

**Assurance Argument**  
**Metropolitan State University**

**Review date: 7/19/2021**

# 1 - Mission

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

## 1.A - Core Component 1.A

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

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

## Argument

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Metropolitan State University (Metro State) was established in 1971 to serve the unmet needs of [post-traditional students](#). The university's mission, vision, and values are represented on the website ([www.metrostate.edu](http://www.metrostate.edu)), and [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) academic catalogs. During the 2018–2019 academic year, a task force led the development of the current [2020–2024 strategic plan](#), resulting in strategic commitments that are aligned to the mission, vision, and values. The strategic plan is the central element of all university operations, and each unit must connect their annual goals and workplans to strategic commitments. The strategic plan is also closely aligned with the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MN State) [Equity 2030 Plan](#). Recently, during the initial phase of the [rebranding process](#), the University assessed stakeholder perspective, and the preliminary results from a survey of 2,540 students, faculty, staff, and alumni showed shared perceptions that Metro State lives out its mission by selecting descriptors that are aligned with the mission: diverse, affordable, inclusive, great, and flexible. To coincide with the 50th year anniversary of the institution, the University President has announced the establishment of a [task force](#), to meet during the 2021–2022 academic year, to review the mission and facilitate revisions if necessary. The task force will also make recommendations about the necessity of regular review of the mission, vision, and values. The current mission, vision, and value statements for the university are:

### University Mission Statement

Metropolitan State University is a comprehensive urban university committed to meeting the higher education needs of the Twin Cities and greater metropolitan population. The university will provide accessible, high-quality liberal arts, professional, and graduate education to the citizens and communities of the metropolitan area, with continued emphasis on underserved groups, including adults and communities of color. Within the context of lifelong learning, the university will build on

its national reputation for innovative student-centered programs that enable students from diverse backgrounds achieve their educational goals. The university is committed to academic excellence and community partnerships through curriculum, teaching, scholarship and services designed to support an urban mission.

### University Vision

Metropolitan State University, a member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System, will be the premier urban, public, comprehensive system university in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and will provide high-quality, affordable educational programs and services in a student-centered environment.

The faculty, staff and students of Metropolitan State will reflect the area's rich diversity, build a culturally competent and anti-racist learning community and demonstrate an unwavering commitment to civic engagement.

### University Values

**Excellence:** Your education has to be the best. Because you're not just investing money, you're investing time and passion. So, we make it a priority to provide innovative, high-quality educational experiences from instructors who are experts in their fields. We don't just help you earn a degree. We'll help you prepare for your future.

**Engagement:** We're plugged into our community and take an active role in its success. We partner with area businesses and organizations to give our students real-world learning experiences. And we offer ourselves as a resource to local groups who work at improving our local community.

**Diversity and inclusion:** We celebrate and include all voices in our quest for quality higher education. We value all forms of diversity, no matter one's ethnicity, religious or sexual preferences, income level, learning style or area of academic focus. All are welcomed. All are valued.

**Open, respectful climate:** Students learn better in a safe, open and respectful environment. You'll find one here. We encourage students and faculty to engage in meaningful conversations that embrace differing viewpoints and perspectives. These provide rich experiences and a healthy communication model students can take into their careers.

**Integrity:** Integrity isn't a one-way street. So as much as we expect our students to conduct themselves in an honest, ethical manner, we also demand the same from ourselves. We're transparent in how we operate. We make sure that all voices are heard. And we're accountable for our actions. You deserve nothing less.

The faculty driven [review of academic programs](#) consider the fit and nature of the program relative to the mission, vision, and values of the university. Academic programs are reviewed by faculty in coordination with the Assistant Provost and the University Provost. Each college or school within the university has a statement of purpose or mission statement that is connected to the university's mission, with the [College of Individualized Studies](#), [College of Sciences](#), and [College of Management](#) listed here as examples. Additionally, students, faculty, and staff have been engaged in the development of [institutional learning outcomes](#), furthering the connection between the university mission and all academic program learning outcomes.

### Enrollment Profile

Metro State's mission focuses on serving underserved populations and communities of color,

supported by its designation as a minority-serving institution for Asian American and American Native Pacific Islander students. Each year, the university welcomes a diverse group of students to its campus. For the 2020–2021 academic year, our unduplicated student population was 10,197 students, including 53% students of color, with 50% of our students being Pell-eligible and 56% being first generation students. We are a commuter campus, educating students that are primarily transfer (87%) and predominantly part-time (59%). To support the onboarding and transitioning of new students, and to increase awareness of the various resources and opportunities available, we require each student to participate in a [new student orientation program](#), led by the Dean of Students and the Director of Student Life and Leadership Development.

[Student Services](#), led by the Associate Provost for Student Success and the Dean of Students, are heavily grounded in the university's mission, vision, and values. All student support services are structured to provide guidance and assistance that enables students to matriculate towards goal completion safely and successfully. [Student clubs](#) further reflect the university's commitment to supporting students through diverse and inclusive activities and events. These include the Black Student Union, Metro Students for Recovery, and Metro State Art Club.

## Sources

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- 1A1 Posttraditional Definition
- 1A10 Approved ILOs
- 1A10 College of Science Mission
- 1A11 College of Management Mission
- 1A11 New Student Orientation
- 1A12 Student Success Webpage
- 1A13 Student Organizations
- 1A14 University Student Services
- 1A2 UG Catalog
- 1A3 GR Catalog
- 1A4 Strategic Plan
- 1A5 Equity 2030
- 1A6 Rebranding Presentation
- 1A7 Mission Review Task Force
- 1A8 Program Review Plan Template
- 1A9 CIS Webpage

## 1.B - Core Component 1.B

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

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

### Argument

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Metropolitan State University (Metro State) is one of the seven universities in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MN State). We are a public university with the explicit goal of serving the citizens of Minnesota by providing higher educational opportunities, contributing to a highly-educated workforce in the state, and thus contributing to the public greater good. State tax revenues partially fund our operating budget to ensure that we can keep our tuition reasonably priced and serve more students.

Metro State is well-known for its student-centered approach to serving post-traditional adult students by recognizing demonstrated learning gained outside the classroom and in community partnerships. This is evidenced by utilization of [student-directed learning](#) options, including prior learning assessments. Student-directed learning is a tradition for the university, as it was the basis for the original degrees that the university granted. This tradition of flexibility is continued within the [College of Individualized Studies](#), where students can create and pursue degree programs crafted specifically to meet their educational, professional, and personal goals. Additionally, the Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship (ICES) at Metro State leads the university's commitment to teaching, research and service that support and enhance student learning through capacity building partnerships within local communities. ICES provides students and faculty with resources for community-engaged coursework, internships, engaged scholarship, and public programming. One outcomes of ICES programming is the designation of courses as "[Community Engagement](#)" courses to help guide students when selecting their courses.

Metro State's commitment to serving the community is visible through its diverse academic programming, evidence includes:

- The university has implemented Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MN State) [transfer pathways](#) and [articulation agreements](#) with local community colleges, enabling students to seamlessly continue progression to the completion of a bachelor's degree.
- The university is engaged with the [MN State Pathway to 18 Concurrent Enrollment Instructor Credentialing program](#), which is designed to support high school teachers that are seeking to meet minimum qualifications to teach concurrent enrollment in the State of Minnesota.
- University social work majors are immersed in one of the local communities of color during their second semester in the program, spending twenty hours per week in a [community learning center](#).

- The university is actively engaged in developing partnerships with local businesses to provide [on-site, cohort-based training](#) for their specific population needs.

Metro State effectively partners with community organizations, businesses, and leadership to provide supplemental programming and services to bridge the gap of unmet community needs. Initiatives include:

- [Neighborhood House](#): Metro State and Neighborhood House partner to offer monthly food distributions for students and the local community.
- [First Saturday Science](#): a program that engages and teaches youth while encouraging use of the scientific method. The workshops are developed and facilitated by university student workers, university STEM students, interns from the Science Museum of Minnesota, faculty, staff, and other community partners.
- [The GROW-IT Center](#): a community-university urban agricultural Gateway for Research, Outreach, Workforce Development, Innovation and Teaching.
- [Metro State Dental Therapy Clinic](#): a clinical education site that enables advanced dental therapy students to offer care to the local community.
- The [Library and Learning Center](#) partners with the Saint Paul Public Library using a co-location model, where the Dayton's Bluff Saint Paul Public Library branch is located within the Metro State library. This partnership provides both students and the local community with access to resources to meet their personal interests. The Metro State library also provides library cards to members of the community and alumni.
- As a member of the national Anchor Learning Network and the [Central Corridor Anchor Partnership](#) in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Metro State contributes to our local community by ensuring our procurement processes support local vendors and communities; shapes employment through career laddering for high-demand workforce needs; and uses our physical space to support the community through the library and Grow-IT Center projects listed above.

## Sources

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- 1 B Central Corridor Anchor Partnership
- 1A9 CIS Webpage
- 1B Community Engagement Courses\_ Metro State
- 1B1 Student Directed Learning
- 1B10 Dental Clinic
- 1B11 Library
- 1B2 Transfer Pathways
- 1B3 Articulation Agreements
- 1B4 Pathways to 18
- 1B5 SOWK 391
- 1B6 Affinity MBA
- 1B7 Neighborhood House
- 1B8 Saturday Science
- 1B9 Grow it Center

## 1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

### Argument

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As a member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MN State), Metropolitan State University (Metro State) is committed to supporting MN State's [Equity 2030](#) initiative. Two of the core values for Metro State are Diversity and Inclusion and creating an Open, Respectful Climate. These two values are reinforced by the current [strategic plan's](#) fifth strategic commitment (Respect, Equity, and Inclusion) and associated goal:

Strategic Commitment Five: Model a culture of respect, equity, and inclusion for students, faculty, staff, and partners.

Goal: Operationalize equity and inclusion principles throughout the university to reduce bias and inequalities and improve student and employee success as measured by indicators of the campus climate.

Efforts to enhance the culture of equity and inclusion at the university are being implemented on several fronts. At an infrastructure level, the university has begun to review all policies and procedures for potential biases or embedded barriers that could potentially inhibit the progression or success of students or employees from marginalized backgrounds. [University Procedure 100](#) was revised to ensure that policies and procedures are reviewed for potential differential impacts based on racial, cultural, or social group identity, affinity, or ability. Members of the President's Cabinet, who generate policy and procedure, and the member of the [Policy and Procedure Review Council](#), have been trained [using an equity lens in policy development and review](#). Another important part of the infrastructure commitment to equity and inclusion is newly created Equity and Inclusion division led by a new Vice President position. Elevation of the work and increasing the personnel demonstrates the importance of this work. The VP of Equity and Inclusion is a co-chair of the [Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism Council](#), which is responsible for the development and oversight of the university's equity and inclusion plan. Finally, campus climate surveys were administered to students and employees in spring 2021. The results from those surveys will be used to shape the next equity, inclusion, and anti-racism strategic plan.

The university recently approved [institutional learning outcomes](#) to provide overarching goals for undergraduate student learning. The institutional learning outcomes are directly supported by outcomes and goals throughout the Division of Academic and Student Affairs. The institutional learning outcome related to diversity and inclusion states that "Graduates demonstrate an

understanding of the importance of equity and inclusivity and can advocate for antiracism and social justice in communities and global societies.” This outcome is directly supported throughout the Division of Academic and Student Affairs:

- General Education and Liberal Studies – students must complete a course under the goal areas of [Human Diversity](#), [Global Perspective](#), and [People and the Environment](#).
- [Racial Issues Graduation Requirement](#) – all undergraduate students must complete an approved learning experience with a significant focus on race and racism, with the intended goal of developing and expanding students’ critical knowledge of the central role of race, racism, and anti-racism in multiple contexts of society and aspects of everyday life.
- [Co-curricular Outcomes](#) – students will better understand their social identities, power, and privilege to develop meaningful relationships in order to foster a culture of belonging, collaboration, and mutual respect.

Metro State has also implemented initiatives, and constituted councils and committees, to further expand the culture of diversity and inclusion:

- [Faculty of Color Mentorship Program](#) – a program aimed at retaining and recruiting faculty of color that enhances university-wide commitment towards serving the needs of the communities of color, recent immigrants and diverse communities. The program’s webpage also highlights the accomplishments of faculty who identify being from communities of color.
- [Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism Council](#) – this council is charged with collaborating with departments to achieve the diversity mission of the university and to engage the campus and community in defining, enabling, and fostering an inclusive campus culture.
- [Search Committee Equity Champions](#) – these are individuals committed to increasing their understanding of bias and equity principles, working with search committees to advocate on behalf of our equity and inclusion efforts during the search process, and to ensure more candidates of color can successfully become finalists during upcoming searches. Equity champions received special training to support their work with search committees.
- [Equity by Design Team](#) – as part of a MN State initiative, this team facilitates institutional-level data-informed analysis of equity gaps at the department or course level and supports greater understanding of disparate impact of policies and practices to more effectively address such disparity.
- Campus Climate Surveys – the [PACE](#) survey of employees is administered every three years and results are widely shared. Our most recent administration was in spring 2021. Also, in spring 2021, the [National Assessment of Collegiate College Campuses](#) was administered to students for the first time and we are awaiting results. Work planned for the 2021–2022 academic year involves analysis of results from both surveys to develop a campus climate action plan as part of a broader equity plan.

Metro State also supports programming that provides opportunities for students to engage in the community and to prepare for potential success in the workforce:

- The [American Democracy Project](#) – as a participant of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Metro State prepares university graduates for a lifelong commitment to meaningful action for the public good—as citizens, professionals and community members in a democracy.
- [Metro State Votes](#) – a collaborative effort between Metro State’s Student Association, University Activities Board, Social Science department, many external collaborators, including the Minnesota Secretary of State’s office, to educate voters and increase participation in



elections among university students and employees. In 2019, Metro State was named "Best in Class" winner for medium sized 4-year public universities based on our students' rate of voter participation by the ALL-IN Campus Democracy Challenge.

- [Career Readiness Initiative](#) – with leadership from the Career Center and faculty, the initiative aims to plan, build, and evaluate programs and processes that weave career education as the red thread throughout the Metro State student journey. A Career Readiness framework provides a way for faculty, advisors, and students to reflect on how coursework can prepare students for the next steps in their professional journeys.
- [MAIR Real Talk Systematic Racism Series](#) – sponsored by the [Multicultural, American Indian, and Retention Services](#) department, the series is a holistic, virtual series that brings together top minds to facilitate better understanding, and to develop ways to dismantle, all aspects of systemic racism in criminal justice, healthcare, education, corporate America and more.

## Sources

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- 1A10 Approved ILOs
- 1A4 Strategic Plan
- 1A5 Equity 2030
- 1C Applying an Equity Lens to Policy Review Training Metro Cabinet
- 1C Equity Inclusion and Anti-Racism Council Charter rev 09-14-20
- 1C1 UP 100
- 1C10 Metro State Votes
- 1C11 Career Readiness
- 1C12 MAIR
- 1C13 Cocurricular Outcomes
- 1C14 MNTC People
- 1C15 MNTC Global
- 1C16 MNTC Diversity
- 1C17 Real Talk
- 1C18 EIAC Charge
- 1C2 Pand P Council Charter
- 1C3 Faculty of Color Program
- 1C4 EandI Council
- 1C5 Equity Champion Training
- 1C6 Equity by Design
- 1C7 PACE Presentation
- 1C8 Campus Climate
- 1C9 Democracy Project
- 3B4 RIGR Requirement

## 1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

### Summary

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Metropolitan State University (Metro State) was established in 1971 to serve the unmet needs of [post-traditional](#) students. The university's mission, vision, and values are represented on the website ([www.metrostate.edu](http://www.metrostate.edu)), and [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) academic catalogs. During the 2018–2019 academic year, the current 2020–2024 [strategic plan](#) was developed, resulting in strategic commitments that are aligned to the mission, vision, and values. The strategic plan is the central element of all university operations, and each unit must connect their annual goals and workplans to strategic commitments. The strategic plan is also closely aligned with the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MN State) [Equity 2030 Plan](#).

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Metro State's commitment to serving the community is visible through its diverse academic programming, with evidence including implementation of MN State [transfer pathways](#) and

[articulation agreements](#), participating in the MN State [Pathway to 18](#) Concurrent Enrollment Instructor Credentialing program, and coordinating and supporting a [community learning center](#). Metro State effectively partners with community organizations, businesses, and leadership to provide supplemental programming and services to bridge the gap of unmet community needs. Initiatives include the [Neighborhood House](#), the [GROW-IT Center](#) and the Metro State [Dental Therapy Clinic](#).

Efforts to enhance the culture of equity and inclusion at the university are being implemented on several fronts. At an infrastructure level, the university has begun to review all policies and procedures for potential biases or embedded barriers that could potentially inhibit the progression or success of students or employees from marginalized backgrounds. [University Procedure 100](#) was revised to ensure that policies and procedures are reviewed for potential differential impacts based on racial, cultural, or social group identity, affinity, or ability. This work is primarily carried out by the [Policy and Procedure Review Council](#). Metro State has implemented initiatives, and constituted councils and committees, to further expand the culture of diversity and inclusion, including the [Faculty of Color Mentorship Program](#), the [Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism Council](#), and the [Equity by Design](#) Team. Metro State also supports programming that provides opportunities for students to engage in the community and to prepare for potential success in the workforce, including the [American Democracy Project](#), the [Career Readiness Initiative](#), and the MAIR [Real Talk Systematic Racism Series](#).

