



# MID-CYCLE SELF EVALUATION REPORT

Prepared for the Northwest Commission  
on Colleges and Universities

YEAR **THREE**

APRIL 2020





## Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation Report

Helena College University of Montana

Helena, Montana  
[www.helenacollege.edu](http://www.helenacollege.edu)

Report Prepared for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

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## Introduction

In response to recommendations emerging from Helena College's [Year Seven Comprehensive Peer Evaluation](#) of April 2017, the Strategic Planning, Assessment and Accreditation Committee (SPAA) revisited the College's mission statement, core themes and objectives. At the same time, the committee updated the strategic plan based on input received from a participatory all campus review of the plan in May 2017. The College subsequently revised its mission statement, core themes and objectives, indicators of achievement, and strategic goals and objectives to reflect changing institutional priorities and circumstances. The determination of mission fulfillment was accordingly redefined. As outlined in the [Year One Self-Evaluation Report](#) accepted by the NWCCU in July 2018, Helena College has 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 providing the College with an efficient and effective framework for guiding planning and assessment at the institutional and program level and openly sharing the results. During the first two years of the current accreditation cycle, demonstrable progress has been realized. Though significant work and necessary adaptations remain, the College is fully engaged with implementing the plan outlined in our year one report.

This report outlines the progress Helena College has made with institutional planning, the assessment of student learning outcomes, and determining the extent of mission fulfillment. Part I of the self-study gives an overview of the College's institutional assessment plan. Part II includes representative examples of the operationalization of the College's mission and core themes at the academic program level with a focus on the assessment of student learning outcomes. Part III provides an overall evaluation of the various aspects of the College's assessment plan and the priorities for action as the institution approaches its Peer Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (EIE) in 2024.

## Part I: Overview of Institutional Assessment Plan

### **Methods of Assessing Mission Fulfillment: Helena College's Institutional Assessment Plan**

Helena College's mission statement, refined and adopted in fall 2017, accurately and comprehensively defines the institution's purpose, characteristics and expectations. This statement informs the core themes and strategic goals and provides the foundation for the College's assessment plan:

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

Three core themes individually and collectively represent the fundamental elements of Helena College's mission as a public two-year institution of higher education. The objectives for each core theme are stated as outcomes to provide clarity of purpose, meaningful assessment of their achievement, and alignment with the College's action-oriented strategic goals. Each indicator of achievement has one or more associated metrics with baselines and targets against which current performance is measured (Appendix A).

Core Theme One: Student Access and Success: Includes two outcome objectives and eight indicators associated with access and student success reflecting the goals of the institution and our students.

Core Theme Two: High Quality Education: Emphasizes quality of instruction and student learning with two outcome objectives and five indicators relating to the attainment of student learning outcomes at the institutional and program level, as well as the availability and effectiveness of professional development to improve teaching and learning.

Core Theme Three: Community Enrichment: Provides a set of three outcome objectives and nine indicators designed to effectively evaluate the College's efforts to engage responsively with and enrich the community.

The College's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan is comprised of five strategic goals each with 3-4 associated objectives intended to align the operations and activities of the College and its component programs and services towards mission fulfillment and achievement of the core theme objectives (Appendix B).

Strategic Goal #1 - Promote student success and achievement

Strategic Goal #2 - Advance academic excellence and scholarship

Strategic Goal #3 - Build community engagement and partnerships

Strategic Goal #4 - Model and foster equity, inclusion, and cultural competency

Strategic Goal #5 - Ensure Institutional Integrity

The first three strategic goals align directly with the College's three core themes, while strategic goals four and five guide the manner in which the College achieves its mission creating policies and processes that provide an equitable and inclusive environment for students and employees. The core theme objectives and associated indicators of achievement serve as key performance indicators for evaluating overall progress on the achievement of the strategic goals.

The five strategic goals and their related objectives are operationalized through an annual work plan comprised of 48 individual unit plans representing all areas on campus, including administrative offices, academic programs, support services, institutional committees, and the faculty, staff, and student senates. The annual work plans document how actions at the unit level are aligned to specific strategic goal objectives and include timelines, responsible parties, indicators, results, and planned future actions as well as a final fiscal year budget narrative for units that have operational budgets. The annual work plans are accessible through a secure login on the College's website. Plan developers currently complete their prior year plans and submit new plans at the beginning of each academic year. The responsible division chair reviews academic program work plans, while plan developers for administrative offices, support services, and committees are encouraged to have their plans reviewed by their supervisor or an appropriate senior administrator (Appendix C).

In addition to annual work plans, faculty and staff from all academic programs and most support services complete a comprehensive internal program review every five years following a schedule published on the College website. The purpose of the review is to direct institutional decision-making on the continuing development, approval, allocation of resources, and management of programs and services in alignment with the College's mission, core themes, and strategic goal objectives. The reviews summarize program development and outcomes during the prior five years and culminate in a plan to enhance student learning and improve program quality during the next review cycle. Reporting and analysis of student achievement and learning outcome assessment data are required components of the reviews.

Halfway through the five-year review cycle, program faculty and managers are required to complete a brief mid-cycle program progress report. The report summarizes progress on the recommendations and

implementation plan emerging from the last program review, professional development activity, fiscal trends, an update on student learning outcomes and program goals, challenges and opportunities, and any best practices or research questions under consideration (Appendix D). Division chairs, supervisors, and the director of institutional effectiveness assist faculty and staff with the development of their program reviews and progress reports. The appropriate senior administrator and the Institutional Development, Effectiveness and Accreditation (IDEA) Committee evaluate the internal reviews and progress reports to provide feedback and inform strategic planning and resource allocation. As required by [MUS BOR Policy 303.3](#), academic program reviews are submitted to the Montana University System Board of Regents each year following the campus schedule with an accompanying recommendation on continuation of the program. Completed internal program reviews are published on the College's [website](#).

Helena College defines and articulates mission fulfillment based on the following determinations:

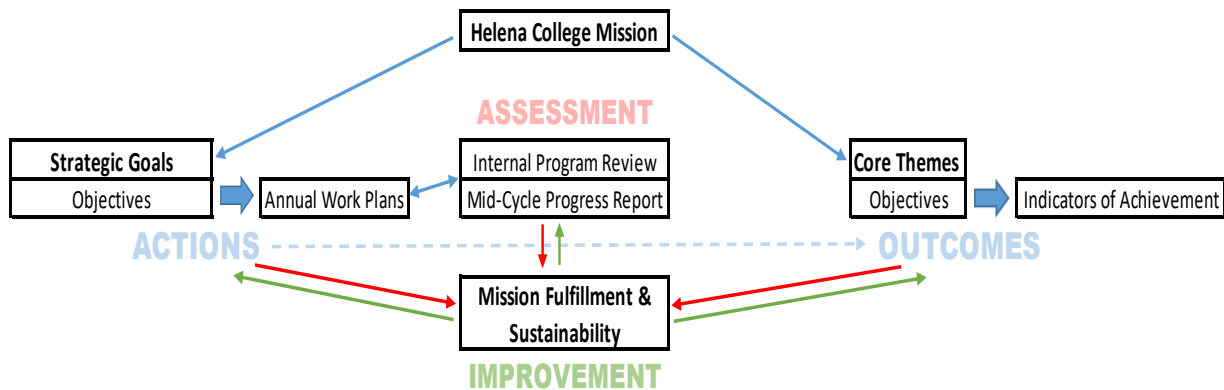
1. Systematic evaluation of the performance of each of the indicators of achievement for the outcome objectives identified in the three core themes. An acceptable threshold for mission fulfillment is defined as 75% of the indicators of achievement exceeding, meeting, or having an acceptable range of achievement. Performance for each indicator is rated according to the following scale:

Score	Result	Definition
2	Target met	Performance meets or exceeds target
1	Acceptable range of achievement	Performance within 90% of target
0	Target not met	Performance not within 90% of target

2. Regular monitoring of progress towards achievement of the each of the five strategic goals and their supporting objectives. Progress is determined through regular evaluation of the results of annual work plans supporting specific strategic goal objectives at the unit level.

The IDEA Committee, formerly identified as the SPAA Committee, is responsible for determining the extent of mission fulfillment each year. In fall 2019, the committee completed its first review of the 2018-19 annual work plans evaluating each of the individual plans for alignment, quality, and achievement using a standard set of criteria (Appendix E). Work plan results were also aggregated to assess the distribution and completion of action items across the five strategic goals and their supporting objectives (Appendix F). Following the annual work plan review, the committee rated the performance of the 22 core theme indicators using the most recent available data. The first Helena College [Mission Fulfillment Progress Report](#) summarizing the committee's findings and recommendations for improvements and future actions were forwarded to the Dean's Cabinet and published to the campus community simultaneous to the completion of this self-evaluation report. The figure below provides a visual representation of the essential components of the College's planning and assessment cycle and the process for determining mission fulfillment and sustainability.

### Helena College Planning & Assessment Framework



#### Participation in the Assessment of Mission Fulfillment

Helena College is an affiliate campus of the University of Montana and as a public two-year comprehensive college is formally governed by the Board of Regents (BOR) of the Montana University System (MUS). The BOR regularly reviews and approves the College's mission statement and core themes, academic programs, and annual budget but is not directly involved with assessment of mission fulfillment at the individual campuses.

