

University of Northern Iowa - IA

HLC ID 1259

OPEN PATHWAY: Reaffirmation Review

Review Date: 3/29/2021

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Context and Nature of Review

Review Date

3/29/2021

Mid-Cycle Reviews include:

- The Year 4 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Biennial Review for Applying institutions

Reaffirmation Reviews include:

- The Year 10 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Review for Initial Candidacy for Applying institutions
- The Review for Initial Accreditation for Applying institutions
- The Year 4 Review for Standard Pathway institutions that are in their first accreditation cycle after attaining initial accreditation

Scope of Review

- Reaffirmation Review
- Federal Compliance (if applicable)
- On-site Visit
- Multi-campus Visit (if applicable)

- COVID-19 Response Form

Institutional Context

The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) is the state's public comprehensive university. Its four colleges, (Humanities, Arts and Sciences; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Business Administration; and Education) offer 90 undergraduate and 50 graduate degree programs. Strong academic programs are complemented by a variety of support services to help students meet their academic goals. In-state students comprise 88-93% of the student population which is predominantly white (81.7%). Responding to a decline in enrollment is being guided by a Strategic Enrollment Master Plan.

UNI revised its Strategic Plan in 2016. Throughout the Assurance Argument and during the virtual campus visit, attention to two of the Strategic Plan goals was demonstrated across the five Criteria. Community Engagement includes outreach to the Cedar Falls community and to the State of Iowa offering services, knowledge, and resources. A result of UNI's Quality Initiative Project is the Service Learning Institute. The purpose of the Service Learning Institute is to help faculty incorporate the pedagogy of service learning into courses to support student learning goals. Training is provided for faculty to incorporate service learning into courses. Service Learning Institute staff facilitate connections with community agencies and groups. During the Community Engagement Forum faculty members described their positive experiences incorporating service learning into their courses. Community engagement is part of the faculty promotion and tenure standards. Students described their experiences with service learning and were enthusiastic about their opportunities. One student described his service learning

experience as "the most rewarding thing I have done here." Another student reported her service learning experience brought her into contact with peers she would not have gotten to know otherwise. A woman who oversees a volunteer center in Cedar Falls spoke positively about the resources provided by the Service Learning Institute and the impact the students have on the agencies, groups, and individuals with whom they work. It is clear the community benefits from the initiatives and services provided to the community through the Service Learning Institute.

Another goal in the Strategic Plan focuses on Diversity and Inclusion. There are resources in place to address Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the campus community including the Chief Diversity Officer and the Director of Multicultural Education, and the Center for Multicultural Education. Comments from students during the campus virtual visit show mixed feelings about the achievement of this goal. "Administrators do not see diversity as a priority - there are no active discussions"; "Reactionary conversations happen often - follow-up does not happen."; "The bias response form has become the bias report form - nothing happens after a form (complaint) is submitted."; "UNI needs to do a better job supporting minority students"; "Some folks on campus are fantastic advocate for students." ; and "some departments are set-up to do good things." The recently formed President's Council on Inclusion, Transformative Social Justice & Advocacy is a 14 member group of students, faculty, staff, and administrators charged with "providing broad recommendations, on strategies, practices and policies to achieve systematic change for a truly diverse, equitable and inclusive campus community." The close of the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan will provide the opportunity for the university to report on the progress of this Council and provide direction for continuing attention to DEI efforts.

Interactions with Constituencies

President

President's Cabinet

Senior VP for Finance and Operations

Chief Information Officer

Assistant VP & Director of Management

Chief Diversity Officer

Director of Multicultural Education

Opening Session - 20

Criteria 1 & 2 Open Forum - 55

Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum - 106

Criterion 5 & the Future - 70

Student Open Forum - 41

Board of Regents meeting - 10

Budget meeting - 14

DEI/President's Council - 15

QIP/Community Engagement/Service Learning - 21

Exit Session - 19

Additional Documents

See Addendum

1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

1.A.1

The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) revised and approved its mission statement during the academic year 2016-2017. This was an inclusive process beginning with a leadership retreat attended by 160 members of the university community. Three hundred students, parents, and community members responded to an online survey designed to gather thoughts about the mission. Beyond the university community, eight public sessions were held in five Iowa communities to give voice to UNI stakeholders in the mission development.

1.A.2

The Board of Regents approved the revised mission statement at its October 20, 2016 meeting. The university's focus then moved to developing the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan to guide activities and initiatives over five years. The President appointed a Strategic Planning Committee with members representing all areas of the university and the Cedar Valley community. Core values identified in the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan are academic freedom, access, accountability, collaboration, community, diversity, engagement, excellence, and sustainability. Student success is the unifying goal of the Strategic Plan. Three Supporting Goals are included in the plan: Diversity and Inclusion, Campus

Vitality, and Community Engagement. Each goal has its own metrics identified in the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan to assess progress from the base year to 2022 identified in the five-year strategic plan..

1.A.3

The University of Northern Iowa is the state's comprehensive university. UNI's mission is to provide a "challenging and supportive environment and engage students in high-quality and high-impact learning experiences while also emphasizing excellence in teaching and scholarship." UNI understands its responsibility and obligation to serve the citizens of Iowa and strives to fulfill the charges given to it by the State. The mission and supporting statements clearly identify the nature and scope of UNI's educational programs and services provided to support students.

1.A.4

The institution offers 90 undergraduate degrees and 50 graduate degrees that include a doctoral program as described in the catalog and on the Graduate College's website, with a special focus on education and business majors. In-state residential students make up 88-93% of the university student body. UNI offers a wide range of student support services and learning opportunities for their students. In the support services area, UNI focuses heavily on 1st and 2nd-year retention as is demonstrated in the Outreach and Collaboration Projects described in the evidence provided in the Assurance Argument. In 2016 UNI received the Excellence and Innovation Award in Student Success and College Completion from AASC&U in recognition of their course-embedded peer mentoring program.

1.A.5

The 2017-2022 Strategic Plan is published on the UNI website along with the Plan's metrics and reports on the progress towards meeting the Plan's goals. Missions and strategic plans from Colleges and divisions are also published on the website. The president regularly incorporates reviews and updates of the university mission and vision in his Cabinet meetings and with the University Council which includes 100 plus leaders from across campus. The president reviews the mission, vision, and progress towards achieving goals during public presentations, and during updates presented to the Board of Regents.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.B - Core Component 1.B

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

1.B.1

The University of Northern Iowa has a long history of serving the public and is striving to serve a broader spectrum of students as described in the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. Campus constituents' work and service extend beyond campus into the community. As presented in the Assurance Argument the numerous Centers and Clinics the institution supports give students many opportunities to engage with the community and allows and encourages faculty to work outside the classroom. UNI engages directly with non-profit organizations in several ways for example by holding an annual Town Hall for Community Engagement to discuss their projects and assess community needs. UNI's Business and Community Services provides economic development services which impact the state and serve the 99 counties of Iowa. One example of the university's service to the state was demonstrated when UNI's Institute for Decision Making was asked to gather information to assist the State of Iowa's Response to the COVID-19 Crisis.

1.B.2

UNI's primary mission is to educate students. The university engages with the community to provide services locally and statewide. The Board of Regents policies and procedures prohibit public institutions from engaging in competition with private enterprises, unless it services the mission of the institution or assists with their education or research. UNI also has a clear internal auditing process that partners with the management team to ensure the institution's resources are utilized appropriately to "engage students in high-quality and high-impact learning experiences and emphasizes excellence in teaching and scholarship."

1.B.3

UNI has a clear goal and path for civic engagement as part of the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. Community engagement is the third goal in the plan and is operationalized in the Civic Action Plan

which strives to provide students with community engagement activities, such as service learning classes and co/extra-curricular activities. A second goal is to support faculty and staff in aligning community engagement with their teaching and tenure and promotion process, and also in hiring practices. The third goal is to establish a process where community partners opt-in to be recognized as UNI partners. The fourth goal is for the Office of Community Engagement to provide the leadership to create access and support for students, faculty, and staff; and reach out to the community partners to facilitate their work together. The Office of Community Engagement serves as a point of access for the community to connect with the university to establish partnerships. The Service Learning Institute works with community partners such as the Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley to support students and faculty in service learning engagements.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

1.C.1

The University of Northern Iowa has developed as their general education curriculum the Liberal Arts Core. This program is divided into six categories, seeking to give students the best educational experience and keeping them engaged with their own development, as students and informed citizens. UNI graduate students engage in practicums or internships to prepare them for the professional setting after graduation.