## Sources

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- 1A1 Posttraditional Definition
- 1A10 Approved ILOs
- 1A10 College of Science Mission
- 1A11 College of Management Mission
- 1A13 Student Organizations
- 1A14 University Student Services
- 1A2 UG Catalog
- 1A3 GR Catalog
- 1A4 Strategic Plan
- 1A5 Equity 2030
- 1A8 Program Review Plan Template
- 1A9 CIS Webpage
- 1B1 Student Directed Learning
- 1B10 Dental Clinic
- 1B2 Transfer Pathways
- 1B3 Articulation Agreements
- 1B4 Pathways to 18
- 1B5 SOWK 391
- 1B7 Neighborhood House
- 1B9 Grow it Center
- 1C1 UP 100
- 1C11 Career Readiness
- 1C17 Real Talk
- 1C2 Pand P Council Charter
- 1C3 Faculty of Color Program
- 1C4 EandI Council

- 1C6 Equity by Design
- 1C9 Democracy Project

## 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

### 2.A - Core Component 2.A

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

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

### Argument

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Metropolitan State University (Metro State) is a member of the Minnesota State College and University System (MN State), which has a 15-member Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor of Minnesota. The Board has [policy responsibility](#), outlined in Minnesota State Statutes, for system planning, academic progress, fiscal management, personnel, admissions requirements, tuition and fees, and rules and regulations. The work of the Board is carried out through standing committees, committees, and working groups. The Board operates with transparency and integrity as evidenced by publicly available meeting [agendas](#), materials and [summaries](#), meetings that are open to the public, and a [full list of policies and procedures](#) published on the MN State website. The Board of Trustees is governed by a [code of conduct policy](#).

Metro State publicly communicates its commitment to integrity through its [mission](#) statement, which was developed by Metro State and approved by the Board of Trustees, in compliance with [Board Policy 1A.1](#), which names the mission and vision for MN State and the expectation for institutional alignment with the system mission and vision.

Metro State values transparency in leadership, as embodied by its shared governance process, which includes five bargaining units ([AFSCME](#), [MAPE](#), [MMA](#), [IFO](#), [MSUAASE](#)). Each bargaining unit has a contract that provides expectations of behavior that aligns with university policies on professional behavior. Monthly meetings with representatives of each [faculty](#) and [nonfaculty](#) bargaining unit are held to discuss a wide range of contract and university matters.

The Metro State administration also demonstrates transparency and integrity through the [university council structure](#) and regular meetings of leaders. University Councils have formal charters, annual work plans, and minutes that are available to all staff and faculty at Metro State. Leadership Assembly is a monthly meeting of university administration and supervisors from all areas of the institution, whose function is to review and discuss important issues related to university operations. The Metro State administration seeks input from Leadership Assembly members on important issues, such as developing policies and procedures related to university operations during the COVID pandemic, utilizes [agendas](#) to guide the meetings, and records [meeting minutes](#) to ensure that all university stakeholders are aware of the critical discussions that take place.

Metro State operates with fiscal responsibility and integrity. [Board Policy 7.1](#) delegates authority to the Chancellor to develop procedures and guidelines that facilitate implementation of Board policies for administrative and fiscal management of the system, while also ensuring Metro State sufficient autonomy to administer the university's resources to achieve its mission. MN State system [procedures](#) assure that financial records are complete and safeguarded, financial information is accurate and reliable, and financial management methods support university strategic objectives. Several related MN State [procedures](#) and [guidelines](#) ensure that Metro State is compliant with Board and system expectations.

MN State [policy](#) requires that all institutions prepare balanced budgets consistent with policies and procedures. Metro State is committed to transparency in budgeting as evidence by its Resource Planning and Alignment Council, which has broad campus membership, public [budget forums](#) in which detailed budget projects are provided to university stakeholders, and monthly budget reports to each of the bargaining units. [State Statute 16A.15](#) and [State Statute 16C.05](#) prevent the university from overspending by requiring that funds be encumbered, with oversight from financial professionals, prior to being spent. As a state entity, the university's financials are monitored by the Minnesota Management and Budget Office (MMB), which is charged with ensuring that agencies are proper stewards of state financial resources. To provide evidence of its fiscal responsibility, Metro State is annually included in the [MN State audit](#).

The Board of Trustees is responsible for [approving](#) all academic programs, academic program requirements, and the awarding of all certificates and degrees. All new academic programs follow a Metro State approval process, which includes [Policy 2070](#) and [Procedure 207](#), that requires the following approval stages: department, college, university-wide faculty committee, provost, and president. After the university process is completed, the academic program is submitted to the MN State system for approval by the Chancellor according to MN State [Policy 3.36](#) and [Procedure 3.36.1](#). Additionally, the Chancellor must approve any program suspensions or closures.

Integrity of the academic programs at Metro State is also assured by a number of policies and procedures that provide direction to students, faculty, and staff, with examples that include:

- [Metro State Policy 2000](#): Undergraduate Admissions Standards
- [Metro State Policy 2020](#): Baccalaureate Degree Requirements/Modification Student Degree Program/Graduation Requirements
- [Metro State Policy 2050](#): Undergraduate Academic Standing
- [Metro State Policy 2080](#): Grading Policy
- [Metro State Policy 2120](#): Transfer Credit
- [Metro State Policy 2130](#): Course Prerequisite
- [Metro State Policy 2150](#): Prior Learning Assessment
- [Metro State Policy 2160](#): Assessment of Student Learning
- [Metro State Policy 2180](#): Credit Hour
- [Metro State Procedure 202](#): Academic Appeals
- [Metro State Procedure 212](#): Transfer Credit
- [Metro State Procedure 219](#): Academic Student Integrity
- [Metro State Procedure 220](#): Minimum Faculty Qualifications Evaluation

Academic information for students is provided through website pages about each academic program, an online course catalog, archived course catalogs, a web-based registration system (eService), and the degree audit report system (DARs) provided by MN State.

Faculty evaluation is described in the [IFO Master contract](#) and is focused on five criteria: demonstrated ability to teach effectively and/or perform effectively in other current assignments; scholarly or creative achievement or research, evidence of continuing preparation and study; contributions to student growth and development, and service to the university and community. Probationary faculty are evaluated annually through a process that includes providing evidence of their achievement of the criteria, feedback from department colleagues, and feedback from the dean of their academic unit. When a faculty member applies for tenure and/or promotion, they submit a dossier of evidence that demonstrates they meet each of the five criteria for evaluation, which is reviewed by their department, the dean, the provost, and the president in a decision-making process. Associate Professors are evaluated every two years and Full Professors are evaluated every four years, per the contract.

At Metro State, operating with integrity is also supported by the [code of conduct](#) for all employees in the MN State System and employee trainings. Employees are required to complete [periodic trainings](#) and the most recent iteration in 2020 included a focus on code of conduct and cultivating a respectful workplace. Employees who report fraudulent or other dishonest acts are protected from retaliation according to [MN State Policy 1C.2](#). Metro State also has a contract with Ethics Point to allow employees to file anonymous complaints or concerns about violations of university policies and/or procedures via an [Ethics Point link](#) on the university website.

MN State policies ensure that institutions, including Metro State, exhibit [non-discrimination](#) and ensure equal opportunity in both educational and employment practices. Human Resources operationalizes those expectations through standardized job postings, [search processes](#) and [training](#) for search committee members, and review of positions by the system to confirm fair compensation. Employees can file [complaints](#) with either Human Resources or the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

Metro State has limited auxiliary operations, which include parking, bookstore, and student center. [MN State Procedure 7.3.2](#) regulates the financial administration of auxiliary operations to ensure effective management and integrity.

## Sources

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- 2A Employee Concerns and Complaints Metro State\_Ethics Point
- 2A1 BP 1A.2
- 2A10 MAPE Contract
- 2A11 MMA Contract
- 2A12 AFSME MeetConfer
- 2A13 BP 7.1
- 2A14 BP 7.3
- 2A15 SP 7.3.3
- 2A16 SP 7.3.16
- 2A17 BP 5.9
- 2A18 Statue 16A.15
- 2A19 Statue 16C.05
- 2A2 Board Agenda
- 2A20 MN State Audit
- 2A21 Statue 136F

- 2A22 UP 2070
- 2A23 UP 207
- 2A24 SP 3.36
- 2A25 SP 3.36.1
- 2A26 UP 2020
- 2A27 UP 2050
- 2A28 UP 2080
- 2A29 UP 2130
- 2A30 UP 2160
- 2A31 UP 2180
- 2A32 UP 212
- 2A33 UP 220
- 2A34 IFO Article 22
- 2A35 Employee Training
- 2A36 SP 1C.2
- 2A37 SP 1B.1
- 2A38 Search Timeline
- 2A39 SP 7.3.2
- 2A4 Board Summary
- 2A40 Complaint Form
- 2A41 Assembly Agenda
- 2A42 Assembly Minutes
- 2A5 Board Policies
- 2A6 SP 1C.01
- 2A7 Mission
- 2A8 SP 1A.1
- 2A9 AFSME Contract
- 2D3 UP 219
- 2E6 UP 202
- 3C11 MSUAASF Contract
- 3C2 UP 2200
- 3C5 IFO Contract
- 4A13 UP 2120
- 4A9 UP 2150
- 5A1 IFO MeetConfer
- 5A3 Council Handbook
- 5B3 Search Committee Training
- 5B9 Fall Forums



## 2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

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

### Argument

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Metropolitan State University's (Metro State) website, [www.metrostate.edu](http://www.metrostate.edu), which is readily available to the public, contains the following information:

- Academic programs, majors, and required courses
- Clubs and organizations
- Tuition rates and fees
- Accreditation information
- Policies and procedures

The accuracy of information on the website is supported by processes for website content management and updates that limit the ability to make changes to key employees in the Marketing and Information Technology Services departments. Requests to change the website are managed through the [Marketing Service Portal](#) and requests are routed through an internal review and approval process to ensure accuracy and clarity. Divisions, colleges, schools, and departments have a person identified as the web content liaison who collects, reviews, and manages change requests.

Additionally, the university uses targeted emails, radio blasts, [Facebook](#), [printed mailings](#), and the [ENGAGE](#) software tool to disseminate information about events and offerings on campus. Students, faculty, staff, and the public at large are made aware of the [accreditation](#) and agency standard relationships associated with the university via its website, which includes

- Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education
- Council on Social Work Education
- Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs
- Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board
- Minnesota Board of Peace Officers Standards and Training
- Institute of Management Accountants
- National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education

In compliance with the Federal Student Right to Know and Campus Security Act, Metro State publishes and posts annually to all students and employees, information regarding rape prevention, sexual assault, drug and alcohol policies, drug and alcohol abuse prevention and treatment programs, and rates of instances of crime reported on campus. Each student, faculty, and staff member has access to [Annual Campus Reporting](#), which is released by January of each year and contains

emergency procedures, crime and fire statistics of the campus, and educational programming put on by the institution. The report is compliant with state and federal crime awareness and campus security legislation, including the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Crime Statistics Act.

[University Policy 1020](#) provides guidance to Metro State's students about expectations related to social and academic conduct. If students are involved in any activities that are in violation of policy 1020, [University Procedure 112](#) provides guidance on the steps involved in student hearings and appeals as well as the steps for filing incident reports. Student conduct issues and appeals are reviewed by the university's student conduct committee, which is chaired by the Dean of Students. Academic performance expectations and requirements are provided in the [academic catalog](#). Academic term deadlines and other important dates are published in the [academic calendar](#). Students are bound by the academic catalog for the year that they begin their matriculation at the University. [University Policy 2190](#) provides students with expectations related to academic integrity, and in the event that they are charged with violating the policy, [University Procedure 202](#) provides steps for academic appeals, which are forwarded to and reviewed by the Academic Appeals Committee. Additionally, students have an opportunity to engage with the university's governance structure through the [Metropolitan State University Student Association](#) (MSUSA), an elected student governing body of 20 students that can be either undergraduate or graduate students.

Metro State uses a MN State tool, ISRS, as its student information system. Students can access the system through their [eServices](#) Portal. The portal provides students with access to their degree audits, financial standing and tools to aid schedule development and degree planning. Students can also access [D2L Brightspace](#), which is the university's learning management system, through their eServices account. The D2L software offers faculty a platform for sharing course materials, including syllabi, rubrics, assignments, and classroom discussions. The software also allows for the sharing of recorded lectures, assignment submission, and course grading.

The [Consumer Information](#) Page is the one-stop shop for all information students need to make the best financial decisions for their educational pursuits. The page contains links to the [tuition and fees](#) page, where students can review any variances in credit hour costs across different programs, as well as the [cost of attendance](#) page, where students can learn more about estimated living expenses related to their academic pursuits. All information connected to the Consumer Information Page is updated annually, to ensure students have the most current information at their disposal.

Metro State continues to positively impact the lives of the students that it serves. CollegeNet's 2020 [Social Mobility Index](#) rankings affirm our continual effectiveness at improving the economic outcomes for our students, once again ranking it at the top for Minnesota four-year institutions; Metro State has climbed into the top 2.7% nationally among the 1,449 ranked institutions. The index is a measure of a college or university's success in elevating students from low income strata into the middle class within five years after graduation.

The university also provides students with opportunities to gain valuable experiences and enrichment outside of the academic classroom. The Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship (ICES) provides students and faculty with resources to connect student learning and faculty scholarship with community knowledge and expertise through [community-engaged coursework](#), academic internships, engaged scholarship, and public programming. Programming includes the [Democracy Project](#), [Metro State Votes](#), and the [Grow-It Center](#). Students also have an opportunity to participate in [clubs](#) that offer a wide-range of engagement opportunities, including the [Chess Club](#), [Black Student Union](#), and the [Lavender Bridge](#).

One source of evidence that demonstrates how well student experiences match the claims made by Metro State is the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which is regularly administered to students, most recently in spring 2020. Because the vast majority of students at Metro State have transferred from another institution (89% of students in 2020-21 transferred more than 16 credits at matriculation), the NSSE data for first-year students is less useful. Instead, we focus on data from seniors as a measure of their overall educational experience at Metro State. The [2020 Engagement Indicators Report](#) indicates that seniors at Metro State are more likely to have integrated their learning and used effective learning strategies than seniors at comparison institutions (with a significance of  $p < 0.05$  and an effect size  $< 0.3$  in magnitude). Seniors at Metro State are also more likely to have engaged in discussions with diverse others (with a significance of  $p < 0.05$  and an effect size  $> 0.3$  in magnitude). Other engagement indicators were on par with seniors at benchmark institutions except collaborative learning and student-faculty interaction which seniors at Metro State were less likely to report than seniors at benchmark institutions (with a significance of  $p < 0.05$  and an effect size of  $> 0.3$  in magnitude). Projects are underway to support improvement in some student engagement areas. To improve collaborative learning opportunities and support Strategic Commitment #3 of the [strategic plan](#), a program of [Educator Learning Communities](#) are planned for next year and include innovative teaching topics. A team of faculty and staff are working on a proposal for enhancing and improving [High Impact Practices](#) on campus (to further Strategic Commitment #2 of the strategic plan); this team attended a High Impact Practices Institute through the American Association of Colleges and Universities in June 2021 and are developing an action plan based on their institute participation.

## Sources

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- 1A13 Student Organizations
- 1A2 UG Catalog
- 1A4 Strategic Plan
- 1B9 Grow it Center
- 1C10 Metro State Votes
- 1C9 Democracy Project
- 2B 2021 HIPs Campus Inventory\_Metro State
- 2B Educator Learning Communities Announced
- 2B NSSE20 Engagement Indicators (Metro State)
- 2B Service Catalog - Marketing Services
- 2B1 Facebook
- 2B10 Tuition and Fees
- 2B11 Cost of Attendance
- 2B12 Social Mobility
- 2B13 Community Engagement
- 2B14 Chess Club
- 2B15 BSU
- 2B16 Lavender Bridge
- 2B2 Mailer
- 2B20 Student D2L
- 2B3 Engage
- 2B4 Campus Security
- 2B5 UP 1020
- 2B6 UP 112

- 2B7 Academic Calendar
- 2B8 eServices
- 2B9 Consumer Information
- 2E4 UP 2190
- 2E6 UP 202
- 3B1 Accreditation
- 4A5 D2L
- 5A6 MSUSA

## 2.C - Core Component 2.C

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

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

### Argument

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The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system (MN State), of which Metropolitan State University (Metro State) is a member, is governed by a 15-member [Board of Trustees](#) (Board) appointed by the governor. New Board members engage in an [orientation program](#) that clarifies Board [expectations](#). On-going training of Trustees occurs through regular [retreats](#).

The Board has policy responsibility for system planning, academic programs, fiscal management, personnel, admissions requirements, tuition and fees, and rules and regulations. Recent actions by the Board can be found in the attached [summary](#), which are available to all system faculty, staff, and students, and the public in general, via the board webpage. MN State maintains a [website page](#) for the Board that provides public access to the board policies and procedures, Board membership, calendar of meetings, committees, meeting materials, and minutes. The President of Metro State regularly attends Board meetings, serves as a Presidential liaison to two Board committees, and is available to answer Trustees' questions regarding Metro State.

The Board establishes standing committees and may establish additional standing committees as necessary. All members of the Board serve as ex-officio members of every committee to which they are not appointed. The ex-officio members are granted the right to fully participate in committee discussion and deliberations, but do not have the power to vote and are not included for purposes of a quorum. The standing committees include the following:

- Executive Committee, acts as a governance committee and as such is charged with oversight of the board's integrity and effectiveness.
- Finance Committee
- Workforce and Operational Effectiveness Committee
- Academic and Student Affairs Committee
- Audit Committee
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
- Facilities Committee
- Nominating Committee

Broad representation of stakeholders during Board deliberations is accomplished by intentional engagement of employee and student groups, and by providing access to Board meetings and materials. Statewide leaders for the six employee bargaining units representing MN State faculty and staff, and the student organizations representing students at both the 2-year and 4-year institutions in MN State, are intentionally engaged by the Board. At each Board meeting, leaders from each of these stakeholder groups are invited to address the Board and/or submit written comments for the Board materials. Board of Trustees meetings are also open to the public and live streamed. In addition, all meeting materials are posted on the MN State website (See Criterion 2A).