The IDEA Committee assesses mission fulfillment on an annual basis following the aforementioned process. Membership on the committee provides both authority for decision-making, and representation of the main constituencies on campus. Designated committee members include senior administrators (Associate Dean of Academic/Student affairs, Assistant Dean of Administrative Affairs, Director of community engagement and workforce development), and the student, staff, and faculty senate presidents. An additional faculty member responsible for development and administration of the College's assessment database sits on the committee, as does the director of institutional effectiveness who serves as the chair. The Dean/CEO of the College is an ex-officio member of the committee. The Senate presidents provide regular communication to and from their constituencies on committee deliberations and proceedings. Currently, with a vacancy in the Assistant Dean of Administrative Affairs position, the director of nursing is temporarily serving on the committee.

The plan developers who write and monitor annual work plans for their areas represent a diverse cross-section of the campus community including administrators, contract professionals, faculty, staff, and the student senate president. Faculty have the primary responsibility for the development and assessment of student learning outcomes at the institutional, program/credential, and course level.

#### Validity of Core Themes and Objectives

Helena College's three core themes were originally adopted by the campus in 2011 and approved by the MUS BOR in 2013. In response to two recommendations emerging from the College's seven-year evaluation in April 2017, the SPAA Committee coordinated a comprehensive review of the mission statement, core themes, objectives, and indicators with a particular focus on core theme three which emphasizes how the College engages with and enriches the community. As detailed in the 2018 year

one report, the mission and core themes were refined, while the core theme objectives and indicators of achievement were updated to provide better alignment with strategic goals and relevant measures of effectiveness, including for the first time the results of student learning outcomes assessment. The definition and determination of mission fulfillment was improved to provide a more holistic framework for institutional planning and assessment and communicating the College's progress to its constituencies. While NWCCU's new accreditation standards taking effect in January 2020 no longer mandate the use of core themes as a framework for assessing mission fulfillment, Helena College has yet to formally decide if it will continue with the revised core theme framework adopted in February 2018. At a minimum, the College will likely remain committed to using the existing core theme objectives and indicators of achievements as they continue to provide clear outcomes and meaningful performance indicators for measuring student learning and achievement and improving institutional effectiveness as articulated in Standard One of the NWCCU 2020 Standards for Accreditation.

### **Sufficiency of Evidence to Assess Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability**

As previously discussed, Helena College completed its first assessment of mission fulfillment last fall using the new definition and framework for determination implemented in spring 2018. The IDEA Committee reviewed the most current available data for each of the 22 indicators of achievement supporting the core theme objectives. Overall, 45% of the total indicators met or exceeded the established targets or were within an acceptable range of achievement defined as 90% of the identified target. The results indicate that the College did not reach its acceptable threshold of mission fulfillment of 75% of the total indicators meeting their targets or falling within an acceptable range of achievement. Five new indicators of achievement in core themes two and three, representing 23% of the total, do not yet provide sufficient data to measure performance either because data results are pending, or processes for data collection still need to be implemented. Excluding the indicators lacking sufficient data, 63% of the indicators of achievement exceeded, met or were within an acceptable range of their targets.

The results were most promising in Core Theme One: Student Access and Success, which met the threshold for mission fulfillment (75%, or 6 of 8 indicators). The enrollment and student success indicators in Core Theme One are well established with readily available data, and are generally viewed as sufficient for assessing the College's mission and sustainability with regard to providing access and supporting student success. For Core Theme Two: High Quality Education, two out of five indicators (40%) exceeded their targets. Of the three that did not, two are related to aggregation of student learning outcomes assessment data at the institutional and program level, which is pending the full implementation of a new assessment database initiated in fall 2019. The remaining indicator related to professional development has two performance metrics, which both need targets established and one requires a process for data collection. Given the primacy of assessment of student learning to the College's mission and ongoing compliance with NWCCU standards, collection and reporting of assessment data is necessary to provide sufficient evidence of mission fulfillment, this is currently among the College's highest priorities.

Assessing mission fulfillment for Core Theme Three: Community Enrichment has been an ongoing challenge for the College, resulting in a recommendation from the year seven evaluation committee that cited a disconnect between "exemplary community engagement" and the incomplete examples provided by the indicators of achievement. In preparation for submission of the year one self-evaluation in spring 2018, the Interim Dean/CEO, Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs, the Director of



Community Engagement and Workforce Development, and the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research reviewed and refined the objectives and indicators for Core Theme Three to provide better evidence of mission fulfillment. The initial mission fulfillment review showed that only two of the nine indicators (22%) met, exceeded, or were within an acceptable range of their targets. While two of the four new indicators still need processes implemented to collect assessable data, this overall outcome suggests that those remaining indicators of achievement, associated metrics, and established targets need to be re-evaluated for their sufficiency to provide evidence of mission fulfillment and relevance to the College's present priorities.

## Part II: Representative Examples of Student Learning Assessment

The following two examples are intended to demonstrate how Helena College's mission and core themes are operationalized at the academic program level with regard to the assessment of student learning in order to improve teaching and learning, and inform program planning.

Helena College has been engaged in a sustained long-term effort to fulfill a recommendation that first emerged from its comprehensive peer evaluation in 2010, and was later modified after the year seven comprehensive peer evaluation in 2017. The NWCCU's recommendation focuses on the need for the College to effectively demonstrate that program assessment data is used to improve teaching and learning and inform decision-making at all institutional levels. The greatest ongoing challenge for the College has been implementing a systematic and sustainable process for documenting how, when and where program assessment occurs and how the data is used for continuous improvement and institutional planning.

In fall 2017, the Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs, the Director of Institutional Research and a faculty member from the computer technology program convened to design a new framework for systematically documenting institutional assessment of student learning at the course, program/credential, and institutional level. The centerpiece of the framework is the development and implementation of a secure web accessible database to document student learning outcomes, how and when they are assessed, and how the results are used to improve teaching and learning and inform program planning. The new framework has the following goals:

- Allow faculty to map or associate course student learning outcomes to program/credential student learning outcomes.
- Allow faculty to map or associate course or credential student learning outcomes to institutional competencies.
- Allow faculty to document the primary assessment tool used for each course learning outcome.
- Allow for the creation of a target percentage of student achievement for each assessment.
- Allow for the collection of data for each course section to include the number of students assessed, number of students that passed the assessment, target attainment, faculty analysis and planned changes related to the assessment result.
- Allow for the association between an assessment of a course student learning outcome to an institutional competency with details as to how the assessment relates to the competency.
- Allow for the reporting of student learning outcome assessment at the course, credential, program, division, and institutional levels.

Development of the new system and database is ongoing and was piloted with a small sample of Helena College faculty in the spring semester of 2018. Training and implementation began in the 2019-20 academic year with the General Education/Transfer and Nursing programs in the fall semester and the remaining Career-Technical Education programs planned in the spring semester. The College will report on the progress of this effort in more detail in its Ad Hoc Report on Recommendation 4 of the Spring 2017 Year Seven Peer Evaluation Report due to the NWCCU on March 1, 2020.

### **Example A: Nursing Assessment Plan**

#### Program Summary

The mission of the Helena College Department of Nursing is to provide a quality nursing education that prepares competent, safe, generalists; and to provide models and encourage life-long learners who are prepared for successful employment and leadership in the community. The purpose of the Helena College Nursing Department is to prepare qualified nurses for entry-level positions to meet community workforce needs. Historically, learning experiences were based on the following eight abilities: professional behaviors, communication, assessment, clinical/decision-making, caring interventions, teaching and learning, collaboration, and managing care. The Nursing program, which offers a Certificate of Applied Science Practical Nursing and an Associate of Science Registered Nursing, is approved by the Montana State Board of Nursing (MSBON) and nationally accredited by Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). As part of that accreditation, the program is required to meet six standards: (1) Mission and Administrative Capacity, (2) Faculty and Staff, (3) Students, (4) Curriculum and Instruction, (5) Resources and (6) Outcomes. The most recent placement rate for the program is 85% with an average annual starting salary of \$40,400 (Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry). Registered nurses are currently in high demand across the state, and earn the highest average annual starting salary of Helena College's graduates (\$51,117). In 2019, the Registered Nursing program was ranked as the top ADN program in the state and the nation by RNCareers.org and RegisteredNursing.org.

#### Related Core Theme Objectives & Indicators and Strategic Goal Alignment

Assessment of student learning in the Nursing program relates to the following core theme objectives and indicators of achievement:

#### Core Theme Two: High Quality Education

Objective 1: Helena College students demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes
Indicator 1.1: Institutional Competencies (Students demonstrating competency in Information Literacy, Technology Literacy, Diversity- See Appendix G)
Indicator 1.2: Student Achievement of Program Learning Outcomes
Indicator 1.3: Professional License and Certification Pass Rates

This core theme objective and its associated indicators align with the following strategic goal objectives:

#### Strategic Goal #2 – Advance Academic Excellence and Scholarship

- 2.2 Utilize research and assessment data to make evidence-based decisions regarding curriculum, instruction and programming

- 2.3 Demonstrate that students have learned requisite knowledge and skills relevant to their educational goals.

Program learning outcomes for the CASPN and ASRN degrees are as follows:

1. Human Flourishing: Promote the human dignity, integrity, self-determination, and personal growth of patients, oneself and members of the healthcare team.
2. Nursing Judgement: Provide a rationale for judgement used in the provision of safe quality care and for decisions that promote the health of patients within a family context.
3. Professional Identity: Assess how one's personal strengths and values affect one's identity as a nurse and one's contributions as a member of the healthcare team.
4. Spirit of Inquiry: Question the basis for nursing actions, considering research evidence, tradition and patient preferences.