The Student Learning Outcomes include University Learning Outcomes, Program Learning Outcomes, and General Education Learning Outcomes as seen in the evidence. During the virtual visit, participants described how they have revised their learning outcomes and their assessment processes to ensure accurate and useable results.

UNI's cocurricular efforts include the Service-Learning Institute, the result of the university's Quality Initiative Program (QIP). Data show 42 faculty or staff members have collaborated with 25 local agencies from 2016 to 2019. The Civic Action Plan is one of the initiatives designed to support Goal #3 of the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. Goal #3 aims to prepare students to live life as informed citizens. A vital part of the Civic Action Plan is the American Democracy Project, overseen by the Office of Community Engagement. This is a national program of more than 260 colleges and universities focused on public higher education's role in preparing the next generation of informed, engaged citizens. The American Democracy Project was established in 2003 as a non-partisan initiative of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities in partnership with The New York Times. UNI seeks to engage their students in various activities in their community through this program.

1.C.2

The institution's values, which support its mission, illustrate UNI's commitment to the inclusive and

equitable treatment of its faculty, staff, and students. The institution has in place several policies and procedures to ensure their stakeholders receive equitable treatment. These include Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination, and Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct policies. Also, the New Faculty Colloquium includes a session on Diversity and Inclusion.

The University of Northern Iowa recognizes that it has struggled in the past in matters of diversity and inclusion, as they stated in the Assurance Argument. As one of the responses to a student petition, in 2016 UNI hired a Chief Diversity Officer who is a member of the President's Cabinet. During a meeting with the President's Council on Inclusion, Transformative Social Justice, and Advocacy, the discussion included descriptions of the university's efforts to strengthen the University's efforts focused on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).

UNI acknowledges the need for continued progress to foster a climate of respect for all campus constituents. During an open forum with students and a review of the student opinion survey, students noted specific areas needing attention from the university. These include the need for accurate representation of diversity in publication materials, prompt response to bias incident reports submitted by campus constituents, greater integration of topics across the curriculum rather than in department specific efforts, and greater representation of diversity across the institution. Students stressed they would like attention to DEI be an ongoing priority rather than an episodic reaction to incidents, and on-going action from leaders in administration. A review of the Climate Survey data indicate that students of color report lower levels of satisfaction with their experiences at the institution than White students.

1.C.3

UNI has taken steps to foster a climate of respect, understanding, and inclusion of faculty, staff, and students of all backgrounds. Some of these efforts are the Diversity Visit Days, Multicultural College Access Day, LGBTQ+ Visit Day, and Black/Latinx Student and Family Visit Day. Additional resources to support diversity, equity, and inclusion include a Multicultural Resource Guide, a bilingual employee list, and recruitment materials translated from English to Spanish. The Retention and Completion Council developed in 2017-2018 a Multicultural Retention Plan, aimed to address equity gaps.

All of these efforts and plans are focused on creating a climate of respect and inclusion on campus. One of the initiatives in the current strategic plan is to “provide a campus culture that reflects and values the evolving diversity of society and promotes inclusion.” The team noted continued, focused attention to this initiative is required to respond effectively to issues identified on a campus climate survey, on a student opinion survey, and at an Open Forum for students during the virtual visit.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Rationale

From evidence presented in the Assurance Argument and information shared in meetings during the virtual visit, the team confirmed the UNI mission is clear and guides the university's operations. The university revised the mission in 2016 through a process which included campus constituents and many external stakeholders. In the mission, the university confirms its commitment to provide a "challenging and supportive environment and engage students in high-quality and high-impact learning experiences while also emphasizing excellence in teaching and scholarship." The mission was approved by the Board of Regents in 2016, and is included in the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. Part of the mission is also UNI's extensive community engagement, which is guided by their Civic Action Plan and includes the Quality Improvement Project, the Service Learning Institute. UNI provides students with curricular and co-curricular activities within their community, preparing them for an active and engaged life as citizens in their lives after graduation.

The University's contributions to the public good are demonstrated by the number of collaborations and connections campus constituents have with community organizations. These include centers and clinics to provide services and information. The annual Town Hall for Community Engagement provides direct interactions between faculty, staff, and students with community groups and organizations to identify opportunities for working together. The Service Learning Institute provides training for faculty on ways to include service learning goals and activities in their courses and supports students, faculty, and staff in their service learning activities.

The University of Northern Iowa has implemented policies, activities, and initiatives to foster a climate of inclusivity and equitable treatment of faculty, staff, and students. Appropriate policies include those focused on Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination, and Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct. The New Faculty Colloquium includes a session on Diversity and Inclusion. Training activities are provided for members of search committees to ensure recruitment and selection decisions adhere to policy expectations. Despite hiring a Chief Diversity Officer in 2016, and the establishment of the Center for Multicultural Education, student comments in the Open Forum and on a student opinion survey indicate underrepresented and marginalized students are less satisfied with their campus experiences than their White peers.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A - Core Component 2.A

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

2.A.1

The mission statement was updated during 2015-2016 in accordance with Board of Regents policy. As described by evidence provided in the Criterion 1 rationale, the process of reviewing and revising the mission began with a leadership retreat of 160 members of campus constituents. Community members had several opportunities to participate in revising the University's mission statement. The Board of Regents approved the University's 2017-2022 strategic plan which included the updated mission statement at its October 20, 2016 meeting.

The list of Values included in the 2017-2022 strategic plan identifies the expectations for the UNI environment. One of the Values is Diversity defined as "the cultivation of a diverse and inclusive learning and work environment." Following the review of the Assurance Argument and after meetings during the virtual visit, the Team recognized efforts focused on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) flowed through much of the University's work. As demonstrated by evidence statements throughout this report, attention to DEI was described in activities and initiatives relating to the mission, community engagement, curriculum design, planning, and student concerns. Recommendations designed to strengthen the DEI coordination between Criteria are included in the rationale sections in appropriate Criteria sections.

2.A.2

The university has in place policies to guide processes and ensure operations are conducted with a high level of integrity. Evidence to support ethical conduct can be found in policies focused on financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary functions. An indication of the University successfully adhering to policies is its receipt of a Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting

after the most recent comprehensive financial report by the Auditor of State. Policies to guide ethical and responsible behavior are published in the Academic Catalog, handbooks, manuals, and on the UNI website for dissemination to campus constituents and the public. Training sessions are provided to campus staff members to explain the expectations for implementing policies and procedures.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

2.B.1

Members of the campus community and the public have access to accurate, current information through the university website. Published academic information includes descriptions of undergraduate and graduate programs, degree requirements, student learning outcomes, and program accreditations. Consumer information on the website includes costs of attendance (tuition, fees, meal plan rates, housing expenses) and Recommended Expenses. Much of the information included on the website is also included in the Academic Catalog. Prospective students and their families have access to important information to help them make decisions about attending UNI.

2.B.2

Program descriptions on the UNI website include information about research opportunities for students working with faculty in Biology, Chemistry, Psychology, Earth Science for example. An annual symposium hosted by The Graduate College provides a showcase for students to present their research and creative works. The symposium gives students experience in presentation and performance. Community engagement is an integral part of the UNI strategic plan and is demonstrated by the Service Learning Institute, the university's Quality Improvement Project. UNI is a member of the Iowa Campus Compact.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.C - Core Component 2.C

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

2.C.1

The nine member state Board of Regents (BOR) governs and provides oversight to the three state universities and two special schools. Members of the BOR are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. A student from one of the universities serves as a member of the Board. Professional staff members support the work of the Board. Orientation for new BOR members includes meetings at the Board office, an orientation manual, and visits to the university campuses. Regents' training continues through their service on Board committees, through meetings with campus presidents, administrators, staff, and students, and reports submitted by campus administrators. The Board participates in training workshops offered by AGB and includes AGB representatives to Board retreats.

2.C.2

A review of the agenda for the July 2018 Orientation meeting for new BOR members confirmed information was provided in the areas which come to the Board for consideration and action. The areas were internal audit, media/social media, state & government relations, legal and human resources, academic affairs, and finance and facilities. Reviews of minutes from BOR meetings verify the members' deliberations and decision-making in the areas of their responsibility including finance and budgeting, academic affairs, human resources, legal issues, and facilities and construction. The BOR's 2016-2021 Strategic Plan includes the mission, vision, values, and culture. The goals included in the Strategic Plan guide the BOR's activities and initiatives in their work.

