

Systems Appraisal Feedback Report

An AQIP Pathway Report Completed In Response to a Systems Portfolio Submitted by

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The Higher Learning Commission

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I. Reflective Overview

Upon completing its review of the Institutional Overview and Category Introductions included in the Systems Portfolio, the Systems Appraisal team formulates its understanding of the institution, the institution's mission, and the constituents served. This understanding is conveyed in the following Consensus Reflective Statement. Additional team insights are also summarized here in relation to the six AQIP Pathway categories.

Reflective Overview Statement

As a member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU), Metropolitan State University is an urban institution located in the Twin Cities area, at four primary locations. It collaborates with eight of the ten MnSCU community and technical college campuses in the area, providing degree completion and course offerings. The university offers a variety of programs leading to bachelor, master, doctoral degrees and graduate certificates. A number of its programs and coursework are offered either partially or fully online. Metropolitan State emphasizes its mission to underserved groups, including adults and communities of color. One of the key defining mission, vision, and value expressions of the university is its commitment to civic engagement. Of its more than 11,500 students enrolled during 2014-2015, 90.9% are undergraduates and of those, 87% are transfer students. Less than one percent of undergraduates are traditional first time, full time students. The average age of students is 31 years and, as working adults, 64% attend part time. The university has 1,190 employees, many of which are represented by one of five unions. As of June 2014, there were 174 full-time (resident faculty) and 750 part-time (community faculty). The number of tenure-track faculty has increased by 23 over the past three years.

Category Summary Statements

- 1. Helping Students Learn:** Metropolitan State University has 10 General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS) goal areas that align with its mission and identify its common learning outcomes. Due to leadership turnover, the Provost and Vice president for Academic Affairs Office now has the responsibility for learning assessment. Metropolitan State has recently established a new Institutional Effectiveness Office and is hiring a Coordinator of Assessment, which is a new position at the university.
- 2. Meeting Student & Other Key Stakeholder Needs:** During the period of 2011 through 2014, there was turnover in three senior administrative positions within student affairs. In Fiscal year 2012 (FY12), Metropolitan State's Student Affairs

- Office created its first strategic plan that addresses fostering diversity and inclusion, driving innovation, creating exceptional student experiences, investing in employees, and managing enrollment. In the fall 2015, a new student center will be opened on campus that will provide a facility enabling the university to meet stakeholder needs in a way that it was previously unable.
3. **Valuing Employees:** The factors affecting the university's organizational structure and human resources include its divisional structure, five unions, reliance upon adjunct faculty, a diverse and nonresidential student population, several teaching sites, and its commitment to diversity, civic engagement, and community-based learning. From 2012 through 2014, Metropolitan State had four chief human resources officers (CHRO) and lost its entire HR management and transactional-level staff.
 4. **Planning and Leading:** Metropolitan State University aligns itself with the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities' *Charting the Future* strategic planning initiative. This initiative focuses on increasing access, affordability, excellence, and service (collaboration). The university has experienced a significant amount of turnover in leadership with 35 people holding 13 senior administrative positions over the past five years. The current president is interim.
 5. **Knowledge Management & Resource Stewardship:** Being a part of the MnSCU system affects Metropolitan State's knowledge management and stewardship in a number of ways. While state funding appears to have stabilized at a lower level than in 2009, MnSCU expects to increase baccalaureate degree conferral in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. In addition, centralized planning and operations in the form of board policy (and system approval for facilities, budgeting, and large transactions), an aging Integrated Statewide Record System (ISRS), and system-level chief information officer significantly affect the university's knowledge management and resource stewardship. A recent reorganization under an interim president returns the university's institutional research function to its Academic Affairs Office.
 6. **Quality Overview:** Metropolitan State has been an AQIP institution since 2003. Its Academic Quality and University Improvement Steering Committee (AQUISC) advises the Provost in the realm of quality and continuous improvement at the university. In response to a recognition that its prioritizing of issues and its selection of projects was not well-established, the interim president approved (December

2014) an AQIP action project to address the university's process for selecting projects using wide-spread collaboration and an idea exchange platform.

II. Strategic Challenges Analysis

In reviewing the entire Systems Portfolio, the Systems Appraisal team was able to discern what may be several overarching strategic challenges or potential issues that could affect the institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and overall quality improvement goals. These judgments are based exclusively on information available in the Systems Portfolio and thus may be limited. Each item should be revisited in subsequent AQIP Pathway reviews, such as during the Comprehensive Quality Review (CQR) visit.

Strategic Challenge: Metropolitan State can benefit from a more purposeful approach to setting internal targets and establishing external benchmarks. In contrast to what seems to be its customary practice of wanting to exceed its previous performance for any given measure year-to-year, the university should develop the practice of analyzing its past, trending performance and current circumstantial factors in order to set stretching, but realistic targets. A shift in cultural mindset from meeting-or-exceeding its previous year's performance to one of high performance goal achievement could propel the university to new heights.

Strategic Challenge: Since improvement initiatives should be data-/information-driven in any CQI organization, Metropolitan State should strive to align the measures selected, the results presented, the interpretations from analyses conducted, and the improvement projects planned. Improvement initiatives should be consistently driven from the analysis of the university's results. The strategic benefit of doing this would be to move from a more reactive set of activities to purposeful, coordinated initiatives that would be more aligned to accomplish its mission, vision, and values.

Strategic Challenge: In light of the serious level of employee turnover at the university in past years, it is imperative that the root causes of it be addressed. Metropolitan State needs to analyze relevant data and information in order to determine why the problem arose and persisted. Planned improvements dealing directly with this matter are needed in order to avoid high employee turnover in the future.

Strategic Challenge: Metropolitan State University has many worthwhile planned initiatives. In order to benefit from them, it will need to exercise determined, institutional discipline to see them through to completion and reap their intended results.

III. AQIP Category Feedback

As the Systems Appraisal team reviewed the Systems Portfolio, it determined for each AQIP Pathway category the stages of maturity for the institution's Processes and Results. These stages range from "Reacting" to "Integrated" and are described in Appendix A. Through use of the maturity stages and its analysis of the institution's reported improvements, the team offers below summary feedback for each AQIP Pathway category. This section identifies areas for further improvement and also possible improvement strategies. In addition to the summary information presented here, Appendix B conveys the team's specific feedback for all Process, Results, and Improvement items included in the institution's Systems Portfolio. Appendix B is structured according to the "New Systems Portfolio Structure and AQIP Categories" document which is available on the Commission's website. The summary feedback below, and the detailed feedback offered in Appendix B, is based only upon evidence conveyed in the Systems Portfolio. It is possible that the institution has additional information on specific Processes, Results, and Improvements that was not included in the Systems Portfolio. In such instances, the institution should plan to provide this evidence in a future AQIP Pathway review process such as the CQR visit.

Category One: Helping Students Learn

Metropolitan State University should be commended for its commitment to integrating co-curricular activities into the curriculum and the processes that have been established to facilitate such an integration. The philosophical shift to consider student violation of academic integrity as opportunities for intervention, instead of offenses requiring punishment, helps illustrate the institution's commitment to its students. In most cases, the university appears to use many repeatable processes in conducting institutional and program assessments. It is often unclear, however, how the processes themselves are evaluated for currency or appropriateness and how the information that is collected through assessment is utilized to consistently make institutional improvements. Additionally, the summary data provided as support for some processes (1R3 and 1R5, for example) appears to be extemporaneous in some instances and does not appear to be directly related to the conclusions being made. This raises some general concern about how summary information is disseminated and utilized across the institution in making decisions to help students learn.

As noted in the systems portfolio, the university appears to be generally lacking institutional processes and opportunities to analyze data related to how students learn and, more importantly, to regularly utilize information to make improvements at the departmental or institutional level. This seems to be due, at least in part, to Metropolitan State often lacking internal targets and external benchmarks. Generally, processes seem to be systematic while results tend to be at a reacting level of maturity.

Category Two: Meeting Student & Other Key Stakeholder Needs

Generally, Metropolitan State University is doing a good job of meeting the needs of current and prospective students. Improvements such as required monthly meetings between senior administration and the Student Senate, the intentional inclusion of student members in major institutional committees, and *MetroAnnounce* may help improve communication. However, there seems to be a disconnection between the institution's collection of data and assessment regarding other stakeholder needs and the use of such data to regularly inform decisions with respect to those needs. For example, learning from student complaints was not evident in this section. This indicates a reacting maturity level overall for this category. The university is encouraged to establish targets and benchmarks as a part of its effort to develop procedures to systematically analyze data and to standardize assessments. Additionally, periodic evaluation of the processes used and sharing lessons learned would help to increase the level of maturity for this category.

Other improvement efforts the university may want to consider include better alignment across the strategic planning process, Retention Task Force efforts, and weekly enrollment monitoring. Community engagement is clearly a strength of the university. It is encouraged to follow the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching recommendation to develop more rigorous assessment of student learning outcomes associated with community engagement.

Category Three: Valuing Employees

Metropolitan State's current overall level of maturity for processes is early systematic while results are reactive. Given the recent high turnover that has occurred at the institution, there should be some examination of the fundamental issues relating to employee satisfaction and development. There seems to be a disconnection between the data collected and summarized. Processes are activity-based (not necessarily system-based), goals and outcomes are not identified, and there doesn't appear to be links to the mission and

strategic plan. The university's recognition of improvements is very encouraging and, when implemented, should take Metropolitan State in the right direction.

Category Four: Planning and Leading

Metropolitan State University is making progress from reacting toward systematic maturity in planning and leading. Through inclusive processes, the university has reaffirmed its mission and values and has drafted a strategic positioning statement. However, it faces some challenges in the achievement of its mission. The number of different strategic, operational, or action plans that the university has creates the potential to duplicate efforts or be counterproductive. Next, Metropolitan State recognizes that many processes need attention. Internal discipline will be required to document processes by setting milestones, due dates, and other objective measures of progress. The university's work in establishing a nationally recognized academic integrity process could serve as a model for developing processes and accountability measures for its other ethical, legal, and financial processes.

This category suggests a fragmented university structure that has been riddled with turnover and process ineffectiveness. Consistent leadership is needed to ensure the institution's ability to meet its mission and vision. Perhaps it would be beneficial for the university to prepare an integrated system that prepares leaders, promoting ethical behavior, unity, and communication. Metropolitan State is encouraged to address the disconnection existing between leadership and employee perceptions of its continuous improvement efforts.

Category Five: Knowledge Management & Resource Stewardship

Over the last few years, Metropolitan State has dealt with several challenges, including leadership changes, significant enrollment increases, an IT breach, and a pollution remediation project. Coupled with requirements to use MnSCU reporting systems, the university's process maturity for fiscal, physical, technological, and information infrastructure management tend to be reacting. Many processes do not appear to have been institutionalized, as shown by the number of instances where information that should be used in the decision-making process was not properly shared across the institution, perhaps because of a general lack of accountability or because of issues related to employee turnover. The results sections are incongruent. The portfolio discussions are not a cohesive narrative that ties the outcomes, summary measures, comparisons or interpretations in 5R1, 5R2, or 5R3 to each other.

There is a consistent lack of process descriptions resulting in what seems to be a piecemeal approach to this category. There is no apparent comprehensive plan to guide the university's resource stewardship or knowledge management systems. The processes that are in place appear to operate within silos, rather than in an overarching approach where each process contributes to furthering the institution's mission and goals.

However, recent and planned improvements should help to mature the level of Category 5 over the next several years. Pursuing a solid culture of continuous improvement can create processes and results that are pervasive and effective despite turnover. The university is encouraged to develop internal targets and external benchmarks that will guide the improvement process, while also establishing policies that foster institutional accountability with respect to the management of knowledge and resources at the institution.

Category Six: Quality Overview

Metropolitan State's efforts to increase involvement in improvement processes through its implementation of the All Hands on Deck action project, organizational restructuring, and training through the State of Minnesota Office for Continuous Improvement is commendable. Areas of strength relevant to Category 6 include centralizing strategic planning work with accreditation and institutional research, and, efforts to keep members of AQUISC oriented to the AQIP work. Metropolitan State also has a number of planned improvement efforts intended to enhance the continuous improvement infrastructure and to establish a culture of quality throughout the institution. These include establishing a standardized process for proposing and conducting improvement initiatives, formalizing the process for providing lessons learned from completed improvement initiatives, and creating an online tool for communicating and receiving feedback from across the institution for CI and AQIP efforts. Process maturity is systematic in Category Six. Metropolitan State would benefit from infusing its processes with more data-driven results, and then demonstrating how planned improvements are the direct product of its analysis. It will be critical for Metropolitan State to maintain the internal discipline to see its planned and executed improvement initiatives through to completion.

The university acknowledges that there is an opportunity to foster a more robust CI culture. There appears to be a disconnection between leadership perceptions and employee perceptions about its capacity for quality improvement, and no discussion is provided to indicate how the institution intends to alleviate this. There seems to be an assumption throughout Category 6 (and other portions of the portfolio) that the creation of an IE office,

along with the reorganization of assessment, strategic planning, IR and accreditation efforts under this office will lead to a coordination of efforts among these areas, resulting in an elimination of silos. Yet, there does not appear to be any supporting efforts or policies to facilitate such coordination.

IV. Accreditation Evidence Screening

Since AY2012-13, Systems Appraisal teams have screened the institution's Systems Portfolio evidence in relation to the Criteria for Accreditation and the Core Components. This step is designed to position the institution for success during the subsequent review to reaffirm the institution's accreditation. In order to accomplish this task, the Commission has established linkages between various Process/Results questions and the twenty-one Core Components associated with the Criteria for Accreditation. Systems Appraisal teams have been trained to conduct a "soft review" of the Criteria/Core Components for Systems Portfolios completed in the third year of the AQIP Pathway cycle and a more robust review for Systems Portfolios completed in the seventh year. The formal review of the Criteria and Core Components for purposes of reaffirming the institution's accreditation occurs only in the eighth year of the cycle and is completed through the CQR visit, unless serious problems are identified earlier in the cycle. As part of this Systems Appraisal screening process, teams indicate whether each Core Component is "Strong, clear, and well-presented"; "Adequate but could be improved"; or "Unclear or incomplete." When the Criteria and Core Components are reviewed formally for reaffirmation of accreditation, peer reviewers must determine whether each is "Met," "Met with concerns," or "Not met."

Appendix C of this report documents in detail the Appraisal team's best judgment as to the current strength of the institution's evidence for each Core Component and thus for each Criterion. It is structured according to the Criteria for Accreditation and supporting documents that can be found on the Commission's website. Institutions are encouraged to review Appendix C carefully in order to guide improvement work relative to the Criteria and Core Components. Immediately below the team provides summary statements that convey broadly its observations regarding the institution's present ability to satisfy each Criterion as well as any suggestions for improvement. Again, this feedback is based only upon information contained in the institution's Systems Portfolio and thus may be limited.

Criterion One. Mission:

The presentation of evidence for Criterion One: Mission is generally strong, clear, and well presented in the Systems Portfolio. The university's mission is broadly understood and is developed through a process suited to its culture. In addition, Metropolitan State fully understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of the students and community it serves. The evidence for articulation of the mission (1.B) and demonstration of commitment to the public good (1.D.) could be strengthened by documenting the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the programs and services provided and how Metropolitan State engages with external groups as its mission and capacity allows.

Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

Metropolitan State provided adequate evidence that the institution acts with integrity and that its conduct is ethical and responsible. Overall, this criterion could be strengthened by providing more detail. Areas lacking detail include: specific policies and procedures for financial and operational activities; the mechanism used to inform students and other constituents about the VSA College Portrait, and; the university's commitment to academic freedom and associated responsibilities beyond faculty contract provisions.

Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

The university's presentation of Criterion Three Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support is adequate overall, but could be improved. Criterion Three focuses on how the institution determines appropriate degree programs, general education goals and outcomes, effective staffing and support services, and applicable co-curricular activities. The appraisal team had a general sense that the institution was doing a better job in this area than was shown by the evidence it presented. For example, the institution describes instructor-focused assessment versus program-focused assessment; the offering of courses and co-curriculars that include GELS rather than the assessment of GELS completion, and; class size instead of effective staffing. Future Systems Appraisals should present clear and abundant information for each of these.

Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

Metropolitan State's presentation of evidence for the evaluation and improvement of its teaching and learning processes is considered adequate. The review team recognizes that the university has made some recent changes related to institutional assessment and

program review, particularly with respect to who is responsible. This should have a positive impact on this criterion. In general, it does not yet appear that there are processes in place to allow for the systematic analysis of teaching and learning data that would yield strong and clear evidence for this criterion. The review team is confident that the organizational changes outlined in the portfolio will help to establish such a process and that future improvement will be due to the presentation of the abundant data and information for which such changes are designed to produce.

Criterion Five. Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

Metropolitan State University's presentation of evidence for Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness is adequate, but could be improved. In regards to the resource base supporting the current educational programs and plans for maintaining and strengthening quality in the future (5.A.), the evidence was incomplete. In addition, this could be enhanced by providing documentation of how the university ensures that staff in all areas are qualified and trained. The budgeting process and monitoring of expenses does not yet seem well developed. The strength of evidence in this section is in the structure imposed by the MnSCU system and resilience of the university to continue its quality improvement journey.

V. Quality of the Systems Portfolio

With a view to improving future portfolio quality, the appraisal team would offer the suggestions below for Metropolitan State University to consider.

- In the process sections of the portfolio, the university had a tendency to state that it has a process and that it is doing it, as opposed to describing the process itself. Routinely throughout the team's appraisal, there was the impression that many good processes existed but they were not detailed. The degree to which processes are clearly articulated profoundly affects the feedback that the team provides to the institution.
- Some discussions were misplaced and would have been more appropriate in other sections of the portfolio. For example, much of the discussion included in 4P2 would more directly describe the processes that were asked for in 4P1. Paying attention to directly addressing the matter at hand would improve the portfolio.
- Perhaps the most significant consideration for improving overall portfolio quality in the future would be to achieve alignment within each of the category results sections among measures, reported results, interpretation of the results, and the planned improvements.

Often, the results presented did not align with the university's declared measures and its conclusions. Demonstrating that improvements directly flow out of interpretations that are based on the measures tracked and their results should be a fundamental approach to CQI at the institution.