Other objectives and indicators of achievement from Core Theme One: Student Access and Success, and Core Theme Three: Community Enrichment focus on student achievement (enrollment, retention, completion) and community engagement (program partnerships, student service hours in the community via internships and clinical experiences) provide meaningful measurements of mission fulfillment, effectiveness, and sustainability at the program level. For example, nursing students complete 7,280 clinical hours in the community through the program's 50 partnerships with local and regional healthcare facilities. Program activities supporting these outcomes are aligned to the College's strategic goals and assessed through annual work plans and the program review cycle. Taken together, the three indicators of achievement under Core Theme Two are adequate and meaningful for assessing student learning outcomes in a general overall manner. Indicator 1.3, measured by pass rates on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), provides a more specific summative assessment of learning outcomes for the CASPN and ASRN credentials. Assessment Technology Incorporated (ATI) test results are collected at various points over the course of the nursing curriculum and are used as formative assessment tools for specific course and program level outcomes.

#### Data Collection, Analysis, Utilization, and Communication

Helena College nursing faculty have developed an assessment plan that guides the nursing education unit in ongoing program development and improvement. The plan is based on the six ACEN standards and the faculty regularly review each standard according to an established schedule. The plan demonstrates how the program is meeting ACEN and MSBON standards and criteria. Program effectiveness is also evaluated by graduation rates, NCLEX pass rates, job placement rates, and program satisfaction as indicated by the results of graduate and employer surveys. Assessment data is collected, analyzed, aggregated, and trended. Nursing faculty use assessment results to implement strategies for improvement.

The assessment plan findings are compiled and reviewed by the Nursing Program Director. The results of student course evaluations are provided to faculty for the specific courses each has taught. Faculty members then write goals for any instructional changes made in response to the evaluations. Program changes are communicated to the Nursing Academic Standards Committee for discussion and approval. Any resulting curriculum changes are forwarded to the Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs and then submitted to the Academic Standards and Curriculum Review (ASCR) Committee for approval. The Nursing Program Director presents all program and curriculum changes at program advisory board meetings. Changes or improvements resulting from program assessment are communicated to students,

faculty, advisory board members, clinical affiliates, the Montana State Board of Nursing, and to the public through written and oral methods such as meetings, letters, and/or emails.

The Nursing program uses ATI testing services (ATI) at various points in the curriculum to assess students' abilities related to the three institutional competencies (Information Literacy, Technology Literacy, and Diversity). The ATI Comprehensive Predictor, given at the end of the program, is also used to evaluate students' overall aptitude to become safe, competent generalists. Helena College nursing graduates consistently achieve pass rates on the NCLEX in the range of 95-100%, which provides a meaningful and necessary indicator of student learning and program effectiveness in preparing them for employment in the nursing profession.

### Lessons Learned

In October 2015, the State of Montana was awarded a \$15 million Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) consortium grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. The purpose of the grant was to address a statewide shortage in nurses by creating more efficient educational pathways to nursing degrees. A new curriculum was developed for all nursing programs across the state, requiring faculty and administrators to work together to identify student learning outcomes for each of the courses in the curriculum.

One of the challenges the nursing department has faced since the new course learning outcomes were established is systematically documenting the outcome assessment results. While the course outlines identify which learning outcomes are being addressed, there was no way for the instructor to efficiently and effectively quantify the results. The development and implementation of the Helena College Assessment Database offers instructors a tool to document student learning outcome assessments and results. In spring 2019, the Nursing program assisted in a pilot project to test the new database. Because of participation in the pilot project, the faculty have identified a primary assessment tool such as an assignment, examination, demonstration or project/portfolio for each course learning outcome. At the end of the semester, the faculty can now review the results of the assessments for all course learning outcomes to determine student achievement levels and make any changes deemed necessary to improve instructional delivery and student learning. Following a review of the initial assessment results from the database after implementation in fall 2019, the nursing faculty recognized that the curriculum needs to undergo an extensive learning outcome mapping process (Appendix H). This process will be completed in February 2020 using the National Council of State Board of Nursing's (NCSBN) plan to identify any gaps in the curriculum and ensure any gaps discovered will be thoroughly addressed to ensure all course and program learning outcomes are aligned and effectively assessed.

### **Example B: Computer Technology Assessment Plan**

#### Program Summary

The Helena College Computer Technology program offers an associate of applied science degree with options in network administration and programming. The curriculum for each option prepares students for employment within a wide range of information technology fields. Program curriculum develops a foundational knowledge in technology that students can build upon as their employment needs and opportunities change throughout their careers. The program offers a very hands-on, results-oriented curriculum that provides practical real-life experience through project-based coursework and industry-

based internship opportunities. Full-time and adjunct faculty have many years of experience working in information technology bringing variety and depth of industry knowledge into the classroom. The most recent placement rate for the program is 100% with an average annual starting salary of \$46,745 (Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry). Most graduates secure local positions in state government or private enterprise.

Related Core Theme Objectives & Indicators and Strategic Goal Alignment

Assessment of student learning in the Computer Technology program relates to the following core theme objectives and indicators of achievement:

Core Theme Two: High Quality Education

Objective 1: Helena College students demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes
Indicator 1.1: Institutional Competencies (Students demonstrating competency in Information Literacy, Technology Literacy, Diversity – See Appendix G)
Indicator 1.2: Student Achievement of Program Learning Outcomes

This core theme objective and its associated indicators align with the following strategic goal objectives:

Strategic Goal #2 – Advance Academic Excellence and Scholarship

- 2.2 Utilize research and assessment data to make evidence-based decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, and programming
- 2.3 Demonstrate that students have learned requisite knowledge and skills relevant to their educational goals.

Program learning outcomes for the Associate of Applied Science in Computer Technology degree are as follows:

1. An ability to apply knowledge of computing and mathematics appropriate to the discipline.
2. An ability to analyze a problem, and identify and define the computing requirements appropriate to its solution.
3. An ability to design, implement, and evaluate a computer-based system, process, component, or program to meet desired needs.
4. An ability to function effectively on teams to accomplish a common goal.
5. An understanding of professional, ethical, legal, security, and social issues and responsibilities.
6. An ability to communicate effectively with a range of audiences.
7. An ability to analyze the local and global impact of computing on individuals, organizations, and society.
8. Recognition of the need for and an ability to engage in continuing professional development.
9. An ability to use current techniques, skills, and tools necessary for computing practice.
10. Synthesize and apply information to meet an identified need.

Other objectives and indicators of achievement from Core Theme One: Student Access and Success, and Core Theme Three: Community Enrichment focusing on student achievement (enrollment, retention, completion) and community engagement (program partnerships, student service hours in the community through internships and work-based projects) also provide meaningful measurements of

mission fulfillment, effectiveness, and sustainability at the program level. Program activities supporting these outcomes are aligned to the College's strategic goals and assessed through annual work plans and the program review cycle.

With the new assessment framework and database in the implementation stage, it will take some time to collect sufficient data for analysis and reporting of meaningful assessment results for credential level learning outcomes and institutional competencies. At this early stage, systematic assessment results for course learning outcomes are starting to emerge and will be used for improving instruction and student achievement in the Computer Technology program.

#### Data Collection, Analysis, Utilization, and Communication

Several years ago, the Computer Technology program created pre and post assessment tests to evaluate student achievement. The tests were created and administered to one student cohort, but the amount of work required to administer and assess the results was much greater than anticipated. For that reason, the pre and post assessment project was not fully implemented. At that point, the program did not have an effective and attainable plan for the assessment of student learning outcomes. The Computer Technology program was not alone as the assessment of student learning was a deficiency in many academic programs at Helena College which has been working since 2010 to fully satisfy an NWCCU recommendation on the use of program assessment data to improve teaching and learning and inform decision-making. As previously detailed, a faculty member from the Computer Technology program has played a key role in creating a new system for documenting student learning outcome assessment by designing and implementing a secure web accessible database to collect and report assessment results at the course, program/credential, and institution level. In the fall semester of 2019, that faculty member along with other faculty from the General Education/Transfer and Nursing programs began entering course assessment data in the database. An initial report on assessment of student learning outcomes for Computer Technology courses for fall 2019 is attached to this report (Appendix H).

Concerns with student achievement of learning outcomes observed by faculty are shared with other program faculty and the division chair. A plan for addressing any gaps in achievement is created and implemented by the program faculty. A concern that came to light two years ago was a higher than average DFW rate for the CSCI 100 Introduction to Programming course. This was especially problematic as the course serves as the foundational and primary feeder course for the AAS Programming degree. In the past, the course has normally been taught by adjuncts. To better facilitate student engagement and academic success, the course is now taught by full time faculty whenever possible. There is little overlap between the courses taught by Computer Technology program faculty. Most of the time issues with student achievement of learning outcomes are identified and remedied by the individual faculty member teaching the course. For example, in CSCI 111 Programming with JAVA I, the final exam for the course was a practical that required students to finish an incomplete program script. The student pass rate for the assessment was much lower than expected. Many students struggled with the assessment due to the time limit. Students who had previously demonstrated that they were very capable of completing the objectives of this assessment were not scoring well. Consequently, the faculty member that typically teaches the course eliminated the assessment and created a new assessment that more adequately measures student achievement.