2.C.3

BOR meetings include written and oral reports from the university presidents, administrators, faculty and students. Issues brought before the Board come from one of the standing committees after discussion, review of reports from the campuses, and information collected by the Board staff. During a meeting with 8 members of the Board and two Board staff members, the team learned the ways members of the public are able to interact with Board members for example through the public comment session at each meeting. The BOR meeting minutes demonstrate the variety of topics raised during the public comment sessions.

2.C.4

The composition of the BOR must be balanced by gender and political composition, a requirement of Iowa Code, Section 262. BOR members described how they avoid being influenced from individuals and groups who may seek favors or special consideration in their decisions by referring individuals to appropriate Board staff members or the institutions' administrators. The members realize they have a significant amount of power to make decisions that could have benefits to those outside of higher education. During the meeting BOR members expressed the need to stay well-informed about issues that come before them to ensure their decisions are based on good information, thoughtful consideration of information submitted to them, and the responsibilities given to them in their role. The Board Manual preamble addresses conflicts of interest and duty of loyalty. Regents submit annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure Forms.

2.C.5

The BOR delegates the day-to-day management of UNI to the president and administrative staff. Regular reports submitted by campus administrators keep the Board informed of the campus operations and the outcomes. As required by state code and BOR policy, the UNI has a business office to implement and oversee the UNI's activities related to its fiscal affairs.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

2.D

Academic freedom is a UNI core value, is addressed by the university policies 6.10 and 13.10 and is also guaranteed by Board of Regents policy 3.9 and in Iowa Code. These policies recognize the basic functions of the university as including the creation, advancement, and dissemination of knowledge in all its forms. Description of the ways faculty and students pursue research and creative works are included in the Criterion 3 Rationale statements 3.B and 3.D in this report.

A review of several examples of programs, events, and curriculum opportunities focused on examining freedom of speech demonstrate a variety of ways UNI attends to this concept. The content of the course COMM 4217/5217, Freedom of Speech, includes laws and social attitudes, attempts to regulate communication, free speech and national security, and artistic expression. On January 18, 2018 a panel discussion, Should There Be Limits to Free Speech on Campus? was held at UNI. The Rod Library annually sponsors Banned Books Week to highlight books that have been "challenged, restricted, or banned." The goal of of the week is to "...highlight the importance of even the most controversial texts." During the week books are on display and the library sponsors a READOUT.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

2.E.1

UNI has an Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP) to support research and scholarship. The Dean of the Graduate College and Associate Vice President for Research and Innovation oversees the RSP. The Dean/Associate VP's responsibilities include obtaining and managing funds for research from a variety of external sources. RSP and the Office of Business Operations provide support and guidance to departments to ensure appropriate use of grant funds, including grant program personnel and activities. UNI policy 6.10 provides the expectations for faculty adherence to professional and ethical standards in conducting research. A review of UNI Policy 13.13 showed guidance and procedures for addressing potential misconduct in research conducted by faculty, staff, or students.

2.E.2

Two UNI groups help ensure the research conducted by campus constituents is conducted responsibly. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversees research which includes human subjects; the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee cooperates with the Biology Department to oversee research on animals. UNI provides access to the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) to help faculty, staff, and students understand the requirements and expectations for conducting research appropriately and with integrity. Courses and workshops focused on conducting research are offered by UNI. Students, faculty, and staff who participate in a certain number of workshops earn a Certificate on Ethics in Research & Scholarship.

2.E.3

Student research is supervised by faculty advisors. The Student Academic Ethics Policy identifies the expectations for student behavior in their academic work including research projects. The policy

includes definitions of ethics violations. Faculty are required to include the policy on their syllabi and to discuss the importance of following the policy in students' academic work. Records of violations of the policy are kept by the Associate Provost's office and are catalogued by semester, major, and violation level. A review of academic ethics violations reported from Fall 2015 through Summer 2018, showed a total of 133 reports for undergraduate students. This number showed a significant decrease in the number of academic ethics violations cases reported during this time period for undergraduate students. In Fall 2015, 30 reports of policy violations were submitted; in Fall 2018, zero violations were reported. The number of reports of academic ethics policy violations for graduate students was 1 in Fall 2015 and was zero in Fall 2018. The Rod Library provides services and instruction to support students' research work, as stated in the library's strategic plan. Faculty Librarians, Liaison Librarians, and Strategist Librarians are available to assist students identify, evaluate, and use resources and information to support their research.

2.E.4

Records of violations of the Academic Ethics Policy are kept by the the Associate Provost's Office and are catalogued by semester, program, and level of violation. A review of summary data of academic policy violations submitted for the terms Fall 2015 through Fall 2018 and Summer sessions 2016, 2017, 2018 showed a small number of reported cases. In Fall 2015, reports were submitted for 30 undergraduate students; in Fall 2018, zero reports were submitted. In Fall 2015, a report was submitted for 1 graduate student; in Fall 2018, zero reports were submitted. For Summer sessions 2016, 2017, and 2018, 4 reports were submitted for both undergraduate and graduate students.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Rationale

Evidence presented in the Assurance Argument and shared in meetings during the virtual campus visit confirm the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) meets Criterion 2. Policies and procedures are in place which identify expectations for behaviors to ensure ethical and responsible conduct and integrity in Financial, Academic, Human Resources, and Auxiliary Function operations. Policies and procedures are published in various manuals and handbooks and published on the UNI website which provides access by campus constituents and the public.

The nine member Board of Regents, who are citizen volunteers, sets policy and provides oversight of UNI and the other two state universities. The Regents described the ways they maintain their independence from undue influence in their discussions and decision-making. While delegating day-to-day management of the university to the campus administrators and responsibility for academics to the faculty, the Regents stay informed through regular reports from the UNI president and other administrators. Regents interact with the public through public comment sessions at Board meetings.

UNI is committed to supporting academic freedom and freedom of expression. UNI policy, Board of Regents policy, and Iowa code explain and guarantee these freedoms. Free exchange of ideas is encouraged and UNI offers opportunities for faculty and students to participate in activities focused on presentation and discussion of a variety of ideas and topics.

Research conducted by faculty, students, and staff is encouraged and supported by UNI. Policies define the expectations for conducting research ethically and with integrity. Guidance in conducting research is provided by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. Training is available to guide students in their research efforts through courses, workshops, and librarians. UNI began keeping records of the number of violations of the Student Academic Ethics Policy in Fall 2015. A review of data gathered on violations of the Student Academic Ethics Policy showed a very small number of violations overall and a significant decrease in the number of violations from Fall 2015 to Fall 2018.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

3.A.1.

As documented in the Assurance Argument, the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) assures quality education through well-established policies and procedures published in the Curriculum Handbook as well as guidelines available on the curricular website. Multi-level and systematic review and approval occur for both Undergraduate and Graduate curriculum proposals beginning at the department level with faculty. Following college level approval, proposals move to the University Curriculum Committee (undergraduate programs and courses) or the Graduate College Curriculum Committee (graduate programs and courses). The University Faculty Senate reviews and takes final action on curricular proposals. The Board of Regents approves new majors, name changes of majors, suspension/termination of majors, and changes in the location of program offerings. A documented review of this process for a new program, the BS in Environmental Science, confirmed all levels of curricular review as stipulated. During a meeting with the Iowa Board of Regents, the Board President confirmed their role in this process as recommendations come to the Board Academic Affairs Committee, generally being presented by campus faculty. Board of Regents members are able to ask questions prior to their determination concerning proposals.

Regular Academic Program Review occurs to assure "rigor and currency" of curriculum. The Board of Regents policies stipulate that all programs must be reviewed every seven years. Programs are allowed to apply to substitute external accreditation for these reviews. In addition, annual reporting of Academic Program Assessment is required to assure that learning outcomes drive curricular decisions and program improvement. The review team confirmed these actions through review of

documentation materials provided as part of the Assurance Argument. The University of Northern Iowa's courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.

3.A.2.