There are multiple MN statutes, policies, and procedures that ensure that the Board of Trustees act independently and free of conflict. MN [State Policy 1C.1](#) outlines the expectations for conduct by Trustees including expectations for informed decision-making, disclosure of potential conflicts, and prohibited activities. The policy also explains the process for removal of a Trustee if they have violated professional and fiduciary responsibilities, code of conduct, or governing policies and laws.

The Board of Trustees of MN State are required to appoint a Chancellor, who will perform the duties delegated by the board as described in [MN Statute 136F.07](#). Each college or university in MN State has a president who is [appointed](#) by the Board based on the recommendation of the Chancellor.

[System Procedure 1A.2.2](#), Delegation of Authority, fully describes the authority that is granted to the MN State Chancellor and the respective College and University Presidents. An excerpt below shows that the President of Metro State has been granted the necessary authority to govern the University:

*The chancellor is accountable for assuring proper delegation of authority to the presidents and employees in the system office. Presidents, after appropriate delegation from the chancellor, are accountable for assuring proper delegation of authority to employees of their institution.*

The day-to-day management of Metro State is conducted by the President's Executive Cabinet (PEC) which consists of the president, provost and executive vice president for Academic and Student Affairs, divisional vice presidents, and the senior human resources officer. The group of eight leaders meets weekly to discuss matters from across the university, and to make decisions and/or recommendations to the President.

A broader layer of leadership is provided by the Cabinet, which includes the PEC members, the associate provost for Student Success, the assistant provost and dean of Graduate Studies, the academic deans from 8 academic units, the dean of students, and the director of the Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship. The director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research attends as an ex-officio member. The [Cabinet](#) has a role in discussing matters from across the university and advising the President and PEC. In the past two years, the Cabinet has also taken on a role to collaboratively develop and evaluate budget proposals during the [budgeting process](#).

Shared Governance is accomplished through the University Council Structure, which includes ten councils with representation from administration and each of the five bargaining units. The councils include the: Accreditation and Continuous Improvement Council; Community Engagement Council; Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism Council, Organizational Development Council; Policy and Procedure Council; Resource Planning and Alignment Council; Strategic Enrollment Management Council; Strategic Integrated Marketing Council; Student Success Council, and University Technology Advisory Council. Each council has a charter that describes the purpose and scope, primary outcomes and deliverables, membership, and other characteristics, with [Resource Planning and Alignment Council](#) and [Strategic Enrollment Management Council](#) being examples. Councils

provide monthly summaries of their meetings and work, which are distributed through monthly meetings of the bargaining unit leadership and administration. [Annual reports](#) are also developed and shared.

University-wide faculty leadership for academic programming is accomplished through the work of the Academic Affairs Committee of the Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) bargaining unit. Faculty members from across the university are appointed by IFO leadership to serve on the committee with the following [charge](#), and utilize meeting [minutes](#) to provide evidence of their work.

### **Academic Affairs Committee (IFO)**

#### a. Charge.

i. Review and approve (or disapprove) new course proposals forwarded by academic unit curriculum committees for completeness of proposal form overall coherence in the curriculum (progression from lower division to graduate, overlaps between academic units, gaps, etc.)

ii. Disapproved course proposals to academic unit curriculum committees with specific written recommendations.

iii. Forward all approved courses to the dean of the academic unit for approval.

iv. Review new program proposals forwarded by an academic unit following approval by the respective college/unit meeting for overall quality, appropriate number of credits, need for the program, ability of the university to support the program, coherence in the curriculum (progression from lower division to graduate, overlaps between academic units, gaps) and for adherence to the new program development process, including adherence to Minnesota State and other pertinent requirements

v. Return disapproved new program proposals to academic units with specific written recommendations.

vi. Forward approved programs (majors and minors) to the Faculty Council for approval.

vii. Respond to academic issues that have been referred by Faculty Council.

viii. Other duties as assigned by Faculty Council.

### **Sources**

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- 2A1 BP 1A.2
- 2A4 Board Summary
- 2C AAC Minutes 2020-21
- 2C1 New Trustee Orientation
- 2C10 Budget Timeline
- 2C2 Board Culture
- 2C3 Board Retreat
- 2C4 Trustee Website
- 2C5 BP 1C.1
- 2C6 Statue 136F.07

- 2C7 BP 4.2 Part 1
- 2C8 SP 1A.2.2
- 2C9 Cabinet Agenda
- 5A18 IFO AA Comm
- 5C2 RPAC Charter
- 5C3 SEM Charter
- 5C6 Planning Update



## 2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

### Argument

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The commitment of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MN State) System and Metropolitan State University (Metro State) to academic freedom is evident by the inclusion of [Article 4](#), Academic Freedom, within the Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) Contract that governs teaching faculty. Section A provides the overall perspective of MN State as it relates to academic freedom:

*It shall be the policy of MnSCU to maintain and encourage full freedom, within the law, of inquiry, teaching, and research. The Employer shall not discriminate against a faculty member for engaging in political activities or holding or voicing political views, so long as the exercise of this right does not interfere with his/her responsibilities as a faculty member.*

As it explicitly relates to faculty rights within the academic classroom, Section C states that:

*In the exercise of academic freedom, the faculty member may, without limitation, discuss his/her own subject in the classroom; he/she may not, however, claim as his/her right the privilege of persistently discussing in the classroom any matter which has no relation to the course subject. In extramural utterances, the faculty member has an obligation to not represent himself/herself as an institutional spokesperson, unless so designated by the President.*

Faculty also have the freedom to conduct and execute research that matches their interests. This is codified by Section D, which states:

*A faculty member is entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of results, so long as he/she fulfills the requirements of his/her other academic duties. To protect faculty from any potential adverse effect that their execution of academic freedom could have on their tenure process, Article 25 provides a grievance process that they can follow to ensure fair treatment.*

Faculty professional development is supported by a dedicated fund that enables faculty to engage in activities that improve and expand their professional competence. Additionally, faculty members that have been employed at the university for six consecutive full-time years may apply for [sabbatical leave](#) to continue their scholarship, creative activities, and/or research at full base salary for a one semester leave, or at 80% of their base salary for a full academic year. The university must grant sabbaticals to faculty with approved applications after the faculty member earns tenure or after ten years of full-time employment.

Metro State is similarly committed to the academic freedom of its students, assuring that their opinions will not be regulated, and that their opinions shall not exert influence on the assessment of their academic performance. [MN State Board Policy 3.1](#) details student rights and responsibilities and includes a statement about freedom of expression, freedom to learn, and freedom of association. [University Procedure 219](#) is in place to ensure that students have an opportunity to

appeal decisions about their academic outcomes that they feel were unjust or unfair.

## Sources

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- 2D1 IFO Article 4
- 2D2 IFO Article 19C
- 2D3 UP 219
- 2D4 SP 3.1

## 2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

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

### Argument

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Metropolitan State University's (Metro State) [Human Subject's Review Board](#) (HSRB) is charged with ensuring that the rights and welfare of human subjects are adequately protected, as discussed in [University Policy 2060](#). The HSRB ensures that faculty and student researchers use an adequate informed consent process to fully inform participants about their rights, how data will be used, safeguards used to protect personally identifiable information, and potential risks and benefits to participating. Additionally, the HSRB serves to protect human subjects from harm by meeting professional, university, and federal ethical standards.

Metro State is a member of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), a company that has excelled in providing research, ethics, and compliance training. University stakeholders appointed to serve on the HSRB complete mandatory training provided through CITI. Researchers, including students, are encouraged to complete CITI training prior to submitting a project for review by the HSRB. Applications for review are submitted to the HSRB through [IRBNet](#). The HSRB website includes additional information for researchers about which projects are subject to review, the types of HSRB reviews, and the application process.

As outlined in [University Policy 2190](#), Metro State embraces the philosophy that the academic community in the United States expresses their indebtedness to scholars by acknowledging source material through citation in original scholarly works. Further, to assess a students' learning, it is necessary to be able to distinguish a students' original thoughts from those borrowed or expanded upon from others. Metro State holds each individual accountable for being intellectually honest. Metro State provides students with access to [TurnItIn](#), a software that reviews their manuscripts for potential issues of plagiarism. In instances where students are charged with violating the academic integrity expectations of the university, they are required to attend an academic integrity workshop as well as given an opportunity to appeal the decision to the [Academic Appeals Committee](#).

Metro State's Library has a comprehensive website with [guides](#) for assisting student research. Additionally, faculty librarians serve as [supports](#) for students, faculty, and staff doing research in specific subject domains with each discipline being assigned a liaison. The library also has a website to educate students on [appropriate use of sources](#). Students are afforded the opportunity to present research during the academic year, through both the IFO Student Research Committee symposium and the Department of Psychology symposium.

The Associate Provost receives reports on academic integrity violations and compiles an [annual report](#), that will inform revisions to our current policy and procedure.

## Sources

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- 2E1 HSRB
- 2E10 Library Liaisons
- 2E2 UP 2060
- 2E20 Academic Appeals Committee Charter
- 2E3 IRBNet
- 2E4 UP 2190
- 2E5 TurnItIn
- 2E6 UP 202
- 2E7 Research Guides
- 2E8 Academic Integrity
- 2E9 AI Annual Report

## 2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

### Summary

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Metropolitan State University (Metro State) is a member of the Minnesota State College and University System (MN State), which has a 15-member Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor of Minnesota. The Board has [policy responsibility](#), outlined in Minnesota State Statutes, for system planning, academic progress, fiscal management, personnel, admissions requirements, tuition and fees, and rules and regulations. The Board operates with transparency and integrity as evidenced by publicly available meeting agendas, materials and summaries, meetings that are open to the public, and a [full list of policies and procedures](#) published on the MN State website. The Board of Trustees is governed by a [code of conduct policy](#). New Board members engage in an [orientation program](#) that clarifies Board [expectations](#). On-going training of Trustees occurs through regular [retreats](#).

Metro State publicly communicates its commitment to integrity through its [mission statement](#), approved by the Board of Trustees in compliance with [Board Policy 1A.1](#), which names the mission and vision for MN State and the expectation for institutional alignment with them.

Metro State values transparency in leadership, as embodied by its shared governance process, which includes five bargaining units ([AFSCME](#), [MAPE](#), [MMA](#), [IFO](#), [MSUAASF](#)). Metro State's administration also demonstrates transparency and integrity through the [university council structure](#) and regular meetings of leaders. Councils provide monthly summaries of their meetings and work that are distributed through monthly meetings of the bargaining unit leadership and administration. Leadership Assembly is an additional monthly meeting of university administration and supervisors from all areas of the institution, with function of reviewing and discussing important issues related to university operations.

Metro State operates with fiscal responsibility and integrity. [Board Policy 7.1](#) delegates authority to the Chancellor to develop procedures and guidelines that facilitate implementation of Board policies for administrative and fiscal management of the system, while also ensuring Metro State has sufficient autonomy to administer the university's resources to achieve its mission. MN State procedures assure that financial records are complete and safeguarded, financial information is accurate and reliable, and financial management methods support university strategic objectives. Metro State is committed to transparency in budgeting as evidenced by its public budget forums. [State Statute 16A.15](#) and [State Statute 16C.05](#) prevent the university from overspending by requiring that funds be encumbered, with oversight from financial professionals, prior to being spent. To provide evidence of its fiscal responsibility, Metro State is annually included in the [MN State audit](#).

The Board of Trustees is responsible for [approving](#) all academic programs, academic program requirements, and the awarding of all certificates and degrees. All new academic programs follow a Metro State approval process, which includes [Policy 2070](#) and [Procedure 207](#), and requires the following approval stages: department, college, university-wide faculty committee, provost, and president. After the university process is completed, the academic program is submitted to the MN State system for approval according to [MN State Policy 3.36](#) and [Procedure 3.36.1](#).

Integrity of the academic programs at Metro State is also assured by a number of policies and procedures that provide direction to students, faculty, and staff including [Metro State Policy 2080](#) (Grading Policy), [Metro State Policy 2160](#) (Assessment of Student Learning), and Metro State Procedure 202 (Academic Appeals). Academic information for students is provided through website pages about each academic program, an online course catalog, archived course catalogs, a web-based registration system (eService), and the degree audit report system (DARs) provided by MN State.

Faculty evaluation, described in the Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) contract, focuses on five criteria: demonstrated ability to teach effectively and/or perform effectively in other current assignments; scholarly or creative achievement or research, evidence of continuing preparation and study; contributions to student growth and development, and service to the university and community. Per the IFO contract, probationary faculty are evaluated annually, associate professors are evaluated every 2 years and full professors are evaluated every 4 years.

At Metro State, operating with integrity is also supported by the code of conduct for all employees in the MN State System and employee trainings. Employees are required to complete periodic trainings and employees who report fraudulent or other dishonest acts are protected from retaliation by [MN State Policy 1C.2](#). MN State policies ensure that institutions, including Metro State, exhibit [non-discrimination](#) and provide equal opportunity in both educational and employment practices. Employees can file complaints with either Human Resources or the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

Metro State has limited auxiliary operations which include parking, bookstore, and student center. [MN State Procedure 7.3.2](#) regulates the financial administration of auxiliary operations to ensure effective management and integrity

Metro State's website contains information about accreditation, policies and procedures, academic programs and tuition and fees. In compliance with the Federal Student Right to Know and Campus Security Act, Metro State publishes and posts [Annual Campus Reporting](#) to all students and employees, with information regarding rape prevention, sexual assault, drug and alcohol policies, drug and alcohol abuse prevention and treatment programs, and rates of instances of crime reported on campus.

[University Policy 1020](#) provides guidance to Metro State's students about expectations related to social and academic conduct. Academic performance expectations and requirements are provided in the academic catalog. Academic term deadlines and other important dates are published in the academic calendar. University Policy 2190 provides students with expectations related to academic integrity, and in the event that they are charged with violating the policy, University Procedure 202 provides steps for academic appeals, which are reviewed by a faculty committee. Additionally, students have an opportunity to engage with the university's governance structure through the [Metropolitan State University Student Association](#) (MSUSA), an elected student governing body of 20 students that can be either undergraduate or graduate students.

Metro State uses a MN State tool, ISRS, as its student information system. Students can access the system through their [eServices](#) Portal. Students can also access [D2L](#), which is the university's learning management system, through their eServices account. The [Consumer Information Page](#) is the one-stop shop for all information students will need to make the best financial decisions for their educational pursuits, containing links to the [tuition and fees page](#) and the [cost of attendance page](#).

There are multiple MN statutes, policies, and procedures that ensure the Board of Trustees acts

independently and free of conflict. MN State Policy 1C.1 outlines the expectations for conduct by Trustees, including expectations for informed decision-making, disclosure of potential conflicts, and prohibited activities. The Board of Trustees is required to [appoint](#) a Chancellor, who will perform duties delegated by the board as described in [MN Statute 136F.07](#). Each college or university in MN State has a president who is appointed by the Board based on the recommendation of the Chancellor. [System Procedure 1A.2.2](#), Delegation of Authority, fully describes the authority that is granted to the MN State Chancellor and the respective University Presidents.

The day-to-day management of Metro State is conducted by the President's Executive Cabinet (PEC) which consists of the Provost, Vice Presidents, and the Senior Human Resources Officer. A broader layer of leadership is provided by the Cabinet, which includes the PEC members, the Associate Provost for Student Success, the Assistant Provost and Dean for Graduate Studies, the academic deans from 8 academic units, the Dean of Students, and the director of the Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship. The Cabinet and Leadership Assembly provides additional opportunities for expanded discussions across the university.

The commitment of MN State and Metro State to academic freedom is evident by the inclusion of Article 4, Academic Freedom, within the IFO Contract. Within Article 4, Section A provides the overall perspective of MN State as it relates to academic freedom, and Section D provides faculty rights within the academic classroom and information on faculty's freedom to conduct and execute research. Metro State is similarly committed to the academic freedom of their students, assuring that their opinions will not be regulated, and that their opinions shall not exert influence on the assessment of their academic performance. MN State [Board Policy 3.1](#) details student rights and responsibilities and includes a statement about freedom of expression, freedom to learn, and freedom of association. [University Procedure 219](#) is in place to ensure that students have an opportunity to appeal decisions about their academic outcomes that they feel were unjust or unfair.

Faculty professional development is supported by a dedicated fund that enables faculty to engage in activities that improve and expand their professional competence. Additionally, faculty members that have been employed at the university for six consecutive full-time years may apply for [sabbatical leave](#) to continue their scholarship, creative activities, and/or research.

Metro State's [Human Subject's Review Board](#) (HSRB) is charged with ensuring that the rights and welfare of human subjects are adequately protected, as discussed in [University Policy 2060](#). Metro State is a member of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), a company that has excelled in providing research, ethics, and compliance training. University stakeholders appointed to serve on the HSRB complete mandatory training provided through CITI.

As outlined in [University Policy 2190](#), Metro State embraces the philosophy that the academic community in the United States expresses their indebtedness to scholars by acknowledging source material through citation in original scholarly works. Metro State provides students with access to [TurnItIn](#), a software that reviews their manuscripts for potential issues of plagiarism. In instances where students are charged with violating the academic integrity expectations of the university, they are required to attend an academic integrity workshop as well as given an opportunity to appeal the decision to the [Academics Appeals Committee](#). Metro State's Library has a comprehensive website with [guides](#) for assisting student research. Additionally, the library has a website to educate students on [appropriate use of sources](#). The Associate Provost receives reports on academic integrity violations and compiles an [annual report](#) that will inform revisions to our current policy and procedure.