VI. Using the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report

The Systems Appraisal process is intended to foster action for institutional improvement. Although decisions about specific next steps rest with the institution, the Commission expects every AQIP institution to use its feedback report to stimulate improvement and to inform future processes. If this Appraisal is being completed in the institution's third year in the AQIP cycle, the results may inform future Action Projects and also provide the focus for the institution's next Strategy Forum. In rare cases, the Appraisal completed in the third year may suggest either to the institution itself or to the Commission the need for a mid-cycle (fourth year) CQR visit. If this Appraisal is being completed in the institution's seventh year in the cycle, again the results may inform future Action Projects and Strategy Forums, but more immediately they should inform institutional preparation for the CQR visit in the eighth year of the cycle when the institution's continuing accredited status will be determined along with future Pathway eligibility. Institutions are encouraged to contact their staff liaison with questions.

APPENDIX A

Stages in Systems Maturity: *Processes*

Reacting	Systematic	Aligned	Integrated
<p>The institution focuses on activities and initiatives that respond to immediate needs or problems rather than anticipating future requirements, capacities, or changes. Goals are implicit and poorly defined. Informal procedures and habits account for all but the most formal aspects of institutional operations.</p>	<p>The institution is beginning to operate via generally understood, repeatable, and often documented processes and is prone to make the goal of most activities explicit, measurable, and subject to improvement. Institutional silos are eroding and signs of coordination and the implementation of effective practices across units are evident. Institutional goals are generally understood.</p>	<p>The institution operates according to processes that are explicit, repeatable and periodically evaluated for improvement. Processes address key goals and strategies, and lessons learned are shared among institutional units. Coordination and communication among units is emphasized so stakeholders relate what they do to institutional goals and strategies.</p>	<p>Operations are characterized by explicit, predictable processes that are repeatable and regularly evaluated for optimum effectiveness. Efficiencies across units are achieved through analysis, transparency, innovation, and sharing. Processes and measures track progress on key strategic and operational goals. Outsiders request permission to visit and study why the institution is so successful.</p>

Stages in Systems Maturity: *Results*

Reacting	Systematic	Aligned	Integrated
<p>Activities, initiatives, and operational processes may not generate data or the data is not collected, aggregated, or analyzed. Institutional goals lack measures, metrics, and/or benchmarks for evaluating progress. The monitoring of quality of operational practices and procedures may be based on assumptions about quality. Data collected may not be segmented or distributed effectively to inform decision-making.</p>	<p>Data and information are collected and archived for use, available to evaluate progress, and are analyzed at various levels. The results are shared and begin to erode institutional silos and foster improvement initiatives across institutional units. The tracking of performance on institutional goals has begun in a manner that yields trend data and lends itself to comparative measures in some areas.</p>	<p>Measures, metrics and benchmarks are understood and used by all relevant stakeholders. Good performance levels are reported with beneficial trends sustained over time in many areas of importance. Results are segmented and distributed to all responsible institutional units in a manner that supports effective decision-making, planning and collaboration on improvement initiatives. Measures and metrics are designed to enable the aggregation and</p>	<p>Data and information are analyzed and used to optimize operations on an ongoing basis. Performance levels are monitored using appropriate benchmarks. Trend data has been accrued and analyzed for most areas of performance. Results are shared, aggregated, segmented and analyzed in a manner that supports transparency, efficiency, collaboration and progress on organizational goals. Measures and metrics for strategic and operational goals yield results that are used in</p>

		analysis of results at an institutional level.	decision-making and resource allocations.
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APPENDIX B

AQIP Category Feedback

AQIP Category One

HELPING STUDENTS LEARN focuses on the design, deployment, and effectiveness of teaching-learning processes (and on the processes required to support them) that underlie your institution's credit and non-credit programs and courses.

1P1. **Common Learning Outcomes** focuses on the knowledge, skills, and abilities expected of graduates from all programs. Describe the processes for determining, communicating and ensuring the stated common learning outcomes and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Aligning common outcomes to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution	<p>Metropolitan State University has established 10 General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS) required competencies aligned with its mission to provide high-quality education, address social problems and adapt to change, and foster community engagement.</p> <p>Metropolitan State's mission to provide a high-quality liberal arts education is captured in six of the institution's common learning outcomes. The other main tenet of this mission, to demonstrate the institution's commitment to its service area with an emphasis on serving traditionally underserved groups, is captured in the other four common learning outcomes. There appears to be an opportunity to improve the level of maturity for this process by extending the application of common learning outcomes to its graduate-level coursework as well.</p>
Determining common outcomes	<p>Minnesota State Colleges and University's Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) requires that all Metropolitan State students earn 40 credits in the 10 GELS core goal areas. The GELS Committee, which is a faculty committee representing all of its colleges and schools, is responsible for ensuring that Metropolitan State complies.</p> <p>The GELS Committee members align common outcomes across each college and school under University Policy 2010 and MnTC procedure.</p>
Articulating the purposes, content, and level of achievement of these outcomes	<p>Each semester, Metropolitan State University has a detailed, publicly-available document that outlines the purposes and content of the common learning outcomes for each course offered, indicating an aligned level of maturity. This is accomplished through the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) and on the university web site. There is an opportunity to improve the level of maturity for this process with more detail about the level of achievement for each outcome or competency. Currently, it appears that the outcome is assumed to be attained as long as the respective course is completed.</p>
Incorporating into the curriculum opportunities for all students to achieve these outcomes	<p>The university has embedded GELS courses in 44 curriculum areas. Students have a broad opportunity to achieve the outcomes in a systematic manner. Prior learning assessment and independent studies also enable students to achieve outcomes.</p> <p>However, there is no discussion concerning the process by which learning outcomes are aligned to courses. Although it is assumed that this occurs within the GELS committee, there is no discussion of</p>

	<p>how this happens on a consistent and repeatable basis. Furthermore, there is no mention of a process to identify instances where there might be limited opportunities for students to meet certain learning outcome and take actions to address such a situation. This presents the university with an opportunity to move to an aligned level.</p>
Ensuring the outcomes remain relevant and aligned with student, workplace, and societal needs	<p>Metropolitan State University's learning outcomes are reviewed for appropriateness by the Minnesota State College and University system (MnSCU) Academic Affairs Council on a regular basis, recently receiving this affirmation in 2014. The institution also utilizes employer feedback to ensure the alignment of the institution's learning outcomes to workplace needs, indicating an aligned level of maturity for this process. However, it is unclear how, and how frequently this information is solicited from employers. There is also an opportunity to improve the maturity level of this process by incorporating feedback from students as well.</p>
Designing, aligning, and delivering co-curricular activities to support learning	<p>The design, alignment, and delivery of co-curricular activities is intended to help achieve the university's vision, namely to "...reflect the area's rich diversity, build an anti-racist learning community, and demonstrated an unwavering commitment to civic engagement." In light of this, faculty collaborate with the Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship (ICES) to establish co-curricular activities to support learning. This process is systematic and achieved through work groups, advisory councils, the Student Senate, faculty members, and staff.</p>
Selecting tools/methods/instruments used to assess attainment of common learning outcomes	<p>From the evidence presented, selection of tools, methods, and instruments is at a late reacting to early systematic level of maturity. While the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is a valuable tool to analyze student effort and resources provided by the university, it cannot provide student achievement of GELS competencies. Further, course-level assessments may provide inadequate evidence for continuous improvement efforts across general education curricula. In other sections of the portfolio, the university reports that assessment of student learning will be placed under the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Metropolitan State may want to consider further development of this process as a priority.</p>
Assessing common learning outcomes	<p>Student achievement of GELS outcomes and goals takes place on a course-by-course basis as prescribed in (course) syllabi. The National Survey of Student Engagement is administered to (a sample of) seniors in the spring of odd-numbered years. There does not appear to be an institutional assessment of how well each learning outcome is being met, which indicates a reacting level of maturity to this process.</p> <p>Metropolitan State may want to consider making assessment of GELS competencies a priority to move to a higher level of maturity.</p>
Other identified processes	

1R1. What are the results for determining if students possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are expected at each degree level?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	As Metropolitan State University has indicated, it is at the reacting stage in outcomes tracked and tools utilized. There is some promise in the work being done in the College of Management. Once this work spreads and

	the results are used to improve institution-wide learning, movement to the systematic level can be realized.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	The summary measures that Metropolitan State utilizes to track learning outcome attainment are individual item responses to the NSSE. It would appear that the GELS committee vetted the questions to determine which items from the NSSE should be considered appropriate indicators for the 10 GELS, but this process is unclear. Although the summary measure results are currently at the reacting stage of maturity, the institution mentions the development of a more formalized and systematic process for assessing common learning outcomes and sharing results, which will help improve the level of process maturity.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	Although there are no internal benchmarks that have been established with the measures that are currently being used at the university, it does present comparisons between its NSSE results and those of peer institutions. However, there is no mention of how or if such comparisons are used internally, indicating a reacting level of maturity
Interpretation of results and insights gained	Metropolitan State offers an interpretation for the areas of highest gain results. It has an opportunity to also draw conclusions from the other results presented. The conclusion drawn from the transferable skills module that trend data results were stable and “[T]here were few significant differences between the Metropolitan State mean and the mean of the comparison groups”. It could prove useful to understand the implications of this analysis by drawing further conclusions as to what this might mean. Although the university has already taken steps to improve the level of maturity in its measurement of institutional learning outcomes, it does not appear that currently available information is being utilized in a consistent and systematic manner, indicating a reacting level of maturity.

111. Based on 1R1, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
Several process improvements have been made and are being planned. Notification to faculty explaining the process for getting courses added or removed from the approved GELS list is being done. A change request form has been developed so that all receive communication when changes to GELS occur. A new procedure is being developed to determine reasonable accommodations in GELS classes. Metropolitan State has an opportunity to plan improvements in its development of internal targets and benchmarks.

1P2. **Program Learning Outcomes** focuses on the knowledge, skills, and abilities graduates from particular programs are expected to possess. Describe the processes for determining, communicating and ensuring the stated program learning outcomes and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Aligning program learning outcomes to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution	Metropolitan State University has an established framework for aligning program learning outcomes to its mission that begins with faculty curriculum committees. The institution also utilizes a tool (Planning Tool for Academic Programs) to help guide the alignment of program curricula to the college’s and state system’s missions. Professional associations and accrediting agencies also guide this process. However, it is unclear how this tool is used or how it has

	been institutionalized, indicating an aligned level of maturity for this process.
Determining program outcomes	Metropolitan State faculty determine program outcomes, although from the evidence provided it is unclear if a university policy or procedure is in place to guide program faculty, indicating a reactive stage of maturity. The university may want to formalize this process to make it explicit and subject to improvement to inform efforts across its colleges and schools.
Articulating the purposes, content, and level of achievement of these outcomes	Metropolitan State communicates programs' purposes and content through learning outcome goals and communicates levels of achievement through program assessment reports. It is unclear how the actual process for communicating about outcomes is achieved (especially for intended audiences). This places the university in a reacting stage of maturity.
Ensuring the outcomes remain relevant and aligned with student, workplace, and societal needs	While Metropolitan State conducts regular program reviews, updating learning outcomes to meet professional standards, it is unclear how the university involves key stakeholders, like employers, in the process so that it can incorporate their input. This places the university at a reacting stage. Metropolitan State has an opportunity to ensure that key stakeholders' input informs its outcomes so that they remain relevant and aligned with stakeholders' need.
Designing, aligning, and delivering co-curricular activities to support learning	Metropolitan State University has a systematic manner of designing, aligning, and delivering co-curricular activities. It has received the Community Engagement Classification through 2025. In addition, more than 100 faculty participated in the Circle of Engaged Learning. Opportunities for student learning through leadership in student organizations that have demonstrated their alignment with university goals can be tracked through an online system, <i>OrgSync</i> , reflecting an "involvement transcript". The Carnegie foundation has awarded its Engagement Classification to the university through 2025 for its, "...university-wide approach of teaching, research or experiential learning that combines authentic community or public service activity with academic instruction". Whether there are other means, beyond official student organization leadership, for student involvement in co-curricular activities is not discussed. This is also true of the university's process for designing and aligning all of its co-curricular activities. The university seems to have an opportunity to establish a more comprehensive approach to this function.
Selecting tools/methods/instruments used to assess attainment of program learning outcomes	Program faculty determine the tools or methods used for program assessment and report results to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA), indicating a systematic stage of maturity. To increase maturity, the university might consider evaluating the current process for improvement and share lessons learned among its institutional units.
Assessing program learning outcomes	While the university states that the Provost & VPAA is responsible for assessment at Metropolitan State and that annual assessment reports are submitted, the actual process of assessing program outcomes is not explained. This places the maturity at reacting . A collaborative effort to document and evaluate program assessment processes used across colleges and schools could assist in identifying best practices, as well as gaps to be addressed. The university has an opportunity to clarify its process.
Other identified processes	

1R2. What are your results for determining if students possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are expected in programs?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	Each college uses measures specifically related to the applicable program of study ranging from standard measures to course assessments. Collaboration, communication, and coordination among colleges would allow lessons learned to be shared among program faculty. The university has systematic results for outcomes for a variety of academic units.
Overall levels of deployment of assessment processes within the institution	Metropolitan State is reorganizing its assessment function. Despite this current reorganization, it has an opportunity to describe the level of assessment process deployment over the past few years. Currently, academic programs are required to submit a summary of assessment activities every year and a program review every five years. This reacting model is being reorganized to include faculty training and development in program learning outcomes assessment.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	Metropolitan State presents summary results for life sciences, biology, education, nursing, and management. While tools are identified for economics, management, and law enforcement, no results are presented. It appears, with some frequency, that the university has a tendency to use previous years' results as internal targets as opposed to setting goals that either stretch the institution or take into account circumstantial factors. This places the university in a reacting stage of maturity.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	Metropolitan State provides some comparative data as internal targets or external benchmarks indicative of a reacting stage of maturity. This data is a first step in establishing targets or benchmarks. For example, under the management rubric identifying the percentage of students or percentile ranking of students who meet or exceed a certain score is a more useful target rather than a mean score alone. In addition, the university could present the national norm data for the Educational Testing Services (ETS) assessments for comparative purposes.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	The university appears to be reacting in its interpretation of results and insights gained. It states its licensure pass rates often meet or exceed the national or state benchmarked averages. Reviewing trend data might provide additional areas for program improvement.

1I2. Based on 1R2, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
Metropolitan State University will soon hire a coordinator of assessment to develop and implement a comprehensive program assessment plan. The university will also be participating in Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) Fall 2015 Assessment Academy. The university has an opportunity to go beyond its tendency to exceed previous years' performance and establish targets that will stretch the institution's organizational performance and account for situational factors.

1P3. **Academic Program Design** focuses on developing and revising programs to meet stakeholders' needs. Describe the processes for ensuring new and current programs meet the needs of the institution and its diverse stakeholders. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Identifying student stakeholder groups and	To help students meet their educational needs, Metropolitan State provides a number of student services including Multicultural Services, Veteran Services, Disability Services, TRiO, Student Parent

determining their educational needs	<p>Center, International Student Services, along with some ways that it helps students determine the appropriateness of their field of study. The reactive process for identifying student stakeholder groups and determining their educational needs, however, is not clear.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to improve the level of maturity by incorporating student feedback into the process of identifying educational needs.</p>
Identifying other key stakeholder groups and determining their needs	<p>Metropolitan State relies on input from certification bodies, advisory boards, and professional practice standards to determine stakeholder needs. While some programs utilize advisory boards to determine the needs of other stakeholder groups, the process for any program that does not have an advisory board is unclear. It is also unclear how or if other stakeholder needs that are not specific to a department (e.g., community members, parents, etc.) are identified. Opportunities to move from this systematic approach include developing processes for determining the effectiveness of these efforts, disseminating findings, and regularly analyzing its external stakeholder population to address the needs of underserved stakeholders.</p>
Developing and improving responsive programming to meet all stakeholders' needs	<p>While the university has a systematic process in place implemented under University Policy 2070, it is unclear from the evidence provided how stakeholders' needs are included in the process. Metropolitan State has an opportunity to review its policy and related procedures to ensure stakeholder needs are addressed explicitly.</p>
Selecting the tools/methods/instruments used to assess the currency and effectiveness of academic programs	<p>The process for selecting instruments to assess the currency of academic programs appears to be subsumed within the five-year program review process, with oversight provided by the Academic Affairs Office. This process allows for consistency across programs in the selection of tools for assessment, but it would also seem to limit the opportunity to make timely decision about tools to assess program currency since this only happens once every five years. This process appears to be at a systematic level of maturity.</p> <p>Opportunities to move from this approach include identifying tools, methods, and instruments, developing processes for determining their effectiveness, and disseminating findings.</p>
Reviewing the viability of courses and programs and changing or discontinuing when necessary	<p>Metropolitan State uses a variety of systematic methods to determine the currency of programs (e.g., program review, program accreditation, community faculty input, advisory boards, and student feedback). However, no information is provided about the process used to discontinue programs. Metropolitan State has opportunities to increase process maturity by creating a plan to evaluate the methods used and then aggregate and analyze the information from these methods. In addition, the plan could include criteria for discontinuing courses and programs.</p>
Other identified processes	

1R3 What are the results for determining if programs are current and meet the needs of the institution's diverse stakeholders?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	The program review process at Metropolitan State is undergoing revision with a view to standardizing processes and (improving its) consideration of stakeholders. The university acknowledges that it is in a reacting stage.
Summary results of measures (including	The evidence provided in this portion of the systems portfolio is a summary of programs that Metropolitan State has recently added. However, there is

tables and figures when possible)	an opportunity to improve the level of maturity by presenting an example of summary results that are used to make the decisions to add or modify the programs that are presented in Table 1.8. The university has self-identified section 1R3 as being at a reacting level of maturity. There does not appear to be a systematic process in place for summarizing what assessment results are available.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	The university reports that it sets targets when new programs are added, but not for existing ones. Professional program results are compared with statewide results, however these are not provided either. Setting and comparing targets will help the university track trend data for performance and for improvement opportunities. This places the university in a reacting stage of maturity.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	Metropolitan State concludes that it is sensitive to changing needs, that it recognizes that career areas change, and that advisory groups are helpful. It is not apparent how these are helpful conclusions (leading to improvements that can be acted upon) or how they are driven directly by the results presented. This represents a reacting level of maturity. Better alignment among measures, results reported, analysis of results, and conclusions drawn from its analysis is needed.

113. Based on 1R3, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
Metropolitan State University is updating its institutional program review process and has had all of its programs conduct program evaluations during the 2014-2015 academic year. The Institutional Research Office has also been reorganized to report to the Provost and VPAA to facilitate the use and collection of data in the updated program review process. Budgeting additional funds for program review, so that programs may engage outside reviewers or have support for other data collection methods, is commendable.