Significant and commendable work by UNI has taken place in the area of learning outcomes with differentiation being made between undergraduate and graduate programs. Three University Learning Outcomes have been identified: critical thinking, communication, and program content knowledge. The team reviewed course syllabi and noted they demonstrate the reference of program outcomes as well as course learning outcomes. Course and program assessment reports are required on a systematic basis as described and evidenced in Criterion 4. When graduate courses are cross listed with undergraduate courses, syllabi stipulate additional rigor for graduate study utilizing differentiated learning outcomes. This was also substantiated by the team's review of course syllabi. Program outcomes are specified within the Academic Catalog for undergraduate degrees, graduate degrees, majors, minors and certificates. UNI clearly articulates and differentiates learning goals for all programs.

3.A.3.

The Board of Regents as well as UNI policies require the same academic standards and course quality regardless of delivery mode or location and this is reflected in course syllabi reviewed by the team. The Office of Continuing and Distance Education provides course language to assure consistency in learning outcomes. These were demonstrated through online and off campus course syllabi presented as part of the Assurance Argument. Most off-campus courses are taught by UNI faculty. The HLC Federal Compliance review confirmed that UNI's credit hour policy is consistent with federal guidelines regardless of the location of instruction, meeting pattern, or course format. Application of the widely recognized Quality Matters Rubric to UNI online courses began in 2011. Since adopting QM, a significant number of faculty and staff have participated in workshops (400) with seventy completing QM's peer review certification. This rigorous training and review program assures the use of best practices in online course design. UNI's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes and locations of delivery.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.B - Core Component 3.B

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

3.B.1.

The University of Northern Iowa's general education program is known as the Liberal Arts Core (LAC). The program purpose, content and learning outcomes are communicated to prospective and current students through the Liberal Arts Core website. Students are required to take courses across six categories: Civilizations and Cultures; Fine Arts, Literature, Philosophy and Religion; Nature Science and Technology; Social Science; and Capstone Experience.

In 2011, a Cornerstone course was added to enhance the first-year experience. Cornerstone accrues three credit hours during each of the first semester and second semester of enrollment. The Executive Director of Undergraduate Studies noted during the Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum that currently only about 40% of incoming students take the Cornerstone course as it is designed for first time, full time students. Assessment of learning outcomes by instructors is required and documentation concerning this was included in Criterion 4. The team's review of faculty qualifications for a random selection of instructors for the Cornerstone course verifies that the institutional process for qualifications was followed. During the Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum, administrators verified that standard hiring practice is used when openings occur, approximately one per year. Based on the focus and learning outcomes of this course, instructors are drawn from the subject matter areas of Language & Literatures and Communication.

Following a significant change in the university mission and strategic plan in 2017, the UNI Faculty

Senate created a two-phase process to review the current general education program to “ensure alignment” with the new mission and to enhance student success. The revised program will take effect Fall of 2023. Faculty and administrators confirmed this multi-year project and its current status during the Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum.

Evidence presented in the Assurance Argument as well as the team visit confirms that UNI's general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution.

3.B.2.

The current general education program (LAC) is rooted in the liberal arts, providing a foundation of knowledge and skills in preparation for success in further study and in life. LAC's framework aligns with the academic mission of the university which is clearly stated in the Academic Master Plan. The areas of critical thinking and creative abilities, intercultural literacy and a global perspective, community engagement and civic responsibility, and curiosity, imagination, and lifelong learning are foci of the framework. The program uses a distribution model to populate courses to fulfill requirements in the six required categories as noted above. Outcomes for each category as well as subcategories are clearly outlined.

As is noted above, UNI's general education program is in transition to a revised program to be implemented in Fall 2023. According to faculty and administrator comments during the Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum, this is a significant modification from the current Liberal Arts Core which was a distributed, discipline based model. As UNI has progressed in the application of learning outcomes, it became clear to that the previous model made it difficult to measure the defined outcomes. Therefore, the new general education program has been formed on the basis of learning outcomes.

While the current general education program is based on a strong liberal arts framework, the program which will take effect in 2023 is based on learning outcomes allowing for enhanced documentation of student acquisition of knowledge and concepts and the development of skills and attitudes valued by UNI as important for college-educated individuals.

3.B.3.

UNI demonstrates commitment to human and cultural diversity within the context of a definition of diversity which was established in 2009. The university commitment to diversity was reaffirmed with the identification of a focused goal within the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. This commitment to diversity was demonstrated in the Assurance Argument by describing and providing evidence of a wide range of curricular and co-curricular opportunities. For example, various LAC courses in the categories of Humanities, Non-Western Cultures, Diversity and Global Issues and Capstone, include content and learning outcomes relevant to human and cultural diversity. A review of selected course syllabi (Socio-Economic Reality of Central America, Crime and Social Inequality, and Women and Christianity) supported the integration of culture and diversity content by faculty with relevant expertise. Also, study abroad participation of more than an average of 600 students a year pre-COVID-19 pandemic, provides students with opportunities for cultural immersion.

New student orientation, UNI Now, includes sessions on diversity and inclusion. Co-curricular programs such as Jump Start, MILE program, Multicultural Mentors for Student Success, Ethnic Student Promoters, Safe Zone Ally, and International Student Promoters were documented in the Assurance Argument as providing growth opportunities for students related to diversity and

inclusion. The UNI Diversity website includes a calendar of events. Over 250 student organizations provide an array of opportunities for student engagement and a number of these focus on diversity and inclusion. Community engagement opportunities also provide connections to underserved populations.

Climate assessment reviews presented in the Assurance Argument, including the annual graduating senior survey and the student climate survey, point to continuing opportunities for growth in creating an inclusive campus environment. Disaggregated data of students of color from white students suggest that students of color report less agreement with statements such as Different perceptions are valued in the classroom, Appropriate and inclusive language is used in your classes, and Instructors model cultural sensitivity. Data also suggest that students of color agree with the statement There are interracial tensions in the classroom at a rate of 40% while white students agree at a rate of 20%. UNI is undertaking a broad approach and focus in dealing with diversity issues and preparation for life in a multicultural world through the establishment of the President's Inclusion, Transformative Social Justice & Advocacy Advisory Committee. The Student Open Forum as well as the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion session highlighted the complexity of issues in this area as well as documented efforts by UNI to address these issues. While the education and opportunities by UNI recognize human and cultural diversity, their continued work in this area is encouraged.

3.B.4.

The mission of the University of Northern Iowa focuses on excellence in teaching as well as scholarship which enhances civic life and influences communities. Scholarship is determined to be 25% of a tenured/tenure-track faculty member's work as referenced in the Faculty Handbook. Departments establish criteria for annual review, promotion, tenure and post-tenure review to specify scholarship within context of university-wide guidelines. The School of Music criteria document was included in the Assurance Argument. The team reviewed three additional department criteria as examples of these criteria: Department of Biology, Department of Special Education, and Department of History.

As documented in the Assurance Argument, UNI supports faculty scholarship and creative work. The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs assists with identifying and preparing to apply for external and internal funding. The five-year average for competitive grants and contracts is about \$26 million. Internal funding is also available through various units (departments and colleges, Provost & Executive Vice President, Graduate College). Outcomes of the investment of internal funds over the past several years have been publications, creative products, and summer research fellowships. Several centers on campus also provide opportunities for faculty and students.

Undergraduate and graduate students also contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge in the following documented ways. These may be accomplished as part of coursework or as independent projects with the faculty. Some programs, such as Bachelor of Science degrees require such engagement by students. Students have also participated in NSF Research Experience for Undergraduate Programs. Students have opportunities to present their research and creative work both on-campus and off-campus at a variety of events and activities. Departments, colleges, and the university provide funding to support student research and creative activity. For example, the Intercollegiate Academic Fund awarded \$269,660 to 846 students from fall 2018 through spring 2020. Graduate Assistantships are available for students to work with faculty in the area of research. A number of award, scholarship and funding opportunities are available for graduate students.

In harmony with UNI's institutional mission, faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative

work and the discovery of knowledge.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

3.C.1.

A goal of the UNI 2017-2022 Strategic Plan is to attract and retain a diverse and representational workforce. Since 2016, the Assurance Argument claims that the proportion of faculty and staff who are females and underrepresented minorities has steadily increased. According to aggregated data across all employee categories provided in the Assurance Argument, from 2015-16 to 2020-21, the percentage of females has dropped slightly from 55.4% to 54.7%, and the percentage of minority faculty and staff has grown from 9.7% to 13.2%. A disaggregation of categories indicates improvement in most employee areas.