## Sources

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- 2A1 BP 1A.2
- 2A10 MAPE Contract
- 2A11 MMA Contract
- 2A13 BP 7.1
- 2A18 Statue 16A.15
- 2A19 Statue 16C.05
- 2A2 Board Agenda
- 2A20 MN State Audit
- 2A21 Statue 136F
- 2A22 UP 2070
- 2A23 UP 207
- 2A24 SP 3.36
- 2A25 SP 3.36.1
- 2A28 UP 2080
- 2A30 UP 2160
- 2A36 SP 1C.2
- 2A37 SP 1B.1
- 2A39 SP 7.3.2
- 2A5 Board Policies
- 2A6 SP 1C.01
- 2A7 Mission
- 2A8 SP 1A.1
- 2A9 AFSME Contract
- 2B10 Tuition and Fees
- 2B11 Cost of Attendance
- 2B4 Campus Security
- 2B5 UP 1020
- 2B8 eServices
- 2B9 Consumer Information
- 2C1 New Trustee Orientation
- 2C2 Board Culture
- 2C3 Board Retreat
- 2C7 BP 4.2 Part 1
- 2C8 SP 1A.2.2
- 2D2 IFO Article 19C
- 2D3 UP 219
- 2D4 SP 3.1
- 2E1 HSRB
- 2E2 UP 2060
- 2E20 Academic Appeals Committee Charter
- 2E4 UP 2190
- 2E5 TurnItIn
- 2E6 UP 202
- 2E7 Research Guides
- 2E8 Academic Integrity
- 2E9 AI Annual Report
- 3C11 MSUAASF Contract



- 3C5 IFO Contract
- 4A5 D2L
- 5A3 Council Handbook
- 5A6 MSUSA
- 5B9 Fall Forums

## 3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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

### 3.A - Core Component 3.A

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

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

### Argument

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Metropolitan State University (Metro State) offers an array of undergraduate certificates, undergraduate degrees, graduate certificates, and graduate degrees. Current offerings include 68 undergraduate majors, 59 undergraduate minors, 6 undergraduate certificates, 29 graduate degrees, and 11 graduate certificates. For many of the undergraduate and graduate degrees, there are certificate programs that were developed to serve as primers and steppingstones for the higher degree.

Ensuring that the courses and programs are current and include appropriate levels of student performance for the credential conferred is accomplished through: on-going review of community college curriculum in transfer and through the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MN State) Transfer Pathways collaborations, curriculum development using accreditation and/or national discipline society standards, and by collecting feedback from alumni about how well their degree prepared them for their career. Faculty at MN State community colleges and universities collaborated to develop Transfer Pathways which specify a program of study for an associate's degree (of 60 credits) that transfers seamlessly to accepting universities, and allows bachelor degree completion (with 60 additional credits). Metro State currently supports twenty-three [Transfer Pathways](#). As part of the faculty collaboration, Metro State reaffirmed that its Transfer Pathway curricula are at an appropriate level, particularly compared to our community college partners (the [Psychology Transfer Pathway](#) is provided as an example). The curriculum is evaluated, in part, by collecting feedback from our students. A [spring 2021 Strada survey](#) of 550 bachelor degree alumni demonstrated that 76% of the alumni surveyed indicated they were likely or very likely to recommend Metro State to someone considering undergraduate education, 56% of the alumni surveyed indicated that their bachelor's degree makes them attractive to potential employers, and 55% of the alumni surveyed indicated that their bachelor's degree makes them attractive candidate for graduate or professional schools. These results suggest that the curriculum is at the appropriate level for our undergraduate degrees.

Academic [program learning outcomes](#) were developed by faculty to be consistent with the university's mission, educational offerings, and degree levels, with each credential having 1–5 outcome measures. All program outcomes are listed on the university website. An initiative slated for the fall 2021 semester will entail reviewing program learning outcomes, university-wide, to ensure their measurability and to revise as needed. Potential new [undergraduate courses](#) and [undergraduate or graduate programs](#) go through a rigorous internal review process prior to adoption that includes review of learning outcomes. New courses require approval from faculty within the specific department, faculty within the larger college or school, and members of the faculty [Academic Affairs Committee](#). New programs follow a similar review process, with added requirements for approval by Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) leadership, and the University Provost and President. After receiving university level approval, new programs are then submitted into [Program Navigator](#) for system review and approval.

The university specifies and communicates the content and purpose of learning outcomes to its students. Metro State bachelor degree programs include the [Minnesota State Transfer Curriculum](#) (MnTC), a common curriculum required at all public colleges and universities in Minnesota that includes 40 unduplicated credits across ten goal areas. Metro State's General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS) requirements include the 40 credits required to satisfy the MnTC, as well as eight additional credits of upper level liberal studies courses, and a four-credit course to satisfy the university's Racial Issues Graduation Requirement (RIGR). The University website includes GELS course listings from [2019-2020](#) and [2020-2021](#).

Metro State serves students at a number of locations in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area and across the state. There are four primary campus locations: St. Paul campus, Midway Center, Minneapolis, and the Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Education Center. Additionally, courses and programs are offered at a number of partner community college campuses, at a local credit union, and in prison facilities. Regardless of the location where teaching and learning occurs, the academic departments and the administration for each program is the same. For example, the dean of the College of Management, the five department chairs in that college, and the three faculty graduate program directors, work collaboratively to ensure the quality of all the course and program offerings at all locations.

While Metro State embraces the academic freedom that faculty have in the delivery of their respective course sections, the university also understands the importance of consistent delivery of core content across course sections. Each faculty member, regardless of the instructional delivery method utilized or location of the course offering, ensures that each course section aligns with approved [course learning outcomes](#). Additionally, all faculty utilize a [standard template](#) to develop the syllabi for each of their course sections, which are reviewed each term by department chairs and/or the respective academic dean to ensure consistency across section modality variability. Each academic college or school has a defined process for [reviewing individual faculty syllabi](#).

## Sources

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- 2C AAC Minutes 2020-21
- 3A1 Ethnic Studies PLOs
- 3A1 Psychology Metropolitan State University\_transfer pathway
- 3A1 Strada survey Report Mar2021
- 3A1 Transfer Pathways Metropolitan State University

- 3A2 UG Course Proposal
- 3A3 Program Approval Checklist
- 3A4 Program Navigator
- 3A5 1920 GELS
- 3A6 2021 GELS
- 3A7 Syllabus Template
- 3A8 CCSPA Syllabi Collection
- 3A9 MNTC

## 3.B - Core Component 3.B

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

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

## Argument

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Metropolitan State University (Metro State) is committed to offering high quality academic programs that are both rigorous and of high quality. This is evidenced by its ongoing relationships with [accreditors](#) for many of its programs, including nursing, social work, and education. [University Policy 2010](#) establishes the purpose for the institution's general education program and the required content and intended learning outcomes for general education:

*Consistent with MnSCU policy and policy throughout higher education, Metropolitan State University has developed general education and liberal studies requirements to facilitate depth and breadth of student learning. Enrolled students must complete at least 48 credits that meet either the general education or liberal studies requirements included in the Catalog at the time of their admission, or the general education and liberal studies requirements adopted at any time subsequent to the publication of the Catalog in effect at the time of their admission. Of the 48 credits, 8 must be at the upper division (300 or higher) level.*

Metro State adheres to the [Minnesota State Transfer Curriculum](#) (MnTC), which requires that all undergraduate students must complete 40 unduplicated credits across ten goal areas. The MnTC is a required part of the curriculum at all public colleges and universities in Minnesota to facilitate transfer among them. Metro State's general education and liberal studies (GELS) requirements include the 40 credits required to satisfy the transfer curriculum, as well as eight additional credits of upper level liberal studies courses, and a four-credit course to satisfy the university's Racial Issues Graduation Requirement (RIGR).

The General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS) committee, comprised of faculty representatives from all colleges and schools, assesses and proposes changes to the MnTC goal areas; the committee also ensures institutional compliance with the MnTC Standards. The current list of [General Education/Liberal Studies courses](#) were developed and approved through a process facilitated by the

General Education/Liberal Studies faculty committee, and they connect to the ten [MnTC Goal Areas](#). Using the hyperlinks for each of the goal areas reveals the various learning outcomes under each. As an example, the learning outcomes associated with Goal 1-Communication are as follows:

- Understand/demonstrate the writing and speaking processes through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing and presentation.
- Participate effectively in groups with emphasis on listening, critical and reflective thinking, and responding.
- Locate, evaluate, and synthesize in a responsible manner material from diverse sources and points of view.
- Select appropriate communication choices for specific audiences.
- Construct logical and coherent arguments.
- Use authority, point-of-view, and individual voice and style in their writing and speaking.
- Employ syntax and usage appropriate to academic disciplines and the professional world.

The [Racial Issues in Graduation Requirement](#) (RIGR) was established to ensure that Metro State students graduate from the institution with an understanding of systems of racial oppression in the United States, as well as learning strategic approaches to addressing and dismantling such systems. Very similar to the GELS Committee, the RIGR Committee is charged with reviewing [courses](#) for approval that fulfill the university's requirement, including the current list.

Historically, the GELS learning outcomes have been used to describe the learning goals for all undergraduate students at the university. During the 2020–2021 academic year, Metro State approved institutional learning outcomes that will serve, moving forward, as the skills and knowledge each graduate should achieve as part of their education. The [institutional learning outcomes](#) are as follows:

- Graduates acquire and produce knowledge, independently and collaboratively.
- Graduates find, interpret, and critically evaluate quantitative and qualitative information.
- Graduates apply evidence-based analysis and critical thinking for creative problem-solving and innovation.
- Graduates effectively communicate orally, visually, nonverbally, in writing, with creative media, or through the arts.
- Graduates demonstrate an understanding of the importance of equity and inclusivity and can advocate for antiracism and social justice in communities and global societies.

In support of effectiveness within academic programming, members of the [GELS Committee](#) and members of the [RIGR Committee](#) conducted an analysis to determine correlation and connection between their respective outcomes and the newly adopted institutional learning outcomes. During the fall 2021 semester, members of the Assessment Committee will utilize the results of the analyses to begin development of potential assessments for the institutional learning outcomes.

Curricular requirements and co-curricular programming provide students with multiple opportunities to learn and develop skills for living and working effectively in the context of human and cultural diversity. Co-curricular programming and multicultural [student organizations](#) provide students with additional opportunities to develop skills of living and working in diverse settings. [Results from the National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\)](#) show that Metro State senior students report significantly more frequent engagement in discussions with others representing diverse backgrounds and experiences (with a significance of  $p < 0.05$  and an effect size  $> 0.3$  magnitude).

Faculty and students also contribute to scholarship, creative activities, and research. Every full-time faculty member is evaluated using five criteria, one of which is focused on evidence that faculty members are engaged in such scholarship. The Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) Master Contract includes broad definitions of scholarship, creative activities, and research in its [Guidelines for Evaluation](#), which allows faculty to pursue a wide variety of impactful scholarly and creative work. To be awarded tenure and/or promotion, faculty must provide evidence that they meet the expectations of this criterion and the evidence is evaluated by their department peers, the dean, the provost, and the president through the approval process. Several graduate programs require students to complete original research projects to earn their degrees, including the Doctorate of Nursing Practice, the Doctorate of Business Administration, and the Master's of Science in Advanced Dental Therapy. Since 2016, research conducted by students is shared through regular [research symposia](#) planned by the Student Scholars Committee each fall and spring, although the symposia were not held during the COVID-19 pandemic for safety reasons. Students in the Psychology major regularly conduct research in a recently renovated Psychology Lab. Even during the pandemic, the [Psychology Lab sponsored research conference](#) through Zoom for Psychology students to share their research. Students contribute to creative work in the University's literary and arts magazine, [Haute Dish](#), which is published twice a year. The magazine also sponsors a reading each fall and spring. Students also publish an independent newspaper, *The Metropolitan*. The *Gordon Parks Gallery* and the Student Center on the St. Paul campus regularly features students' art work.

## Sources

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- 1A10 Approved ILOs
- 1A13 Student Organizations
- 2B NSSE20 Engagement Indicators (Metro State)
- 3A6 2021 GELS
- 3A9 MNTC
- 3B 2019-2021 IFO Contract\_Faculty for Evaluation
- 3B Spring 2021 Psychology Research
- 3B1 Accreditation
- 3B2 UP 2010
- 3B20 MNTC Curriculum
- 3B3 MNTC Goal Areas
- 3B4 RIGR Requirement
- 3B5 RIGR Courses
- 3B6 GELS to ILO
- 3B7 RIGR to ILO
- 3B8 Haute Dish
- 3B9 Research Symposia

## 3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

### Argument

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Metropolitan State University (Metro State) strives to maintain sufficient faculty, understanding the impact that faculty and student interactions have on the teaching and learning process. As of March 2020, the university employed 193 full-time (resident) faculty and 516 part-time (community) faculty, who served students in classes with an average size of 21. At its founding, Metro State did not employ full-time faculty and instead relied on part-time community faculty who were working professionals in our community. The goal of integrating the perspectives of working professionals in our academic offerings and courses still guides the institution and results in the large number of community faculty members.

The university has a goal of employing a faculty who reflect the diversity, defined broadly, of our student body. During the 2019-2020 academic year, the Provost, Senior HR officer and Equity and Diversity officer drafted a [plan to increase faculty diversity](#). As part of the plan, Metro State initiated an [Equity Champions program](#) (called Equity Advocates in the plan) for probationary faculty searches which trained select employees to serve as Equity Champions on search committees. The role of the Equity Champion was to ensure that diverse candidates were treated equitable during the search process. In addition, [probationary faculty position postings](#) were rewritten to emphasize the university's commitments to diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism. In the past three years, our faculty searches have resulted in hiring very diverse cohort of new faculty and our percentage of faculty who identify as non-white or as Native American has increased from [20% in 2017-2018, to 24% in 2019-20](#). The cohort of eighteen probationary new faculty who started during the 2020-21 included thirteen faculty members who identify as non-white or Native American. Starting in fall of 2021, we will welcome a cohort of thirteen new probationary faculty members, eight of which identify as non-



white or Native American. While we have seen significant progress towards our goal of diversifying our full-time faculty, we cannot attribute the success to the Equity Champions program, to revised postings, or to simply clarifying the goal for our university community.

Just as important as the number of faculty is the quality of faculty that are hired. Two documents govern the hiring of qualified faculty. The first document is [University Policy 2200](#), Minimum Faculty Qualifications, which provides minimum qualifications necessary to teach courses at the bachelor's, master's, and doctorate levels. The following excerpt shows a sample of the options to meet minimum qualifications:

- *A Master's degree or terminal degree (e.g., Ph. D., Ed. D., M.F.A., D.N.P., D.B.A.) in the discipline, subfield or related interdisciplinary field in which they will teach.*
- *A Master's degree, terminal degree (e.g., Ph.D., Ed. D, M.F.A., D.N.P.), or J. D. with expertise in a different discipline or subfield in which they will teach and at least 18 semester hour credits of graduate coursework in the discipline, subfield, or related interdisciplinary field in which they will teach.*

A second document related to faculty hiring is [University Procedure 501](#), Recruitment, Screening, and Selection for Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) Resident Faculty Positions, which sets forth the basic IFO recruitment, screening, and selection steps and is designed to accomplish the following:

- Recruit, select, and hire the most qualified candidates for IFO positions.
- Meet the university's commitment to affirmative action.
- Create sufficient documentation of the university's selection decision-making with regard to each hire.
- Comply with state and federal laws regarding affirmative action and equal employment opportunity.
- To protect the university and those involved in the process from exposure to liability.
- To ensure all applicants fair and consistent treatment in the university's selection processes.

During the hiring process, a [Minimum Faculty Qualifications Evaluation Form](#) is completed to ensure that a timely review of the new employee's credentials. Once hired, the [IFO contract](#) further provides the rights and responsibilities of faculty at the university. Article 22 provides insight on professional development and evaluation:

*The purpose of professional development is to provide for continuing improvement in teaching, in other student interactions, in the quality of scholarly activity and other service to the university and community. The purpose of evaluation is to provide faculty with information which will contribute to their professional development. The evaluation processes are intended to be supportive of a faculty member's desire for continuing professional growth and academic excellence. This process contributes to various personnel activities and supports the interest of each faculty member to achieve continuing professional growth and to pursue the highest possible level of academic excellence.*

Within [Article 22 of the IFO Master Contract](#), a timeline is provided that highlights the frequency of faculty annual evaluations and the expectations for the contents of evaluations plans and reports. Each faculty member, during their probationary period, is required to submit an annual [professional development plan](#) (PDP). Faculty members may place different emphases on the various criteria so long as such emphases are consistent with university, college, department, program goals and objectives, and university policy. For faculty with teaching assignments, the PDP shall include a

process for student assessment. The PDP is reviewed by department colleagues and the dean to provide feedback to the probationary faculty member. At the end of the year, the faculty member will provide a professional development report (PDR) summarizing evidence that supports achievement of their plan. The PDR is reviewed by the dean who provides written feedback.

Professional development for faculty members is supported by the Center for Faculty Development (CFD), the Center for Online Learning (COL), and through dedicated funds that are contractually mandated.

The Center for Faculty Development is led by a faculty director who has a 12-credit reassignment for this role, and an associate director who has an 8-credit reassignment for this role. Programming from the center is designed to support both full-time and part-time faculty members in their professional development, including orientations for new faculty. The CFD website contains links to teaching journals, recommended blogs and podcasts, and information to support faculty engagement with Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. This past academic year, the CFD piloted educator learning communities as a way to support innovative teaching. Based on that pilot, they have a series of [Educator Learning Communities](#) planned for 2021-2022. Normally, the CFD hosts two faculty conferences a year during which faculty present to each other about effective teaching and assessment strategies. Those conferences were not held during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since its development in 2003, COL has been instrumental in supporting faculty who teach online or use technology in their courses. Over the years, instructional design support has extended beyond online learning environments. Of course, the expertise in COL was critically important at the onset of the pandemic to support faculty members who found themselves teaching remotely unexpectedly. For Metro State, the majority of courses continued to be offered online or remotely throughout the 2020-21 academic year. In addition to working directly with individual faculty members, COL and Information Technology Services (ITS) staff partnered to offer training sessions, and [web-based training modules](#). During April 2020, 23 faculty members participated in an [Accelerated Teaching and Learning Institute](#) and were compensated for the development of an online course as part of the program. In the 2020-2021 academic year from across the university, were provided compensation to support their colleagues to effectively adjusting their courses to online or remote modalities. The university also offered compensation to faculty to have their online courses reviewed using the Quality Matters framework by [faculty mentors](#). During the 2020-2021 academic year, 292 faculty participated in COL trainings, 145 faculty served as peer reviewers/mentor/coaches, and 115 courses were developed with COL support.