1P4. **Academic Program Quality** focuses on ensuring quality across all programs, modalities, and locations. Describe the processes for ensuring quality academic programming. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Determining and communicating the preparation required of students for the specific curricula, programs, courses, and learning they will pursue	The university appears to have a systematic process for determining and communicating the preparation required of students for curricula, programs, courses, and learning. Program faculty determine the preparation needed for courses and programs. The information is communicated through advising, web site, marketing materials, and other publications. Perhaps this process could be improved by periodic evaluation of the utility of this process and, if appropriate prerequisites are in place, as part of program review.
Evaluating and ensuring program rigor for all modalities, locations, consortia, and when offering dual-credit programs	The expectations for ensuring quality at Metropolitan State are the same regardless of modality or location. The university provides resources, training, and individual support for faculty during the developmental process for online courses. It is implementing a new peer review process with a view to ensuring the quality of its online offerings. An Instructional Improvement Questionnaire (IIQ) is administered in every course. Fulltime faculty are reviewed regularly for teaching quality and part-time faculty's teaching quality is addressed in individual Professional Development Reports (PDR). The key elements of the developmental process and new peer review

	process are unclear and reacting in nature. The university has an opportunity to describe some of the key elements of these processes.
Awarding prior learning and transfer credits	Metropolitan State's approach to awarding prior learning and transfer credits is consistent with the MnTC which applies to all MnSCU institutions. Key mechanisms for awarding prior learning and transfer credits include administering recognized assessment exams and articulation agreements. This appears to be a systematic approach.
Selecting, implementing, and maintaining specialized accreditation(s)	The institution has multiple specialized accreditations for which it is approved or in good standing. However, the institutional processes by which these accreditations are sought remains unclear, indicating a systematic level of maturity. Metropolitan has an opportunity to move to a more aligned level by describing the process for selecting, implementing, and maintaining its accreditations.
Assessing the level of outcomes attainment by graduates at all levels	<i>[The university does not discuss the matter here, referring the reader to previous portfolio discussions, namely 1P1-1R1 for its general education outcomes assessment and 1P2-1R2 for the assessment of its academic programs.]</i> In light of the fact that the previous discussions of assessment generally stated the fact of doing outcomes assessment but did not describe its processes for doing so, the university has an opportunity to describe its processes. It has a reacting level of maturity in regards to assessing the level of outcomes attainment by graduates at all levels.
Selecting the tools/methods/instruments used to assess program rigor across all modalities	Tools, methods, and instruments used to assess program rigor across all modalities are not actually discussed in this section. The university does state additional peer review assessments are conducted for online courses. This is a reacting level of maturity.
Other identified processes	

1R4 What are the results for determining the quality of academic programs?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	To monitor the quality of academic programs across locations and modalities, Metropolitan State cites three tools: the Priorities Survey for Online Learning (PSOL) (learner satisfaction), the IIQ (student feedback), and NSSE (student engagement). These systematic efforts could be improved by developing analysis for comparing responses among students by location and modality to ensure that the quality is, in fact, consistent.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	While some results for this area are provided, the results from the PSOL, Adult Learner Inventory (ALI), and NSSE are not. It is unclear why more results related to determining academic program quality at Metropolitan State are not presented. The university appears to have an opportunity to present more of its results. Thus, the maturity level is reacting .
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	The university doesn't report how it establishes internal targets although it reports using its results to compare with external benchmarks. No data is provided to illustrate its performance results or comparisons. This is a reacting level of maturity.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	Summary data from the POSL is used to make institutional decisions regarding online course offerings. This information has been disseminated throughout the university in presentations by the Academic Affairs Office, but it does not appear that such sessions happen on a regular basis. The Faculty Development Office also trains new faculty on interpreting the institution's student evaluation tool for making classroom improvements. Together, these practices indicate a reacting level of maturity.

114. Based on 1R4, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
Metropolitan State identifies improvements related to the model used in its Center for Faculty Development, peer reviewing for online course development, and hiring a coordinator of assessment. While these may be worthwhile improvements to pursue, it is not evident how these improvements were decided based on a CQI approach of analyzing results. The university has a clear opportunity to document its processes and to align its measures, reported results, analysis, conclusions, and improvements.

1P5. **Academic Student Support** focuses on systems designed to help students be successful. Describe the processes for developing and delivering academic support to students. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Identifying underprepared and at-risk students, and determining their academic support needs	Metropolitan State has systematic processes to identify underprepared and at-risk students and determine their academic support needs. The university has an opportunity to periodically evaluate these processes to ensure that they are meeting institutional goals and strategies.
Deploying academic support services to help students select and successfully complete courses and programs	The university is aligned in deploying academic support services to help students select and successfully complete courses and programs. Students are placed according to <i>Accuplacer</i> results in writing and math courses. Students complete an online orientation and have the option for group advising and registration. Undecided students are assigned an advisor.
Ensuring faculty are available for student inquiry	Per contract, faculty are to be available to students for at least 10 regularly scheduled office hours per week, indicating a systematic level of maturity. The university has opportunities to further clarify if this includes community faculty and how it ensures whether this is adequate for student needs.
Determining and addressing the learning support needs (tutoring, advising, library, laboratories, research, etc.) of students and faculty	The university has solid learning support in the area of advising, tutoring, and library resources. Metropolitan State supports students learning through Career Services, TRiO/Student Support Services (SSS), Disability Services, Math and Writing Centers, Veterans, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) services. This is a systematic process.
Ensuring staff members who provide student academic support services are qualified, trained, and supported	Position descriptions that include qualifications are vetted by Human Resources and the relevant union. Metropolitan holds required training for new faculty and professional advisors, as well as new tutors. Additionally, there is ongoing training and webinars available for support staff. This process is at a systematic level of maturity.
Communicating the availability of academic support services	The methods by which the university communicates the availability of academic support services appears to be systematic . Students are notified during the Group Advising and Registration (GAR) sessions and Welcome Week about support services.
Determining goals for retention, persistence and program completion	Annually, the Provost and the VP for Enrollment Management determine Metropolitan State's goals for retention, persistence, and program completion. While the university refers to a specific 2015 goal for retention, it does not do so for persistence or program completion. From the information provided here, the role of the Retention Task Force (discussed in Category 2) is unclear. The process for determining targets, how to improve upon them, and how

	the data are employed to set further improvements is not provided, making this a reacting process.
Selecting the tools/methods/instruments used to evaluate the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of support services	The university has selected two quantitative tools for evaluation of its advising and counseling services. It also uses the PSOL (online), ASPS, & ALI (adult learners). These tools would give the university historic trend information and comparable (other institutions) information. Metropolitan is systematic in this process.
Other identified processes	

1R5 What are the results for determining the quality of academic support services?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	Based on information provided under 1P5, Metropolitan State systematically uses the Noel-Levitz survey, a university-created advising survey for advising services; the Counseling Center Assessment of Psychological Symptoms measure, student surveys for counseling services, the College Student Health Survey, and a variety of measures for academic support services. In addition, library services are evaluated using student suggestions and focus groups.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	There are numerous results summarized from the many support service assessment tools mentioned above. However, it is unclear how the student retention and completion summary tables are utilized by support service areas without more explanation. Is this information routinely reviewed by support service areas in addition to the service specific feedback from students? The summary information showed the high level of satisfaction that Metropolitan students have with these services. The declining number of students utilizing the tutoring center and the fact that a minority of students (only 20%) utilize this service overall may indicate the need for better communication of the benefits of this service to students. This result is at the systematic level of maturity.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	The university has a reacting level of maturity when it comes to comparing results with internal targets and external benchmarks. To move to a more systematic level the university should state its internal targets and make comparisons with the external benchmarks. For example, what is the advising load of comparable institutions? That type of analysis of results will move the university's maturity level higher.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	The university has an opportunity for deeper analysis of the data and for developing improvements based on this data. The 2010 Advising Task Force recommended a 300:1 student to advisor ratio. However in 2012, academic advisors had an average of 363 advisees, 340 of which were identified as active (enrolled) students. Regular data collection and analysis will help establish trends and identify areas for improvement and the university, moving it from reacting to a systematic level of maturity.

115. Based on 1R5, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
Metropolitan State University has already undertaken a number of improvements and organizational changes over recent years to improve the impact of student support services. These include establishing a new advising coordinator position, online appointment scheduling for the Center for Academic Excellence (CAE), and implementing a strategic course calendar program to guide degree planning. Metropolitan State also plans to implement many other initiatives over the next few years to improve the impact of student support services on its students. These include developing a strategic plan for the library, updating the advising mission statement and enhancing advisor training materials. Yet, it is still unclear, from 1P5 and 1R5 what information was utilized to prompt these improvements.

1P6. **Academic Integrity** focuses on ethical practices while pursuing knowledge. Describe the processes for supporting ethical scholarly practices by students and faculty. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Ensuring freedom of expression and the integrity of research and scholarly practice	The university appears to be systematic in ensuring freedom of expressing and integrity of research. This is outlined in the Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities. For faculty, this is covered in the faculty contract. University Policy 2060 assigns responsibility for implementation of the Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB) to the Office of Provost.
Ensuring ethical learning and research practices of students	In 2014, Metropolitan State adopted a new Student Academic Integrity Policy, violations of which are addressed in 3 ways depending upon severity and whether it is a first-time or repeat violation. University resources including faculty training, an online workshop, and a Student Guide to Academic Integrity. Appeals go to an ombudsperson and the Academic Affairs Committee. The International Center for Academic Integrity's (ICAI) <i>Campus of Integrity Award</i> was given to the university in 2015. This is a solid systematic process.
Ensuring ethical teaching and research practices of faculty	The university has policies covering assessment of student learning, including course, program, and GELS objectives. The student complaints and grievances process provides students with a tool to report improper, arbitrary, and unfair treatment. Metropolitan also has a student ombudsperson who aids students in the complaint process. This places the university in the systematic level of maturity.
Selecting the tools/methods/instruments used to evaluate the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of supporting Academic Integrity	A single tool is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the institution's academic integrity policy (<i>Maxient</i>). However, it is unclear what information was utilized to select this particular tool, or if there are other measures or data that are regularly used to evaluate the effectiveness of the academic integrity policy, indicating a reacting level of maturity to this process.
Other identified processes	

1R6 What are the results for determining the quality of learning support systems?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	The measures highlighted in section 1R6 (through the <i>Maxient</i> reporting system) appear to exclusively capture issues related to student academic integrity infractions. If data related to assessment of ethical learning or research practices are utilized, they are not mentioned. This would indicate a reacting level of maturity.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	Summary data related to student academic integrity violations and HSRB training participants are provided. However, summary data to track the number of student complaints regarding grades or faculty and the number of research project reviews conducted by the HSRB are not provided. This indicates a systematic level of maturity.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	Metropolitan State recently implemented an automated system for collecting results and provides no previous trend data. It might consider working with other MnSCU institutions or Maxient to uncover possible external benchmarks. It is currently at the reacting stage of maturity.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	No interpretation of results are provided based on to the recent implementation of the academic integrity policy and procedure. Further, no interpretation of results is provided for Collaborative Institutional Training

	Initiative (CITI) data. Given the new reporting system, interpretation of results not been conducted. However, it is unclear if an analysis of such information has ever been conducted in the past, since data has been available in past years, although in a different format (paper forms). This indicates a reacting level of maturity for this result.
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116. Based on 1R6, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
Metropolitan State identifies four improvements. While these appear to be worthwhile, they do not seem to be the direct byproducts of the university's analysis of its results presented. Improvements that are directly driven by the analysis of clearly presented results will move the university to a higher level of maturity in this area.

AQIP Category Two

MEETING STUDENT & OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDER NEEDS focuses on determining, understanding and meeting needs of current and prospective students' and other key stakeholders such as alumni and community partners.

2P1. **Current and Prospective Student Needs** focuses on determining, understanding and meeting the non-academic needs of current and prospective students. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Identifying key student groups	Metropolitan State systematically reports basic demographic data to both HLC and IPEDS. It has an opportunity to develop a more proactive and comprehensive process to move to a more aligned level by delving deeper into the data. Further analyzing data including employment levels, age, and diversity, might ensure that no gaps exist for meeting the needs of key student groups.
Determining new student groups to target for educational offerings and services	New student groups are identified in the university's three-year enrollment management plan. The university has an opportunity to increase maturity to fully systematic by documenting and periodically evaluating its actual processes and those outside of MnSCU who are involved in determining new student groups to serve.
Meeting changing student needs	Two aligned processes are in place – student representatives who serve on university committees and Student Affairs annual strategic planning efforts. The maturity of the other processes is systematic and could be strengthened by ensuring the information obtained from the various sources is shared and that the units working to meet student needs coordinate and communicate.
Identifying and supporting student subgroups with distinctive needs (e.g., seniors, commuters, distance learners, military veterans)	Metropolitan State identifies numerous student subgroups with distinctive needs, but it does not describe its process for doing so. Therefore, from the evidence provided, this subprocess is at the reacting stage of maturity. Incorporating these processes in the Student Affairs annual strategic planning process might uncover additional subgroups with distinctive needs and ways to support them.
Deploying non-academic support services to help students be successful	Metropolitan State provides a table listing student support services and activities. However, the university did not describe the processes used to determine these support services. Therefore, this sub-process is at the reacting stage of maturity. Perhaps this effort,

	too, could be included in the Student Affairs annual strategic planning process.
Ensuring staff members who provide non-academic student academic support services are qualified, trained, and supported	A comprehensive, systematic hiring process ensures that student support staff members are appropriately qualified for their positions. In addition, the university has processes in place through annual performance evaluations and recommendations made by the Staff Development Committee to provide ongoing professional development. To move to the aligned stage of maturity, Metropolitan State could periodically evaluate these processes for improvement to ensure that available resources are sufficient and utilized.
Communicating the availability of non-academic support services	Metropolitan State uses systematic processes to communicate the availability of non-academic support services to students. However, all of the methods appear to be indirect, in that they are available for students who seek out such information. Additionally, the university did not document how those processes were chosen or developed. Aligned maturity would be characterized by periodic evaluation of processes with lessons learned communicated across institutional units.
Selecting tools/methods/instruments to assess student needs	Multiple surveys are conducted each year to assess student needs and satisfaction with various aspects of the institution. However, the process by which these measures are identified is still unclear. Furthermore, the process by which the data collected from these measures are aggregated and discussed in order to assess student needs is still unclear, indicating a systematic level of maturity.
Assessing the degree to which student needs are met	Student needs are identified through a number of methods and action plans are reviewed and adjusted. Yet, it is unclear how this review process happens or what criteria are used to determine whether needs are met or not. The Enrollment Management Office has recently conducted student focus groups to discuss survey assessment results. It is not clear whether these focus groups happen on a regular basis or were one-time events and what the process is for systematically using this student feedback to assess whether needs are met. This process can move from a systematic to an aligned level of maturity by establishing ongoing, institutionalized practices for assessing student needs.

2R1. What are the results for determining if current and prospective students' needs are being met?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	A number of different measures are utilized to assess various student groups' needs, as discussed in 2P1. However, only the results from the ASPS (an assessment for adult student satisfaction) are discussed in 2R1. It is unclear what results are analyzed to assess whether the needs of other subgroups are being met. This indicates a systematic level of maturity.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	Metropolitan State provides trend and comparative data for the ASPS. Generally, its performance in this area has improved from 2009 to 2013, noting improvements in its performance gaps and comparisons to national cohorts. To move from a systematic to an aligned stage, the university could analyze other survey results (with accompanying internal targets compared to trend data) and external benchmarks compared to national results.

Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	Metropolitan State presents its ASPS results for 2009, 2011, and 2013, showing general improvements in performance when compared to national cohorts. However, the university does not identify internal targets for its performance. Now it appears to have an opportunity to establish objective performance goals for specific dimensions of the ASPS so it can measure its future success. It can move from reacting towards a systematic level by setting internal targets, including other survey results to develop a more complete analysis of its performance, and identifying possible areas for improvement.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	Although the university provides ASPS results to document how it identifies areas of strength or weakness as well as improvements or declines over time, the interpretation of this data appears to be at a superficial level. It is unclear how insights from this data are gained and disseminated at a broad, institutional level, indicating a reacting level of maturity for these results. Comparisons to university established internal targets or external benchmarks could assist Metropolitan State in determining priorities and setting strategic and operational goals.

2I1. Based on 2R1, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts	
Metropolitan State identifies several recent and future improvements including a Student Affairs Monthly report, five-year survey plan, and an AQIP Action Project designed to improve student communication. Some appear to be logical decisions based on the analysis of the results presented, while for others it is not apparent how the analysis resulted in a given improvement decision. The university is encouraged to establish targets and benchmarks as part of the effort to develop procedures to systematically analyze data and standardize assessments. Future improvements will benefit from clear identification of begin dates, targeted completion dates, and milestones which will help the university measure its progress, and ultimately its success in these improvement initiatives.	

2P2. **Retention, Persistence, and Completion** focuses on the approach to collecting, analyzing and distributing data on retention, persistence and completion to stakeholders for decision-making. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Collecting student retention, persistence, and completion data	MnSCU collects and reports data concerning student retention, persistence, and completion. It does not appear that Metropolitan State collects or analyzes any other student retention and completion data beyond what is required by the state, indicating a reacting level of maturity. Adult students, for example, are an identified focus group for the university but don't appear to be one of the student subgroups for which the state's data can be disaggregated. Further identifying subgroups beyond MnSCU-defined characteristics (gender, underrepresented, students of color) could identify opportunities for it to serve its unique, diverse student population.
Determining targets for student retention, persistence, and completion	This appears to be a systematic level of maturity. Targets for retention, persistence, and completion are established through the strategic planning process, hinting at the cross-functional representation that is involved in making decisions about targets. However, it is unclear what information is used to determine such targets, how they are determined, or how they are evaluated for effectiveness.

Analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion	Weekly updates on enrollments, applications, admissions, conversion rates, enrolled rates, yield rates, and total credits are sent to the President's Council and union leadership by the AVP of Enrollment Management. Also, the Retention Task Force analyzes enrollment information and makes recommendations for improving retention, persistence, and completion. It is unclear from the evidence provided how these systematic efforts are coordinated among strategic planning, Retention Task Force activities, weekly enrollment monitoring, and the three-year enrollment management plan.
Meeting targets for retention, persistence, and completion	Metropolitan State provides a list of resources and activities used to meet targets. However, it did not describe the processes or criteria used to determine these resources, faculty involvement, or the effectiveness of the activities. Therefore, this sub-process is at the reacting stage of maturity. Systematic processes indicate coordination and implementation across institutional units with generally understood, repeatable, and documented processes.
Selecting tools/methods/instruments used to assess attainment of retention, persistence, and completion outcomes	From information provided, it appears Metropolitan State relies mainly on the MnSCU Accountability Dashboard for retention, persistence, and completion data. This instrument provides for comparisons at the institutional level, but may not provide detailed levels analysis to evaluate internal program or college retention, persistence, and completion outcomes. The university has also worked with a research consultant to identify key student characteristics that influence retention and degree completion. This study was conducted in 2012 and it is unclear if the results of this study have been used. This process appears to be at a reacting level of maturity.

2R2. What are the results for student retention, persistence and completion?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	Metropolitan State suggests a variety of reports are available from the MnSCU Accountability Dashboard, that are able to provide data about entering cohort, student characteristics, admissions category, and student load. It is unclear, however, which of these measures or disaggregations are typically used by the university in making decisions since the data provided is at the institutional level. In addition, the vice president monitors weekly enrollment and should be able to provide enrollment patterns by term. However, from the information provided it is unclear what measures are used to inform decision-making indicating a reacting stage of maturity. The university has an opportunity to analyze its current outcome tracking processes for more effectiveness.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	Limited summary tables of completion and retention data from the state Accountability Dashboard are presented, reporting increases in completion and decreases in retention rates. However, there is no indication about how this information is utilized and shared across the institution. This indicates a reacting stage of maturity. More complete results related to data sub-sets (e.g., by student characteristics, admissions category, student load) would demonstrate a more sophisticated stage of maturity.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	The portfolio includes completion results through 2008 and persistence rates through 2012 for the university as well as other systems institutions. It is unclear why more current results and internal targets were not included. It might be beneficial for the university to benchmark its performance with peer-institutions outside the MnSCU system that would be characterized as urban institutions or those that serve similar student groups. The university is at a reacting stage, but can move to a mature

	stage through deeper analysis of results to replicate and expand successful processes and to foster improvement initiatives.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	Among the universities within the MnSCU system, Metropolitan State reports the highest completion rate and the third highest persistence rate. The decline in persistence rate between Fall 2007 and Fall 2012 is attributed to the high-risk student population that the university serves. It is unclear, from the results provided, if the assertion is supported indicating a reacting stage of maturity. Presentation of persistence results by credit load, for example, would provide stronger support for the assertion. Reviewing the insights from the consulting firm and incorporating results from other internal and external surveys might provide additional insight or areas for investigation.

2I2. Based on 2R2, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts	
Metropolitan State provides a list of improvements but the direct link to the results reported is difficult to determine for some items. The “early alert,” Welcome Day, and undeclared student advising center were established based on data trends and the Asmussen Report. Targets for measuring their success need to be established and monitored. The rationale for the others was not presented. Other improvement efforts the university may want to consider include better alignment across the strategic planning process, Retention Task Force efforts, and weekly enrollment monitoring, as well as developing more complete results to inform its interpretation of results and support decision-making. Additionally, the university may want to consider creating baselines using the Asmussen data points and monitoring results over time.	

2P3. **Key Stakeholder Needs** focuses on determining, understanding and meeting needs of key stakeholder groups including alumni and community partners. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Determining key external stakeholder groups (e.g., alumni, employers, community)	Metropolitan State identifies alumni as a key stakeholder group but does not describe a process for maintaining relationships beyond a first year complimentary membership, indicating a reacting stage of maturity. In addition, based on its mission, the university identifies specific community groups as external partners but does not describe the process or criteria used to select these partners nor does it discuss how it includes employers as external stakeholders. Given its emphasis upon engagement, the university has an opportunity to identify more stakeholders.
Determining new stakeholders to target for services or partnership	While the university identifies ICES as the party responsible for aligning academic programs and community-based applications, it does not describe a process or the criteria used to determine whether any given group should be considered for partnership. This indicates a reacting stage of maturity. The university has an opportunity to articulate its process and criteria used for this mission-critical function.
Meeting the changing needs of key stakeholders	Although the Community University Action Team (CUAT) is in place to meet the needs of the community, the processes used and the relationship with the Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship is unclear, indicating a reacting stage of maturity.
Selecting tools/methods/instruments to	The university developed an internal alumni survey in 2012, but it has not been administered since then. The CUAT uses qualitative evaluation strategies which were not further defined. ICES has

assess key stakeholder needs	internal evaluation tools, but there is no discussion of how any given tool, method, or instrument is determined for use, indicating a reacting maturity. It could be beneficial for the three organizations to generate and share data to address key stakeholder needs.
Assessing the degree to which key stakeholder needs are met	Processes include the longitudinal tracking of evaluations from community outreach events by ICES, and the reported qualitative evaluation strategies used by CUAT. No repeatable, documented processes are described for the Alumni Association. Overall, these processes indicate a reacting maturity level. These entities have a common goal for assessing whether key stakeholder needs are met. The university may benefit from coordinating efforts across departments to share best practices.

2R3. What are the results for determining if key stakeholder needs are being met?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	Categories tracked in the 2012 alumni survey are satisfaction, engagement, volunteerism, and financial support. No measures beyond community satisfaction are established yet, especially for community engagement related to their mission to support academic programming. This indicates a reacting stage of maturity. To move to a more systematic level of maturity the university could survey other key stakeholders such as businesses and the community at large.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	Summary data is provided for a community outreach evaluation, as well as one alumni survey. Collecting results that also demonstrate alignment with department and university mission might prove beneficial. No results were provided from CUAT. It was noted earlier in 2P3 that such data had been collected over many years, but trend data is not presented. It is unclear how this information is disseminated or discussed with key decision-makers at the institution, or if trend data is examined. This result is at a reacting level of maturity.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	Metropolitan State received national recognition from the Carnegie Foundation and the Corporation for National & Community Service President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for its community engagement practices. However, the university does not currently utilize any external benchmarks or establish internal targets for survey data. This result is currently at the reacting level of maturity, but an opportunity for improving exists by establishing internal targets for key stakeholder response data.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	Although preliminary, Metropolitan State has identified some key opportunities for engaging alumni through the analysis of survey responses. Responses from event surveys also indicate that the institution is meeting the needs of its community stakeholders. However, it is still unclear if there is a systematic process for interpreting results that are shared across the institution for the purpose of continuous improvement. Establishing targets and benchmarks as well as an ongoing administration schedule will strengthen this reacting level of maturity.

2I3. Based on 2R3, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts	
<p>Metropolitan State identifies four improvements that have been made for this area. It is unclear how these improvements address the conclusions drawn in 2R3. It may be more beneficial for the university to focus on a broader view of process creation rather than a narrow activities-based vision. Since it did not identify any planned improvements for this area, perhaps the university should plan future improvements that specifically address the matters of concern described in its interpretation. For example, since data-/information-driven improvements are a characteristic of CQI, begin dates, milestones, completion dates, and other objective measures of performance should be included as part of these initiatives so the university will be able to measure its progress and, ultimately, its success. The university is also encouraged to follow the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching recommendation to develop more rigorous assessment of student learning outcomes associated with community engagement.</p>	

2P4. **Complaint Processes** focuses on collecting, analyzing and responding to complaints from students or key (non-employee) stakeholder groups. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Collecting complaint information from students	Metropolitan State has a formal documented systematic process to collect, distribute, and monitor non-academic complaint information from students that was enhanced via an AQIP Action Project. To move to a more aligned process and increase collaboration, there is an opportunity to periodically evaluate and share the lessons learned through the student complaint process, the changes made, and the response time for complaints.
Collecting complaint information from other key stakeholders	An online form can be used to by alumni and community members to submit complaints or they can communicate with the Alumni or CUAT boards. However, the process for collecting, tracking, and acting upon this information does not appear to be as universal as the process for collecting student complaints, indicating an early reacting level of maturity.
Learning from complaint information and determining actions	The process for collecting and addressing student complaints is the responsibility of an officer of Judicial Affairs and appears to be systematic . However, the process for determining complaints and relevant actions outside the realm of student conduct is unclear, as is the university's process for the periodic review and institutional learning from the information that it collects. These indicate a reacting maturity.
Communicating actions to students and other key stakeholders	Metropolitan State appears to have a systematic process for notifying students that their complaints have been received and forwarded to the appropriate party. However, there does not appear to be a process to ensure communication with the student about their concern or its resolution in a timely manner. It is also unclear if these processes include periodic review, evaluation, and change due to that review and evaluation. Metropolitan State relies on forums and committees to communicate about community concerns, as well as sending (electronic) acknowledgements upon the receipt of complaints submitted through the web. There appears to be an opportunity to develop a process for communication with interested parties once matters of concern have been addressed. This would also provide an

	opportunity to collect information related to satisfaction among concerned stakeholders. This process is considered to be at the reacting level of maturity.
Selecting tools/methods/instruments to evaluate complaint resolution	While the instruments for collecting and analyzing student complaint information are identified, the process and criteria that the university uses to determine their (appropriateness of) selection is not discussed, indicating a reacting maturity. Tools or a system for tracking community or alumni complaints are not documented.

2R4. What are the results for student and key stakeholder complaints? This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of the following:

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	There is no discussion of the outcomes or measures related to student, alumni, and other stakeholder complaints. This result is at the reacting level of maturity. The university has an opportunity to develop a collection system to capture and analyze complaints from students, community and alumni to address areas for improvement.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	Metropolitan State's summary results provided indicate recent patterns in student academic integrity violations. However, there are no results to show student or stakeholder complaint data received, indicating a reacting level of maturity. The university has many contacts with stakeholders that can provide opportunities to solicit information on its performance. Developing a system that allows for positive and negative feedback would allow it to identify areas that are working well, as well as those that might need attention.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	No internal targets or comparisons to other (MnSCU) institutions were included, indicating a reacting maturity. Metropolitan State has an opportunity to analyze whether it is achieving its internal targets for performance and to compare its performance to other/peer/system institutions in order to determine how well it addresses complaints that it receives.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	The insights gained in 2R4 are specific to student violations of the academic integrity policy, which was addressed in 1R6. There is no evidence presented to indicate how insights regarding student or stakeholder complaints are used by the institution. This is considered a reacting level of maturity and is an area of opportunity for Metropolitan State.

2I4. Based on 2R4, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
Metropolitan State identifies four future improvements in this area. These appear to be general statements as opposed to specific improvements with objective measures of its progress and performance. Recently completed improvements in the area of complaints were not discussed. Monitoring and improvements related to internal academic issues are reasonable in light of the new Student Academic Integrity Policy. However, because results regarding other stakeholders' complaints are not provided, it is difficult to determine if this is an area of improvement for the university. It is also unclear why processes to comply with the 2013 Campus Sexual Violence Elimination (SaVE) Act have not been implemented to date.

2P5. **Building Collaborations and Partnerships** focuses on aligning, building, and determining the effectiveness of collaborations and partnerships to further the mission of the institution. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Selecting partners for collaboration (e.g., other educational institutions, civic organizations, businesses)	The partnership selection process is described as being a thorough assessment of the university's resources that relate to needs and opportunities among potential partners. However, it does not appear that there is a systematic university policy or procedure that guides selection decisions, indicating a reacting maturity.
Building and maintaining relationships with partners	Many of the university's partners appear to be connected with it through broader community campaigns or partnerships of which the university is a part. Metropolitan State utilizes partnership agreement forms to clarify responsibilities and expectations for each of the institution's partnership, while also providing faculty with a means for documenting their community work for inclusion in reviews. Community engagement site assessment forms help the university assess the experience of community partners in order to maintain and refine these relationships. This process should be considered at the aligned level of maturity.
Selecting tools/methods/instruments to assess partnership effectiveness	Metropolitan State declares that it uses evaluations of activity, external evaluator audits, and qualitative research. Yet, there is no discussion of the process that it uses in order to determine appropriate (reliable and valid) assessment of partnership effectiveness. Evaluating the methods and processes to ensure the efforts address key goals and strategies would increase the maturity from reacting to systematic .
Evaluating the degree to which collaborations and partnerships are effective	Although frequency is not reported, Metropolitan State appears to have a systematic process for sharing collaboration-related data with partners and the institution in order to improve partnership strategies, inform faculty, and its reporting. In light of previous Category 2P5 statements, there seems to be an opportunity for the university to select measures of the fit between resources and need or opportunity, reciprocity, and mutuality.

2R5. What are the results for determining if students possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are expected at each degree level?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	Metropolitan State systematically tracks goal achievement, partner satisfaction, and increased capacity as collaborative measures. In addition, an external audit of community engagement and partnership practices was completed in 2012, although the outcomes or measures evaluated as part of the audit are not provided.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	The university claims that it cannot present summary results because of the nature of its collaborations. While some measures can be unique to each partnership, there is still information that can be aggregated across partnerships to help the institution measure its partnership results and move from reacting to systematic . Examples of these data might include the degree of the fit between resources and need/opportunity, reciprocity, mutuality, goal achievement, partner satisfaction, faculty participation, and capacity increase.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	Recognition from the Corporation for National and Community Service/President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll and the Carnegie Community Engagement classification suggests that Metropolitan State compares favorably to other institutions in the realm of collaborative partnerships. However, no

	evidence of internal performance targets or external benchmarks are provided that would allow the university to measure its progress. This indicates a reacting maturity level.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	Metropolitan State reports findings from the 2012 external audit. While the results seem positive, from the evidence provided it is unclear how these results are being shared and if the university will be able to establish trend data or comparative measures, that would strengthen this reacting level of maturity.

2I5. Based on 2R5, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
The university identifies three current improvements on the part of the ICES Faculty Work Group related to collaborative partnerships. Objective measures of progress could be included in order to measure progress in these improvements. This would be a first step to achieving better alignment among the results, conclusions drawn from analysis, and the specific improvements planned. Metropolitan State has redesigned its community partnership survey tool. This offers the university an opportunity to include items that would generate internal targets and benchmarks.

AQIP Category Three

VALUING EMPLOYEES explores the institution’s commitment to the hiring, development, and evaluation of faculty, staff, and administrators.

3P1. **Hiring** focuses on the acquisition of appropriately qualified/credentialed faculty, staff, and administrators to ensure that effective, high-quality programs and student support services are provided. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Reviewer’s Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Recruiting, hiring, and orienting employees	Metropolitan State has a systematic processes for recruiting, hiring, and orienting employees that are documented, understood, and repeatable. Applicants are recruited using appropriate publications, web sites, and consultants. Orientations are either one-on-one or in groups and through the Faculty Development Center. It is unclear if processes are regularly evaluated for improvement, how processes address key goals and strategies, and whether metrics have been identified for evaluation. Addressing these concerns could increase maturity from systematic to aligned.
Designing hiring processes that result in staff and administrators who possess the required qualification, skills, and values	Processes for hiring employees are defined in university policies. Job audits are conducted at the local and system level to determine the skills, credentials, and duties for positions at the institution. Policies and associated procedures are consistent with MnSCU policies for classified employees and the MSUAASF collective bargaining agreement for represented employees. The systematic maturity level could be increased to a higher level through periodic evaluation of processes and a closer alignment of mission, vision and values to the values of prospective employees.

Developing and meeting academic credentialing standards for faculty, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortia programs	The university has a systematic practice for developing and maintaining academic standards for faculty, including dual credit programs as guided by the master agreement between the IFO and MnSCU. The hiring process established by Metropolitan State ensures that faculty meet these qualification to be considered for hiring. The university is implementing an evaluation process to review faculty qualifications and credentials. Continuous improvement of this kind could improve the maturity level from systematic to aligned.
Ensuring the institution has sufficient numbers of faculty to carry out both classroom and non-classroom programs and activities	By providing incentives for faculty to provide adequate notice of retirement or sabbatical leave, analyzing annual instruction needs as part of the budget process, scheduling of community (adjunct) faculty, and monitoring course enrollments each term, Metropolitan State University has a systematic process to ensure sufficient full-time and adjunct faculty to meet classroom demands. A regular review process to determine the effectiveness of the current process, would be beneficial to the institution and improve its maturity level.
Ensuring the acquisition of sufficient numbers of staff to provide student support services	The President's Council reviews student support staffing, but it is unclear how data is included in planning and what process is used to ensure the acquisition of sufficient numbers of staff to provide student support services. In light of the recent and future changes being made in its strategic planning, Metropolitan State has the opportunity to better articulate this process and to elevate the institution's maturity level from reacting to systematic.

3R1. What are the results for determining if recruitment, hiring, and orienting practices assure effective provision for programs and services?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	Metropolitan State identifies several measures to assure effective assessment of programs and services including ratio of courses taught by full-time versus part-time faculty, headcount of faculty and staff, employee diversity, and student-faculty ratios. The systematic level of maturity could be increased by aligning outcomes and measures with goals and measuring the effectiveness of the staff and faculty hiring.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	The university is to be commended for its diversity ratio which is actually higher for employees than its student body. But Metropolitan State seems to be in a reacting mode due to its limited summary data. The university could move from this phase by analyzing additional measures related to outcomes and trend data to make informed decisions. It is unclear how this information is shared with internal stakeholders and used for decision-making with respect to hiring.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	The university is commended for having smaller class sizes than its counterparts in the system, but this data alone does not indicate if it is meeting the needs of the students. Metropolitan State has the opportunity to move from the reacting maturity level by establishing internal and external benchmarks for improvement and analyzing results.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	The analysis of its diversity results validates the University's belief that Metropolitan State has more employees of color than other MnSCU institutions. It is unclear if these results are consistent with strategic and operations goals or how these data are used to generate improvement initiatives. The University has the opportunity to align its recruiting, hiring, and onboarding measures resulting in complete and perceptive

	conclusions which would elevate the institution from a reacting maturity level to a systematic level.
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311. Based on 3R1, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
The university has identified many areas of improvement in the hiring process. These improvements are a good beginning, but it does not address how it will recognize meeting student needs with sufficient and qualified staff and faculty. Future plans do not appear to include gathering of trend or comparison data, setting of internal targets and external benchmarks, or developing a relationship to the strategic and operational goals of the institution. In light of the significant turnover experienced at Metropolitan State in recent years, the university would benefit from better practices in this area.