Policies and programs supported by Human Resource Services, and the Office of Compliance and Equity Management seek to increase diversity in the workforce and improve retention. Additionally, programming through Gender & Sexuality Service, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, and the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice provide programs and/or support for faculty and staff in areas of policy and practice.

In 2016, a collaborative study was completed by administration and faculty looking at faculty compensation. Inequities brought about by such things as prior experience and inaccurate application

of evaluation criteria, affected salaries were adjusted.

3.C.2.

According to the Common Data Set referenced in the Assurance Argument, in the Fall of 2020, UNI had a total of 641 faculty (537 full time and 104 part time). Of this total, 363 were tenured, 96 tenure-track and 182 non-tenure-track. UNI reports that 99% of classes are taught by faculty with graduate assistants serving in support roles. The student/faculty ratio was 17/1 in 2019 and the average class size in fall 2020 was 14 for graduate and 28 for undergraduate. Tenure and tenure-track faculty, 71.6% of total faculty, are relied upon to plan and deliver the curriculum.

Responsibilities of faculty relative to teaching are addressed in the Faculty Handbook as preparation and delivery of instruction, establishment of student learning goals, and assessment of progress toward achievement of learning outcomes within courses. As described in Criterion 4.B., faculty also plan and assess student learning outcomes at the program level.

As documented in the Assurance Argument, UNI maintains a transparent and open annual process for requesting faculty lines, beginning at the department level. Data provided through the Program Vitality website are utilized to support these requests. Department heads and college senate review and consult with college deans as to priorities. College priorities are then discussed by the Deans Council. Faculty are involved in the establishment of academic credential requirements for instructional staff as well as serving on search committees. Faculty also serve on department professional assessment committees, developing criteria for promotion and tenure which align with university-wide guidelines identified in the Faculty Handbook.

With a decline in student population of about 27.9% between 2010 and Fall 2020 (Criterion 5.C.), UNI has strategically reduced staffing. Administrators described the ongoing process of staffing during the Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum as involving an ongoing analysis of open faculty lines and determining the necessity of filling of these positions as it relates to the potential for enrollment. Administrators also review assessment data to determine where resources should be invested. UNI maintains a 17 to 1 student to faculty ratio. The University of Northern Iowa has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty to carry out both the classroom and non-classroom roles of faculty.

3.C.3.

The University of Northern Iowa assures that faculty are appropriately qualified to teach courses in programs to which they are assigned. Terminal degrees are required for faculty teaching at the graduate level and master's degrees for those teaching at the baccalaureate level. Faculty who do not meet these expectations meet credential qualifications through a review process. Forms used for this process as well as Faculty Handbook and Faculty Hiring Guide references were provided as evidence. Selected faculty files outlining their credentials were reviewed by the team member during the campus visit. Policies and procedures are in place to assure that qualification requirements are adhered to. The Graduate Faculty Constitution defines graduate faculty membership, and a status form is utilized for review of instructors who are not regular UNI graduate faculty. The Graduate College is responsible for tracking these applications and the Provost's Office annually reviews graduate courses to assure that faculty teaching these courses have earned the appropriate graduate degree. Faculty teaching distance courses must meet the same qualifications as on-campus faculty.

A review of the Guidelines and Procedures for Qualifying Faculty to Teach demonstrates accordance with the Higher Learning Commission assumed practices. The team reviewed a sample of recent faculty appointments based on tested experience, which supplemented the samples presented in the

Assurance Argument narrative. The evidence provided indicates that the institution follows its procedures with a review of tested experience using a combination of a curriculum vita and three letters of reference attesting to the individual being a successful practitioner and has been doing so since 2017. This tested experience is reviewed by the department head, dean, and provost. In addition, the team noted that the institution applies this standard in a rigorous manner, with at least two of the sampled individuals holding a terminal degree within their field of practice at the time of the review and several pursuing coursework for terminal degrees.

The first year, two semester Cornerstone course satisfies categories 1A and 1B of the Liberal Arts Core and is recommended for first time, full time students. With approximately 15 sections each semester, the course is taught by approximately 10 different instructors. A review of randomly selected Cornerstone course faculty confirmed they meet the guidelines and procedures for qualifying faculty. Two individuals have a terminal degrees in a relevant program of study (English, Communication), and one individual has a terminal degree with relevant coursework in the discipline (Ed.D. degree with masters and doctoral work in literacy education and curriculum & instruction; specialized certification in academic support). During the Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum a college administrator shared that Cornerstone instructors are selected from faculty within associated disciplinary fields and include individuals who are seeking a terminal degree as an effort to develop their teaching portfolio.

A review of a stratified random sample of fourteen faculty indicated that all individuals either had a terminal degree in a disciplinary field aligned with the subject code of courses they teach (13/14) or were qualified based on coursework within the discipline (i.e., faculty member teaching statistics with a master's degree in physics combined with 26 doctoral coursework credits in science and math education, math, and statistics). Furthermore, a review of personnel files indicated that the institution follows its policy (vet applicant for proper degrees, retention of official transcripts, use of background checks before hiring).

All UNI instructors are appropriately qualified.

3.C.4.

The UNI Faculty Handbook outlines annual review process procedures which occur in spring or early summer for all faculty. Evaluation of faculty aligns with their workload which is generally 60% teaching/librarianship, 25% scholarship, and 15% service.

The Faculty Handbook also outlines procedures and policies guiding the review of faculty applying for tenure and/or promotion which is conducted during the fall and early winter by the Professional Assessment Committee, department head, dean, and provost. The Board of Regents is provided the final campus recommendation for promotion and tenure by the UNI provost.

As prescribed in the Faculty Handbook, departmental standards and criteria for evaluation are developed by faculty within the department as demonstrated in the Assurance Argument using the School of Music example. Review of the following unit criteria documents substantiated this process: School of Music, Department of Biology, Department of Special Education, and Department of History. Criteria are reviewed each year. The Professional Assessment Committee of each unit develops a set of procedures which are followed. Each College Review Committee reviews departmental standards and criteria and monitors evaluation processes within the college in order to ensure consistency, equity, and alignment with university standards.

Graduate assistants with teaching responsibilities are evaluated following the Policy on Teaching Assistant Evaluation and Training which is located in the Graduate Assistantship Handbook.

All instructors are evaluated regularly following institutional policies and procedures.

3.C.5.

UNI assures currency of faculty in their disciplines as well as their adeptness in teaching roles through well-developed evaluation processes specified in the Faculty Handbook. Expectations of teaching as the primary role of faculty as well as the requirement that these must be demonstrated in probationary and annual reviews are clearly articulated in the Faculty Handbook. Faculty are required to include in their evaluation files artifacts from their teaching as well as standardized student assessments. Peer and department head observations are also used to demonstrate teaching effectiveness.

Professional development for faculty is offered through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL). According to CETL data presented in the Assurance Argument, in 2018-2019, 140 contact hours of activities were provided with 93 contact hours in 2019-2020. The Fall Faculty Workshop focuses on pedagogy and professional development. Also noted was the co-sponsoring of the Diversity Colloquium by the CETL with the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminology and the President's Office. The Office of Continuing Education partners with Educational Technology & Media Services to offer instructional teaching workshops for faculty. Over the past five years, 77.5% of faculty have participated in these workshops. In response to COVID-19 pandemic extension of online instruction, all three of these units partnered along with the library to assist faculty in increasing their proficiency in using technology and teaching online. Comments by faculty and administrators during the Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum substantiate the assistance provided and pivoting that was required by faculty in a short period of time to move all classes to an online format at the outset of COVID-19.

Summer Research Fellowships are available to faculty based on an application process. Short-term and long-term educational leaves, professional leave, and retraining leave are available to faculty. Each of these is noted in the Faculty Handbook.

UNI provides processes and resources to assure that instructors are current in their disciplines as well as adept in their teaching roles.

3.C.6.

The university Academic Freedom, Shared Governance and Academic Responsibility policy requires faculty with teaching assignments to schedule a minimum of one office hour per class per week. The 2019 Board of Regents Biennial Faculty Activity Report notes UNI tenured/tenure-track faculty as spending an average of 7.82 hours of out of class availability for students. Non-tenure track faculty reported an average of 7.51 hours each week. The 2019-20 Graduating Senior Survey reported that a high percentage of students (80.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that faculty with whom they had contact were committed to student learning, a good indicator of accessibility. In addition, 85.9% of these students agreed or strongly agreed that at least one faculty member showed an active interest in their education/career goals. The 2020 NSSE Survey provided evidence that UNI instructors are accessible to students with 76.6% of students reporting discussions with faculty outside of class. Also, 87.3% of students reported talking with a faculty member about career plans. A measure of quality of interactions with faculty on a scale of 1 to 7 (poor to excellent), 83.5% rated interactions at 5 or

above. UNI instructors are available for student inquiry.