Finally, the IFO Master Contract includes provisions for annual funding for full-time faculty professional development in [Article 19, Sections A and B](#), and for annual funding for part-time faculty professional development in [Article 10, Section J, subdivision 4](#). The funds described in Article 19, Section A and Article 10, Section J include an amount for each academic year to be distributed using an application process for Professional Development Grants. For the 2020-21 academic year, \$71,022 was allocated for full-time faculty grants and \$57,800 was allocated for part-time faculty grants. Due to the pandemic, professional development activity was markedly lower than previous years and only \$21,718 of the funds for full-time faculty and \$32,257 of the funds for Community Faculty were awarded. Unspent funds are carried forward to support future applications. Additionally, Article 18, Section B specifies that in 2021-22 each full-time faculty is allotted \$1450 to support their professional development.

Students are able to provide feedback to faculty on their classroom experiences using the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction tool through a web – based platform. The [IDEA Student Ratings of](#)

[Instruction](#) tool was piloted in 2018–2019 and fully implemented in 2019–2020. Faculty receive individuals reports, and administrators have access to aggregated data.

Faculty also provide opportunities for students to engage outside of the classroom during established office hours which are listed on their syllabi and expectations for advising students. The expectation for office hours, which is a minimum of 10 hours per week for full-time faculty, and the expectation for full-time faculty members to serve up to 45 advisees are stated in [Article 10, Section A, subd. 2](#) of the IFO Master Contract.

Academic student support services are housed primarily in the Center for Academic Excellence and the Center for Accessibility Resources. The Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) has professional and peer tutors to help students navigate conceptual difficulties and develop their study skills. Our tutors are devoted to helping currently enrolled students achieve their academic goals. The CAE offers expert tutoring in an evaluation-free setting for Accounting, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Economics, Finance, Geology, Mathematics, Natural Science, Physics, Statistics, Symbolic Logic, and Writing. The Center for Academic Excellence is led by a highly qualified staff, with the director and associate director having at least a master's degree. Many of our professional (full-time and part-time) tutors hold master's or doctoral degrees, and each peer tutor has earned at least a 'B-' in the particular course they are assigned to tutor. The Center for Accessibility Resources (CAR) ensures that all programs, services, spaces, and activities at Metro State are accessible. CAR provides accommodations such as ASL interpreting, Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) captioning, alternative text format, service animals, and test accommodations. In addition to providing direct support to students, CAR also works with faculty to support accommodations for students and universal design in classes.

Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty (MSUAASF) members are an integral component of the overall success of students at Metro State, having a significant impact in roles associated with admissions, student support services, financial aid, and academic advising. All service faculty are highly qualified; each MSUAASF employee is required to have attained a bachelor's degree, and the majority have earned a master's degree. Professional development is engrained in the culture of service faculty at the university. MSUAASF members have contractually mandated [professional development funds](#), engage in an annual retreat and have access to funding to participate in non–university sponsored professional development activities that they perceive will enhance their professional effectiveness. During fall 2021 the MSUAASF retreat will include members completing the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and getting individual coaching on their on-going intercultural development. The academic advisors and student success professionals engage in [monthly advising forums](#), which serve as opportunities to discuss best practices being implemented across the university and to develop new processes and procedures that will enhance overall student success. Recently, a team of eight academic advisors participated in a NACADA Assessment Institute, learning new strategies that will positively impact the 2021 – 2022 goal of developing and implementing an assessment of student learning plan for [academic advising](#).

## Sources

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- 1C5 Equity Champion Training
- 2B Educator Learning Communities Announced
- 3B Spring 2021 Psychology Research
- 3C 2019-2021 IFO Contract\_Article 10

- 3C 2019-2021 IFO Contract\_Article 10 Section A subd2
- 3C 2019-2021 IFO Contract\_Article 19 A and B
- 3C 2019-2021 IFO Contract\_Article 22
- 3C ATOI Welcome
- 3C Faculty Demographics
- 3C Faculty Recruitment Plan to Increase Faculty Diversity\_final\_093019
- 3C Faculty Resources for Transitioning to Online Learning Metropolitan State University
- 3C IFO\_Faculty\_NOV-Template-Fall FY21\_final
- 3C QM Faculty Mentor Checklist
- 3C1 Faculty Syllabus
- 3C11 MSUAASF Contract
- 3C13 Advising Forum Agenda
- 3C14 AALC Report
- 3C2 UP 2200
- 3C3 UP 501
- 3C4 IFO MinQuals
- 3C5 IFO Contract
- 3C7 Faculty PDP
- 3C8 IDEA Report
- 3C9 Equity Email
- 4C12 Metro Goals
- 4C2 Metro Measures

## 3.D - Core Component 3.D

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

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

## Argument

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Student support services for Metropolitan State University (Metro State) are housed under the division of Academic and Student Affairs and under the leadership of the Associate Provost for Student Success. The [Student Services departments](#) strive to serve students at their point of need. The services include:

- Gateway Student Services
- Center for Academic Excellence
- The Career Center
- Placement Assessment
- Counseling, Healthcare, and Wellness
- Center for Accessibility Resources
- Multicultural, American Indian, and Retention Services
- Women's and LGBTQ Student Services
- Veteran and Military Services
- International Student Services
- TRIO Programs
- Student Parent and Resource Center

Student support services have been consistently responsive to the evolving needs of our student population. This was very visible during the COVID-19 pandemic, during which time all student support services were available remotely via Zoom web conferencing, email and/or telephone. A recent [survey](#) suggests that students want to continue to have remote access to support services for the next year.

Students can complete the Accuplacer test, or use scores from the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA, administered in grade 11 for math), ACT or SAT, to assist in their course placement for math and writing courses. Demand for developmental courses at Metro State is significantly lower than at other institutions because the majority of students have transferred from other institutions with more than 16 credits. Metro State offers one developmental math course, MATH 098 (Introduction to Mathematical Thinking) and one developmental writing course, WRIT 101 (Introduction to College Writing). During the pandemic, students' access to the Accuplacer test

was limited and, as a result, we piloted additional placement criteria that had been provided by Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MN State). MN State guidance allowed for using stand-alone and self-reported high school GPAs and guided self-placement.

This past spring the Placement Assessment Office evaluated course placement and student success during the pandemic. They evaluated the new placement criteria by looking at scores in math and writing courses from both Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 compared to placement type. The student pass/no pass rates in math courses are similar for all placement approaches, including guided self-placement, stand-alone GPA, Accuplacer testing, MCA, SAT, and ACT scores, and/or transfer credits from another institution. The student pass/no pass rates for writing actually demonstrate a slightly better passing rate for students who used guided self-placement or stand-alone GPA, as compared to those placed using other methods (Accuplacer, MCA, SAT, or ACT). The results were as follows:

Math- 1147 total students (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)

- Used guided self-placement or stand-alone HS GPA: 83.1% pass; 16.9% no pass
- Used other placement methods: 84.4% pass; 15.6% no pass

Writing- 192 students (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)

- Used guided self-placement or stand-alone HS GPA: 74.1% pass; 25.9 % no pass
- Used other placement methods: 67.9% pass; 32.1% no pass

Given the success of using multiple placement options, Metro State has joined a group of 27 MN State colleges and universities to [pilot](#) using multiple measures for course placement for the next two years.

Academic advising is central to Metro State's teaching and learning mission and to the academic success of our diverse student body. Each college and school have dedicated professional advisors (Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty, or MSUAASF, members) who are assigned approximately 200 active students as advisees. In addition, faculty members (Inter Faculty Organization teaching faculty) are regularly assigned student advisees as part of their regular workload. Every student is assigned an academic advisor as part of their matriculation process. Undecided students are assigned to professional advisors in the College of Liberal Arts. Professional academic advisors and faculty advisors partner with students to help them develop educational plans that support meaningful academic and career goals. Additionally, they engage students in an intentional teaching and learning process that values each student's experience and promotes inclusion, equity and critical thinking.

The goal of enhancing Academic Advising is embedded in Strategic Commitment #1 of our [strategic plan](#), which focuses on student success. In October 2019, we engaged a reviewer from the national advising organization NACADA to [evaluate](#) advising at Metro State. After receiving the NACADA reviewers' evaluation and recommendation, the provost and associate provost held open forums to discuss the review and developed a [document](#) that prioritized the recommendation for Metro State. For example, the NACADA reviewers suggested having all of the academic advisors report to a single administrator to enhance consistency of advising across all colleges and schools. However, faculty, staff, and administrators at Metro State were very concerned that the reorganization would result in less effective advising because professional advisors would no longer be structurally embedded in a college or school. Based on those concerns, we developed a [new charter](#) for the

Academic Advising Leadership Committee (AALC) and changed the membership to include all the academic deans and advisors from each college or school. The AALC is providing collaborative leadership for advising with goals that have been represented in the strategic activities for [FY 21](#) and those planned for [FY 22](#).

The [Library and Learning Center](#) houses the Library and Information Services department, the Dayton's Bluff branch of the Saint Paul Public Library, the Center for Academic Excellence, the Center for Faculty Development, the campus bookstore, and the Gordon Parks Gallery. This sharing of a facility supports active collaborative student support services, events for campus and the neighborhood, and much more. The primary purpose of the library is to support the learning, teaching, and information seeking of students, faculty, and staff of the university. The library connects patrons to resources and also works to instruct them on evaluating and effectively using information. The library is committed to encouraging lifelong learning. The library fulfills its work in a variety of in-person and virtual services including Interlibrary Loan, technical support, research support, study spaces, citation tutoring, instruction for credit and as part of courses taught in other departments. The print collection is focused on the academic curriculum and consists of about 45,000 print monographs, about 4,000 physical A-V resources, and 250 print serials subscriptions. In recognition of the campus non-residential nature and the various sites and students across the Metro area, the collections are substantially electronic. Access is provided to about 250,000 e-books and streamed videos, 62,000 e-journals, and about 250 research databases of secondary and primary resources, video, and more. The website is the primary entry for the range of services offered to the Metro community as well as many resources. Searching and access is mainly through the Primo search and retrieval interface of the Alma library services platform that is used for management of the life cycle of print and electronic resources.

In addition to the library, the university also provides facilities that directly support instructional sessions, including 10 science laboratories, 2 simulation practice laboratories, 15 computer laboratories, 3 fine arts studio spaces, and the Gordon Parks gallery. Our Advanced Dental Therapy program supports a 6-chair dental clinic in St. Paul, MN (6 miles from the main St. Paul campus location). The university also has external community partnerships, which facilitate clinical practicums, and internships that are aligned with specific external accreditation requirements. For example, our Social Work bachelor's degree program includes 16-19 credits of learning in field courses with: five credits in a community learning center serving people of color or Native Americans; five credits in a mainstream or child welfare social work setting; and six to nine credits in a field practice seminar. To support the program, the department maintains strong partnerships with 10 community partner organizations that serve people of color or Native Americans.

Academic instructional support is also provided by the Information Technology Services (ITS) division. In particular, the Endpoint Technology Services team is responsible for supporting and managing all hardware and software across campus. Faculty have access to a number of software tools to support their teaching like D2L Brightspace, VoiceThread, Zoom, SPSS, Qualtrics, Mathematica, and Kaltura. ITS also has a process by which faculty members can request software to support their teaching and research. The team also provides support to faculty and students for classroom and meeting space technology, mobile and computing devices, printing, computer lab hardware and software, and many other services across all campus locations. During the pandemic, ITS accelerated the launch of [virtual computer lab](#) access so that students could access software tools, provided by Metro State, from any computer with an internet connection. Computer labs are available to students at each of our campus locations. Students have access to help desk support via chat from any university computer or by visiting the ITS suite on the St. Paul campus.

## Sources

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- 1A12 Student Success Webpage
- 1A4 Strategic Plan
- 1B11 Library
- 3D Advising Recommendations
- 3D Article - Virtual Computer Lab
- 3D CHARTER\_AcadAdvising Leadership Committee- 09\_21\_2020
- 3D Charter\_Academic Advising Strategic Activity
- 3D FY21\_divisional\_workplan\_updates\_Academic
- 3D Metro State Report NACADA Consultant Report 2019
- 3D1 Student Survey
- 3D2 Gordon Parks
- 3D3 Student Services
- 3DCourse Placement Pilot Expectations\_6 28 21



## 3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

### Summary

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Metropolitan State University (Metro State) has a vast catalog of undergraduate certificates, undergraduate degrees, graduate certificates, and graduate degrees. Metro State is committed to offering academic programs that are both rigorous and of high quality. This is evidenced by its ongoing relationships with [accreditors](#) for many of its programs, including nursing, social work, and education.

Ensuring that courses and programs are current and require appropriate levels of student performance for the credential conferred is accomplished through: on-going review of community college curriculum in transfer and through the Minnesota State (MN State) Transfer Pathways collaborations, curriculum development using accreditation and/or national discipline society standards, and by collecting feedback from alumni about how well their degree prepared them for their career. The curriculum is evaluated, in part, by collecting feedback from our students. A spring 2021 [Strada survey](#) of 550 bachelor degree alumni demonstrated that 76% of the alumni surveyed indicated they were likely or very likely to recommend Metropolitan State University to someone considering undergraduate education, 56% of the alumni surveyed indicated that their bachelor's degree makes them attractive to potential employers, and 55% of the alumni surveyed indicated that their bachelor's degree makes them attractive candidate for graduate or professional schools. These results suggest that the curriculum is at the appropriate level for our undergraduate degrees.

Academic program learning outcomes, all of which are listed on the university website, were developed by faculty to be consistent with the university's mission, educational offerings, and degree levels. An initiative slated for the fall 2021 semester will entail reviewing program learning outcomes, university-wide, to ensure their measurability and to revise as needed. Potential new [undergraduate courses](#) and [undergraduate or graduate programs](#) go through a rigorous internal review process prior to adoption that includes review of learning outcomes. New courses requiring approval from faculty within the specific department, faculty within the larger college or school, and members of the faculty Academic Affairs Committee. New programs follow a similar review process, with added requirements for approval by the faculty association leadership, and the University Provost and President. After receiving university level approval, new programs are then submitted into [Program Navigator](#) for system review and approval.

The university specifies and communicates the content and purpose of learning outcomes to its students. Metro State bachelor degree programs include the [Minnesota State Transfer Curriculum](#) (MnTC), which requires that all undergraduate students must complete 40 unduplicated credits across ten areas which are common among all public universities in the state. Metro State's General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS) requirements include the 40 credits required to satisfy the MnTC, as well as eight additional credits of upper level liberal studies courses, and a four-credit course to satisfy the university's RIGR requirement. [University Policy 2010](#) establishes the purpose for the institution's general education program and the required content and intended learning outcomes for general education:

The General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS) committee, comprised of faculty representatives from all colleges and schools, assesses and proposes changes to the four core goal areas; the committee also ensures institutional compliance with the MnTC Standards. The [current list of General Education/Liberal Studies courses](#) were developed and approved through a process facilitated by the General Education/Liberal Studies faculty committee, and they connect to the ten [MnTC Goal Areas](#). The [Racial Issues in Graduation Requirement \(RIGR\)](#) was established to ensure that Metro State students graduate from the institution with an understanding of systems of racial oppression in the United States, as well as learning strategic approaches to addressing and dismantling such systems. Very similar to the GELS Committee, the RIGR Committee is charged with reviewing [courses](#) for approval to the list of courses that fulfill the university's requirement.

Historically, the GELS outcomes have been used to describe the learning goals for all undergraduate students at the university. During the 2020–2021 academic year, Metro State approved institutional learning outcomes that will serve, moving forward, as the skills and knowledge each undergraduate should achieve as part of their education. In support of effectiveness within academic programming, members of the [GELS Committee](#) and members of the [RIGR Committee](#) conducted an analysis to determine correlation and connection between their respective outcomes and the newly adopted institutional learning outcomes. During the fall 2021 semester, members of the Assessment Committee will utilize the results of the analyses to begin development of potential assessments for the institutional learning outcomes.

Each faculty member, regardless of the instructional delivery method utilized, ensures that the content taught within the respective course section aligns with the approved course learning outcomes. Additionally, all faculty utilize a [standard template](#) to develop the syllabi for each of their course sections, which are reviewed each term by department chairs and/or the respective academic dean to ensure consistency across section modality variability. Each academic college or school has a defined process for reviewing individual faculty syllabi.

Curricular requirements and co-curricular programming provide students with multiple opportunities to learn and develop skills for living and working effectively in the context of human and cultural diversity. Co-curricular programming and multicultural [student organizations](#) provide students with additional opportunities to grow their skills of living and working in diverse settings.

Metro State strives to maintain sufficient faculty, and as of fall 2019, the university employed 178 full-time faculty and 516 part-time faculty, and served students in classes with an average of 21 students. [University Policy 2200](#), which provides the minimum qualifications necessary to teach courses at the university, and [University Procedure 501](#), which sets forth the basic faculty recruitment, screening, and selection steps, help to ensure a high quality of faculty hires. During the hiring process, an Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) [Minimum Qualifications](#) Evaluation Form is completed to ensure a timely review of the new employee's credentials. Once hired, the [IFO contract](#) further provides the rights and responsibilities of faculty at the university. [Article 22, Section C](#) provides a timeline for the frequency of faculty annual evaluations. Each faculty member, during their evaluation period, is required to submit a [professional development plan \(PDP\)](#). For faculty with teaching assignments, the PDP shall include a process for student assessment. Students are able to provide feedback to faculty on their classroom experiences using the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction tool through a web-based platform.