## Lessons Learned

The current program level outcomes for the two Computer Technology credentials have been in place for several years. In the process of using the new assessment system to map credential learning outcomes to institutional competencies, faculty recognized that none of the outcomes for the AAS Programming credential could be mapped to either of the institutional competencies for information literacy or diversity. The institutional competencies have been revised since the current learning outcomes for the program credentials were adopted. Some programs may not have specific credential outcomes that map to the institutional competencies, or the competencies are met by general education courses in the program curriculum. The Computer Technology program, particularly in the case of the AAS Programming credential, desires and will implement student learning outcomes in the curriculum that map to all three institutional competencies (Appendix H). This is particularly important given the current and well-known gender gap in the IT industry. The need to map student learning outcomes as part of implementing the new assessment system brought this problem to light for the program. Credential learning outcomes need to be routinely reviewed, especially when institutional competencies are changed. As every academic program at Helena College engages in this process, similar problems will likely surface and need to be addressed.

## Part III: Moving Forward- Priorities for Year Seven

Analysis of Helena College's new institutional assessment plan and the representative examples of student learning assessment in this self-evaluation reveals many positive improvements, as well as several priorities for action the College must address to successfully conclude its current seven-year cycle. Many of these priorities have been recommended by the IDEA Committee in response to their findings in the College's first [Mission Fulfillment Progress Report](#) published concurrently with this report. While action on many of these priorities is ongoing, other actions will be initiated from now through the 2020-21 academic year with involvement from the appropriate stakeholders on campus.

### **Institutional Planning and Assessment**

1. Review Helena College's core themes and the determination of mission fulfillment and institutional effectiveness.
  - In spring of 2020, three teams of IDEA Committee members will review each of Helena College's core themes to evaluate the validity and effectiveness of the 22 indicators of achievement. Some indicators are still lacking targets, while others have targets that may need revision based on changing baselines and current performance. The review teams will include appropriate stakeholders from across campus as they review of each theme.
  - For the indicators related to student learning outcomes (2.1.1, 2.1.2), data collection is now underway within the new assessment database, but comprehensive program/credential assessment results are not yet available. For three other indicators (2.2.1, 3.1.1, 3.1.2), data collection processes/instruments must be developed. If core theme review deems these indicators are still relevant and effective measures, processes for collecting data need to be developed and implemented immediately so that performance can be evaluated and included in determining the progress of mission fulfillment each year.
  - As core theme frameworks are no longer required in the 2020 NWCCU Standards for Accreditation, the College will need to make a decision about their future use in its

transition to the new standards. The current 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.

2. Improve the quality and effectiveness of annual unit work plans and program reviews.
  - The 2020-21 online work plan form will be updated to improve clarity, strategic goal alignment, and effectiveness. Suggested improvements include: providing prompts to guide the input of information in text fields, eliminating defaults in pull-down menus to encourage more intentional selection of strategic goals and objectives, allowing planned actions to support multiple related strategic goal objectives rather than just one, and changing how "deferred" and "ongoing" action statuses are defined and used to improve how plan achievement is measured and evaluated. A mid-year progress update will be added to encourage operationalization of the work plans, as opposed to "write and forget."
  - More substantive initial and ongoing training will be provided to plan developers emphasizing how to better align program actions with strategic goal objectives, how to write goals using S.M.A.R.T. criteria, and ensuring work plans are thorough and complete.
  - The timeline for development and completion of annual work plans will be changed to more closely follow the academic/fiscal year. To provide more timely feedback, the annual plan review process has been divided into two phases: an initial review evaluating clarity, alignment and effectiveness, and a final review process evaluating plan achievement.
  - College leadership will identify specific strategic goals and/or objectives as institutional priorities each year so that annual work plans do not continue to cluster around some strategic goal objectives, while other important institutional goals and objectives are neglected or underserved.
  - In 2018-19, Helena College engaged in a [comprehensive strategic enrollment planning process](#) to address continuous decline in degree-seeking students since the end of the recession (-29% as of fall 2019). As part of that process, a working group was assigned to develop a situational analysis on the effectiveness of the College's academic programs. A comparative academic program profile was compiled including measures of enrollment, student achievement, and fiscal efficiency. While most of these measures are currently evaluated by faculty as part of the five-year program review cycle, the working group evaluated the current review process and identified several areas of improvement which have been passed on to the IDEA Committee to implement this year. The improvements include the following:
    - Creating an individual program profile that visually summarizes enrollment, student achievement and fiscal data in comparison to institutional benchmarks.
    - Providing specific prompts to the individual sections of the report template to improve the consistency and quality of information reported.
    - Connecting program reviews to annual work plans (i.e. program review findings should inform annual planning for subsequent cycle).
    - Incorporating Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis and a peer review component.



3. Close remaining gaps in institutional planning and assessment.
  - Following recent transitions in senior leadership positions (Dean/CEO, Assistant Dean for Administrative Affairs), the budgeting process is being restructured to foster efficiency, participation, transparency, and accountability. In the past, budget managers were required to align particular items in their budget requests to the College's three core themes; however, these connections were neither explained nor prioritized in higher-level decisions on resource allocation. At both the unit and institutional level, budget development and resource allocation needs to be specifically aligned to and prioritized by the College's mission and strategic goal objectives. Budgeting decisions should also be informed by the most recent assessment of progress on mission fulfillment measured by the College's core theme indicators of achievement.
  - Expectations surrounding program and student learning assessment should be communicated during the hiring process for all faculty and any staff that have assessment activities as part of their job responsibilities, and initial training on the institutional assessment process and tools should be provided during the onboarding process. Annual work plan goals and actions should also be incorporated into employee performance evaluations and development plans, thereby linking employee development to the College's mission and strategic goal objectives.
  - The IDEA Committee's first review of annual unit work plans indicates that many are developed in isolation, even from other units in the same administrative area or division. Administrators, directors/division chairs and staff responsible for developing annual plans should coordinate their efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the plans for their areas.
  - Evaluation of the strategic goal alignment for 2018-19 and 2019-20 annual work plans (Appendix F) reveals that very little focus is being given to Strategic Goal #4 – Model Equity, Inclusion, and Cultural Competency, a critical aspect of the College's mission. This may be due in part to the lack of consistent messaging around strategic priorities given the changes in College leadership over the past few years. At the same time, plan developers may be having a hard time connecting to the strategic goal because there is no related objective that is widely applicable to all areas of campus. An additional objective should be developed and added to the goal to allow all areas across the campus community to identify relevant and meaningful actions to support this important strategic priority. In a similar manner, strategic enrollment planning (SEP) was formally aligned to the College's strategic goals when the IDEA Committee proposed and approved an additional objective supporting SEP to Strategic Goal #5 – Ensure Institutional Integrity in April of 2019.

### **Student Learning Outcomes Assessment**

As highlighted in Part II of this report, Helena College is currently in the process of implementing a new framework for documenting assessment of student learning outcomes initiated in the 2019-20 academic year. This process centers on the development and use of a database tool to collect, map, and report assessment results at the course, credential, and institutional level. The new system will, for the first time, systematize the creation, analysis, and reporting of student learning assessment. For the full benefit of the tool to be realized, all faculty must participate, and the results must be incorporated into academic program assessment and institutional determination of mission fulfillment and effectiveness.

The new assessment system requires faculty to specify how course learning outcomes will be assessed and allows for the collection of results and documentation of faculty analysis and planned changes. While attention to course learning outcomes has always been emphasized, Helena College has not had a systematic process for evaluating the assessment of outcomes, particularly at the program level. Some

faculty who have started using the new system, have expressed dissatisfaction with the quality and relevance of some course outcomes. Those faculty were encouraged to initiate curriculum changes through established procedures of the Academic Standards and Curriculum Review Committee (ASCR). As another example, a computer technology faculty member participating in the initial rollout of the assessment database indicated that they had modified existing assessments and created several new assessments because of using the new tool. They attributed this to the focus that the system puts on course outcomes and the required details for related assessment instruments. Already in its earliest stage, the new system is bringing much needed attention to the improvement of teaching and learning.

The implementation of and training on the online assessment database is being phased in over the 2019-20 academic year, with program faculty scheduled for the fall and spring semester. The following objectives were provided to faculty in a pre-assessment checklist (Appendix I):

1. Review of all course outcomes to ensure they are current, accurate and complete.
2. Review of all credential outcomes to ensure they are current, accurate and complete offering “appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and synthesis of learning” per NWCCU standards, and are informed and regularly reviewed by advisory councils for Career Technical Education programs.
3. Mapping of credential outcomes to specific course outcome assessments where students demonstrate mastery of knowledge or skills necessary to support the credential-level outcome.
4. Selection of the appropriate level for all course outcome assessments in relationship to the subject knowledge or skill being assessed (introduced, reinforced, or mastered).

As of the end of the fall 2019 semester, faculty usage of the new system has not been as high as anticipated. More faculty have been involved with outcome mapping than entering assessment data. Only 144 outcome assessments were entered for 21 courses in communication, computer science, literature, math, nursing and statistics. Draft course outcome assessment reports have been generated, and will be provided to faculty for review and feedback (Appendix J). Going forward, academic leadership will need to set and communicate clear expectations around use of the new system, while providing sufficient time and resources for assessment activities. In spring 2020, the Helena College Faculty Senate will be consulted on the formation of a Learning Outcomes Assessment Technical Advisory Group to provide full faculty ownership of and oversight on student learning assessment. The group may be attached to the Academic Standards and Curriculum Review Committee (ASCR). Responsibilities will include assisting with ongoing development of and training on the assessment database, planning for full faculty participation extending to adjuncts and high school dual-credit instructors, and hosting professional development opportunities on outcome writing and assessment.