3.C.7.

UNI demonstrates appropriate qualifications for staff members from the point of hiring via review of position listings by Human Resources based on information regarding similar positions on campus or other BOR campuses as well as from the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources. UNI Policy 5.20 governs the hiring of Professional and Scientific staff, requiring that they hold appropriate academic degrees or possess equivalent experience. They are also to be certified, licensed or registered as pertinent to the position and have received training in specialized areas.

With the guidance of Human Resource Services, all departments are responsible for the on-boarding and training of new staff hires. Examples of unit training documented in the Assurance Argument included student tutor training through The Learning Center at Rod Library, the Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships staff, and campus wide advisor training. UNI supports professional development of staff through professional organization memberships. Staff members may attend conferences or events. UNI provides support following university procedures for staff tuition reimbursement, professional development assignments, or non-instructional employee graduate work. Units provide relevant training for staff members such as those listed on the centralized web portal from the Office of Compliance and Equity Management. The Student Affairs Professional Development Committee offers professional development opportunities such as the documented Breaking Barriers, a Fall 2018 Conference. A wide array of relevant opportunities is available to staff members by virtue of their employment at the university.

Staff members who provide student support services are qualified, trained and supported for professional development.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.D - Core Component 3.D

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

3.D.1.

As documented in the Assurance Argument, the University of Northern Iowa displays a well developed array of support services suited to needs of the student population. The student body includes a high percentage of first generation students (33%) with 28% of undergraduate students being Pell Grant eligible. Support begins with orientation during which time services target specific populations of students to assist their transition and enhance their potential for success. During the first five to seven weeks of the first semester of enrollment and along with pre-college information, UNI requests that students complete a Connection Survey designed to assist in identifying students struggling with the transition to college and students who might be at-risk for leaving the university. Based on their answers students receive information and/or outreach from a variety of campus resources to support their transition.

Orientation programs are mandatory for both freshman and transfer students. These programs are facilitated by the Office of Student Success & Retention. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these orientations were held online in 2020. Students learn about the university, consult with an advisor to schedule classes, and meet with the Office of Financial Aid regarding their status. Orientation also includes programming for parents and other family members. UNI Now extends orientation for several days as the fall semester begins. A transfer-track is included in this orientation. The orientation program, Graduate Student Success, is offered online. Programming for these students comes through the Graduate College with the efforts of a Graduate Student Life Coordinator.

Housing programming and support is provided by the Department of Residence. In fall 2020, 88.5% of new freshman and 24.2% of transfer students chose to live on campus. Support for students continues beyond their first year of enrollment. The Student Health Center, Student Wellness and Recreation Services, and Counseling Services also support students. A number of students during the

Student Open Forum spoke positively regarding the unique support provided during COVID-19 by the Student Health Center as well as Student Wellness and Recreation Services.

UNI provides student support services under the leadership of the Dean of Students Office which are suited to the needs of the student population.

3.D.2.

In order to address needs of specific student groups, a multicultural retention plan was developed in 2017-2018 and implemented the following academic year. Resulting actions included referrals to the Center for Multicultural Education as identified through the Connection Survey, financial outreach projects, and expanded community space for TRIO eligible students. Also implemented was the Jump Start Extended Orientation Program for ethnic and racial minority students and/or students who participated in TRIO programs.

The Office of Diversity, Inclusion, & Social Justice was restructured in 2018 to include the Center for Multicultural Education, Military & Veteran Student Services, and Gender & Sexuality Services. Gender & Sexuality Services collaborations across campus resulted in all-gender housing, preferred name use, and inclusion of personal pronouns. International programming includes study abroad, Culture and Intensive English Program, and other culture specific programs and events. Support is provided to meet specific needs of international students.

The Honors program provides students with enhanced advisement, academically rigorous seminars, small enrollment classes taught through innovative studies, opportunities for leadership, extracurricular opportunities, and personal mentoring in completing the required thesis.

Indebtedness has decreased by 13.9% over the past seven years due to education and support for student borrowers. Financial Aid and Scholarships provides online, no cost financial literacy programming such as Live Like a Student and Panther Cash Course as well as individual counseling. Additionally, workshops are provided on such topics as FAFSA and applying for scholarships.

Career Services reports that in 2019, 94% of recent graduates found successful employment or advanced studies within six months of their UNI graduation. As evidenced on the Career Services website, staff provide support in developing professional skills, a job board, internship coordination, career fairs, on-campus recruiting and individual and group advising.

Support services are coordinated and supported by the Retention and Completion Council. Processes, services, and interventions are developed or refined in order to enhance student success and persistence. The CRM system (Customer Relations Management) is currently being expanded to enhance communication and referral.

Numerous student support services were listed in the assurance argument.

- Preparatory experiences such as Daily Visits, Panther Open Houses, Admitted Student Visit Days, and Transfer Connections.
- Conditional admittance for high school graduates and transfer students who do not meet academic requirements.
- ALEKS guide for student placement in mathematics or science courses.

- Course placement and advisement for international students.
- Graduate student degree/provisional admission.
- Peer mentors in selected Liberal Arts Core and introductory major courses.
- Course-embedded support that is overseen by The Learning Center@Rod Library.

When invited to comment on the interventions established by the institution to support students, attendees at the Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum pointed to the use of data to determine effectiveness in monitoring students. With the university's mature use of assessment for learning outcomes in academic programs, UNI possesses institutional knowledge and expertise to grow in the area of assessment in the area of student services in order to demonstrate how services are making a difference in enrollment, persistence, and completion.

Learning support and preparatory instruction are provided by UNI to address the academic needs of students.

3.D.3.

Undergraduate academic advising occurs for the first time as all first year and transfer students receive one-on-one advising as part of the mandatory advisement prior to registering for classes. During this initial session, the advisor reviews and discusses the student's academic background, previously completed coursework, and academic and/or career interests. An academic advisor is then assigned within their declared program or within one of three professional advising centers (College of Business Administration, College of Education, Office of Academic Advising). Supplemental advising is offered to various student groups: TRIO eligible, low income, first-generation, students of color, and student athletes.

Discussion, communication, and collaboration among advisors and between advisors and administration regarding policies, procedures and issues is facilitated by the Undergraduate Advising Council to the Provost. A student-centered strategic plan is maintained by the Advising Council.

Open-ended responses to the student opinion survey and student comments made during an open forum indicate that students' advising experiences vary across academic programs and advisors. Some students noted a high level of changes in advisors (4-5), varying levels of relationship based on advisor's workload and position, difficulty with the portal technology, lack of academic planning, and lack of contact or responsiveness. Other students, however, noted a positive advising experience with one student attributing the success to the professional advising model used in the College of Business Administration. While a review of the NSSE data indicates an increase in the percent of students rating their interactions with advisors as excellent (71% in 2020), the comments shared in the opinion survey and student forum indicate that the quality of advising or satisfaction with advising is uneven across the institution and may warrant additional attention.

Graduate student academic advisement is done by the Graduate Coordinator or departmental academic program graduate advisor. The Graduate Student Handbook serves as a source for academic policies and procedures. The Associate Dean of the Graduate College oversees issues of procedure and compliance. Advisement for thesis and dissertation writing is provided by the Thesis & Dissertation Services Coordinator.

UNI provides academic advising that is suited to offerings and needs of students while

undergraduate perception that advising is uneven across the institution warrants additional attention.

3.D.4.

As documented in the Assurance Argument and verified through the site visit, UNI provides resources and infrastructure to support effective teaching and learning through adequate technology support and professional development as well as classrooms, labs and performance spaces.

The university utilizes Blackboard Learn eLearning Suite as the centrally supported Learning Management System. Eighty-seven percent of instructors make Blackboard courses available with 95% of students using these courses when available. Information Technology Services supports faculty and students through the Service Desk as well as workshops, technology teaching tools and faculty consultation. The CETL offers support to faculty as professional development and curricular development. The Office of Continuing and Distance Education offers support for development and delivery of distance education courses as well.