3P2. **Evaluation and Recognition** focuses on processes that assess and recognize faculty, staff, and administrators' contributions to the institution. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Reviewer's Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Designing performance evaluation systems for all employees	Metropolitan State uses standard systematic annual performance evaluations for staff and administration. Faculty members are individually accountable to a faculty development plan. Periodic assessment of the performance evaluation process and explicit linkage to key goals and strategies could improve maturity.
Soliciting input from and communicating expectations to faculty, staff, and administrators	Although employees and supervisors work together to develop a plan with goals and development, it is unclear what process is used to tie the individual and departmental performances to the overall mission of the university. It appears that evaluations are independent and not related to a broader plan. It is also unclear how this process applies to faculty. By including input from faculty and staff on a consistent and formal basis, Metropolitan State could elevate its maturity from reacting to systematic.
Aligning the evaluation system with institutional objectives for both instructional and non-instructional programs and services	From the information provided, it is unclear how Metropolitan State aligns performance evaluations with institutional goals. Feedback is collected via some surveys and forums, but it is unclear what it does with the information and if an evaluation process exists within the university. Without a process the institution is merely gathering information and is at a reacting maturity level.
Utilizing established institutional policies and procedures to regularly evaluate all faculty, staff, and administrators	Metropolitan State University meets its requirements in a systematic manner for various union agreements and the MnSCU chancellor has tied presidential annual performance reviews to the institution's performance. It has an opportunity to take the initiative started by the MnSCU chancellor and incorporate it in the university's overall performance evaluation process. This would tie the processes together and help all staff and faculty work toward common strategic goals.
Establishing employee recognition, compensation, and benefit systems to promote retention and high performance	Metropolitan State has compensation and benefits systems established by collectively bargained agreements and has listed various employee recognition programs. It is unclear how the performance evaluation process aligns with institutional objectives. In light of the high employee turnover, it is important for the institution to investigate which factors are contributing to employee satisfaction, engagement, and turn-over for a more aligned versus systematic process.

Promoting employee satisfaction and engagement	Metropolitan State reports employee involvement in MnSCU system-wide activities, but does not indicate a process to determine if these activities promote employee satisfaction or engagement. To move from the reacting stage, there is an opportunity for the university to analyze what its employees value and to measure employee satisfaction on a local level.
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3R2. What are the results for determining if evaluation processes assess employees' contributions to the institution?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	Metropolitan State provides no outcomes and measures related to the effectiveness of the employee evaluation processes. The tools used do not seem to be comparable. The void in measuring results in this area is a valuable loss of information during a time of instability and reflects a reacting maturity level.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	Even though Metropolitan State has used a current survey (2006-2009-2011), it is unclear what process was used to summarize and act upon the results. Metropolitan State has an opportunity to establish tools that deliver outcome measures for use in establishing robust processes and identifying improvements. The institution is in a reacting stage of maturity.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	Metropolitan State has previous survey results that could be compared with other participants in the MnSCU system, but does not indicate the results were used. Internal targets (Valuing People Survey) for the periods prior to its discontinuation were not presented. Based on this, the institution is in a reacting stage of maturity.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	Metropolitan State has previous survey results that could have been used to gain insight and interpretation of employee needs and concerns. There does not appear to be a process in place to go beyond the collection of survey results. Given its challenges with staff turnover, focusing efforts here should be a high priority for the University. The institution is in a reacting stage of maturity in this important area.

3I2. Based on 3R2, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
The improvements planned for the institution indicate that the administration understands the areas of weakness. These improvements should include information such as beginning dates, completion dates, and milestones. Metropolitan State needs to not only plan improvement activities, but develop processes that guide the performance evaluation process and employee satisfaction. In light of the significant turnover experienced in recent years, the institution can benefit from a better understanding of its employees and addressing the root causes of the turnover that has occurred.

3P3. **Development** focuses on processes for continually training, educating, and supporting employees to remain current in their methods and to contribute fully and effectively throughout their careers within the institution. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Reviewer's Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Providing and supporting regular professional development for all employees	The University appears to be systematic in supporting regular professional development for all employees. Without the benefit of an overall process that focuses on how to determine the type of training, education, and support employees need, the institution is in a systematic versus aligned maturity level. Metropolitan State has an opportunity to develop an overall approach to developing all employees that would include establishing strategic and operational goals, defining a process, and allocating resources.
Ensuring that instructors are current in instructional content in their disciplines and pedagogical processes	Metropolitan State uses the Center for Faculty Development to provide numerous opportunities for faculty development and collective bargaining agreements provide for funding, sabbatical leave, and tuition waivers. To move from a systematic to an aligned stage of maturity, a comprehensive process would include faculty evaluations, a self-described weaknesses that requires specific training for how to deliver that training in the most effective way. The process would also have an evaluation component for continuous improvement.
Supporting student support staff members to increase their skills and knowledge in their areas of expertise (e.g. advising, financial aid, etc.)	Metropolitan State is using developmental days, university sponsored programs, and workshops to support student support staff. An opportunity exists to move from a systematic stage to an aligned stage that determines development priorities that employees need to excel in their positions and contribute to the strategic objectives of the institution.
Aligning employee professional development activities with institutional objectives	Metropolitan State indicates a process of aligning employee development activities with institutional objectives via the performance review. Using the performance review and supporting it with funding are two very important components of this systematic process. Measurements, targets, evaluation, alignment at an institutional rather than a divisional-level and continuous improvement would elevate this to an aligned stage.

3R3. What are the results for determining if employees are assisted and supported in their professional development?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	Metropolitan State tracks employee participation and associated funding in professional development activities. What is not clear is if the data is combined for the university or just available for the individual, how the data ties participation and funding together, and what results are used. No outcomes, measurements and targets are identified. This type of activity is at a reacting level of maturity.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	Metropolitan State is reporting activities, not the summary results of these activities. It may benefit from establishing measurable outcomes for professional development that are tied to the strategic plan and mission. An opportunity exists to move from this reacting stage by analyzing trend data for employee satisfaction and other measures.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	Metropolitan State is able to use MnSCU data to compare itself to the MnSCU system as a whole by the attendance of employees at one or more professional development activities. It is difficult to use attendance (alone) to accurately determine if employees are receiving adequate professional development. Metropolitan State does not appear to have internal targets or external benchmarks established and would benefit from establishing outcomes beyond attendance to more accurately evaluate their results. The institution is in a reacting level of maturity in this area.

<p>Interpretation of results and insights gained</p>	<p>The interpretation and insights presented do not appear to be related to the summary data presented. It is unclear how the environment to “do more with less” can be improved by having more and complete development plans. Less than half of non-faculty employees have a development plan and this indicates that a disconnection exists between the intention of the institution and the actual actions. This places the university in a reacting level of maturity.</p>
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3I3. Based on 3R3, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

<p style="text-align: center;">Evaluation of Improvement Efforts</p>
<p>Metropolitan State has recognized some limitations and has planned several improvements. The degree to which the improvements are a priority or add value is not clear. Opportunities exist for the university to identify outcomes and measures, track employee satisfaction, and determine training effectiveness within a continuous feedback loop. It is encouraging that the university understands what to do, but it must demonstrate the internal discipline to implement these changes.</p>

AQIP Category Four

PLANNING & LEADING focuses on how the institution achieves its mission and lives its vision through direction setting, goal development, strategic actions, threat mitigation, and capitalizing on opportunities.

4P1. **Mission and Vision** focuses on how the institution develops, communicates, and reviews its mission and vision. Describe the processes for developing, communicating, and reviewing the institution’s mission, vision, and values and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

<p>Process</p>	<p>Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement</p>
<p>Developing, deploying, and reviewing the institution's mission, vision, and values</p>	<p>Metropolitan State revised its original 1971 mission statement in 2006 and in 2008 created a formal statement of its institutional values. The university has used systematic processes to develop and review the institution’s mission, vision, and values. The process generally involves faculty, staff, and administration. Following appreciative inquiry efforts in 2014, the Strategic Positioning Team reaffirmed the mission and vision in its development of a strategic positioning statement. While reviews have taken place, it is unclear whether reviews of its mission are scheduled to take place at regular and frequent intervals.</p>
<p>Ensuring that institutional actions reflect a commitment to its values</p>	<p>To ensure institutional actions reflect a commitment to its values, the recently expanded President’s Council considers the institution’s core values in decision-making. Its five core values dimensions are excellence, diversity and inclusion, engagement, open respectful climate, and integrity. There is an opportunity to improve upon the systematic level of maturity of this process by expanding use of the core dimensions among all employee efforts when making decisions, not just the President’s Council.</p>
<p>Communicating the mission, vision, and values</p>	<p>Metropolitan State uses standard systematic processes to communicate the university’s mission, vision, and values to internal and external stakeholders. Communication occurs through the website and institutional documents when hiring new employees, in orientation sessions, and through the Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship (ICES) staff when working with community partners. The university may have an opportunity to evaluate whether it effectively communicates its mission, vision, and values to all stakeholder groups. Also, it may want to determine specific criteria upon which it bases whether a particular medium, and which media are used for this purpose. For instance, how does the university determine which documents are candidates for this type of</p>

	communication or which media is best to reach a particular stakeholder group?
Ensuring that academic programs and services are consistent with the institution's mission	University Policy 2070 (New Program Approval) is in place to ensure that new or revised academic programs are consistent with the institution's mission. ICES works with a faculty group to integrate community engagement into the curriculum. The Provost, Vice President of Student Affairs, deans, and directors meet monthly to review and adjust services provided to students. Recruiting efforts targeting students with specific characteristics that align with its mission helps to ensure that the university maintains programs and services in support of its mission. These systematic efforts could be improved through explicit integration with the institution's mission and related strategic and operational goals. For example, the university may want to develop a rubric or checklist with specific details to respond to various activities such as infusion of community engagement and responsiveness to business and non-profit needs. Further, it is not evident how lessons learned are shared across units or how they are reviewed for improvement.
Allocating resources to advance the institution's mission and vision, while upholding the institution's values	In the past, Metropolitan State relied on the actions of the President's Council to allocate resources consistent with its mission, vision, and values. The recent establishment of two committees (Strategic Planning Advisory Committee and Budget Advisory Committee) expands participation and assumes strategic priorities will be integrated into budget allocations. However, the processes for selecting and aligning those projects with the mission has not been fully developed. It will be a matter of time to determine whether this new organizational structure and reacting processes will be successful.
Other identified processes	

4R1. What are the results for developing, communicating, and reviewing the institution's mission, vision, and values?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	The MnSCU Enrollment Analytic tool, student satisfaction and engagement surveys, and the Personal Assessment of College Environment (PACE) survey, among other tools are used to track and analyze outcomes among students and employees. As trend data is developed, the university has an opportunity to review the effectiveness of those instruments. However, it is not clear how these measures are identified and how they relate directly to the development and communication of Metropolitan State's mission, vision, and values. Therefore, the maturity level is systematic .
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	The university is systematic in providing summary results of the Enrollment Analytic tool for students of color, Pell eligible, first generation, and underrepresented for students age 25 and older – the student population that the university intends to serve. In addition, the university relates many of its accomplishments to specific dimensions of its mission. Yet, it is unclear how such information is disseminated across the institution and used to discuss how well the institution is communicating and achieving its mission and vision, indicating a systematic level of maturity.

Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	Metropolitan State University has an opportunity to increase its maturity in this category by fully analyzing available data from student surveys, persistence, and graduation data. This would provide internal, as well as external benchmarks for future planning. For example, the university may have an opportunity to move from the reacting to systematic maturity level by reviewing external benchmarks and providing summary results on a variety of outcomes. NSSE and PACE provide institutions with comparison data against similar-sized institutions.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	The insights gained simply compare Metropolitan State enrollment of targeted student populations to those same figures at state peer institutions. Enrollment numbers alone are not conclusive evidence that students have reached their goals for work, service, and leadership, or that the university has accomplished its goals. There is no indication that this information is shared across the institution to discuss insights that can then be used in the broader institutional decision-making process, indicating a reacting level of maturity.

411. Based on 4R1, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
Metropolitan State lists numerous improvements to be implemented. Yet, there is no linkage to outcomes or measures tracked and related analyses to support these improvements. In addition, the initiatives are stated without any indication of when they will begin or be completed. Each of these improvements need to be supported by benchmarks and targets and then evaluated periodically to determine if the university is progressing satisfactorily.

4P2. **Strategic Planning** focuses on how the institution achieves its mission and vision. Describe the processes for communicating, planning, implementing, and reviewing the institution's plans and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Engaging internal and external stakeholders in strategic planning	Metropolitan State reports that planning takes place at the system, university, division, college, and departmental levels and describes recent planning efforts related to the MnSCU's Strategic Framework including Charting the Future, the President's Work Plan, Facilities Master Planning, the Metro Area Baccalaureate Plan, as well as departmental planning within Metropolitan State. Although these plans are detailed and comprehensive, it is unclear how they align. It may be difficult for the university to complete all the goals without considerable duplication of effort or confusion. In addition, it did not describe the processes used to engage internal and external stakeholders in strategic planning as required here. Expanding engagement opportunities, through repeatable, documented processes will allow the university to move from reacting towards a systematic level of maturity.
Aligning operations with the institution's mission, vision, values	Although efforts are underway to align operations with the institution's mission, vision, and values, Metropolitan State appears to be at the reacting level of maturity. From the information provided, it is unclear how the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee and the Vice President of University Planning and Advancement will coordinate processes to make activities explicit, measurable, and subject to improvement. The university has an opportunity to describe its process.
Aligning efforts across departments,	Appreciative inquiry has been used to elicit input and issues from university stakeholders. However, the objective of this process appears

divisions, and colleges for optimum effectiveness and efficiency	to be establishing a strategic plan rather than establishing a process that will ensure that current efforts are aligned across different areas of the university. Better clarity describing the ongoing process that is employed for unit alignment is needed to increase maturity from reacting to systematic.
Capitalizing on opportunities and institutional strengths and countering the impact of institutional weaknesses and potential threats	The university reports some successes using inclusive processes such as appreciative inquiry to develop SWOT analyses and action plans. To increase maturity from reacting to systematic, Metropolitan State may want ensure the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee develops processes that are repeatable and documented and related activities that are explicit, measurable, and subject to improvement.
Creating and implementing strategies and action plans that maximize current resources and meet future needs	Significant reorganization at Metropolitan State has resulted in efforts to develop a new strategic plan and a new academic plan into a single document that it intends to distribute widely. The university will also move to a budgeting model that will help it develop plans to maximize resources and meet its future needs. These are new initiatives and the university will need time in order to determine their effectiveness and move from reacting to systematic maturity.
Other Identified Processes	

4R2. What are the results for communicating, planning, implementing, and reviewing the institution's operational plans?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	The President's 90-Day Action Plan and 2014-2015 Action Plans serve as the measures that are tracked regarding the implementation of the institution's operational plans. Although these goals are often specific to the president's actions, most key constituencies across the institution appear to be aware of them. It is still unclear, though, how the 90-Day Action Plan, the annual Work Plan, the institution's strategic plan, and the departmental operation plans can all have action plans that do not overlap or cause duplication, indicating a reacting result.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	Although not quantified, it appears that the university is making progress on accomplishing broad, overarching, short-term goals. The key outcomes and progress to date for the president's action plan are presented. However, in light of the 30-, 60-, and 90-day milestones presented in the plan, there seems to be an absence of results identifying whether the goals were achieved on time. This process is at a reacting level of maturity.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	The university acknowledges that during the first year of the interim president's administration, it did not establish targets and benchmarks. It reports that it will establish internal targets and external benchmarks for the second year of the president's administration. Metropolitan State has an opportunity to exercise the internal discipline to identify objective performance targets for this function. This process is at a reacting level of maturity.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	No insights are gained or shared across the institution regarding results for implementing the institution's operational plans, even though outcome measures were discussed earlier in this portion of the portfolio. This indicates a reacting level of maturity. At the same time, the university is developing processes that may lead to systematic maturity. Recent, short-term results have been inclusive and are positive indications that the university has an opportunity to draw clear conclusions based on its results.

4I2. Based on 4R2, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
The university recognizes a need to develop its systematic collection and analysis of data to guide planning, budgeting, and strategic planning processes. It has an opportunity to revisit existing data to establish internal benchmarks, and further explore MnSCU and other external data sources for possible external benchmarks. Setting milestones, due dates, and other objective measures of progress would further enhance the institution's ability to measure its progress in these efforts.