## CONCLUSION

Helena College has made great strides since its last comprehensive year seven evaluation in 2017. The College’s mission, core themes, and strategic plan have been refined and refocused. The institution’s assessment plan now integrates strategic goal objectives with core theme outcomes and indicators of achievement to provide a relevant and meaningful process to determine mission fulfillment and

institutional effectiveness. Progress on mission fulfillment is regularly evaluated and communicated to the campus, while annual work planning engages all constituencies on campus in supporting the advancement of the College's strategic goals. A new system is being implemented to systematically document the assessment of student learning at the course, credential, and institutional level for the purpose of improving teaching and learning and program quality. Helena College is committed to addressing its remaining priorities for action, which are significant, but achievable, as it prepares for its next comprehensive evaluation in 2024. The College appreciates the work of the Mid-Cycle Evaluation Committee and looks forward to feedback from the upcoming visit to support and improve its work in assessing mission fulfillment, institutional effectiveness, and student learning.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Core Themes, Objectives, and Indicators of Achievement

See Helena College's [2020 Mission Fulfillment Progress Report](#) for a full description of the core themes, objectives, and indicators of achievement.

## Appendix B: 2018-22 Strategic Plan



### Mission

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

### Vision

Helena College will be recognized as a responsive regional provider of comprehensive educational opportunities, as a partner in economic and community development, and as a diverse and accessible community of learners.

Helena College will promote excellence in education, maintain fiscal and operational integrity; and cultivate an environment of fellowship, inclusiveness, and respect.

### Core Themes

Through an inclusive campus and community-wide discussion of Helena College's purpose and goals, three core themes have been identified individually and collectively to define the College's mission.

- Student Access and Success
- High Quality Education
- Community Enrichment

## 2018-2022 Strategic Goals

### STRATEGIC GOAL #1 – PROMOTE STUDENT SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

1. Construct academic pathways for undergraduate education that enable seamless career transition or postsecondary educational transfer.
2. Increase educational access and support for a diverse student population through community efforts and collaboration.
3. Promote a culture of collaboration and communication that ensures that the College meets its mission.

### STRATEGIC GOAL #2 – ADVANCE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND SCHOLARSHIP

1. Provide relevant and enriching instruction academic programs that address the evolving job market and global community.
2. Utilize research and assessment data to make evidence-based decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, and programming.
3. Demonstrate that students have learned requisite knowledge and skills relevant to their educational goals.

### STRATEGIC GOAL #3 – BUILD COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

1. Foster collaborative partnerships with business, industry, and the broader community to enhance workforce development and lifelong learning.
2. Evaluate and respond to on-going and emerging community educational and workforce needs.
3. Expand civic engagement opportunities through work-based learning and other real-world educational experiences.

### STRATEGIC GOAL #4 – MODEL AND FOSTER EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND CULTURAL COMPETENCY

1. Ensure that recruitment and hiring practices promote equity and inclusion.
2. Develop a diversity and inclusion action plan with measurable outcomes and ongoing assessment.
3. Deliver professional development and other training to support the increased cultural competency of students and employees.

### STRATEGIC GOAL #5 – ENSURE INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

1. Maintain and enhance a transparent process for resource prioritization and allocation that fosters efficient, effective and equitable use of fiscal resources.
2. Procure and allocate resources to support the mission of Helena College.
3. Devise and implement performance metrics for assessing institutional progress towards identified goals.
4. Maintain and systematically assess a strategic enrollment plan that supports the mission of Helena College.

Appendix C: Sample Annual Unit Work Plan

*A secure login will be provided for access to all Helena College annual work plans*

Report/AnnualPlan

## Helena College Annual Area Work Plan

<b>Year Code:</b> 2018-19	<b>Area:</b> General Education	<b>Plan Status:</b> Final Submitted	<b>Plan Developer:</b> Kiesling, Robyn
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**Mission:**  
 The mission of the Helena College A.A. and A.S. programs is to provide students a quality educational experience. The primary goals and objectives of the programs are to deliver a comprehensive two-year curriculum that will:

- 1) Provide students with a broad background in general studies and exposure to various disciplines.
- 2) Provide students the necessary knowledge and skills to be successful at the four-year college level, and
- 3) Provide career education for life-long learners.

**Narrative:**  
 OCHE, the CCN liaisons, and the General Education Council are discussing multiple items that impact General Education at Helena College. There is a CCN faculty pilot in process now that has tasked faculty in the review of learning outcomes for the most common courses in CHMY, PSYX, EDU, CSCI, and EGEN. The decisions made by faculty involved in the pilot will likely prompt learning outcome review and revision at Helena College. The General Education Council is currently revising the MUS general education core outcomes. The revised outcomes will prompt review and revision of the Helena College general education core outcomes. While these are both necessary and important projects, the timeline for completion is set by the CCN faculty pilot and the Gen Ed Council. Hopefully, we'll see some course and gen ed core outcomes revision this academic year so that the revision process can begin at Helena College.

**Final Budget Narrative:**  
 The budget was influenced negatively by employees in incorrect indexes for payroll. Good news is that this issue was identified in BMT and has now been corrected for the entire division.

The budget for this division has always been small and tight. I usually have to ask for the Academic index (Sandy B) to cover costs that come up for faculty and programs throughout the year. The planned items are fine—those items are in the budget and are never an issue. It's the unplanned items, like books, conferences/meetings, faculty needs, etc. that are hard to cover with the limited budget. I've requested more money for unplanned expenses in FY 20, which will hopefully help me support my division.

**Final Narrative:**  
 AY 18-19 was a busy year for the General Education Division and much was accomplished. The work with the Cultural Heritage of American Indians designation and degree requirement was a team effort and now Helena College transfer degrees align with MUSBOR requirements. The discussions about MUS transfer pathways, Gen Ed outcomes, and academic pathways have been great and all will be ongoing in the next academic year. AY 18-19 was largely guided by SEP, which is amazing, and AY 19-20 will be the same.

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Goal #	Goal	Goal Obj.	Goal Status	Action Item	Exp. Term	Indicator	Resp. Party	Results	Future Action
1	SG2	SG2.1	Ongoing	Evaluate and/or revise HC General Education Core outcomes to match revised MUS General Education Core outcomes. Evaluation will occur in all 7 General Education Core areas: natural science; mathematics; written communication; oral communication; social & psychological sciences & history; humanities & fine arts; and diversity.	201950	All 7 Gen Ed Core areas will be evaluated and revised through ASCRC.	Robyn Kiesling, Gen Ed Division	This was postponed due to two items out of OCHE: 1. The General Education Council was discussing the Gen Ed outcomes as part of the MUS core, however, the discussion was delayed and is just now beginning again on 9.19.19, and 2. OCHE began work on the MUS transfer pathways in AY 18-19 which consumed the time of numerous faculty in the division over the course of the year.	This goal is being discussed by the Gen Ed departments this year as part of the course assessment and database discussion and will be an ongoing goal for AY 19-20.
2	SG2	SG2.1	Completed Spring	Add AA and AS degree requirement and catalog language in regards to the Cultural Heritage of American Indians, per Operational Rule 1 for the MUS Core.	201950	AA and AS degrees will have a Cultural Heritage of American Indians requirement starting in AY 19-20.	Robyn Kiesling, Gen Ed Division	This was completed through ASCRC in spring 2020. The new Cultural Heritage of American Indian course designation criteria were created by faculty and approved by ASCRC. Three Gen Ed courses (HSTA 101, HSTA 102 and NASX 105) were approved and now have the CHAI designation beginning fall 2019, and AA and AS degrees (with the exception of ASRN) now have the requirement that one completed course must have the CHAI designation.	Faculty will continue to add courses with the CHAI designation to the course bank. Hopefully, we'll get at least another 3 courses with the CHAI designation in AY 19-20.