UNI maintains 128 general purpose classrooms and 115 class laboratories as well as eight performance spaces for the Department of Theater and the School of Music. Active learning classrooms, computer labs, collaboration spaces, and specific use and scientific labs are available. The Information Technology department maintains the technology infrastructure for UNI including classrooms, labs and offices. Seventy percent of classroom technology has been upgraded and standardized over the past four years. The UNI Facilities Master Plan guides decision making around infrastructure improvements. As noted in 5B, as a result of successful planning and creative funding, the institution was able to leverage the standard technology platform to redesign large meeting spaces across campus into new socially distanced classrooms. In one example, the IT and Facilities partnership resulted in the ability to reconfigure a classroom space in 30 minutes due in part to the stable technology platform. The ability to safely offer 80% of Spring 2021 courses in a face-to-face or hybrid format was strongly supported by this planning and innovation effort.

Clinical practice sites are utilized on campus as well as off-campus. On-campus sites include the Child Development Center, Psychoneuroendocrinology Lab, Psychological Assessment Clinic, Human Performance Center, and Roy Eblen Speech and Hearing Clinic. Off-campus practice sites include hospitals, schools, retirement centers, and clinics.

The Rod Library serves as a source for services, resources, and space in support of teaching and learning. As noted in the library's Annual Report, total gate count for 2018-2019 was 487,093, with a circulation count of 54,566. Rod Library maintains three service units: Youth Collection, Special Collections & University Archives, and the Fine & Performing Arts Collection. Multiple spaces within the library are available for use of students and faculty. The University Museum serves as an educational resource to students and faculty. The Library also houses The Learning Center offering peer tutoring and course embedded support.

Student comments during the Open Forum indicated that the student service facilities (e.g., student health, student union) and academic facilities (e.g., classroom, physical education spaces) largely meet student needs. A student comment during the Open Forum and a review of comments in the student opinion survey indicate some challenges in accessibility due to the configuration of building entrances and number of stairs to access classrooms and services.

The university provides students and instructors infrastructure and resources needed to support effective teaching and learning, such as the technological infrastructure, laboratories, library, and

clinical spaces.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Rationale

The University of Northern Iowa maintains rigor in its academic offerings. Policies and procedures are well-established and adhered to in order to develop and maintain courses and programs. Academic Program Review occurs on a regular basis along with Academic Program Assessment to assure that learning outcomes drive curricular decisions and program improvement. Policies require that academic standards and course quality are consistent across all modes of delivery.

Academic programs engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information and mastering inquiry and creative work. The Liberal Arts Core general education program, rooted in the liberal arts, aligns with the university mission. A significant revision of the general education program is underway to be implemented in Fall 2023 and will enhance the alignment of the program with the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan as well as enhanced connection to the university student learning outcomes. Of note is the ongoing work in the areas of human and cultural diversity. In addition, an appropriate focus on scholarship and creative work is both supported by UNI and integrated into undergraduate and graduate programs.

UNI faculty and staff sustain academic and support programs. The overall composition reflects human diversity and has shown gains in some areas over the past six years. A good balance of tenured, tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty is maintained with most classes being taught by faculty with a student-faculty ratio of 17/1. Faculty are appropriately qualified to teach courses to which they are assigned, undergo regular rigorous review, and are also encouraged and incentivized to maintain currency in their disciplines as well as teaching skills.

Support is provided by the university to assure student learning and effective teaching. An array of services addresses various needs of the student population from orientation throughout their academic career at UNI. The university provides resources and infrastructure to support effective teaching and learning.

4 - 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.

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

4.A.1

University of Northern Iowa (UNI) has an extensive program review process mandated by the Board of Regents and guided by an established policy published in the board manual. Program review is conducted on a seven year cycle facilitated by an established Committee on Academic Program Review (CAPR). CAPR membership includes faculty representing all colleges, graduate and undergraduate programs, external reviewers and appropriate administrative personnel. The program review process uses easily accessible institutional data and its procedures are published as *Detailed Procedures for Academic Program Review and Student Outcomes Assessment*. The Assurance Argument included documentation of sample program reviews from several departments: Philanthropy & Nonprofit Development; Study of Religion; Leisure, Youth and Human Services;

Biology; and Political Science. These program reviews demonstrate a systematic process which includes a self study, external review, program plan based on the review and a high level summary report. Also included are examples of implementing program review recommendations such as seeking accreditation for the Master of Public Policy and shifting the program to an online format. These revisions demonstrate how the institution has used the results of program review to inform future decision making. UNI's program review process meets the criterion by having a robust program review process and acting on its findings.

4.A.2 and 4.A.3

UNI has transfer credit processes guided by policies and procedures which are published in the university catalog. Course equivalency review is coordinated by the admissions office for general education and lower division courses and by department heads for upper division courses. There is clear evidence of resources for students including a database of curricular plans by community college and an online tool to show how courses from other institutions will transfer to UNI. The *2019 Public Connection Report* published by the statewide Liaison Advisory Committee on Transfer Students (LACTS) documents UNI's engagement in the transfer process including articulation agreements between institutions. Conversations with faculty during the Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum confirmed faculty maintain authority over and are the primary drivers of the curriculum. This is supported by University Policy 2.04 and processes, procedures and roles in the *Curriculum Handbook*.

4.A.4

The institution has an established curricular review policy and accompanying processes and procedures to exercise authority over the curriculum. UNI has stated policies for faculty qualifications for appointment and evaluation at each rank supported by departmental Professional Assessment Committees. A review of faculty qualifications during the on-site review corroborates a thorough well documented process with several samples that support the strength of the faculty qualification review process. Several faculty who attended the Criterion 3 & 4 Open Forum supported the claim that faculty play a leading role in curriculum development and are critical partners in the institution's service mission. For example, faculty have engaged in work to shape federal public policy on educator preparation. UNI has university level learning outcomes that must be incorporated by all programs. UNI does not offer dual credit enrollment opportunities.

4.A.5

UNI maintains appropriate specialized accreditation for programs and has a board policy (Policy 3.8) that allows departments to use the institutional program review process for programs without specialized accreditation requirements. The accreditation and related programs are listed in the university catalog as follows.

Academic programs of the university have been accredited by the following professional accrediting agencies: the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB - International), the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), the Foundry Educational Foundation (FEF), the Accrediting Council for Collegiate Graphic Communication (ACCGC), the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA), the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST), The Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions (COAPRT), and the National

Association of School Psychologists (NASP). The Cultural and Intensive English Program (CIEP) is accredited by the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA). The MATR (Master of Athletic Training) is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE). In addition, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA), has conferred accreditation for the two master's level programs in counseling, Clinical Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling, both from the School of Applied Human Sciences,

Other programs at the University of Northern Iowa have also been approved by external organizations. Teacher preparation programs at the University of Northern Iowa have received approval from the Iowa State Department of Education, the Department of Chemistry has approval from the American Chemical Society, and the B.A. in Family Services is an approved program for educating Certified Family Life Educators by the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR).

Within the Division of Student Affairs, the Student Health Center is accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC), the Health Clinic Laboratory is accredited by the Commission on Office Laboratory Accreditation (COLA), and the Counseling Center is accredited by the International Association of Counseling Services (IASC).

The institution compiles annual reports of graduates' employment statistics and uses data from other sources including surveys, student employment, campus involvement and the National Student Clearinghouse to evaluate the success of its graduates.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

4.B.1

UNI has a well established robust process for assessment of student learning outcomes (SLO). The process includes guiding principles for SLO assessment which can be accessed on the institution's assessment website. Assessment at UNI is a four-step cyclical process guided by measurable student learning outcomes. The process is integrated across programs and divisions and includes participation from faculty, staff and upper administration. UNI provides assessment training to appropriate faculty and staff through regular college and departmental level workshops and consultations offered by the Assessment Council. The quality of the assessment process is supported by a 2019 national recognition from the National Institute for Learning Outcomes for excellence in assessment. UNI is currently revising the general education program into a new Liberal Arts Core. During the Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum several faculty members mentioned this revision is shaped by a using a learning outcomes perspective which in turn informs curriculum development.