4P3. **Leadership** focuses on governance and leadership of the institution. Describe the processes for ensuring sound and effective leadership of the institution and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Establishing appropriate Board-institutional relationships to support leadership and governance	Metropolitan State is part of the MnSCU system and, thus, is governed by the MnSCU system Board of Trustees as outlined in MnSCU Board Policy 1A.1. This Board has the responsibility for establishing admission and hiring requirements, setting tuition and fees, entering into contracts, and adopting policies. It operates to provide autonomy to universities, while holding them accountable for their actions. This relationship should be considered at the systematic level of maturity.
Establishing oversight responsibilities and policies of the Governing Board	The MnSCU Board of Trustees exercises systematic oversight through MnSCU Board Policy 4.2 and annual audits and is subject to the Board of Trustees Code of Conduct. Leadership is required to engage with faculty, staff, and students to communicate and validate policies and procedures.
Maintaining board oversight, while delegating management responsibilities to administrators, and academic matters to faculty	MnSCU Board Policy 1A.3 specifies chancellors' management responsibilities, including the delegation of authority and duties to college presidents. MnSCU Board Policy 4.2 specifies management responsibilities for college or university presidents. The collective bargaining agreement between the Inter-Faculty Organization (IFO) and the MnSCU Board of Trustees as well as Metropolitan State policies suggest that academic matters are left to faculty. From the information provided, it is unclear if these systematic approaches are evaluated for improvement.
Ensuring open communication between and among all colleges, divisions, and departments	Metropolitan State utilizes a number of cross-functional meetings during the academic year to ensure open communication across the institution. While the number of potential meetings that happen either by mandate or by practice is impressive, this does not necessarily mean that such meetings include open channels of communication, as the university notes in its portfolio. For example, it is unclear how the results of the meetings are communicated to those who do not attend or how their input is used to inform the process. Further, it is unclear what process is engaged to tie results from these meetings together or to share information across committees and the entire organization. To move from systematic to an aligned system, Metropolitan State might consider holding open town hall meetings or Q&A sessions for employee updates.
Collaborating across all units to ensure the maintenance of high academic standards	Metropolitan State reports having several processes in place to ensure the maintenance of high academic standards. Although it appears that various groups (e.g., Advising Council, Retention Council, faculty governance committees of the IFO, Academic Standing Committee, and tutors) throughout the university address academic standards, it is unclear how collaboration among these groups takes place. Established cross-college representation on all of these committees may help

	promote collaboration and ideas for improvement and improve maturity from systematic to aligned.
Providing effective leadership to all institutional stakeholders	State law requires the governor to appoint MNSCU Board members in a way that balances the interests of labor, business, race, gender, geography, and ethnicity. The 15-person Board must include student, resident, and labor representatives. The university has an opportunity to discuss how it provides leadership to all of its institutional stakeholders at the local level, which would increase maturity from systematic to aligned.
Developing leaders at all levels within the institution	Metropolitan State has undertaken a number of initiatives for developing leaders within the institution. All supervisors at the institution are required to attend monthly meetings with the chief human resource officer to focus on leadership and supervisory skills, and to participate in training courses for fostering supervisory skills. The university is also participating with the National Coalition-Building Institute to develop an internal team to host prejudice-reduction workshops at the institution. There do not appear to be as many opportunities for developing leaders at levels below those of supervisors, however, suggesting a systematic level of maturity. The university may have an opportunity to move beyond job-related training for supervisors and faculty to offer broader, more comprehensive leadership development to additional employees.
Ensuring the institution's ability to act in accordance with its mission and vision	The internal audit process is used by the MnSCU Board of Trustees to ensure institutions act in accordance with system initiatives. As Metropolitan State reports, it has yet to document systematic processes beyond the creation of the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, indicating a reacting stage of maturity.
Other identified Processes	

4R3. What are the results for ensuring long-term effective leadership of the institution?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	Metropolitan State has utilized the Continuous Improvement Readiness Survey (CI survey) and the PACE survey, both recently administered for the first time, as outcome measures related to perception of leadership at the institution. It is unclear what information had been used before this to identify data relating to institutional leadership issues, which indicates a reacting level of maturity.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	Metropolitan State provided results from three items related to leadership contained in the CI survey. Data from the PACE survey is not yet available. This information appears to be directly related to the outcome measures described above. However, it is unclear if these results are shared across the university, especially with senior leaders, to be used in institutional decision-making. Additional feedback methods, including measures and results related to leadership development to ensure long-term leadership effectiveness may yield further insight and improve maturity from reacting to systematic.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	External data is not yet available from the PACE survey, and it is uncertain whether it is available for the CI survey. Metropolitan State has established internal targets for employee participation in leadership training workshops but only provides information related to attendance. In order to move from reacting to systematic level of maturity, the university has an opportunity to establish regular surveys to collect trend data and set targets and benchmarks to inform decision-makers and suggest improvements.

Interpretation of results and insights gained	The university draws two conclusions: that there is a gap between the perception of senior leadership and its faculty and staff regarding the institution’s capacity for improvement, and; accountability and data-driven decision-making are key areas for making future improvements. While these are important insights, the maturity level remains reacting due to lack of trend data, targets, or benchmarks to fully interpret the CI survey results. Differing perceptions on the university’s capacity for continuous improvement might indicate a need for more communication of results and engagement across the campus.
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4I3. Based on 4R3, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
Numerous improvements that seem logically related to this category are identified. Begin dates, milestones, and completion dates are needed in order to measure progress and ultimately, success for each. It would be helpful for the institution to clearly identify which improvements address the specific conclusions drawn in the preceding section namely, the disconnection between leadership and employee perceptions of Metropolitan State’s continuous improvement efforts. In light of Metropolitan State’s recognition (in 4P3) that all university processes need to be documented, it has an opportunity to pursue this quality improvement.

4P4. **Integrity**, focuses on how the institution ensures legal and ethical behavior and fulfills its societal responsibilities. Describe the processes for developing and communicating legal and ethical standards, monitoring behavior to ensure standards are met, and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Team Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Developing and communicating standards	Metropolitan State follows the relevant policies established by the state and MnSCU, publishing them on its web site, in policy manuals, campus-wide notices, and orientations. It is unclear whether there are additional, local standards and, if so, how they are developed, communicated, and evaluated. This indicates a reacting level of maturity.
Training employees for legal and ethical behavior	Metropolitan State employees must attend training sessions related to legal and ethical behavior within 30 days of employment. It is unclear from the information provided if these systematic efforts are evaluated or what processes are in place to train current employees at specific intervals during employees’ careers or when changes occur.
Modeling ethical and legal behavior from the highest levels of the organization.	Members of the President’s Council are expected to model ethical and legal behavior, although from the information provided it is unclear if a process is in place beyond behaviors expected of employees in general. This reacting level of maturity could be improved by specifying procedures that support ethical and legal behavior of senior leaders.
Ensuring the ethical practice of all employees	Metropolitan State reports that collective bargaining agreements and contractual provisions ensure the ethical practice of all employees. There do not appear to be any practices after the initial employment period to monitor or reinforce the expectations for ethical practices, indicating a systematic level of maturity to this practice. Further, it is unclear whether the university has a mechanism for reporting and enforcement.
Operating financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions with integrity, including following fair and ethical	Metropolitan State has standard systematic processes in place to assure institutional integrity in financial, academic, and operational activities. Audits and reports to the Board provide oversight and internal controls. However, references to specific policies and procedures are not referenced and there is no mention of their periodic evaluation.

policies and adhering to processes for the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.	
Making information about your programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships readily and clearly available to all constituents.	Information about programs, requirements, faculty, staff, costs to students, among other information is available through Metropolitan State's participation in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) College Portrait. Academic content and requirements are published annually and made available on the university's website. It is not clear how accreditation-related information is made available. Annual reviews of all of these elements might uncover areas of improvement, leading to an increase in maturity from systematic to aligned.
Other identified Processes	Safety procedures are published on the web site and alert systems are tested periodically. Security is provided by an outside agency. Continuous improvement information is not included.

4R4. What are the results for ensuring institutional integrity?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	The university provides systematic trend data for violations, complaints, audit reports, financial reconciliations, and crime statistics to measure institutional integrity, indicating a systematic level of maturity. No measures for tracking employees and administrative ethical conduct are reported.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	Metropolitan State provides trend data for noncompliance incidents for encumbering funds for contracts, participation in D2L training, and campus crime statistics, indicating a systematic level of maturity. However, it is not clear how this information is shared at the broader institutional level and, if so, how that information is used to evaluate the processes for which they are measures.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	Metropolitan State is commended for being one of only three recipients to receive the 2015 Campus of Integrity Award from the International Center for Academic Integrity. This honor recognizes the institution's work considering student academic integrity. Yet, there are no other external benchmarks or internal targets presented to compare results related to ethical, legal and financial integrity of the institution. This result should be considered in the reacting level of maturity.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	Metropolitan State concludes that better tracking of data will enable it to identify problems sooner and determine whether it resolves issues successfully. It is unclear why it limits its interpretation to financially-related matters and draws no conclusions for the other results that it reports, indicating a reacting level of maturity. The university has an opportunity to better align its discussions of outcomes or measures with the results reported and its conclusions drawn.

4I4. Based on 4R4, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
The improvements seem to be very general lacking real specificity. Internal processes need to be established that are supported by data, goal-setting, and individual accountability.

AQIP Category Five

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT & RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP addresses management of the fiscal, physical, technological, and information infrastructures designed to provide an environment in which learning can thrive.

5P1. **Knowledge Management** focuses on how data, information, and performance results are used in decision-making processes at all levels and in all parts of the institution. Describe the processes for knowledge management and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Reviewer's Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Selecting, organizing, analyzing, and sharing data and performance information to support planning, process improvement, and decision-making	Performance and accountability data is largely determined by the Board of Trustees Dashboard or at the supervisory level at Metropolitan State. Sharing data and performance information seems limited to the President and Vice Presidents, who are expected to formulate university and divisional goals. However, there is no system in place for sharing this information on a broader or consistent basis with the rest of the institution, indicating a reacting level of maturity to this process. The university has an opportunity to improve upon this level of maturity by collecting additional data to evaluate its own performance. For example, survey results from PACE (or another internal survey) may be used to help determine areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. The investment in the institution's research and assessment areas (placing IR in the new Office of Institutional Effectiveness and creating assessment coordinator position) are expected to help improve the coordination of such efforts.
Determining data, information, and performance results that units and departments need to plan and manage effectively	While a formal university procedure identifies the information needs for academic planning and program review, a related action project exists (<i>Data Counts</i>), and some capacity to determine if standardized financial reports should be developed, these efforts appear to stand alone, lacking any comprehensive approach. Data and performance reports are being created to respond to an immediate need, rather than as part of a systematic process to determine what, when, and where results are needed to make decisions, indicating a generally reactive process. The university appears to be moving toward a systematic level of maturity in determining data needs for departmental usage, but it has not quite achieved that level yet. The creation of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness may be able to assist in helping administrators and department heads to determine the information needed for broad institutional decision-making.
Making data, information, and performance results readily and reliably available to the units and departments that depend upon this information for operational effectiveness, planning, and improvements	ISRS system access is maintained by IT, with responsibility for decisions about access made by supervisors. Metropolitan State might benefit from developing specific criteria to be met for granting access in order to avoid the bias that can be a part of relying upon individuals' subjective judgments. The university also uses a function called <i>DataSlice</i> to access data. This tool makes static data reports available to all employees and provides information about accessing dynamic reports available through MnSCU, indicating a systematic level of maturity. While all employees can use <i>DataSlice</i> , it is not clear how the university promotes this tool or makes data available to all employees. The university has an opportunity to improve this maturity level by establishing institutional processes for purposefully integrating data into the institutional decision-making process. Additionally, the extent of the timeliness and reliability for providing data to the units is not reported. Without feedback from employees, the university will not be able to set targets for improvement and realize improvements.

<p>Ensuring the timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security of your knowledge management system(s) and related processes.</p>	<p>Individual access to the ISRS and the degree audit systems is controlled by one of the three institutional security managers. Yet, it is unclear what institutional processes are in place to guide the security managers in making such determinations, indicating a reacting level of maturity. It is also important to consider that the amount of approvals needed for operational data may ultimately prove to be a deterrent to collaboration and efficiency. HR, Admissions, and the Registrar’s Office enter data daily and the ISRS access is tightly regulated. However, from the evidence provided, it is unclear if documented processes are in place for HR, which is a concern given previous payroll issues reported under Category 3. These appear to be independent activities that do not indicate a knowledge management system. The university may benefit from more process and criteria standardization across the institution for ensuring the timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security in its knowledge management.</p>
<p>Other identified processes</p>	

5R1. What are your results for determining how data, information, and performance results are used in decision-making processes at all levels and in all parts of your institution?

<p>Results</p>	<p>Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement</p>
<p>Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized</p>	<p>Metropolitan State conducted its first mid-year budget review in FY 2015 and saw immediate benefits through a reduced end-of-year budget shortfall, which is an encouraging use of data. Nonetheless, the institution is still considered to be in a reacting level of maturity regarding outcomes or measures tracked and tools utilized. The majority of measures mentioned in this section are enrollment reports and the CFI indicator from the State Board of Trustees Accountability Dashboard. From the evidence provided, it is unclear how Metropolitan State prioritizes data available from this dashboard and the Integrated Statewide Record System (ISRS). In light of the university’s claim (SA p.103) that its 2012 <i>Data Counts</i> AQIP Action Project resulted in data and performances results, it would be helpful from a CQI standpoint to see these results since they directly led to the establishment of a new Office of Institutional Effectiveness.</p>
<p>Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)</p>	<p>Metropolitan State provides a summary of recent enrollment figures and annual CFI figures, but little else to indicate the type or level of information that is utilized across the institution for decision-making. This indicates a reacting level of maturity for this process. There is an opportunity to improve upon the level of maturity for this result by utilizing a broader scope of relevant results across institutional units. Having this information readily available may contribute to sharing information in a timely way, an issue that the institution acknowledges.</p>
<p>Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks</p>	<p>Metropolitan State has established internal projections for its CFI using tools provided by MnSCU. While the university has demonstrated year-to-year comparisons, no external benchmarks were identified, and it is unclear how the results are used for decision-making. The university has an opportunity to move beyond the current reacting level of maturity for this stage by identifying additional internal targets and establishing external benchmarks for operations and strategic planning purposes. Additional data tools provided by MnSCU (e.g., enrollments, completion) represent a seemingly unexplored means of establishing benchmarking data that can be used for many institutional decision-making processes.</p>

<p>Interpretation of results and insights gained</p>	<p>Examples provided to illustrate insights gained indicate that the interpretation of currently used data is at the surface level, which represents a reacting level of maturity. The analysis of CFI trend data, for example, focuses on the sensitivity of CFI to large, individual expenses but seems to ignore the fact that Metropolitan State’s CFI experienced a sharp decrease between FY 2014 and FY 2015 regardless whether the unexpected construction costs are included or not. In general, it does not discuss how the current budgeting and planning processes could influence financial measures such as the CFI. Metropolitan State reiterates the importance of collecting, analyzing, and sharing data to make informed decisions across campus. However, next steps are not clear for the university to make improvements in this area. The university has an opportunity to more broadly interpret the results, especially across institutional units to support effective decision-making, planning, and collaboration on improvement initiatives.</p>
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5I1. Based on 5R1, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

<p style="text-align: center;">Evaluation of Improvement Efforts</p>
<p>Metropolitan State identified several improvement initiatives that relate to organizational structure and budgeting. Better communication and more logical reporting structure should aid the university in its use of data, information distribution, and decision-making. However, it is unclear how these initiatives are driven by the conclusions drawn from its analysis of the results presented. Additionally, the improvements mentioned do not appear to address serious gaps in benchmarking to assist in performance evaluations or the coordination of efforts among the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, the Executive Strategic Council, the Budget Advisory Committee, the Enrollment Council, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and the President’s Cabinet and Council, among others. Without targets and benchmarks, these groups will not be able to effectively participate in the continuous improvement cycle of plan-do-check-act.</p>

5P2. **Resource Management** focuses on how the resource base of an institution supports and improves its educational programs and operations. Describe the processes for managing resources and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

<p>Process</p>	<p>Reviewer’s Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement</p>
<p>Maintaining fiscal, physical, and technological infrastructures sufficient to support operations.</p>	<p>Metropolitan State currently has a reactive fiscal process in place, but is exploring strategic budgeting models to align the budgeting process with the university’s mission and vision. The university is required to complete a financial recovery plan which would indicate that the budgetary process needs to be re-evaluated, and the university has taken steps to begin addressing this concern through the evolution of its budget planning to support the university’s mission and vision. Increasing the reserves and recent development of the budget advisory committee is encouraging and will help facilitate the institution’s intent to move toward a strategic budgeting model. The Facilities Planning Group reviews faculty needs and requests changes making appropriate recommendations to the President. Planning for technology is done within the IT department, but there is no mention of how technology efforts are influenced by or coordinated with IT in the MnSCU system. It is mentioned that the institutional technology plan is not widely shared with other divisions, yet there is no discussion of planned changes to improve this.</p>
<p>Setting goals aligned with the institutional</p>	<p>Metropolitan State has designed an organizational flow to address a new Academic Plan beginning in Fall 2014, which will be coordinated among</p>

<p>mission, resources, opportunities, and emerging needs.</p>	<p>the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, the Budget Advisory Committee, and the Executive Strategic Council. This plan will be aligned with the university’s mission and goals. This process has been further informed by strategic planning forums held to solicit input from employees and students. Metropolitan State currently has a reacting process for establishing institutional goals. The university will need to have the internal discipline to follow through with its plan in which departments and programs examine historical data, with a focus on exploring opportunities and potential threats to develop their respective unit plans. The university has an opportunity to further strengthen this process by ensuring that related activities are explicit, measurable, and subject to ongoing improvement.</p>
<p>Allocating and assigning resources to achieve organizational goals, while ensuring that educational purposes are not adversely affected.</p>	<p>Due to enrollment decline and unanticipated expenses, the university responded by allocating reserves to fund operations. Metropolitan State declares that its academic programs remained intact and maintained previous levels of student services despite the expenses and a decline in enrollment. However, it is unclear what processes the university used to make decisions for reallocating resources, and if data was used to inform these actions. It is clear that the university has a reacting level of maturity in its budgeting process. It appears that not enough factors were utilized to help the university determine how to budget for several scenarios such as a drop in enrollment. To move to a more systematic stage, the work of the newly created Budget Advisory Committee will need to be realized. Metropolitan State should also explore processes that can take into account unforeseen costs or funding issues that would affect operating funds in the future.</p>
<p>Other Identified Processes</p>	

5R2. What are your results for Resource Management?

<p>Results</p>	<p>Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement</p>
<p>Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized</p>	<p>Metropolitan State identifies numerous outcomes and measures, such as enrollment on partner campuses, CFI, and new hires. Yet, it is unclear how many of them relate to providing for fiscal, physical, and technological infrastructure, placing maturity at a reacting level of maturity. Given the issues mentioned with respect to the technology planning process, there is an opportunity to improve upon the maturity level of this process by incorporating outcome measures related to the institution’s technology usage that would help facilitate this particular planning process.</p>
<p>Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)</p>	<p>The summaries provided (CFI, enrollments, hiring of faculty and advisors) do not provide direct evidence for fiscal, physical, technological infrastructure. There is also no explanation for any of these summary tables to indicate how they might be used to maintain physical, fiscal, or technological infrastructures, why these particular data points are relevant to such discussions, or how they are shared with decision-makers. This indicates a reacting level of maturity to this result. In light of the outputs reported in the above discussion, it is generally unclear how the university uses summary results in decision-making and improvement efforts. A further examination of the data may lead to ideas for improvement. Other data sets might be investigated for insight into performance results for resource management.</p>
<p>Comparison of results with internal targets</p>	<p>Metropolitan State acknowledges that it has made no effort to compare results in this area (Category 5) with the list of 7 comparable institutions that it identifies. There is also no explanation for why these institutions</p>

and external benchmarks	are considered peers. While it declares that it generally benchmarks against other MnSCU-system institutions, no such comparisons were presented, indicating a reacting level of maturity. There is an opportunity to improve upon this measure by examining infrastructure information through external data sources, such as the MnSCU dashboards or IPEDS.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	The university states that it has gained insight in the area of using data in enrollment management, but these insights are at a reacting level of maturity and it is generally unclear how they contribute toward a solution to this issue. Developing more data points will produce more information for planning and resource management. The university has an opportunity to ensure that the various working groups (i.e., the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, the Budget Advisory Committee, and the Executive Strategic Council) align strategic goals, activities, outcomes, measures, internal targets, and external benchmarks in priority areas. The university has a further opportunity to investigate tools that will assist in these efforts.