To ensure a high-quality educational experience for students, Metro State established a goal of having its faculty and staff match the rich diversity of its student population. Understanding that such an undertaking must be supported intentionally, the university implemented an [Equity Champion](#)

project, an endeavor to train individuals to serve as non-voting members of search committees to offer guidance, facilitation, and feedback to search committee chairs and committee members and ensure that search processes are equitable for all candidates.

Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty (MSUAASF) members are an integral component of the overall success of students at Metro State, having a significant impact in roles associated with admissions, student support services, financial aid, and academic advising. Professional development is engrained in the culture of service faculty at the university. MSUAASF members have contractually mandated professional development funds, engage in an annual retreat and have access to funding to participate in non–university sponsored professional development activities that they perceive will enhance their professional effectiveness. The academic advisors and student success professionals engage in [monthly advising forums](#), which serve as opportunities to discuss best practices being implemented across the university and to develop new processes and procedures that will enhance overall student success.

[Student support services](#) for Metro State are housed under the division of Academic and Student Affairs and under the leadership of the Associate Provost for Student Success. The Student Services departments strive to serve students at their point of need. Student support services have been consistently responsive to the evolving needs of our student population. This was very visible during the COVID–19 pandemic, during which time all student support services were available remotely via Zoom web conferencing, email and/or telephone.

Academic advising is central to Metro State's teaching and learning mission, and each college and school have dedicated professional advisors (MSUAASF) and faculty members (IFO) that partner with students to help them develop educational plans that support meaningful academic and career goals.

Metro State provides excellent infrastructure and resources to support student learning and effective teaching. The Library and Learning Center, science laboratories, fine arts studios, dental clinic, simulation labs, and computer labs all support students and faculty. In addition, Information and Technology Services departments provide hardware and software support, classroom and computer lab technology support, and developed a virtual computer lab to allow report access to software tools for both students and faculty.

## Sources

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- 1A13 Student Organizations
- 1B11 Library
- 1C5 Equity Champion Training
- 3A1 Strada survey Report Mar2021
- 3A2 UG Course Proposal
- 3A3 Program Approval Checklist
- 3A4 Program Navigator
- 3A6 2021 GELS
- 3A7 Syllabus Template
- 3A9 MNTC
- 3B1 Accreditation

- 3B2 UP 2010
- 3B3 MNTC Goal Areas
- 3B4 RIGR Requirement
- 3B5 RIGR Courses
- 3B6 GELS to ILO
- 3B7 RIGR to ILO
- 3C13 Advising Forum Agenda
- 3C2 UP 2200
- 3C3 UP 501
- 3C4 IFO MinQuals
- 3C5 IFO Contract
- 3C6 IFO Contract A22C
- 3C7 Faculty PDP
- 3D2 Gordon Parks
- 3D3 Student Services

## 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

### 4.A - Core Component 4.A

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The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

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

### Argument

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Program reviews are the foundational assessment activity for the university. [University Policy 2550](#) provides the purpose and rationale for the university program review process:

*The purpose of an Academic Program Review is to facilitate a high quality and meaningful learning experience for our students by evaluating program relevance, effectiveness and alignment with Metropolitan State University's mission and strategic goals. Systematic and comprehensive program reviews will provide evidence to support:*

- *Planning and decision making at all levels*
- *Continuous improvement*
- *Programmatic innovation*
- *Stewardship of institutional resources*

All academic programs (certificates and degrees) participate in the five-year [program review](#) cycle, with each program developing and submitting a [program review plan](#) during the fourth year of their respective cycles. The program review plan is reviewed and [approved](#) by the Assistant Provost, after

which the academic department begins the actual program review. The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness compiles the necessary [program data](#) for the respective academic department within its D2L platform. Faculty use the data provided by IRE, along with recent internal assessment data, to complete the program review draft. The program review includes an evaluation of the program to date, while also indicating future actions that will strengthen the program. Examples of actions that have been completed as a result of program review recommendations include the development of an honors program for [biology](#), the creation of a certificate program in [e-learning](#), and the development of a Collegiate Recovery Program and [formalization of a focus into a certificate program](#).

Since its inception, Metropolitan State University (Metro State) has been in the forefront nationally of providing opportunities for students who wish to have their experiential learning assessed for college credit. The university was founded on and remains committed to the fact that there are life and work situations through which students may have acquired college-level learning, particularly if the experience has been supplemented by workshops, seminars, training sessions, reading, professional conferences and/or individual study. Metro State views prior learning as one end of a continuum of student-directed learning (SDL). Theory seminars or Student Designed Independent Studies (SDIS's) are used to augment prior learning in a particular subject area or discipline, to help learners meet university-level standards. Prior Learning Assessment is governed by [University Policy 2150](#) and [University Procedure 215](#). Support for students to engage with student-directed learning, like prior learning assessment, is provided by the Student-Directed Learning (SDL) Office. Faculty are engaged in the oversight of student-directed learning through the [SDL advisory committee](#), which meets regularly. Established guidelines for prior learning assessment processes and evaluation criteria are consistent with national best practices, such as those recommended by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). The university also recognizes nationally and locally recommended exams for assessment, consistent with recommendations by Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MN State) System policies and procedures and by the American Council of Education (ACE). The university offers [placement exams](#) for undergraduate students.

The awarding of transfer credit is facilitated through several processes. The [Minnesota Transfer Curriculum](#) (MnTC) applies to all public colleges and universities in the MN State system, including Metro State. The specific transfer policy for Metro State is described in [University Policy 2120](#). A [course equivalency form](#) is the tool that is utilized to evaluate the transferability of a course and its potential internal course equivalency. Students have the ability to appeal [transfer credit](#) evaluations through a process facilitated in the Registrar's office. Metro State's transfer appeal process was recently recognized with a [Source Award](#) during the national College Source conference for the Best Holistic Model for Transfer Student Success.

Program faculty at Metro State determine the [preparation](#) needed for specific courses and programs. The same standards apply to courses offered to high school students through Minnesota's Post-Secondary Education Option (PSEO) who take colleges courses to meet high school requirements and earn college credits. Through the use of prerequisites, students are informed about the background needed to successfully complete a course or program. These preparation requirements are communicated through active advising, information on the university's web site and the undergraduate and graduate catalogs.

Metro State [policy #2200](#) and [procedure #220](#) provide guidance for faculty hiring. As a component of the process for hiring new community faculty members, department chairs complete Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) [Minimum Qualifications evaluation forms](#). This process ensures that full-time

resident faculty and part-time community faculty members who are hired meet the minimum university qualifications for teaching their respective subjects.

In addition to institutional accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, Metro State has program [accreditation](#) and program recognition for its degrees in Nursing, Social Work, Business, Urban Education, Law Enforcement, and Cyber Defense.

The university understands that students enter the institution with goals that will extend long after the completion of their academic studies. The university utilizes several tools to monitor graduate success and progress, including:

- Results of Minnesota [Peace Officer Standards Training Board Licensing Exam](#)
- Results of Minnesota [Teachers Licensing Examinations](#)
- [Nursing Licensing Exam Results](#)
- [MN State Student Success Data](#) reporting completion, licensure exam pass rates, and related employment data for Metro State compared to MN State University peers
- [National Alumni Career Mobility Survey](#)
- [CollegeNet Social Mobility](#): Index measures the impact of Metro State on the social mobility of our graduates and ranks Metro State #1 in Minnesota and #39 in the nation for increasing the social mobility of our graduates.
- [MN State Policy 3.31](#) requires all MN State institutions to [collect survey data](#) from graduates one year after graduation.

A number of pieces of data reinforce the importance of career readiness and the critical role for faculty as mentors for students when they are exploring careers. In particular, the National Alumni Career Mobility (NACM) survey results show that significantly fewer Metro State alumni report having received career advice compared to the national average (31.4% compared to 55.6%). In addition, fewer Metro State graduates [report related employment](#) compared to their MN State university peers. Based on these data, and other inputs, Career Services is leading an initiative with faculty leaders across campus to integrate career readiness into academic courses and has set goals for [strategic activities in FY 22](#).

## Sources

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- 2A33 UP 220
- 3A2 UG Course Proposal
- 3A9 MNTC
- 3B1 Accreditation
- 3C2 UP 2200
- 3C4 IFO MinQuals
- 4A Advocacy and Political Leadership (MAPL)\_IER Data
- 4A ASA JulyNewsletter2021
- 4A Charter\_Student Journey Map\_Career Readiness
- 4A MetroStateU\_StudentSuccess May 2020
- 4A MN State Graduate Survey
- 4A MN State Policy 3.31
- 4A MN State Related Employment May 2020
- 4A1 UP 2550

- 4A10 UP 215
- 4A11 SDL Charter
- 4A12 Placement
- 4A13 UP 2120
- 4A14 Course Equivalency
- 4A15 Credit Transfers
- 4A16 POST Results
- 4A17 UED Results
- 4A18 Nursing Test
- 4A19 NACM Survey
- 4A2 Program Review Schedule
- 4A20 Social Mobility
- 4A3 Program Review Plan
- 4A4 Approved Program Review Plan
- 4A5 D2L
- 4A6 Biology PR
- 4A7 Technical Comm PR
- 4A8 ADC PR
- 4A9 UP 2150



## 4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

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

### Argument

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For the last five years, Metropolitan State University (Metro State) has been engaged in transforming its culture of assessment of student learning and program improvement. The journey began during 2016, when the Student Learning Task Force was created. For a three-year period, the [Student Learning Task Force](#) was charged with formalizing a program review process and establishing it as the central focus of the university's assessment of student learning processes. Shortly after chartering the Student Learning Task Force, the university began participation in the HLC Assessment Academy, to gain more insight into national best practices related to assessment of student learning and to strategically implement initiatives that would have a positive impact. As a participant in the HLC Assessment Academy, the university elected to focus on making program learning outcomes the central focus of its Assessment Academy activities. Each academic unit either developed new, or reviewed and revised existing, program learning outcomes, at both the certificate and degree levels. [Program learning outcomes](#) are listed on each program's web page. Course learning outcomes for each academic course are listed in the online [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) course catalog. Additionally, each academic program has developed a formal [assessment of student learning plan](#), with the plan elements ranging from assessment activities across several courses to cumulative assessment activities being integrated into a capstone course.

In 2019–2020, the Student Learning Task Force was replaced by the [Assessment Committee](#). The Assessment Committee has faculty representatives from each college, the library, the School of Urban Education, and a member from a Student Success department. A primary function of the Assessment Committee is to develop and revise university assessment processes and practices as needed, and to provide support to their colleagues to strengthen assessment practices within their academic areas. The Assessment Committee identified a gap in direct connection between the academic program outcomes and the university at-large. This led to the development of an initial draft of institutional learning outcomes, aimed at providing a comprehensive framework of the skills and capabilities that all students should acquire by the time they complete their undergraduate studies. [Open forums](#) were conducted and [feedback](#) was solicited from every level of the university shared governance structure. The [formal institutional learning outcomes](#) were approved in spring 2021, are as follows:

- Graduates acquire and produce knowledge, independently and collaboratively.
- Graduates find, interpret, and critically evaluate quantitative and qualitative information.
- Graduates apply evidence-based analysis and critical thinking for creative problem-solving

and innovation.

- Graduates effectively communicate orally, visually nonverbally, in writing, with creative media, or through the arts.
- Graduates demonstrate an understanding of the importance of equity and inclusivity and can advocate for antiracism and social justice in communities and global societies.

While the institutional learning outcomes are the goals all graduates should achieve by the time of graduation, there are three other outcome areas that students must also accomplish: General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS), Racial Issues Graduation Requirement (RIGR), and Program Learning Outcomes. During spring 2021, the [GELS Committee](#) and the [RIGR Committee](#) determined correlations between their respective outcomes and the institutional learning outcomes. During the 2021–2022 academic year, two significant initiatives will begin. The Assessment Committee, in collaboration with staff from the Center for Online Learning, will review program learning outcomes university-wide and provide feedback to academic units on the measurability of their respective outcomes. Additionally, each academic unit will evaluate the connectedness between their program learning outcomes and the institutional learning outcomes.

As noted in 4A, program learning outcomes are the central focus of university program assessment activities, and the program review document is utilized as the comprehensive assessment document. Within the program review document, academic departments analyze the currency of their program learning outcomes, the results of the assessment of student learning, and propose changes to the program and/or the learning outcomes. Examples of proposed changes based on assessment of student learning data include:

- Based on assessment of student learning data that showed students were not meeting goals for analyzing data and using data effectively to make decisions, and based on the recommendation of alumni, the MBA program faculty decided to add a [course](#) in analytics to the MBA program.
- While students in the Professional Communication program meet or exceed goals for achievement of student learning outcomes in written communication, oral communication, and critical thinking, faculty decided to add a [learning outcome](#) related to anti-racism to better align with the university [strategic plan](#) and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System [Equity 2030 goals](#).
- The addition of the [Peregrine Assessment](#) into the Management capstone course to obtain benchmark comparisons of student learning. Initial results suggest that Metro State management students achieve above average levels of student learning.
- Based on faculty evaluation of writing samples during the Academic Writing program review, the faculty recommend offering [additional individualized instruction](#) for multilingual learners by embedding writing tutors in WRIT 101 and WRIT 121 to better support student learning in those courses.
- Based on the [assessment of student learning data](#) from ePortfolio reviews in the Early Childhood Studies program, the faculty decided to increase the number of credits for PSYC 359, Positive Behavior Guidance, to ensure students have the support needed to evaluate observation data, and use the information to plan for and develop instruction for young children.
- Based on assessment of [student learning data in the Criminal Justice program](#), the faculty have decided to increase the emphasis on written and oral communication in every course.

Between program reviews, assessment of student learning data is regularly used to make curricular changes. In spring 2021 Department of Nursing initiated a significant curriculum revision based on

declining pass rates of our students on the NCLEX licensure exam. In 2020, the first-time NCLEX pass rate for Metro State students was 69.6%, below the 75% Minnesota Board of Nursing standard. In response, the faculty reviewed several years of NCLEX data to identify students' areas of strength and areas for growth, and adjusted the curriculum in NURS 490 to better prepare students for the NCLEX exam, including skills reviews and practice tests.

During the 2020–2021 academic year, the Assessment Committee, and the Academic Planning Task Force, collaborated to develop an [annual reflection document](#). The reflection document, which will be piloted during the 2021–2022 academic, will provide an opportunity for academic units to discuss assessment of student learning activities conducted during a specific year and any changes that will be implemented as a result. The annual academic reflection documents will serve as foundational documents for the cyclical five-year program review.

The university uses a central software repository for assessment of student learning data, eLumen. A current project is underway to revise the organizational structure within eLumen to match the university's current academic structure. Once the organizational structure has been revised, an initiative will be implemented that will input all program learning outcomes, course learning outcomes, institutional learning outcomes, general education and liberal studies goals, racial issues graduation requirements into eLumen. This will provide opportunities for academic departments to create curriculum maps within eLumen, greatly enhancing their ability to assess student progress and success at varying institutional levels. To date, a number of programs have been using eLumen to document assessment activities which allows comprehensive reporting.

## Sources

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- 1A2 UG Catalog
- 1A3 GR Catalog
- 1A4 Strategic Plan
- 1A5 Equity 2030
- 3B6 GELS to ILO
- 3B7 RIGR to ILO
- 4A9 UP 2150
- 4B1 Tasks Accomplished
- 4B10 MGMT PR
- 4B11 Acad Writ PR
- 4B12 ECS PR
- 4B13 Crim Just PR
- 4B15 Human Services PR
- 4B17 Annual Reflection
- 4B2 MIS PLOs
- 4B3 Individualized BS Assessment Plan
- 4B4 Assess Comm Charter
- 4B5 ILO Open Forums
- 4B6 ILO Feedback
- 4B7 ILO Announcement
- 4B8 MBA Program Review
- 4B9 Prof Comm PR

## 4.C - Core Component 4.C

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

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

### Argument

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The Board of Trustees for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MN State) approved Strategic Framework Performance Measures, with a dashboard for [enrollment](#) and a dashboard for [student persistence and completion](#), with defined [Student Success Metrics](#) and [Performance Measures](#) for each institution and the overall system.

The university's definitions of retention, persistence, and completion align with definitions set forth by the Board. The university's definitions are also in concert with the definitions established by IPEDS. A student is retained if they matriculated in the fall term and are enrolled in the subsequent spring term. Student persistence measures continuous enrollment between consecutive fall terms. A student completion means a student has graduated within six years of matriculating.

Data are disaggregated by one of more of the following: undergraduate/graduate, full-time/part-time, gender, race/ethnicity, age category, Pell eligibility, first generation student. University [trend data](#) supports the institutional focus on the mutable predictors of student success, such as prior college credits, initial credit load, and first term academic progress.

The university established its own completion and persistence goals as part of its [2020–2024 strategic plan](#). The President's Executive Council established goals of 3% increases in completion and student persistence over the five-year period (from 67.4% to 70.4% and 87% to 90%, respectively) . Data from the [MN State Student Success Metrics report](#) was used to develop the goals and will be used to monitor success. [Key performance indicators](#) were created to support strategic planning, and data for the key performance indicators are accessible by all employees through the university iteration of [Power BI](#). Power BI provides a central, consistent repository of strategic data that is necessary to make effective operational decisions. Goals for engagement of university students were based on results of the [NSSE](#).

The MN State System has adopted an initiative called Equity 2030, which aims to eliminate the

educational equity gaps at every MN State institution. In response to this system initiative, one of the strategies to be implemented at Metropolitan State University (Metro State) is Equity by Design. [Equity by Design](#) is an equity-minded, race-conscious, and data-informed methodology to examine and address outcome gaps across student groups at the University. A campus work team has begun to review student data to identify opportunities and avenues to address disparities that are impacting academic progression and success for Metro State students.