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3	SG1	SG1.1	Ongoing	<p>Create academic pathways for students obtaining AA and AS degrees that clearly outline required and/or recommended courses for each discipline.</p>	201950	<p>Academic pathways will be created for all discipline areas in general education (psychology, sociology, art, literature, natural science, exploratory, etc.) and will be published and promoted in the catalog. Degree sheets will be created for each specific pathway and will be made available on the website. Pathways will be used to move towards a more structured schedule at Helena College.</p>	<p>Robyn Kiesling, Gen Ed Division</p>	<p>This has been a major topic of discussion over AY 18-19, due in large part to the SEP steering committee and process. The need for academic pathways has grown into further discussion of the adoption of a Guided Pathways model for Helena College. The College is sending a team of 5 to a Guided Pathways 101 Workshop in October 2019 to begin the process and there will be a Guided Pathways Steering Committee as a new sub-committee of the SEP Steering Committee. This process will involve the entire institution, not just academics, and will be ongoing for several years. The College did identify 8 meta majors in summer 2019 that will be used in the Guided Pathways discussion as well. The General Education Division is participating in a shared read of Redesigning America's Community Colleges in fall 2019 as part of this ongoing discussion.</p>	<p>Continued work with Guided Pathways and SEP to move towards a student-centered pathways model for Helena College.</p>
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Appendix D: Sample Mid-Cycle Program Progress Report

**Helena College Mid-cycle Program Progress Report**

<p><b>Purpose and Timeline:</b>                  All Helena College programs (academic and support services) are required to complete the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An <b>assessment plan</b> each year which documents achievement of program/student learning outcomes and utilization of fiscal resources.</li> <li>• An <b>internal program review</b> every 5 years subject to the institutional schedule which provides a comprehensive self-study of a program culminating in recommendations and an implementation plan for program improvements in the next 5 year cycle.</li> <li>• A <b>mid-cycle program progress report</b> every 2.5 years to evaluate progress on recommendations and implementation plans arising from program reviews, achievement of student/program outcomes, fiscal trends, emerging challenges and opportunities, and other information relevant to program improvement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Program or Department:</b> <u>Financial Aid</u></p>
<p><b>Instructions:</b>                  Please answer the following questions in a complete and concise manner. Your responsibility is to analyze your experience with your program of responsibility, highlight trends that you identify, explain circumstances that might need to be addressed, anticipate potential problems and opportunities, and to provide a brief high-level operational view of your program/area.</p> <p>Please submit this report to your senior administrator, who will review it and provide feedback, and then bring it to the Institutional Development, Effectiveness and Accreditation (IDEA) Committee. The committee will review this report to identify and respond to institutional trends, which may lead to recommendations relevant to strategic planning, assessment and resource allocation.</p>
<p><b>Progress on Recommendations and Implementation Plan:</b> (Please list the recommendations and summarize the implementation plan. Provide an update on your progress to date)</p> <p>The Financial Aid Office will continue to work with the Financial Literacy/Default Prevention Team to continue to increase financial literacy education throughout the campus. The hope is that all staff, faculty and students are discussing these subjects and putting them into context of their everyday lives.</p> <p>The FA Office is seeing a positive reaction to the in-person loan entrance counseling that is now required. Not only are students actually 'hearing' the information, they are able to ask questions immediately, and create a connection with one of the FAAs. This in and of itself will assist in student retention.</p> <p>In light of the obvious effect of in-person financial education, the FA Office is focusing on creating more of these opportunities for staff, faculty and students alike. Therefore the program goals for the AY1314 are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Create a short financial literacy program for students who have a balance owing in the Business Office after the first week of courses, have a loan debt of greater than \$15,000, have a greater than 450% Pell LEU, or are not meeting SAP standards. After the student has completed the online program, they will be required to bring a copy of their budget and make an appointment with a FAA to discuss key points of the program and answer any questions.</li> </ol> <p>There is no longer a Financial Literacy/Default Prevention Team. However, there is a very robust financial literacy awareness program through the new Student Ambassador Program. The ambassadors have put on a Cash Carnival every spring term, had 4 presentations throughout the fall terms on subjects such as budgeting and credit cards; they are currently revamping website, as well as hold a BBQ for scholarship awareness at the Airport Campus each fall term.</p> <p>We also have procured an online product for financial literacy education through EverFi. Advisors for students on Academic Recovery Plans due to not meeting SAP standards require students to provide proof of completion.</p>

2) Develop a better understanding of financial aid processes and capabilities throughout the institution to enable better partnerships throughout by sending a monthly communication piece to all faculty and staff explaining updates to activities and/or processes, identifying upcoming events and create a forum for questions and answers.

The communications within the institution regarding financial aid have not occurred as outlined above. However, there have been emails sent to advisors, as well as updates within student affairs director meetings with updates as to what is coming in the month ahead and recommendations as to what to ask students in order to prepare. This may be filing their FAFSA, meeting with FAAs regarding dropping a course, applying for scholarships, etc. Faculty and staff have opportunities to ask questions within these communications, but they are not particular communication pieces, or forums at this point.

3) The FA Office will also be engaging in a more in-depth cross training due to the pending retirement of one of the FAAs. There is a desire to make processes transfer seamlessly for the students and institution as a whole in order to continue great customer service to students, staff and faculty alike.

The FA Office has cross trained all employees within the department. Everyone within the department is capable of assisting a student with any type of concern and/or process. Not all are as proficient, as there are still certain specialties for each position; however, there are policies and procedures created so that any one of the FAAs is able to follow the steps in all other areas.

The Financial Aid Office would be able to more efficiently and effectively carry out the objectives listed above with a permanent full-time front counter financial aid administrator as was stated earlier within the Fiscal and Physical Resources section.

The main goal of the Financial Aid Office is to enlighten students on their options where finances are concerned. This will hopefully decrease the institution's cohort default rate, and ensure federal funds for students for years to come.

**Professional Development Activity:** (Please list any formal or informal professional development activities pursued or needed by program faculty or staff since your last internal program review)

- Annual MASFAA Conference – 2 staff each year
- Annual RMASFAA Conference – 2 staff each year
- RMASFAA Summer Institute – as needed for new employees; will need to send for advanced training
- Annual NASFAA Conference – 1 staff every other year
- Financial Literacy Certification – 1 staff has attained
- Access Database training – 2 staff
- Excel training – 1 staff
- MBA – 1 staff in the process of obtaining degree
- MSPR – 1 staff has attained
- EdD – 1 staff in the process of obtaining degree
- Annual FSA Conference – 2 staff normally attend each year (There have been a few years where this was not the case.)
- Annual NSPA Conference – 1 staff every other year
- RMASFAA Leadership Pipeline – 1 staff graduated

**Fiscal Trends:** (Please list the amount of your approved budget and the actual amount expended for each of the past 3 fiscal years. Contact Institutional Research if you need assistance with this data)

FY17

- Budget - \$16,350
- Actual Expenditures - \$13,328.98

FY18

- Budget - \$15,300
- Actual Expenditures - \$14,337.91

FY19

- Budget - \$16,100
- Actual Expenditures to date - \$7,510.14

**Student Learning/Program Outcomes:** (Please describe progress on achievement of your student learning outcomes or program goals during the past 3 years)

**Challenges and Opportunities:** (Please describe any emerging challenges or opportunities since your last program review)


There has been a complete turnover of staff in the department. This has been a challenge; however, a great opportunity with the right people in the department with the mentality to move it ahead. The Scholarship & Work Study Officer has greatly enhanced both of these programs. The Grant & Loan Officer has also streamlined several processes.

There is an emerging challenge as the director is taking on a temporary position elsewhere within the institution. The Grant & Loan Officer has stepped in as interim director and there will be a temporary employee hired to assist with duties and processes. The positive here is that the director is still on campus and able to be utilized as a resource.

**Best Practices or Research Questions:** (Where applicable please comment on best practices you may be implementing or concepts you are investigating related to your program curriculum or delivery)

There is current research into a third party to assist with the CDR. This would allow for greater individual contact to potentially decrease the number of students who default on their student loans.

Have you shared this progress report with other program faculty or staff?

Program Faculty/Manager Signature:  Date: 3/28/2019

Associate/Assistant Dean Signature:  Date: 3/28/19

IDEA Committee Review Date: 

### Appendix E: Annual Work Plan Review Sheet

#### Default Question Block

Please select a 2018–2019 Annual Work Plan to review:

Please rate the completeness of the selected plan based on the following criteria:

- Plan is complete- all plan details and goal fields have been entered or selected (note: the additional Narrative field following the Mission field is optional)
- Plan is mostly complete- some fields are partially completed or have not been entered or selected
- Plan is mostly incomplete- most fields are partially completed or have not been entered or selected

Please rate the clarity of the selected plan based on the following criteria:

- All information entered is concise and clearly understood
- Most information entered is concise and clearly understood
- A significant amount of information entered is not concise and clearly understood

Please rate the alignment of the plan based on the following criteria:

- All selected strategic objectives are relevant to the area, and have appropriate action items
- Most selected strategic objectives are relevant to the area, and have appropriate action items
- A significant number of selected strategic objectives are not relevant to the area and/or lack appropriate action items

Please rate the effectiveness of the plan based on the following criteria:

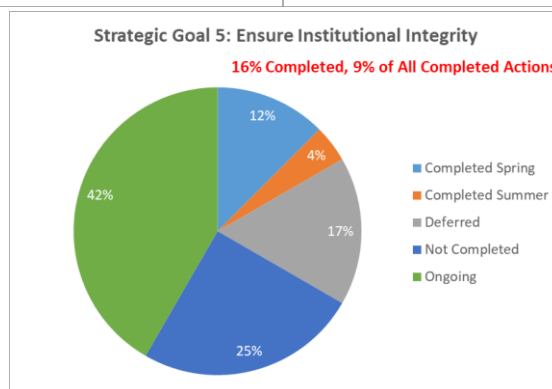
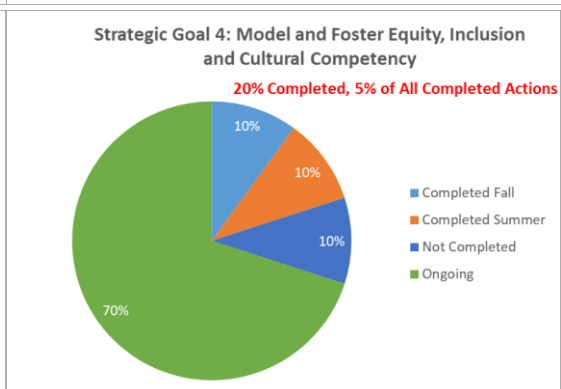
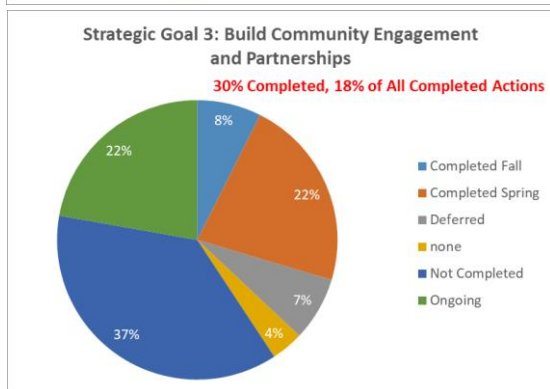
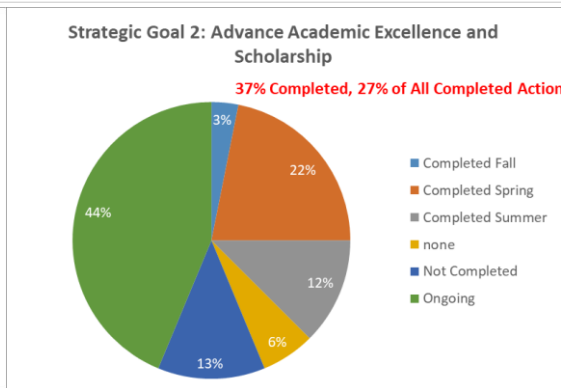
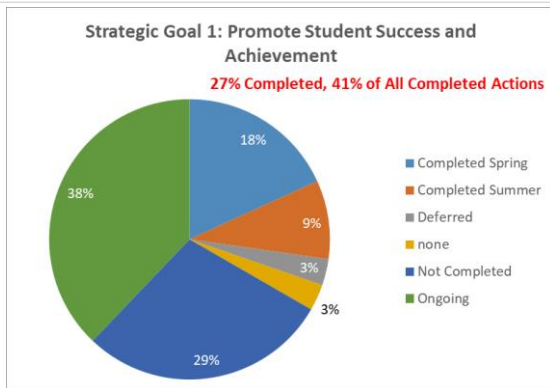
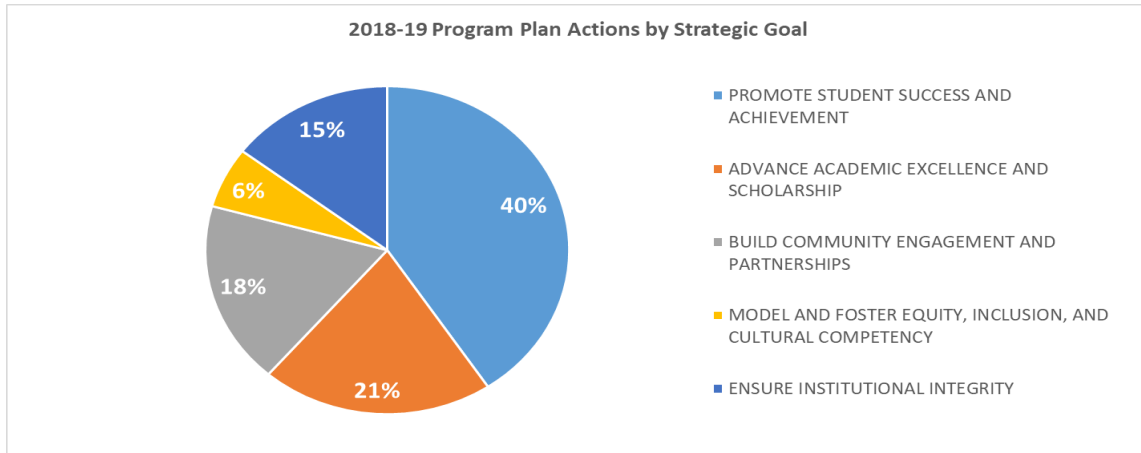
Indicators are appropriate to measure the success of related action items	<input type="text"/>
Timelines for actions are realistic	<input type="text"/>
Results and future actions demonstrate sound analysis and commitment to continuous improvement	<input type="text"/>

Please rate the extent to which the plan goals were achieved:

- All or most action items supporting plan goals were successfully completed
- Some action items supporting plan goals were successfully completed
- Most action items supporting plan goals were not completed or were deferred

Comments (Optional response to explain ratings, address notable strengths and/or weaknesses, or suggestions to improve future planning, etc.):

Appendix F: Summary of 2018-19 Annual Work Plan Alignment and Achievement



## Appendix G: Helena College Institutional Competencies

### Helena College Institutional Competencies (Approved 4/12/2019)

#### Diversity

The student will learn to recognize and value individual, group and cultural differences from and within local, national and global perspectives and contexts.

- Critically examine the cultural, historical, social, economic, and/or political circumstances that produce and shape different social/cultural systems and communities either nationally and/or globally.
- Identify processes by which identities and notions of difference are constructed, reinforced, change over time.
- Examine how power structures, oppressions, and privilege shape the conditions of one or more underrepresented groups as well as various strategies and tools for empowerment, equity, social justice, and inclusion.

#### Information Literacy

The student will learn to locate needed information, managing and evaluating the extracted information and using it critically and ethically.

- Pursue critical inquiry by using authentic questions, curiosity, and a willingness to challenge previously held beliefs in order to make new discoveries.
- Demonstrate persistence, flexibility, and patience in a strategic search for information, while recognizing that it may vary greatly in format, perspective, and value.
- Evaluate content among varied and conflicting perspectives in order to identify authoritative sources.
- Participate actively in scholarly or professional conversation by properly citing past research and accurately representing creators' intended meaning.

#### Technology Literacy

The student will use appropriate technology to access, manage, integrate, or create information, and/or use technology to effectively accomplish a given task.

- Internet and email: web search, web navigation, send and receive email, email attachments, security, messaging
- Operating system operations: locating and executing programs, booting, login, updates
- File management: navigation in OS, create files, folders, copy, delete, rename and upload files, Zip and unzip files, access Flash drive
- Word processing software basics
- Presentation software basics
- Spread Sheet software basics

Appendix H: Sample Student Learning Outcome Assessment Reports



Course Full Details  
with Assessments

Course Number: NRS235

Title: ADULT NURSING I CLINICAL

Description: This clinical introduces the student to nursing practice in care of the stable adult patient. This includes care of the adult in a variety of health care settings. Students utilize the nursing process to develop individualized plans of care to prevent illness, promote wellness and maintain or restore health based on patient needs and evidence based practice.

Credits: 2

Prerequisite:

Corequisite:

Total Hours: 90

Lecture Hours: 0

Lab Hours: 0

Shop Hours: 0

Clinical Hours: 90

When Offered:

Couse Fee:

- General Ed. Core
- Natural Sciences
- Mathematics
- Written Communication
- Oral Communication
- Social & Psychological Sciences/History
- Humanities and Fine Arts
- Cultural Diversity
- Honors
- Cultural Heritage of American Indian

Course Learning Outcomes

Number	Outcome
1	Demonstrate safe, effective and culturally competent nursing care for patients with stable and chronic conditions in a variety of health care settings.
2	Demonstrate collaborative interprofessional patient care planning and implementation for patients with stable and chronic conditions in a variety of health care settings.
3	Demonstrate the concepts learned in NRS234 in a variety of clinical settings.

Program Degree Outcomes mapped to this course

Assessment

Caring Interventions

Clinical Decision Making

Collaboration

Managing Care

Professional Behaviors

Assessment Details

Outcome #	Term Code	Assessment	Target %
1	201970	Instructor or preceptor led clinicals/activities at SNF and Medical group home	80
2	201970	Clinical Care Plan assignment of LTC resident	80
3	201970	Instructor led activities at Assisted living, Dementia Care Unit, Indian Health Alliance Health Fair	80

Assessment Results

Term	Asses #	# Assessed	# Passed	Assessment Result Text
				Percent
1360	8	8	100	Combined results: All 1 Section Assessment(s) are complete. Target 80% achieved with 100.00 % Reached target of 80% with 100.00 % passing assessment.
1361	8	8	100	Combined results: All 1 Section Assessment(s) are complete. Target 80% achieved with 100.00 % Reached target of 80% with 100.00 % passing assessment.
1362	8	8	100	Combined results: All 1 Section Assessment(s) are complete. Target 80% achieved with 100.00 % Reached target of 80% with 100.00 % passing assessment.



Assessment Analysis

Term Assess #	Outcome #	Analysis	Planned Changes
1	1	Met benchmark: All 8 students successfully passed the clinical demonstration of daily cares of residents of the skilled nursing home and medical group home under the supervision of the instructor or facility preceptor.	Continue to use this assessment
2	2	Met benchmark: All 8 students received a grade of 100% on their resident care plan--graded by clinical instructor	continue to use clinical care plan assessment
3	3	Benchmark met: all 8 students attended and actively participated in instructor led activities	Continue with this instructor led off campus activities: Storytelling at Assisted Living; Timeslips at Dementia Care, and Health fairs (available fall semester only)



## Course Full Details

### with Assessments

Course Number: CSC1100

Title: INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAMMING

Description: This course is an introduction to elementary programming techniques using modern programming languages. A wide range of programs will be written by the student and run on a computer. Students learn the techniques of looping, functions and sub/routines, arrays, variables and data types, user input/output, file input/ output and appropriate programming practices.