5I2. Based on 5R2, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
The creation of an annual Budget Book and the redesign of the budgeting process to allocate resources based on the mission and needs of the university will be critical to the future maturity level of 5P2 Resource Management. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will be established in 2015 for timely data collection to use in decision-making and budgeting. New planning processes for budgeting and resource allocation are in development, but few details were provided.

5P3. **Operational Effectiveness** focuses on how an institution ensures effective management of its operations in the present and plans for continuity of operations into the future. Describe the processes for operational effectiveness and who is involved in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Reviewer’s Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Building budgets to accomplish institutional goals.	Metropolitan State acknowledges that the current budgeting process is reacting and inconsistent with continuous improvement efforts. Therefore, the President is exploring alternative budget models. Evidently there are additional, unspecified processes and structures that are being explored and developed in order to align the budgeting process with strategic goals, but no information was provided about them. Budgetary targets are provided for divisional leaders, with a mechanism for them to discuss tactical considerations, but there were no details on how those targets were chosen. The university appears to have been working on a budgetary process since the last systems portfolio, but since the CFI deteriorated rapidly it would seem this was not successful. The addition of the Strategic Planning Advisory and Budget Advisory Committees are viewed as positive changes to improve upon the maturity level of this process
Monitoring financial position and adjusting budgets.	A detailed budget review occurred for the first time in FY 2015, due to an enrollment decline. This is an encouraging step toward improving the level of maturity for this process, which is currently reacting . Metropolitan State acknowledges that the monitoring of financial reports is not widely practiced because of turnover. The university has an opportunity to address its lack of internal discipline in reviewing budgetary progress, along with its turnover in related positions. Training and information

	sessions with the financial management staff should facilitate this process. As the university explores alternative budget models, it may want to adopt a model that identifies processes for mid-course adjustments.
Maintaining a technological infrastructure that is reliable, secure and user-friendly.	Metropolitan State did not describe the processes that are in place to maintain the technological infrastructure whether dictated by MnSCU or by the institution itself. There was no discussion of the process for maintaining technological infrastructure at the institution. No information was provided or discussion given to what improvements were made in response to the security breach, why they were determined to be appropriate, or what processes are in place to assess whether they are effective. The university has an opportunity to improve the maturity level from reacting by documenting processes and establishing goals that are explicit, measurable, and subject to improvement.
Maintaining a physical infrastructure that is reliable, secure and user-friendly.	The university tracks the lifecycle of building infrastructure and equipment. The state mandates tracking energy and water consumption. Preventive maintenance is tracked through a new software. However, Metropolitan State did not describe the processes that are in place to maintain the physical infrastructure whether through the Facilities Planning Group or dictated by MnSCU. There is also no discussion of what system had been in place to make such requests prior to implementation of this software or why the decision was made to purchase it, indicating a reacting level of maturity.
Managing risks to ensure operational stability, including emergency preparedness.	The university manages risks, including emergency preparedness in a systematic manner. Policies and practices document the appropriate response, depending on the situation. Weather risk is managed through coordination with host campuses and evacuation drills are held regularly.
Other identified Processes	

5R3. What are your results for ensuring effective management of your operations on an ongoing basis and for the future?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized	Various software tools are used to track trend data for budget processes, problems with IT, infrastructure maintenance, and room management. The utilization of the budget tool to forecast year-end results and the EMS to compare to a system benchmark for space utilizations suggests that this may be a systematic use of results. There is an opportunity to improve upon the maturity level of these results by developing additional outcomes and other measures specifically related to strategic goals to ensure effective management of operations.
Summary results of measures (including tables and figures when possible)	Summary results for IT service requests, campus carbon emissions, and building FCI are presented, but it is unclear how each is used by the institution to inform decision-making. It is also unclear how the new SEC scheduled for occupancy is affiliated with the results of this section. This indicates a reacting use of these results. In light of the many general references to the data and information tracked throughout this category, the university has an opportunity to identify more measures for which it can then present objective results.
Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks	External benchmarks are presented for classroom utilization and general building energy efficiency, but there is no evidence to indicate how each is used in the decision-making process, indicating a reacting use of results. It is also unclear from the evidence provided if Metropolitan State has set targets or benchmarks to determine their progress in meeting goals for

	these areas. There is an opportunity to improve upon the maturity level of these results by establishing context for evaluating the metrics (is a B3 score of 59 encouraging or disappointing, and why?) and discussing how such information is used by the institution to make decisions about operation management.
Interpretation of results and insights gained	The interpretation of the metrics discussed in 5R3 are rather cursory, and should therefore be considered in the reacting level of maturity. The conclusions drawn from its analysis of results are limited to its physical plant (space utilization, B3, FCI). The results presented may indeed be an indication of good institutional stewardship, but there is no discussion about why such conclusions were drawn, nor, more importantly, what the implications are for future decision-making. Metropolitan State has an opportunity to interpret results in a more balanced and comprehensive fashion that include financially- and technologically-related interpretations. Monitoring these processes for trends over time represent an additional opportunity to improve upon the maturity level.

5I3. Based on 5R3, what improvements have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
The university has a number of planned improvements. The mid-year budget review is one example of a reactive response that can be continued in a systematic manner. The university has also recently worked to incorporate technology into all of its classrooms. However, future improvement initiatives seem to be limited to IT Services, lacking any identification of additional future initiatives related to budgeting or physical plant. The university has an opportunity to plan improvement initiatives (and targets) based on conclusions drawn from its analysis of specific results that it presents in its portfolio.

AQIP Category Six

Quality Overview focuses on the Continuous Quality Improvement culture and infrastructure of the institution. This category gives the institution a chance to reflect on all its quality improvement initiatives, how they are integrated, and how they contribute to improvement of the organization.

6P1. **Quality Improvement Initiatives** focuses on the Continuous Quality Improvement initiatives the institution is engaged in and how they work together within the institution. Describe the processes for determining, and integrating CQI initiatives, and who you involve in those processes. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Reviewer's Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Selecting, deploying, and evaluating quality improvement initiatives.	Through three types of quality improvement initiatives (Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) projects, University Quality Improvement Projects (UQIP), and <i>All Hands on Deck</i> (AHOD) projects), Metropolitan State is making systematic efforts to engage broader participation in Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) initiatives. A standardized template is used to articulate project purpose, benefits, role assignments, outcomes, deliverables, metrics, milestones, and a timeline. There appears to be a formal process in place that is made known across the institution through an online submission and voting platform. However, the process for evaluating such projects on a consistent basis and using this evaluation information is still unclear. To improve upon the maturity level of this process, the university could demonstrate how faculty, staff, and students are integrated into the selection, deployment, and evaluation of quality improvement work.

Aligning the Systems Portfolio, Action Projects, Quality Check-Up, and Strategy Forums.	Although it appears that 6P2 is not specifically addressed in the portfolio, the narrative in the introduction and in 6P1 does indicate the responsibilities of the AQUISC committee. This steering committee is accountable to the Provost and is responsible for the oversight of quality improvement including systems portfolios, appraisal feedback, strategy forums, and CQR visits. Utilizing a cross-functional committee for such oversight helps to provide an institution-wide perspective of the alignment of such improvement initiatives to strategic planning, indicating a systematic level of maturity. An opportunity for improving the maturity level of this process exists by documenting the alignment process to assist others in creating explicit and repeatable processes.
Other identified processes	

6R1. What are your results for continuous quality improvement initiatives?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
What are your results for continuous quality improvement initiatives?	The university provides descriptions, goals, and often quantifiable results for a number of continuous improvement projects, indicating a systematic use of results. This includes projects addressing student complaints, enrollment, assessment, online standards, and cultivating a CQI culture. From the evidence provided, however, it is unclear if the university has established quantifiable goals for these projects so it will be able to better assess the success of its CQI initiatives. Additionally, a couple of initiatives were implemented nearly five years ago, but only single data points were presented to discuss their impact. An opportunity for improvement exists by examining annual trend data for project outcomes and discussing the use of each in the decision-making process. Publishing and celebrating the results of these projects may provide additional support and motivation for continuous improvement processes across the institution.

6I1. Based on 6R1, what quality improvement initiatives have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts
Metropolitan State identifies three planned improvement initiatives to further the institution’s CI efforts. These initiatives include creating an office for institutional effectiveness, restructuring the AQUISC committee, and creating a CI web site. However, it is unclear how these initiatives are the direct products of the university’s analysis of its results. Metropolitan State’s CI efforts may benefit from building upon lessons learned from past AQIP Action Projects and establishing an integrated link between the AQIP initiatives with the Strategic Plan of the university.

6P2. **CULTURE of QUALITY**, focuses on how the institution integrates continuous quality improvement into its culture. Describe how a culture of quality is ensured within the institution. This includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of key processes for:

Process	Reviewer’s Comments on Process Maturity and Improvement
Developing an infrastructure and providing resources to support a culture of quality.	The university focuses its discussion here on its changes for the future, rather than what has been in place in its recent past. From this narrative, it would appear that it is just initiating the AQIP process. It is unclear what the institution’s culture of quality was prior to the upcoming semester and why or how it needs to be improved, indicating a reacting level of maturity. Its plans for an institutional effectiveness office and a communications platform will help to eliminate silos, but Metropolitan

	State will need time in order to assess whether its plans will produce the intended results.
Ensuring continuous quality improvement is making an evident and widely understood impact on institutional culture and operations.	Metropolitan State relies on employee awards, participation merchandise, and articles published in internal communications to spread an understanding of the impact of its CI projects. Planned future improvements include the use of an online tool to provide project status updates and solicit feedback from all university employees, indicating a systematic level of maturity to this process. The planned online platform will provide an avenue to solicit ideas and communicate results. It appears that Metropolitan State has already established an employee satisfaction feedback loop for the AHOD projects. There is an opportunity for improving upon the maturity level of this process by shifting from a collective mindset of sharing information with the rest of the institution to one of discussing such results. It will also be important to identify communication methods that will intentionally and proactively target all employees with the dissemination of QI results, not just those who are already invested in or involved with the university's QI projects.
Ensuring the institution learns from its experiences with CQI initiatives.	Improvement initiative project team leaders have informally reported to the AQUISC upon the completion of their projects in the past, indicating a reacting level of maturity to this process. However, the institution plans to implement an updated process that will standardize the reporting format, which is a promising next step. It is still unclear, though, whether this review will be required and how the information gleaned from these reviews will be processed and, ultimately, institutionalized. The university has the potential to improve upon its maturity level for this process by developing communication strategies that inform and educate the entire campus community on completed action projects. Employees have also received training on CQI and Metro hosts PEN meetings, but there does not seem to be a mechanism for sharing these experiences and best practices campus-wide.
Reviewing, reaffirming, and understanding the role and vitality of the AQIP Pathway within the institution.	The university relies on orientation training, public recognitions, celebrations, published information items/articles, forums, awards, and facilitators to drive an understanding of the role of the AQIP Pathway within the institution, indicating a systematic level of maturity. However, Metropolitan State does not address if it evaluates these processes for improvement. Furthermore, most communication efforts and training appear to be specifically intended for those who are already participating or interested in participating with the AQUISC committee. There is an opportunity to further improve upon the maturity level of this process by establishing a formal process that guides how CQI initiatives are integrated or how AQIP aligns with the Strategic Planning process.
Other Identified Processes	

6R2. What are the results for continuous quality improvement to evidence a culture of quality?

Results	Evaluation of Results and Systems Improvement
What are the results for continuous quality improvement to evidence a culture of quality?	Through CI Readiness Survey and AI session feedback, it was determined that faculty and staff have knowledge of and a willingness to participate in improvement projects, but fewer believe feel empowered to make an impact with respect to CI efforts. Metropolitan State has initiated 3 improvements as the result of this feedback, indicating a systematic use of these results. These initiatives are related to collaborative project sourcing, strategic planning, and senior leadership development. The university acknowledges its opportunity to foster a more robust CI culture.

6I2. Based on 6R2, what improvements to the quality culture have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1 – 3 years.

Evaluation of Improvement Efforts

To further engage faculty and staff in CQI efforts, Metropolitan State will make CI resources available and host a semi-annual quality event to directly address the Continuous Quality Improvement Survey results. The university will also establish a survey cycle to track the readiness for continuous improvement. As mentioned previously, the university plans to centralize assessment, accreditation, and institutional research & planning work in one unit. It is unclear how pervasive the changes will be and if they will be fully realized among the employees campus-wide. Generally, it is unclear how improvements are the products of the university's analysis of results. Metropolitan State has an opportunity to show how planned improvements are the direct result of its analysis of data and information.

APPENDIX C
Criteria for Accreditation & Core Component
Evidence Screening

Criterion One. Mission

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

Core Components (sub-components noted)	Evidence	Screening Feedback on Core Component
<p>1.A. The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.</p> <p>1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.</p> <p>2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.</p> <p>3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.</p>	<p>Metropolitan State was established in 1971 to serve the needs of non-traditional students, particularly those whose educational needs were not being met by other colleges and universities.</p> <p>Metropolitan State University periodically reviews, refines, and reaffirms its mission as an urban, public university, focused on accessibility, flexibility, and affordability for its diverse community and student population. The process generally involves faculty, staff, and administration. Following appreciative inquiry efforts in 2014, a Strategic Positioning Team reaffirmed the mission and vision in its development of a strategic positioning statement.</p> <p>University Policy 2070 (New Program Approval) governs the approval of new or revised academic programs. Specific documentation of alignment with the mission, vision, and values of the university is required. The university reports that the Provost and the Vice President of Student Affairs meet monthly with the Deans and Directors Council to adjust services provided to students. Recruitment efforts are targeted to non-traditional students to ensure consistency with its mission.</p> <p>Until recently the President's Council was responsible for the alignment of budgeting and planning in support of the university's mission and vision. As of Spring 2015, however, two committees (Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) and the Budget Advisory Committee) will be responsible for the alignment. Metropolitan State reports that bi-annual meetings of SPAC will be held to ensure that "strategic priorities are understood and integrated into the budget allocation work".</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>
<p>1.B. The mission is articulated publicly.</p>	<p>Metropolitan State University's mission, vision, and values are communicated through the university's web site, in documents, and as a</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p>

<p>1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.</p> <p>2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of 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.</p> <p>3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.</p>	<p>backdrop for planning exercises and presentations. Potential employee interview questions are mission-related and new employees receive information during orientation. The university states that its mission, vision and values are referenced throughout planning sessions and other deliberations.</p> <p>Metropolitan State’s mission, vision, and values are periodically reviewed and refined as deemed appropriate as its offerings expand. Its mission and vision were addressed as recently as 2014. The mission reflects its urban service area, diverse community, and adjusts to respond to community needs. The mission accurately defines its constituents and the services that it provides.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>
<p>1.C. The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.</p> <p>1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.</p> <p>2. The institution’s processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.</p>	<p>Metropolitan State uses certification bodies, advisory boards, and professional practice standards to identify other key stakeholder groups and determine their needs.</p> <p>Metropolitan State’s policy for developing new programming requires that new programs be proposed by faculty. Proposals formally address requirements and external reviewers provide feedback. Specific criteria that are addressed include consistency with mission, academic policies, integrity, quality, redundancy, demand, and resources.</p> <p>The university provides a variety of student services designed to meet the needs of its highly diverse student body. These include Multicultural Services (with staff who are African American, American Indian, Asian American, Chicano/Latino and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning); Veteran Services; Disability</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>

	<p>Services; TRiO (a federally funded program that serves first-generation students, limited income students, and students with disabilities); Student Parent Center, and; International Student Services.</p> <p>With an average age of 31 and an average of 75 transfer credits each, many undergraduate students arrive at Metropolitan State knowing the field of study they intend to pursue. A variety of courses, offices, and processes assist students in assessing the appropriateness of their chosen field.</p>	
<p>Criteria 1.D. The institution’s mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.</p> <p>1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.</p>	<p>The university’s current mission statement clearly states its role and responsibilities as an urban public institution of higher learning. Metropolitan State University’s mission statement reflects that the university is committed to providing academic and support systems to serve a diverse student body. Specifically, the university states: “Through academic excellence in undergraduate, graduate and continuing education, and integrated community engagement we prepare students to be lifelong, self-directed learners and educated citizens in a globally interconnected society”.</p> <p>The mission states that the university views itself as an innovative partner that engages the community while preparing students for success. It embraces students’ cultural identities and life experiences, and provides flexible and affordable options. In addition, the university received the Carnegie designation as an Engaged Institution.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>

Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

Core Components (sub-components noted)	Evidence	Screening Feedback on Core Component
<p>2.A. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.</p>	<p>Metropolitan State follows the policies established by the state and MnSCU, publishing them on its web site, in policy manuals, campus-wide notices, and orientations. The university has financial processes in place to ensure that any purchase or contractual service that incurs a financial obligation receives approval and encumbers funds in advance of the purchase. In the event that an obligation is incurred outside of this process, a form is completed explaining the violation and corrective action, and then the appropriate Vice President and Chief Financial Officer must sign the form. MnSCU auditing procedures ensure that other areas of the institution follow fair and ethical practices. In fiscal year 2014 the university had a significant deterioration of the Composite Financial Index (CFI) and it developed a financial recovery plan. Monitoring reports will be submitted semi-annually until the CFI improves to an acceptable level.</p> <p>In addition, employees receive mandatory training for ethical practices. Processes, policies, and contractual provisions establish those practices and outline progressive discipline for violations.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>
<p>2.B. The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.</p>	<p>Metropolitan State participates in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) College Portrait, which provides information to students and the public regarding admission requirements, student characteristics, costs of attendance, financial aid, net price calculations, popular majors, average class size, and campus security. Academic information is published in the university's academic catalog that is available on its website. Student Services also provides similar information to students.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>
<p>2.C. The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.</p>	<p>Oversight responsibilities of the board are the result of State of Minnesota statute. State law requires the Governor to appoint MnSCU board members in a way that balances the interests of labor, business, race, gender, geography, and ethnicity. The 15-person board must include student, resident, and labor representatives.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>