The use of student success data to make improvements has been very evident in student services areas. Examples include

- During development of the [strategic plan](#), the data on persistence, course completion, and completion informed initial activity plans. To support Strategic Commitment #1 (Student Success), and to achieve persistence and completion goals, the Strategic Planning Task Force developed a student journey map, analyzing disparities among demographic groups, and establishing and measuring institutional student learning outcomes as key activities.
- Prior to the onset of the pandemic, new students entering the university were administered a placement test to determine courses eligible for registration. With the onset of the pandemic, and the university moving to remote operations, coming onsite for placement testing presented a barrier to student enrollment. The university shifted to a new multiple measures approach to student placement and have seen tremendously positive results, with the results of the multiple measures approach being equal to or greater than other methods. As a result of such favorable outcomes, the university intends to continue to utilize [the multiple measures approach](#) and assess if student outcomes continue to be favorable.
- During the 2020–2021 academic year, the university engaged a consulting firm to facilitate a student journey mapping process and develop a student journey map, to better understand student experiences, lived and perceived, as they matriculated through the institution. Results of the data from the initiative and the resulting recommendations are informing [annual workplans for the 2021–2022 academic year](#) with projects focusing on improving Career Readiness curricula, streamlining appointment scheduling with student support services, and implementing a degree planner tool.
- Data is used to inform staffing resources for tutoring in the Center for Academic Excellence. The center has been able to reallocate resources to help in-demand course subject areas and expand to support students in areas such as STEM.

## Sources

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- 1A4 Strategic Plan
- 1C6 Equity by Design
- 4C1 System Student Success
- 4C10 Draft of 2122 ASA Plans
- 4C11 Enrollment Dashboard
- 4C12 Metro Goals
- 4C2 Metro Measures
- 4C3 Trend Data
- 4C4 Enrollment Plan
- 4C5 KPIs
- 4C7 NSSE
- 4C8 President Email

- 4CBright Spot\_Full Accessible Report
- 5A10 Metro Power BI

## 4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

### Summary

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Program reviews are the foundational assessment activity for Metropolitan State University (Metro State). [University Policy 2550](#) provides the purpose and rationale for the university program review process. All academic programs (certificates and degrees) participate in the five-year [program review cycle](#), with each program developing and submitting a [program review plan](#) during the fourth year of their respective cycles. The program review plan is reviewed and approved by the Assistant Provost, after which the academic department begins the actual program review. The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness compiles the necessary student data for the respective academic department, and faculty use the data, along with recent internal assessment data, to complete the program review draft.

Within the program review document, academic departments analyze the currency of their program learning outcomes and the results of the assessment of student learning, and propose changes to the program and/or the learning outcomes. Current proposed changes include adding a learning outcome related to anti-racism and developing a program concentration in health communication, offering additional individualized instruction for multilingual learners by embedding writing tutors in WRIT 101 and WRIT 121, revising early childhood studies curriculum to include more information on early childhood special education, mental health, and health concerns and to ensure alignment with the Minnesota Core Knowledge and Competency Framework, and revising courses to include new curriculum on anti-racism, women in science, technical communication and game studies, or rapidly growing trends in communication theory, practice, ethics or technology.

For the last five years, Metro State has been engaged in transforming its culture of academic assessment and program improvement. The journey began during 2016, when the Student Learning Task Force was created and charged with formalizing a program review process and establishing it as the central focus of the university's assessment process. Shortly after chartering the Student Learning Task Force, the university began participation in the HLC Assessment Academy. As a participant in the HLC Assessment Academy, the university had to select a project to develop and implement, and elected to focus on making program learning outcomes the central focus of its assessment academy activities. Each academic unit either developed new, or reviewed and revised existing, program learning outcomes, at both the certificate and degree levels. Program learning outcomes are listed on each program's web page. Course learning outcomes for each academic course are listed in the online [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) course catalog. Additionally, each academic program has developed a formal assessment of student learning plan, with plan elements ranging from assessment activities across several courses to cumulative assessment activities being integrated into a capstone course.

In 2019–2020, the Student Learning Task Force was replaced by the [University Assessment Committee](#), with a primary function for developing and revising university assessment processes and

practices as needed. The Assessment Committee identified a gap in direct connection between the academic program outcomes and the university at-large, which ultimately led to the development and formal approval of institutional learning outcomes:

- Graduates acquire and produce knowledge, independently and collaboratively.
- Graduates find, interpret, and critically evaluate quantitative and qualitative information.
- Graduates apply evidence-based analysis and critical thinking for creative problem-solving and innovation.
- Graduates effectively communicate orally, visually nonverbally, in writing, with creative media, or through the arts.
- Graduates demonstrate an understanding of the importance of equity and inclusivity and can advocate for antiracism and social justice in communities and global societies.

While the institutional learning outcomes are the goals all graduates should achieve by the time of graduation, there are three other outcome areas that students must also accomplish: General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS), Racial Issues Graduation Requirement (RIGR), and Program Learning Outcomes. During spring 2021, the [GELS Committee](#) and the [RIGR Committee](#) determined correlations between their respective outcomes and the institutional learning outcomes. During the 2021–2022 academic year, two significant initiatives will begin. The Assessment Committee, in collaboration with staff from the Center for Online Learning, will review program learning outcomes university-wide and provide feedback to academic units on the measurability of their respective outcomes. Additionally, each academic unit will evaluate the connectedness between their program learning outcomes and the institutional learning outcomes.

During the 2020–2021 academic year, the Assessment Committee, and the Academic Planning Task Force, collaborated to develop an [annual reflection document](#). The reflection document, which will be piloted during the 2021–2022 academic, will provide an opportunity for academic units to discuss assessment of student learning activities conducted during a specific year and any changes that will be implemented as a result. The annual academic reflection documents will serve as foundational documents for the cyclical five-year program review.

The university uses a central software repository for assessment, eLumen. A current project is underway to revise the organizational structure within eLumen to match the university's current academic structure. Once the organizational structure has been revised, an initiative will be implemented that will input all program learning outcomes, course learning outcomes, institutional learning outcomes, general education and liberal studies goals, racial issues graduation requirements into eLumen. This will provide opportunities for academic departments to create curriculum maps within eLumen, greatly enhancing their ability to assess student progress and success at varying institutional levels. To date, a number of programs have been using eLumen to document assessment activities which allows comprehensive reporting.

Metro State has been a leader in providing opportunities for students who wish to have their experiential learning assessed for college credit. Theory seminars or Student Designed Independent Studies (SDIS's) are used to augment prior learning in a particular subject area or discipline, to help learners meet university-level standards. Prior Learning Assessment is governed by [University Policy 2150](#) and [University Procedure 215](#). Support for students to engage with student-directed learning, like prior learning assessment, is provided by the Student-Directed Learning (SDL) Office. Established guidelines for prior learning assessment processes and evaluation criteria are consistent with national best practices, such as those recommended by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). The university also recognizes nationally and locally recommended exams for



assessment, consistent with recommendations by MN State policies and procedures and by the American Council of Education (ACE).

The awarding of transfer credit is facilitated through several processes. The [Minnesota Transfer Curriculum](#) (MnTC) applies to all public colleges and universities in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MN State) System, including Metro State. The specific transfer policy for Metro State is described in [University Policy 2120](#). A course equivalency form is the tool that is utilized to evaluate the transferability of a course and its potential internal [course equivalency](#). Students have the ability to [appeal transfer credit](#) evaluations through a process facilitated in the Registrar's office.

Program faculty at Metro State determine the [preparation](#) needed for specific courses and programs. The same standards apply to courses offered to high school students through Minnesota's Post-Secondary Education Option (PSEO). Significant resources are available to faculty through the university's Center for Online Learning (COL), which provides training seminars as well as individual assistance to faculty throughout the developmental process for online and hybrid courses. Faculty are also provided funding to receive training, to serve as reviewers, and to develop courses.

As a component of the process for hiring new community faculty members, department chairs complete Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) [Minimum Qualifications evaluation forms](#), ensuring that full-time resident faculty and part-time community faculty members are hired that meet the minimum university qualifications for teaching their respective subjects.

In addition to institutional accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, Metro State has program [accreditation](#) and program recognition for its degrees in Nursing, Social Work, Business, Urban Education, Law Enforcement, and Cyber Defense.

The university understands that students enter the institution with goals that will extend long after the completion of their academic studies. The university utilizes several tools to monitor graduate success and progress, including results of [Minnesota Peace Officer Standards Training Board Licensing Exam](#), results of [Minnesota Teachers Licensing Examinations](#) and [Nursing Licensing Exam Results](#).

The Board of Trustees for MN State approved Strategic Framework Performance Measures, with a dashboard for enrollment and a dashboard for student persistence and completion with defined [metrics](#) and [goals](#) for each institution and the overall system. The university's definitions of retention and completion align with definitions set forth by the Board and those established by IPEDS.

The university established its own retention and completion goals as part of its [2020–2024 strategic plan](#). The President's Executive Council established goals of 3% increases in retention and completion over the five-year period. Data and goals within the [Strategic Enrollment Management Plan](#) support the retention and completion goals. [Key performance indicators](#) were created to support strategic planning, and data for the key performance indicators are accessible by all employees through the university iteration of [Power BI](#), a central, consistent repository of strategic data that is necessary to make effective operational decisions.

The MN State System adopted an initiative called Equity 2030, which aims to eliminate the educational equity gaps at every MN State institution. In response to this system initiative, one of the strategies to be implemented at Metro State is Equity by Design, an equity-minded, race-conscious, and data-informed methodology to examine and address outcome gaps across student groups at the

University. A campus work team has begun to review student data to identify opportunities and avenues to address disparities that are impacting academic progression and success for Metro State students.

The use of student success data to make improvements has been very evident in student services areas. Examples include reallocating resources to help in-demand course subject areas and expand to support students in areas such as STEM, and informing annual workplans for the 2021–2022 academic year with projects focusing on improving Career Readiness curricula, streamlining appointment scheduling with student support services, and implementing a degree planner tool.

## Sources

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- 1A2 UG Catalog
- 1A3 GR Catalog
- 1A4 Strategic Plan
- 3A2 UG Course Proposal
- 3A9 MNTC
- 3B1 Accreditation
- 3B6 GELS to ILO
- 3B7 RIGR to ILO
- 3C4 IFO MinQuals
- 4A1 UP 2550
- 4A10 UP 215
- 4A13 UP 2120
- 4A14 Course Equivalency
- 4A15 Credit Transfers
- 4A16 POST Results
- 4A17 UED Results
- 4A18 Nursing Test
- 4A2 Program Review Schedule
- 4A3 Program Review Plan
- 4A9 UP 2150
- 4B17 Annual Reflection
- 4B4 Assess Comm Charter
- 4C10 Draft of 2122 ASA Plans
- 4C12 Metro Goals
- 4C2 Metro Measures
- 4C4 Enrollment Plan
- 4C5 KPIs
- 5A10 Metro Power BI

## 5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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

### 5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

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

### Argument

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Metropolitan State University (Metro State) has a two-sided approach to shared governance. On the one, all employees except administrators, are represented by bargaining unions that engage with administration in monthly meet and confer or labor management meetings. As meeting materials show, sessions with [faculty](#) and [non-faculty](#) unions cover a wide range of governance issues and are not restricted to contract management. The other side is based on a set of functional councils with broad stakeholder memberships that include administrators, bargaining unit representatives that represent faculty and staff, appointed employees based on their position, and students. The university council structure and functions are described in the [council handbook](#). The activities of the councils can be seen in [monthly council updates](#) and [council year end summaries](#).

While active participants on university councils, students are also engaged in shared governance via the Metropolitan State University Student Association ([MSUSA](#)) enterprise, a student governing body comprised of up to 20 dedicated student leaders who are focused on strengthening Metro State's commitment to being a student-centered creative. MSUSA assists the university in its efforts to help students achieve academic excellence and be responsible citizens in an increasingly complex and culturally diverse world. MSUSA provides a listening post and forum for student issues, concerns, and needs, and advocates for university accountability and responsiveness. The president meets with MSUSA monthly to provide university updates and answer student questions. The VP for Finance meets with the group periodically to provide information on the university budget and to seek consultation on proposed tuition and fee increases.

Finally, the university has a number of [standing affiliate groups](#) (committees, task forces and teams) all of which have charters and are connected to one of the university councils. One impactful example is the [shared governance task force](#), which was constituted to explore opportunities to

strengthen and enhance the university's shared governance structure. Another example is the Strategic Planning Task Force, which facilitated the development of the University's current strategic plan.

Data are available to university stakeholders through a number of sources including:

1. A large number of [reports](#) made available by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MN State) System office.
2. Locally produced operational reports delivered through the [university BI Launchpad](#).
3. National normed survey instruments such as [NSSE](#) and [PACE](#).
4. Locally produced surveys such as the [branding survey](#) and [student survey](#).

There is a very strong connection between data and decision making at the university. Recent examples of the use of data in decision making include

1. Understanding the need to consistently improve enrollment management, the university hired a consultant, Noel Levitz, to assist with these efforts. The consultant facilitated the institution through a thorough review of its existent quantitative data, and facilitate the attainment of new qualitative data. The result of the activities was the development of the university's current [Strategic Enrollment Plan](#).
2. The University examined the online vs. in-person tuition rate parity as part of a comprehensive, strategic review of all tuition-based revenue. This review included base tuition, differential tuition, and resident/non-resident tuition. The outcome of the [tuition study](#) was a decrease in online tuition rate to achieve tuition parity with in-person courses. New rates provide greater flexibility, transparency, and financial predictability for students.
3. Students were [surveyed](#) to better understand the impact that the COVID – 19 pandemic was having on their ability to continue their educational pursuits. The results of the survey indicated that students were experiencing many challenges, which led to institutional changes, such as the implementation of a multiple measures approach to placement, and the creation of a student laptop loaner program.
4. During the spring 2020 semester, at the onset of the pandemic, the university investigated the potential [technological needs of community \(adjunct\) faculty](#), in partnership with faculty union leadership. The university responded by creating a community faculty equipment program, which provided loaner laptops to part-time faculty in support of their semester specific instructional technology needs, and creating a [MOU](#) that allowed community and resident faculty to use their professional development funds for equipment.

The [policies and procedures](#) governing academic requirements can be found via the university website. In all cases, policy and procedure creation and revision must go through the shared governance process outlined in [University Policy 1000](#) and [University Procedure 100](#), which ensures faculty input on relevant policies. Additionally, specific committees and task forces relevant to these issues include faculty representatives. These include the [Academic Planning Task Force](#), whose charter specifically identifies faculty representation and the [Inter Faculty Organization \(IFO\) Academic Affairs committee](#), which plays a primary role in course and program development and review. The university also has a [Policy and Procedure Review Council](#), whose membership includes faculty members, and has two primary responsibilities: to review, revise, and initially approve all new proposed policies and procedures, and to periodically review existing policies and procedures for necessary revisions and updates.

## Sources

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- 1C1 UP 100
- 1C2 Pand P Council Charter
- 1C7 PACE Presentation
- 3D1 Student Survey
- 4C4 Enrollment Plan
- 4C7 NSSE
- 5A1 IFO MeetConfer
- 5A10 Metro Power BI
- 5A11 Branding Presentation
- 5A12 Tuition Study
- 5A15 Faculty Tech Needs
- 5A16 UP 1000
- 5A17 Acad Plan Charter
- 5A18 IFO AA Comm
- 5A19 MOU
- 5A2 MSUAASF MeetConfer
- 5A20 AA Policies
- 5A3 Council Handbook
- 5A4 Council Monthly
- 5A5 Council Annual Report
- 5A6 MSUSA
- 5A7 Council Subgroups
- 5A8 Shared Governance Charter
- 5A9 MN State Power BI

## 5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

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

### Argument

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Metropolitan State University (Metro State) takes a number of actions to ensure that it hires, promotes and maintains staff and infrastructure sufficient to support operations wherever and however programs are delivered. Faculty qualifications and hiring are controlled by [University Policy 2200](#), [University Procedure 501](#) and [University Procedure 502](#). Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty (MSUAASF) that are hired for a period of greater than six months must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree. [New employees](#) engage in a number of required trainings and there is mandatory training on implicit bias and other aspects of the hiring process for all [hiring committee members](#). Performance evaluations are conducted annually to ensure that employees are current within their profession and are receiving additional support and training that may be needed. This often comes in the form of professional development. Each unit budgets for professional development for its members and [teaching](#) and [service](#) faculty have access to contractually obligated professional development funds. In addition, Human Resources budgets some funds for professional development, with a budgeted amount of \$10,000 for 2021–2022. Additionally, the university offers a tuition benefits to its employees, that is usable by them or members of their immediate family. The state of Minnesota provides many professional development opportunities through its [Enterprise Learning Management](#) (ELM) system. With specific reference for professional development to support online teaching and learning, the university maintains the [Center for Online Learning](#) (COL), which manages D2L, the university learning management system and supports faculty in developing online courses. The Information Technology Services unit routinely upgrades classrooms and meeting spaces to meet the needs of university operations. Additionally, Metro State has history as a distributed university. In addition to our owned campus, we have co-location agreements with two community colleges and a large leased facility. We also use instructional space at the ten community and technical college partners throughout the Twin cities

The budget process at Metro State engages all stakeholders at different levels. Currently, the university is working toward a three-year cycle that will more closely match the state's biennium. The work to transition to a multi-year cycle began in Fall 2020 to plan for FYs 2022 and 2023, as indicated in the [2020–2024 Budget Guidebook](#).