Credits: 3

Prerequisite:

Corequisite:

Total Hours: 60

Lecture Hours: 30

Lab Hours: 30

Shop Hours: 0

Clinical Hours: 0

When Offered:

Course Fee:

- General Ed. Core  
  Natural Sciences  
  Mathematics  
  Written Communication  
  Oral Communication
- Social & Psychological Sciences/History  
  Humanities and Fine Arts  
  Cultural Diversity  
  Honors  
  Cultural Heritage of American Indian

## Course Learning Outcomes

Number	Outcome
1	Identify the programming concepts and methods common to all computer languages;
2	Implement fundamental programming skills in two or more programming languages;
3	Design simple applications;
4	Employ control structures, functions/procedures, arrays, classes and objects to solve problems of moderate complexity;
5	Create a program to solve a given problem of moderate complexity;

### Program Degree Outcomes mapped to this course

Develop, deploy and test desktop, distributed, and web applications.

Students will demonstrate knowledge of programming concepts, logic, design and problem solving techniques.

Write computer programs using fundamental software development skills.

Write computer programs using Object ?oriented programming features

### Assessment Details

Outcome #	Term Code	Assessment	Target %
1	201970	Terms Quiz. Students will identify computer programming terminology.	80
2	201970	In Task 1 students solve a problem of moderate complexity using the Python programming language. In Task 2 students solve a problem of moderate complexity using the C# programming language.	80
3	201970	In Task 1 students design an application to solve a problem of moderate complexity using the Python programming language.	80
4	201970	In Task 2 students utilize control structures, methods (functions), arrays or lists and classes to solve a problem of moderate complexity using the C# programming language.	80
5	201970	Task 1, students write a program to calculate the sales commission and hourly wages for several employees.	80

Assessment Results				
Term	Asses #	# Assessed	# Passed	Assessment Result Text
				Percent
1405	27	13	48.15	<p>Combined results: All 2 Section Assessment(s) are complete. Target 80% not achieved with 48.15 %</p> <p>Failed to reach target of 80% with 45.45 % passing assessment.</p> <p>Failed to reach target of 80% with 50.00 % passing assessment.</p>
1406	27	23	85.19	<p>Combined results: All 2 Section Assessment(s) are complete. Target 80% achieved with 85.19 %</p> <p>Reached target of 80% with 87.50 % passing assessment.</p> <p>Reached target of 80% with 81.82 % passing assessment.</p>
1429	26	25	96.15	<p>Combined results: All 2 Section Assessment(s) are complete. Target 80% achieved with 96.15 %</p> <p>Reached target of 80% with 100.00 % passing assessment.</p> <p>Reached target of 80% with 90.91 % passing assessment.</p>
1430	27	22	81.48	<p>Combined results: All 2 Section Assessment(s) are complete. Target 80% achieved with 81.48 %</p> <p>Reached target of 80% with 81.25 % passing assessment.</p> <p>Reached target of 80% with 81.82 % passing assessment.</p>
124	26	25	96.15	<p>Combined results: All 2 Section Assessment(s) are complete. Target 80% achieved with 96.15 %</p> <p>Reached target of 80% with 100.00 % passing assessment.</p> <p>Reached target of 80% with 90.91 % passing assessment.</p>

Assessment Analysis

Term Assess #	Outcome #	Analysis	Planned Changes
1	1	This was a matching type question. Many students selected the same match for multiple questions. Changing the mechanics of the question to stop selecting the same match would likely help. The assessment was done at the end of the semester and contained 26 items. Splitting up the assessment into two may also help.	I will recreate the question to use a matching technique that does not allow matching to same item multiple times. Split the assessment up in to two smaller assessments.
2	2	target reached	none
3	3	target reached	none
4	4	target reached	none
5	5	target reached	none

## Appendix I: Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan for 2019-20



### Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

The Helena College Assessment Database provides faculty and staff a tool to plan, evaluate and report assessment at the course, credential and institutional level. Each semester the database will be refreshed providing current information all at levels, and it will replace the existing course bank for documenting curricular changes as approved through the Academic Standards and Review Committee (ASCR) or other administrative processes. Implementation of the assessment database across all credit-bearing academic programs will proceed in AY1920 as follows:

Fall 2019	Spring 2020
General Education-Transfer	Automotive Technology
Nursing (RN, PN)	Aviation Maintenance Technology
Accounting & Business	Computer-Aided Manufacturing
Computer Technology	Diesel Technology
Administrative Support & Management	Fire & Rescue
	Industrial Welding & Metal Fabrication

### Pre-Assessment Checklist

Before entering course level assessment data into the database, the following items must be completed to ensure accurate data collection and reporting. The largest part of this work will occur at implementation; however, periodic reviews of these items will be necessary to ensure the ongoing integrity of the database.

- ✓ Review all course-level learning outcomes to ensure they are current, accurate and complete. Those with common course numbering (CCN) should reflect the most recent outcomes designated/approved by the appropriate MUS Faculty Learning Outcomes Council (FLOC).
- ✓ Review all credential level outcomes to ensure they are current, accurate and complete. Per our regional accreditor, student learning outcomes at the course and degree/certificate level should offer “appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and synthesis of learning.” For career and technical education (CTE) programs, course and credential level outcomes should also be informed and regularly reviewed by program advisory councils, and where applicable, by external agencies that provide program-level approval or accreditation.
- ✓ Assessment of credential level outcomes, or the demonstration that students have mastered skills and/or knowledge necessary to earn a credential, occurs cumulatively at the course level. For this reason, specific course outcome assessments where a student demonstrates mastery of knowledge or skills *must be mapped to the appropriate credential level outcomes*. The database has been designed so that you do not need to re-enter this information at the credential level, *if you have linked or mapped the appropriate outcome and assessment at the course level*.
- ✓ All course outcome assessments have an assignable “level” that signifies the purpose of the assessment with relationship to the subject knowledge and/or skill. The assessment levels



include introduce, reinforced, and mastered. Be sure to choose the appropriate level for each course outcome assessment. You may have multiple assessments of a particular course outcome at different levels; however, only outcome assessments at the mastered level should be mapped to the relevant credential outcome.

### **Other Considerations Related to Assessment Planning**

- In planning your course, you may have multiple assessments of a single course outcome or an assessment that covers multiple outcomes. For the sake of time and efficiency, you need only enter what you consider the primary or key assessment (and its corresponding level) for each course outcome. So for example, you might have multiple assessments of a course outcome that represent different levels, but you do not need to enter multiple assessments of a course outcome at the same level, only the single assessment you consider the most important. For an assessment that covers multiple course outcomes, you would simply enter the relevant result for each outcome and the appropriate level.
- For courses that have multiple sections each semester, assessment of course outcomes at the mastered level, which will be mapped up to credential level outcomes, must be coordinated between instructors for the sake of consistency and validity. This could mean using the same assessment tool or assignment, or it may necessitate the use of a rubric or standardized set of criteria, tested or normed to yield consistent results among the raters, applied across various assessments in different sections for the same outcome. We will not be including dual-credit courses in the initial implementation, but this issue will have to be resolved for those courses as well. Our faculty will determine the appropriate assessment tool for dual-credit instructors to utilize for assessing course outcomes.
- For the purpose of training and familiarization with the database, all programs will enter information for the courses in their assigned semester over the course of the 2019-20 academic year. Going forward a decision will be made as to the frequency at which course level assessment data will be entered. Our accreditor does not mandate a particular frequency, only that a systematic process exists for the assessment and improvement of student learning via identified outcomes and assessment tools that yield valid results. The database has the capacity for all course data to be entered every semester, but this could become overwhelming for effective evaluation and improvement of instruction and learning. Most institutions engage in course and credential level outcomes assessment on a rotating schedule or cycle. Once all programs have engaged with the database, the Institutional Development, Effectiveness and Accreditation (IDEA) Committee will consult with faculty, division chairs and administrators to determine the schedule for entering assessment data into the database. With all of the aforementioned considerations in mind, each program can then develop a specific Assessment Plan for their area.

## Appendix J: Institutional Development, Effectiveness and Accreditation Committee

The Institutional Development, Effectiveness and Accreditation Committee is a representative body whose mission is to advance the strategic direction of Helena College through assessment and planning. The committee also has oversight for activities related to maintaining institutional compliance with regional accreditation policies and standards. The College appreciates and recognizes the significant time, effort and valued contributions of the following committee members:

- Dr. Laura Vosejka, Dean/CEO (Ex-Officio Member)
- Dr. Sandra Bauman, Associate Dean of Academic & Student Affairs
- Mr. Michael Brown, Director of Institutional Effectiveness & Research (Chair)
- Ms. Mary Lannert, Director of Continuing Education & Workforce Development
- Mr. Wyatt LaPram, Student Senate President
- Dr. Nathan Munn, Past Faculty Senate President
- Ms. Jessie Pate, Staff Senate President
- Ms. Paige Payne, Executive Assistant to the Dean/CEO (Recorder)
- Ms. Sandy Sacry, Nursing Program Director
- Mr. Phillip Sawatzki, Faculty Senate President
- Mr. Bryon Steinwand, Computer Technology Instructor