<p>1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.</p> <p>2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.</p> <p>3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.</p> <p>4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.</p>	<p>The MnSCU Board of Trustees has engaged in a system-wide strategic planning process – Charting the Future. In addition, the Board has adopted a strategic framework to ensure educational access, workforce and community partnerships, and affordable delivery of educational opportunities.</p> <p>As part of the system-wide strategic planning process, the Board established three strategic workgroups composed of various internal and external constituencies. These workgroups held statewide listening sessions with bargaining units, student associations, campus communities, MnSCU's Leadership Council, and the Board.</p> <p>MnSCU Board Policy 1C.1 defines the Board of Trustees code of conduct, which includes language specific to minimizing undue influence and potential conflicts of interest. In addition, the MnSCU Board of Trustees has an internal audit process in place to ensure that it is acting in the best interest of the institution.</p> <p>Delegation of day-to-day management of the institution to the administration is defined by state statute and outlined under MnSCU Board Policy 1A.1. State statute requires that, "to the extent practicable in protecting statewide interests, the board shall provide autonomy to the campuses while holding them accountable for their decisions." MnSCU Board Policy 4.2 describes the role and responsibilities of university presidents in relationship to Board and institutional mission and goals. Delegation of academic matters to the faculty are established through other university policies.</p>	
<p>2.D. The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.</p>	<p>In 2014, Metropolitan State adopted a new Student Academic Integrity Policy. The Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities, Article 4 of the faculty contract, and Human Subject Review Board materials document the university's commitment to academic freedom. Code of Conduct matters are communicated to faculty on its web site, workshops, presentations, and departmental meetings.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>
<p>2.E. The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of</p>	<p>Metropolitan State's Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB) reviews the ethical design of both faculty and student research when humans are the research subjects. The HSRB has the authority to suspend or terminate approval of research that is not being conducted in</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p>

<p>knowledge by its faculty, students, and staff.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students. 2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources. 3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity. 	<p>accordance with the HSRB's requirements or that has been associated with unexpected serious harm to subjects.</p> <p>Faculty, students, and staff are encouraged to review CITI training every two years at no cost to themselves or their departments. HSRB policy requires that all student research projects involving human subjects either be approved by the board or reviewed by a CITI-educated faculty member who takes formal responsibility for overseeing the student's research process.</p> <p>The university believes that academic integrity violations create an opportunity to provide students with further training in adhering to appropriate standards for academic work. Faculty and administrators cooperatively developed an entirely new Student Academic Integrity Policy (Academic Affairs Policy 2190 and Academic Affairs Procedure 219), adopted January 6, 2014. This policy represents a shift away from treating integrity violations as conduct issues to a new emphasis on providing educational interventions.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>
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Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

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

Core Components (sub-components noted)	Evidence	Screening Feedback on Core Component
<p>3.A. The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded. 2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, postbaccalaureate, post- 	<p>The General Education and Liberal Studies Committee members align common outcomes across each college and school under University Policy 2010 and Minnesota Transfer Curriculum procedure.</p> <p>Processes are in place to ensure program learning outcomes are consistent with the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the university. MnSCU's Program Navigator system, the Planning Tool for Academic Programs, and curriculum committee review guide new program development. University Procedure 255 is in place for program reviews.</p> <p>The quality of all classes is assessed using Instructional Improvement Questionnaire (IIQ) student surveys. Regular reviews of teaching quality are conducted during the tenure and promotion process for resident faculty. Recently, the university initiated a requirement that all</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>

<p>graduate, and certificate programs.</p> <p>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).</p>	<p>community faculty submit a Professional Development Report (PDR) once every two years for review by the dean of the college within which they teach.</p> <p>Metropolitan State uses certification bodies, advisory boards, and professional practice standards to identify other key stakeholder groups and determine their needs.</p> <p>The expectations for ensuring quality at Metropolitan State are the same regardless of modality or location. The university provides resources, training, and individual support for faculty during the developmental process for online courses. The university is implementing a new peer review process to ensure the quality of its online offerings.</p>	
<p>3.B. The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.</p> <p>1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.</p> <p>2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. 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.</p>	<p>Metropolitan State's 10 General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS) core goal areas are aligned with its mission and students achieve them through an array of upper- and lower-level courses.</p> <p>MnSCU's Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) requires that all Metropolitan State students earn 40 credits in the 10 GELS core goal areas. The GELS Committee, a faculty committee representing all of its colleges and schools, is responsible for ensuring that Metropolitan State complies.</p> <p>Metropolitan State uses its web site to inform visitors of the courses that satisfy GELS goal areas and the university's liberal studies requirements, credit requirements, and the required achievement levels.</p> <p>Forty-four curriculum areas among all of its colleges offer courses that satisfy GELS goal areas. Prior learning assessment and independent studies also enable students to achieve.</p> <p>Metropolitan State communicates programs' purposes and content through learning outcome goals and communicates levels of achievement through program assessment reports.</p> <p>The Carnegie foundation has awarded its Engagement Classification to the university through 2025 for its, "university-wide approach of teaching, research or experiential learning that</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>

<p>3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.</p> <p>4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.</p> <p>5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.</p>	<p>combines authentic community or public service activity with academic instruction".</p>	
<p>3.C. The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.</p> <p>1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including e.g., oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.</p> <p>2. All instructors are appropriately</p>	<p>The institution has data indicating staff and faculty numbers and has determined a benchmark for class size. At the start of each fiscal year, the Provost asks deans to submit requests for new faculty lines along with supporting data. Deans align budget considerations, institutional objectives, the continuance of quality teaching and class size in their decision-making. Metropolitan State ranks first in MnSCU system for classes with fewer than 30 members and classes with fewer than 50 members. Personnel changes are reviewed by the President's Council each year during the planning and budgeting process. Instructional faculty (IFO) play the primary role in the hiring processes for both new resident and community faculty. The required and preferred qualifications are developed by the departmental faculty and approved by the Provost and appropriate dean.</p> <p>The Master Agreement between the Inter-Faculty Organization (IFO) and MnSCU stipulates that an earned doctorate or other appropriate degree is required for appointment as an assistant professor; higher ranks require a designated number of years of experience. Official</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>

<p>credentialed, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.</p> <p>3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.</p> <p>4. 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.</p> <p>5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.</p> <p>6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.</p>	<p>transcripts must be submitted prior to hire and maintained in faculty files. In addition to their educational degree, part-time community faculty, are often hired based on their expertise in a specialized field, business experience, and leadership in the community. Credentialing standards for faculty teaching in dual credit programs are the same as IFO members.</p> <p>Each bargaining unit agreement and each plan addresses the need for regular evaluation. Faculty members have faculty development plans that address their ability to teach, scholarly achievement, continuing preparation, and university and community service. An Instructional Improvement Questionnaire (IIQ) is used to provide instructors with student feedback from the courses they teach. Forms are sent to IR and return data is then analyzed and shared with instructors.</p> <p>The Center for Faculty Development provides programs, activities and resources designed to support resident and community faculty. Faculty members in the IFO bargaining unit and employees covered under the MSUAASF bargaining unit have professional development funds available to them as provided in the agreements. Both have sabbatical leaves and tuition waivers available to enhance professional development, support departmental goals, and meet instructional, service, or research priorities of the university.</p> <p>All faculty are expected to hold a minimum of 10 regularly scheduled office hours per week during academic terms as stated in the Inter-Faculty Organization (IFO) contract. Faculty are also available to answer student inquiries by telephone, e-mail, and discussion boards.</p> <p>Academic advising is part of the faculty contract, and newly hired faculty advisors have training specific to academic advising. The university provides general advising training, which new full-time professional advisors and faculty advisors are required to attend. Additional training specific to an advisor's role in his or her college is provided at the college level.</p> <p>The State of Minnesota, as part of collective bargaining processes, determines the minimum skills, credentials, and experience required for non-instructional positions. Metropolitan State, which has discretion over each individual position description, has University Policies 5010 and</p>	
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	<p>5020 and related procedures in place to guide the process. Procedures were recently updated. Metropolitan State uses external and university-sponsored trainings and meetings to increase skills and knowledge of its student support staff. Advisors and tutors receive onboard and ongoing training on site, through webinars, and training materials.</p>	
<p>3.D. The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.</p> <p>1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.</p> <p>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, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).</p>	<p>Metropolitan University provides student support services to address the needs of its various student populations. These cohorts include students who are at-risk, underprepared, veterans, first-generation, low-income, and students with disabilities. The CAE provides tutoring and academic testing services. These tutors that include faculty members, receive training for working with ESL students.</p> <p>Processes are in place for identifying and advising students who have learning support needs. MnSCU-assigned placement tests and advising are designed to ensure appropriate course placement. The TRiO program's processes include one-on-one assessment of ongoing needs, midterm monitoring of students' academic progress, tutoring and study skills assistance, and additional services tied to student needs. The CAE provides academic support services to students in its Writing Center, Math Center, Science Center, Testing Center, as well through Information and Computer Sciences (ICS) tutors. Early Alert and probation processes provide additional assistance.</p> <p>Librarians collaborate with liaison departments to provide course instruction in support of research, as well as consultations with students doing in-depth course research. Interlibrary loan and online databases are provided to on-ground and online students for items not available at the library or learning center. Professional librarians provide reference assistance to students in person at the reference desk, as well as by phone, e-mail, and chat. Faculty are assigned responsibility for developing appropriate clinical practice sites. These site coordinators and the Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship share referrals as community opportunities emerge for practicums, internships, and course-based project sites.</p> <p>Writing Center tutors and librarians are trained to provide support to students who are working on research projects. Librarians also teach</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>

<p>5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.</p>	<p>information access courses. Professional librarians teach a four-credit course, INFS 315 "Searching for Information." This is a higher-level course in which students explore the process of finding, synthesizing, evaluating, and documenting sufficient and reliable information appropriate to a variety of purposes, including upper-division coursework, senior capstone papers, or professional writing and communication tasks.</p>	
<p>3.E. The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.</p> <p>1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.</p> <p>2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.</p>	<p>GELS courses that carry a Community Engagement (CE) designation, defined as "providing students the opportunity to gain knowledge outside of the classroom and inside the community", reflect Metropolitan State's commitment to "community partnerships through curriculum, teaching, scholarship, and services designed to support an urban mission." The university's Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship (ICES), an Academic Affairs department, routinely collaborates with faculty in planning out-of-class activities to directly support learning objectives.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>

Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

Core Components (sub-components noted)	Evidence	Screening Feedback on Core Component
<p>4.A. The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.</p>	<p>Faculty ensure that courses and programs are up to date and effective through assessments of student learning outcomes, five-year program reviews, advisory board input, and, where applicable, program accreditation. The process also relies on the advice of community faculty, many of who represent government agencies,</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p>

<p>1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.</p> <p>2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning.</p> <p>3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.</p> <p>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 assures 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.</p> <p>5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.</p> <p>6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all</p>	<p>businesses, and non-profits. Critical to all these processes are the ongoing research, scholarship, and professional development that ensure that faculty members are engaged and current in their disciplines.</p> <p>The awarding of transfer credit is facilitated through several processes. The Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) applies to all colleges and universities in the MnSCU system, including Metropolitan State.</p> <p>Evaluators use established guidelines for assessment processes and evaluation criteria. These guidelines are consistent with both MnSCU and Metropolitan State policies and procedures, as well as 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 MnSCU policies and procedures and by the American Council of Education (ACE)</p> <p>Program faculty at Metropolitan State University 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). 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, marketing materials, and other publications.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>
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<p>programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and AmeriCorps).</p>		
<p>4.B. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.</p> <p>1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.</p> <p>2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.</p> <p>3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.</p> <p>4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.</p>	<p>Metropolitan State conducts regular program reviews, updating learning outcomes to meet professional standards. The Provost and VPAA is responsible for assessment. Program faculty determine program-related assessment tools that include tests, portfolios, and other tools related to licensure criteria. Institutionally, the Provost and VPAA along with the Office of Institutional Research select instruments for assessing outcomes that include NSSE, ALI, and PSOL. A new position, Coordinator of Assessment, was added as a part of recent restructuring. The university communicates programs' purposes and content through learning outcome goals and communicates levels of achievement through program assessment reports.</p> <p>Goals for student learning are incorporated into course and program outcomes, which align with GELS and MnSCU requirements. Progress towards accomplishing these goals is assessed through the DARS system.</p> <p>The GELS committee, comprised of faculty from each college and school assesses and proposes changes. Assessment of co-curricular activities is built in to course curriculum. Faculty members individually assess learning outcomes for courses and programs. NSSE is used as a primary tool for institutional assessment of curriculum.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>

<p>4.C. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.</p> <p>1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.</p> <p>2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.</p> <p>3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Metropolitan State's strategic planning process uses historical data to determine targets for student retention, persistence, and completion. Each year's goals are based on making year-over-year improvements. Utilizing the Asmussen Retention Report and internal data, the university has set a goal to increase retention by 2% in fiscal year 2015.</p> <p>A Retention Task Force addresses obstacles that may prevent students from persisting and completing their degrees. The task force is addressing more effective and efficient assignment of advisors, a more streamlined major declaration process, and a newly revamped student orientation session. An annual report to MnSCU leadership includes goals for the year; progress made on the goals along with retention, persistence, and completion ideas to be implemented during the next year.</p> <p>A Retention Task Force recommended the implementation of an "early alert" system. Welcome Days were established in response to data and trends observed from frontline personnel interactions with first-semester students.</p> <p>Metropolitan State created a coordinator of advising services position in 2014. The coordinator is responsible for improving the university's advising training and assessment, advocating for and enhancing advising services, coordinating advising processes throughout the colleges for more consistency and accuracy, and improving communication between Student Affairs, academic advisors, and upper administration.</p> <p>Metropolitan State uses numerous surveys to assess the quality of its academic support services, such as the Priorities Survey for Online Learning (PSOL), Adult Student Priorities Survey (ASPS), and the Adult Learner Inventory (ALI). These provide the university with internal benchmarks from previous surveys and benchmarks against other institutions that complete the same surveys.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>
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validity of their measures.)		
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Criterion Five. Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

Core Components (sub-components noted)	Evidence	Screening Feedback on Core Component
<p>5.A. The institution’s resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.</p> <p>1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.</p> <p>2. The institution’s resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.</p> <p>3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution’s organization, resources, and opportunities.</p> <p>4. The institution’s staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.</p>	<p>Metropolitan State’s process for building budgets to accomplish institutional goals is one that provides budgetary targets for divisional leaders that has a mechanism for them to also develop tactical considerations. Metropolitan State recently experienced a budget shortfall that was due to declining enrollment and unanticipated construction costs. The operational reserves that it was required to have by MnSCU policy allowed for academic programs and student services to be unaffected. A financial recovery plan has been implemented with MnSCU to improve the institution’s financial position over the next few years.</p> <p>The Facilities Planning Group review faculty needs and requests changes making appropriate recommendations to the president. Planning for technology is done within the IT department. Recent and planned changes to the budgeting process include a mid-year review and establishing a budget advisory committee to link budgeting decisions with the strategic plan.</p> <p>The university has fully executed its new Academic Plan. This plan requires departments, programs, colleges, schools and centers to examine data about past operations, information about external and emerging opportunities and threats, and develop a plan of academic offerings matched to the university’s strategic goals.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>

<p>5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expenses.</p>		
<p>5.B. The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.</p> <p>1. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.</p> <p>2. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight for the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.</p> <p>3. The institution enables the involvement of its administration, faculty, staff, and students in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.</p>	<p>Metropolitan State administrators are required by collective bargaining agreements and employee plans to obtain input from its internal constituencies before implementing policies and procedures. Metropolitan State Procedure 100 (University Policies and Procedures) requires vice presidents to consult with faculty, staff, or student end-users as well as an MnSCU office before making changes affecting their area of responsibility. MnSCU Board Policy 2.3 (Student Involvement in Decision-Making) requires the university to consult with the Student Senate regarding issues that significantly impact students.</p> <p>The President's Work Plan is developed jointly with the MnSCU Chancellor. An annual MnSCU audit provides assurance checks that Metropolitan State is in "...compliance with the policies and regulations of the board and institutions are effective in meeting their goals and objectives". The internal audit staff also offer professional advice for best practices.</p> <p>Metropolitan State's current academic plan was developed using a real-time strategic planning process. This process included the interim provost and the academic deans. Since its implementation in 2013, the plan has been used to guide budgeting, hiring, and program development decisions. In addition, deans consult with department and program chairs, the provost, and academic and student affairs leadership at the Deans and Directors Council meetings.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>
<p>5.C. The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.</p> <p>1. The institution allocates its resources in</p>	<p>Strategic planning at Metropolitan State is comprised of several elements including the President's Work Plan, facilities master planning, <i>Charting the Future</i>, and the Metro Area Baccalaureate Plan. Planning at the MnSCU</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p>

<p>alignment with its mission and priorities.</p> <p>2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.</p> <p>3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.</p> <p>4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.</p> <p>5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.</p>	<p>system level allows for appropriate participation for Metropolitan State.</p> <p>Alignment is achieved through its real-time planning, West Metro planning, and some recent internal organizational changes. Reorganization at Metropolitan State has resulted in developing its strategic plan and academic plan into a single document that it distributes widely. A Budget Advisory Committee has been established by the interim president. The committee will meet at least twice a year with the Strategic Planning Committee to assure that the budget is aligned with, and will support, strategic priorities.</p> <p>Metropolitan State used an appreciative inquiry approach during the first half of 2014 to engage internal stakeholders on matters of institutional identity, strengths, and its future. In addition, the interim president has appointed a Strategic Planning Advisory Committee to continue its work following the drafting of a strategic positioning statement.</p> <p>Metropolitan State's presidential transition team conducted a recent SWOT analysis with input from across the institution. Appreciative inquiry results and strategic positioning team input along with SWOT results informed the interim president's 90-Day Action Plan.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>
<p>5.D. The institution works systematically to improve its performance.</p> <p>1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.</p> <p>2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and</p>	<p>Metropolitan State University's improvement projects follow a 6-step process that includes identification of need, project proposal, project selection, project approval, implementation, and evaluation. Team leaders for AQIP and institutional improvement initiatives are also now required to present findings and lessons learned upon completion of projects. Finally, the university is developing a platform for soliciting and responding to quality improvement ideas that will document and share improvement initiative results and lessons learned with the entire campus when fully implemented.</p> <p>As the result of 2014-2015 Appreciative Inquiry sessions, Metropolitan has initiated 3 improvement initiatives in the realms of</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strong, Clear, and well presented</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate, but could be improved</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear or incomplete</p>

<p>sustainability, overall and in its component parts.</p>	<p>collaborative project sourcing, strategic planning, and senior leadership development. Participation in the PEN network and Minnesota OCI also allow faculty and staff members to be trained and encouraged in practice of CI efforts in their day-to-day activities.</p>	
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