The following represent the university's stated overall budget planning objectives, which are articulated in the Budget Guidebook and reinforced at budget forums. The goal is to develop a budget

that is:

- Revenue-based and fiscally-constrained
- Transparent for the purpose of clarity & understanding
- Consistent in processes across the divisions of the university
- Mission-driven (“no money, no mission”)
- Based on realistic, projected enrollment
- Developed with mutual integrity and accountability in budget requests and estimates
- Based on assumptions & principles that are stated and transparent
- Supportive of the university’s long-term financial health
- Marked by communication, collaboration & feedback from university members

Annually, the university’s Chief Financial Officer begins the budget process with engagement with the Cabinet, and also engages stakeholders through a breakout session on [Convocation Day](#), the monthly [faculty](#) and [nonfaculty](#) meet and confer and labor management meetings, the university’s council and committee structure, and hosting budget forums at least once each [fall](#) and [spring](#). The budget forums, which the President, Provost, and the President’s Executive Cabinet members attend, are a key opportunity to make the university community aware of the current financial status, the plan to meet strategic goals, and the overall budget development process. Feedback and suggestions gathered at these forums are used to improve the budget development process. Members of the university community are also encouraged to email the [Budget.Forum@metrostate.edu](mailto:Budget.Forum@metrostate.edu) email address at any time during the year with comments or suggestions.

The overall role of the university consultation structures is to

*Assist the president and senior financial officer in evaluating the many uncertain factors used to develop a university budget, evaluate and recommend areas for revenue enhancement and/or cost containment or internal reallocation of expenses in order to develop a balanced budget, which advances the mission and vision of the university, and to provide input on the appropriate level of reserves to be maintained.*

The budget process has formal university–level consultation/communication bodies:

- President’s Executive Cabinet (PEC): chaired by the president and includes provost, vice presidents, Chief Human Resources Officer, and Executive Director for Equity and Inclusion.
- Cabinet: chaired by the president and includes deans, directors, provost, associate and assistant provosts, vice presidents, Chief Human Resources Officer, and Executive Director for Equity and Inclusion.
- Leadership Assembly: includes all supervisors at the university; all cabinet members augmented by others who supervise units and generally have spending authority.
- ASAcC (Academic & Student Affairs Executive Council): chaired by the provost, includes academic deans, the dean of students, associate provost, and the assistant provost.
- Deans and Department Chairs: chaired by the provost, includes academic deans and all academic department chairs. Everyone on this group has budget oversight and spending authority.
- Bargaining units (IFO, MSUAASF, AFSCME, MAPE, MMA): Contractual provisions for IFO and MSUAASF specifically give these bargaining units a consultation right on the university budget.
- Student Association: must be consulted on tuition and fee increases per Board policy. These are the elected representatives of the student body.

- The Resource Planning and Alignment Council is currently chartered to provide input to the budgeting process. The Council includes representatives of each bargaining unit, an academic dean, representatives from each university division outside of academic and student affairs.

The current process also requires each division/college head to complete and submit a budget workbook and [present on their budget](#) request to Cabinet. The [FY2022 budget workbook](#) has different tabs that roll up to a summary tab for base salaries, overtime, student workers and non-salary expenses. For the non-salary expense section, departments were asked to prioritize each requested item, using a scale of critical, high, medium and low priority. At Cabinet meetings, divisions presented on their budget request for the next fiscal year. During these meetings, items were reviewed and examined to ensure clarity on the request, discuss any concerns or consider alternate funding means. Embracing the mission of supporting the academic pursuits of students, on average, 73% of the annual budget has been [allocated to the division of academic and student affairs](#) over the last three years.

By the end of March of each year, the President and the Chief Financial Officer meet and review the workbooks to determine which activities can be funded given the available resources. Approved budgets are then forwarded to the Office of Financial Management to be loaded into the ISRS system, the university information system. During the academic year, a financial analyst sends monthly reports to university administrators to highlight current spending versus budget. The Financial Management Director [meets with each department head](#) for quarterly budget and finance reviews. The Human Resources Assistant Director, and other personnel, attend the quarterly meeting to review payroll and other expenses. The Chief Financial Officer also engages in meet and confers with bargaining units for monthly budget updates and participates in the quarterly budget meetings when available.

The university has just adopted a five-year strategic plan focused on building a more resilient, student ready university through six strategic commitment areas:

- Student Success: Set standards for student-centered support that meets the particular needs of student subgroups based on identified demographic student profiles as a means to increase degree completion.
- High-Quality Education: Provide distinctive, high-quality, accessible and affordable educational opportunities for post-traditional learners.
- Innovation: Create a culture that supports and celebrates dynamic, innovative teaching that results in learning environments that effectively engage post-traditional learners in transformative and relevant learning, and distinguishes Metropolitan State University graduates.
- Strong Partnerships: Strategically develop and maintain relationships and partnerships with urban and metropolitan area communities, nonprofits, donors, and alumni, based on mutual benefit, that clearly enrich the student learning experience, provide enhanced opportunities for students to meet their employment goals, influence the understanding of and value that local employers and the community afford to a baccalaureate level education, and/or advance the financial interests of the university.
- Respect, Equity, and Inclusion: Model a culture of respect, equity, and inclusion for students, faculty, staff, and partners.
- Institutional Effectiveness: Build structural and foundational systems and processes that align physical, financial, and human resources to increase institutional efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability.



These six strategic commitments are integral to the budget approval process. Metro State is also a member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MN State) system. As a result, there is also [system-level budget monitoring](#). Funding from the State of Minnesota is obtained in response to legislative budget requests presented to the [Legislature by the Board of Trustees](#). Funding is then allocated to the system institutions using the Allocation Framework. Detailed information is available through the [Allocation Framework](#) and [Instructional Cost Study](#).

The budget allocations for the Academic and Student Affairs (ASA) division represent the largest divisional budget at the university. In [FY 2021](#) the ASA budget represented 47.5% of the university budget and for [FY 2022](#) the ASA budget represents 50.0% of the proposed university budget. Within the ASA budget, the majority of the expenses are salaries for faculty, professional advisors, support staff, and administrators that all support the educational experience of the students.

## Sources

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- 3C11 MSUAASF Contract
- 3C2 UP 2200
- 3C3 UP 501
- 3C5 IFO Contract
- 5A1 IFO MeetConfer
- 5A2 MSUAASF MeetConfer
- 5B1 UP 502
- 5B10 Spring Forums
- 5B11 Budget Presentations
- 5B12 Budget Worksheet
- 5B13 Budget Analysis
- 5B14 Budget Meetings
- 5B15 Budget Monitoring
- 5B16 Trustees and Legislature
- 5B17 Allocation Framework
- 5B18 Cost Study
- 5B2 New Employee Training
- 5B3 Search Committee Training
- 5B4 ELM Catalog
- 5B4 FY21 Budget at a Glance (8.18.20)
- 5B4 FY22 Preliminary Budget Approved
- 5B5 COL Trainings
- 5B6 Budget Guidebook
- 5B8 Convocation Budget Presentation
- 5B9 Fall Forums

## 5.C - Core Component 5.C

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The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

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

### Argument

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The [university strategic plan](#) identifies strategic commitments and goals that are directly tied to the university mission. Actions to achieve these goals are embedded in division annual work plans, whose priorities are tied directly to the strategic commitments. Every university division produces an annual work plan, which is developed through varying processes of internal consultation. Planning work is also connected to shared governance, with several groups having significant roles in university planning:

- [Comprehensive Facilities Planning Task Force](#): meets to discuss short-term and long-term planning for university facilities and space utilization. As [meeting minutes](#) show, a review of university spaces and rooms has resulted in the relocation of academic units from one location to another.
- [Academic Planning Task Force](#): composed of a group of academic administrators and faculty members, facilitated a review of outcome measures by all academic units and developed the annual reflection document discussed below.
- [Resource Planning and Alignment Committee](#): a committee that plays a central supportive role in the overall university budget process. As the [meeting minutes](#) show, this committee reviews the budget timeline and makes recommendations for adjustments based on internal and external factors.
- [Strategic Enrollment Management Planning Group](#): with the support of a consultant from Noel Levitz, facilitated the development of the university's current [enrollment management plan](#).

The [university planning framework](#) describes the relationship between various planning elements. Connections between assessment, evaluation, planning and budget are contained schematically in the planning process and practically in division work plans and university master plans, which provide details on the connections between these elements. Progress on plans is documented through master, strategic and division [annual plan updates](#). Members of the President's Executive Cabinet (PEC) provide monthly updates to their colleagues. At a recent retreat, [PEC](#) reviewed and prioritized the

activities submitted within the annual work plans, creating a more realistic and uniform focus for the upcoming fiscal year. Each strategic activity has a charter document describing the activity, defining scope, specifying deliverables and milestones, articulating assumptions and specifying the expected outcome measures. The charters allow monitoring of progress throughout the year and clearly establish accountability. The charter for the [Student Journey Map Implementation](#) strategic activity is one example for the work planned for FY 22. The President's Executive Cabinet monitors the progress on strategic plan goals and strategic activities in light of the deliverables, milestones, and outcomes measures monthly. Summary evaluation of outcomes at the end of each year allows the President's Executive Cabinet to adjust strategic activities for the upcoming year to better achieve overall student outcome and operational goals.

Assessment of student learning activities are also critical elements of effective institutional planning. Assessment of student learning is part of the academic program review process, which is used to inform an action plan for the program. Beginning with the fall 2021 semester, academic units will complete and submit [annual reflection](#) documents to the Office of the University Provost. These documents will discuss outcomes of assessment results and request additional resources to address any necessary instructional advances or innovations.

Division budget priorities are also tied to strategic work. The Resource Planning and Alignment Council (RPAC) approves budget projections, which form the basis for annual planning and budgeting. RPAC considers all sources of revenue including state allocations and enrollment. Engaging the President's Cabinet in a leadership role for budget development and evaluation, as described in the [FY22-24 Budget Guidebook](#), has also ensured that the budget reflects the strategic work across the university.

## Sources

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- 1A4 Strategic Plan
- 4B17 Annual Reflection
- 4C4 Enrollment Plan
- 5A17 Acad Plan Charter
- 5B6 Budget Guidebook
- 5C Charter\_Student Journey Map\_Updated\_071321
- 5C1 Facilities TaskForce
- 5C2 RPAC Charter
- 5C3 SEM Charter
- 5C4 Planning Framework
- 5C6 Planning Update
- 5C7 PEC Retreat
- 5C8 Facilities Planning Task Force Minutes
- 5C9 RPAC Agenda and Notes

## 5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

### Summary

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Metropolitan State University (Metro State) has a two-sided approach to shared governance. On the one side, all employees except administrators are represented by bargaining unions that engage with administration in monthly meet and confer or labor management meetings. The other side is based on a set of functional councils with broad stakeholder memberships. The university council structure and functions are described in the [council handbook](#). While active participants on university councils, students are also engaged in shared governance via the [Metropolitan State University Student Association](#) (MSUSA) enterprise, a student governing body comprised of up to 20 dedicated student leaders who are focused on strengthening Metro State's commitment to being a student-centered creative. Finally, the university has a number of [standing affiliate groups](#) (committees, task forces and teams) all of which have charters and are connected to one of the university councils. One impactful example is the [shared governance task force](#), which was constituted to explore opportunities to strengthen and enhance the university's shared governance structure.

Data are available to university stakeholders through a number of sources including: a large number of [reports](#) made available by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MN State) system office, locally produced operational reports delivered through the university [BI Launchpad](#), and national normed survey instruments such as [NSSE](#) and [PACE](#).

The [policies and procedures](#) governing academic requirements can be found via the university website. In all cases, policy and procedure creation and revision must go through the shared governance process outlined in [University Policy 1000](#) and [University Procedure 100](#), which ensures faculty input on relevant policies. Additionally, specific committees and task forces relevant to these issues include faculty representatives, such as the [Academic Planning Task Force](#), whose charter specifically identifies faculty representation. Additionally, the university has a [Policy and Procedure Review Council](#), whose membership includes faculty members, and has with two primary responsibilities: to review, revise, and initially approve all new proposed policies and procedures, and to periodically review existing policies and procedures for necessary revisions and updates.

Metro State takes a number of actions to ensure that it hires, promotes and maintains staff and infrastructure sufficient to support operations wherever and however programs are delivered. Faculty qualifications and hiring are controlled by [University Policy 2200](#), [University Procedure 501](#) and [University Procedure 502](#). Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty (MSUAASF) service faculty that are hired for a period of greater than six months must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree. [New employees](#) engage in a number of required trainings and there is [mandatory training](#) on implicit bias and other aspects of the hiring process for all hiring committee members. Performance evaluations are conducted annually to ensure that employees are current within their profession and are receiving any additional support and training that may be needed, often in the form of professional development. Each unit budgets for professional development for its members, and teaching and service faculty have access to contractually obligated

professional development funds. The state of Minnesota provides many professional development opportunities through its [Enterprise Learning Management](#) (ELM) system. With specific reference for professional development to support online teaching and learning, the university maintains the [Center for Online Learning](#) (COL) which manages D2L, the university learning management system, and supports faculty in developing online courses.

The budget process at Metro State engages all stakeholders at different levels. Currently, the university is working toward a three-year cycle that will more closely match the state's biennium. The work to transition to a multi-year cycle began in Fall 2020 to plan for FYs 2022 and 2023, as indicated in the [2020–2024 Budget Guidebook](#). The following represent the university's stated overall budget planning objectives, which are articulated in the Budget Guidebook and reinforced at budget forums. The goal is to develop a budget that is:

- Revenue-based and fiscally-constrained
- Transparent for the purpose of clarity & understanding
- Consistent in processes across the divisions of the university
- Mission-driven (“no money, no mission”)
- Based on realistic, projected enrollment
- Developed with mutual integrity and accountability in budget requests and estimates
- Based on assumptions & principles that are stated and transparent
- Supportive of the university's long-term financial health
- Marked by communication, collaboration & feedback from university members

Annually, the university's Chief Financial Officer begins the budget process with engagement with the Cabinet, and also engages stakeholders through a breakout session on [Convocation Day](#), monthly faculty and nonfaculty meet and confer and labor management meetings, the university's council and committee structure, and hosting budget forums at least once each fall and spring. The budget forums are an opportunity to make the university community aware of the current financial status, the plan to meet strategic goals, and the overall budget development process.

The budget process has formal university-level consultation/communication bodies:

- President's Executive Cabinet (PEC)
- Cabinet
- Leadership Assembly
- Academic & Student Affairs Executive Council (ASAeC)
- Deans and Department Chairs
- Bargaining units: IFO, MSUAASF, AFSCME, MAPE, MMA
- Student Association
- The Resource Planning and Alignment Council

The current process also requires each division/college head to complete, submit, and present on their budget request to Cabinet. The [FY2022 budget workbook](#) has different tabs that roll up to a summary tab for base salaries, overtime, student workers and non-salary expenses. Embracing the mission of supporting the academic pursuits of students, on average, 73% of the annual budget has been allocated to the division of academic and student affairs over the last three years.

By the end of March of each year, the President and the Chief Financial Officer meet and review the proposed budgets to determine which activities can be funded given the available resources. Approved budgets are then forwarded to the Office of Financial Management to be loaded into the

ISRS system, the university information system. During the academic year, a financial analyst sends monthly reports to university administrators to highlight current spending versus budget. The Financial Management Director meets with each department head for quarterly budget and finance reviews. The Human Resources Assistant Director and other personnel also attend the quarterly meeting to review payroll and other expenses. The Chief Financial Officer also engages in meet and confers with bargaining units for monthly budget updates and participates in the quarterly budget meetings when available.

The university has just adopted a five-year strategic plan focused on building a more resilient, student ready university through six strategic commitment areas that are integral components of the budgeting approval process: Student Success, High-Quality Education, Innovation, Strong Partnerships, Respect, Equity, and Inclusion, and Institutional Effectiveness. Goals within the strategic commitments are directly tied to the university mission and actions to achieve these goals are embedded in division annual work plans, which are required for each budget unit.

As a member of the MN State System, Metro State is also involved in [system-level budget monitoring](#). Funding from the State of Minnesota is obtained in response to legislative budget requests presented to the [Legislature by the Board of Trustees](#). Funding is then allocated to the system institutions using the [Allocation Framework](#).

The budget allocations for the Academic and Student Affairs (ASA) division represent the largest divisional budget at the university. In FY 2021 the ASA budget represented 47.5% of the university budget and for FY 2022 the ASA budget represents 50.0% of the proposed university budget.

The [university planning framework](#) describes the relationship between various planning elements. Progress on plans is documented through master, strategic and division annual plan updates. Members of the president's executive cabinet provide monthly updates to their colleagues. At a recent retreat, the president's executive cabinet review and prioritized the activities submitted within the annual work plans, creating a more uniform focus for the upcoming fiscal year.

Assessment of student learning activities are also critical elements of effective institutional planning. Assessment of student learning is part of the academic program review process, which is used to inform an action plan for an academic program. Beginning with the fall 2021 semester, academic units will complete and submit [annual reflection documents](#), which will discuss outcomes of assessment results and request additional resources to address any necessary instructional advances or innovations.

Division budget priorities are also tied to strategic work. The Resource Planning and Alignment Council (RPAC) approves budget projections, which form the basis for annual planning and budgeting. RPAC considers all sources of revenue including state allocations and enrollment. Engaging the President's Cabinet in a leadership role for budget development and evaluation, as described in the [FY22-24 Budget Guidebook](#), has also ensured that the budget reflects the strategic work across the university.

## Sources

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- 1C1 UP 100
- 1C2 Pand P Council Charter
- 1C7 PACE Presentation

- 3C2 UP 2200
- 3C3 UP 501
- 4B17 Annual Reflection
- 4C7 NSSE
- 5A10 Metro Power BI
- 5A16 UP 1000
- 5A17 Acad Plan Charter
- 5A20 AA Policies
- 5A3 Council Handbook
- 5A6 MSUSA
- 5A7 Council Subgroups
- 5A8 Shared Governance Charter
- 5A9 MN State Power BI
- 5B1 UP 502
- 5B12 Budget Worksheet
- 5B15 Budget Monitoring
- 5B16 Trustees and Legislature
- 5B17 Allocation Framework
- 5B18 Cost Study
- 5B2 New Employee Training
- 5B3 Search Committee Training
- 5B4 ELM Catalog
- 5B5 COL Trainings
- 5B6 Budget Guidebook
- 5B8 Convocation Budget Presentation
- 5C4 Planning Framework