4.B.2

The institution collects annual closing the loop reports from various academic departments which document how assessment is used to improve student learning. These reports identify the outcomes being assessed, the methods, and artifacts that inform the assessment and a data informed action plan. The assessment process includes review of SLOs for student life and student conduct. A UNI team participated in the HLC Assessment Academy and implemented several examples of good practices including direct evidence of using student feedback, application of rubrics, and closing the gap reports. The institution has well supported processes for both academic and co-curricular assessment. The Academic Assessment Executive Summary 2014 - 2019 documents efforts with samples of student work such as student teaching observations, oral presentations, and term papers which are reviewed using rubrics. Attention to a culture of assessment is supported by the existence of an assessment archive which chronicles the institution's history. Criterion 3 & 4 Open Forum attendees supported the claims that faculty routinely discuss reports and use the information from

their discussions and assessment results to inform changes and improve student learning. The Assurance Argument evidence to support the quality of UNI's assessment process included sample reports from several departments. UNI's efforts in this area have been acknowledged by a 2016 American Association of State Colleges and Universities, (AASCU), excellence award for revisions made to peer mentor training based on assessment.

The institution engages in an annual continuous quality improvement process that is mandated by the State of Iowa. This includes using data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and graduate surveys to measure achievement of liberal arts outcomes. The institution pays close attention to reporting on their assessment practices by providing annual reports to the Board of Regents on progress of their quality improvement initiative. There is strong faculty and relevant staff engagement in the assessment process with participation from the faculty, office of institutional research and effectiveness and office of undergraduate studies. The institution also provides training through workshops and keeps the faculty and staff engaged with an annual division wide retreat and through assessment related scholarly activity such as conference presentations and publications for both curricular and co-curricular assessment.

Additional evidence that supports the institution's culture of assessment is seen in the current work related to creation of a new general education program designed around student learning outcomes rather than a focus on independent disciplinary content or themes. Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum attendees reported deep engagement and energy around the inclusive discussions that led to this approach and their commitment to the work. Attendees shared a positive expectation for a general education program with embedded assessments that will provide valuable information on student achievement.

The university also received an Excellence in Assessment Designation from the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) in 2019 for the strength of their assessment processes.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.C - Core Component 4.C

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

4.C.1

UNI has a strategic enrollment master plan (SEMP) which focuses on short term and long term enrollment and includes specific quantitative and qualitative recruitment and retention goals as well as strategies and tactics for improvement. UNI's quantitative recruitment goals are 1) sustaining growth in the market share of Iowa high school graduates, 2) increasing the number of undergraduate non-resident students and 3) capitalizing on existing capacity in graduate programs as well as expanding recruitment of international graduate students. Examples of related strategies and tactics for improving retention include development of a more intentional K-12 model for recruiting new freshmen; development of a multicultural recruitment plan; enhancing the campus experience for prospective students and parents; exploring development of pipeline programs with institutions in Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Missouri.

The quantitative recruitment goals are 1) increasing the academic profile of the entering freshman class 2) evaluating and improving the institutional approach to attracting new transfer students, 3) deploying a targeted marketing campaign and 4) enhancing supporting data, analytics and systems. Examples of strategies to be employed are assessing initiative from the UNI Community College Relations; reviewing current 2+2 programs and exploring expansion in areas of unmet demand as well as using National Student Clearinghouse data to create transfer prospects. The quantitative goals are related to a retention initiative for non-resident students and building engaged learning opportunities and support to improve the second to third year retention rates.

Similarly the institution has both quantitative and qualitative retention goals. The quantitative goals are increasing retention and completion rates among underrepresented minority students, addressing historical institutional inequities between white and minority students; for conditionally admitted students and transfer students, as well as improving first to second year retention rates. Strategies for addressing retention goals include attention to campus climate for minority students through development of a multicultural retention plan in partnership with several offices including the Office of Admissions, the Center for Multicultural Education, the Office of Financial Aid and Student Success and Retention. Additional strategies include building diversity and inclusion programming for all students within orientation and transition programs; forming a group to review the needs and success rates of conditionally admitted students; expanding the structure of the transfer orientation program and growing the number of transfer-only Liberal Arts Core course sections.

The institution documents overall improvement in graduation rate and strong first year retention rates compared to peers. The institution has plans to address gaps in retention and graduation rates for underrepresented students. Attendees at the Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum corroborated the information from the Assurance Argument regarding a strong culture of data gathering which is constantly examined to inform retention and completion strategies. The institution reviews their retention and completion data for different student sub-populations such as Pell eligible, first generation status, graduation rates, and GPA. The Board of Regents is kept apprised of enrollment data and has set a goal of 85% first year retention. The institution reviews student satisfaction and has completed assessment on the impact of peer mentoring on retention. Open Forum 3 & 4 attendees provided examples to support use of data to inform program changes such as assigning success coaches to students who are on probation after a semester. Review of success coaching showed that the greatest impact came from the first three meetings so the program was adjusted to ensure that these meetings included the most successful content to help students improve academically. The Retention and Completion Council also reviews and uses data to consider not only overall achievement but also specific areas where students may have academic struggles.

4.C.2

Student enrollment data including retention, program completion, and persistence are collected by the registrar's office and the Institutional Research and Effectiveness Office. The data are available via a dashboard. Open Forum 3 & 4 attendees also corroborated statements in the Assurance Argument that there is consistent and effective use of data to inform student support and progress.

4.C.3 & 4.C.4

UNI uses appropriate data (IPEDS) from their student information system to analyze student retention, persistence and program completion. The data are available to the university faculty, staff, and administrators via real-time dashboards. Data included on the dashboards include trend reports for weekly, daily and annual applications, admissions and enrollment by program. Student registration data allow faculty/staff to reach out to students who have not enrolled. Also included are program review data for use by department heads as they consider course enrollment. Graduation and completion rates by program may also be used for planning and assessment. The UNI Fact Book includes comparative data from peer institutions. The strategic enrollment management plan includes specific metrics for recruitment and retention. The institution has implemented several programs based on the data and current scholarly work including a First Year Cornerstone Program, Peer Mentoring and Success Coaching.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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.

Rationale

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings through an established 7-year academic review process. The faculty maintain authority over the curriculum supported by published policies and practices for curriculum approval and review of transfer credits. Transfer credit review is accomplished by a committee for first and second year courses and by appropriate faculty for upper level courses. The institution's program accreditations are guided by policy that requires appropriate specialized accreditation for programs such as education and business programs and uses the institutional program review process for those without specialized accreditation.

UNI has an established data driven assessment process that is used by faculty and staff across the institution for decision making related to progress on student learning outcomes. The quality of the processes and methodologies have received external acknowledgement through two national assessment awards. UNI has a strong culture of using data to inform enrollment decisions. Relevant enrollment data are available to faculty and staff via a dashboard which is used to inform recruitment and retention strategies and tactics.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

5.A.1

Since the closure of academic programs during the 2011-12 academic year and the restriction of collective bargaining by the state legislature in 2017, the university adopted new shared governance policies and practices, particularly in relationship to faculty. Across multiple meetings with faculty and staff, individuals affirmed improved efforts to broaden communication, enhance transparency, and actively engage constituents. As a result of these changes, individuals noted increased morale, stronger trust, and greater ability to recommend policies, participate in planning discussions, and opportunities to learn about important decisions.

This development of additional policies (e.g., faculty shared governance policy, policy-making process) and practices (e.g., constituent representation on university-wide committees, discussion of policy proposals in University Council) enhanced the governance infrastructure. A review of the faculty handbook, recent faculty senate minutes, and the structures of various university committees demonstrate both commitment and action with regard to involvement in shared governance. Furthermore, team meetings with the Board of Regents, faculty, staff, students, and community members affirmed the high level of engagement across campus constituents in various planning processes. In addition, the Board of Regents identified their focus on policy development, while deferring operational decisions to institutional leaders. As a result of intentional changes in shared

governance models, the institution demonstrates the ability to adapt to external pressures and supports its commitment to a shared governance model.

5.A.2

Since the implementation of the data warehouse, the institution developed notable capacity to provide on-demand reporting across campus and measure progress. A review of the evidence shows an effective ability to track longitudinal data through summary dashboards that are embedded within various decision-making efforts (e.g., enrollment management, strategic plan monitoring). The institution conducts subsequent analysis of this data to help guide decision-making efforts (e.g., expand success of Cornerstone model for students in other first-year experience courses, impact of interventions for distinct populations). In addition, the institution actively uses information to shape budget decisions and allocation (e.g., monitoring of enrollment trends, budget request process). Comments during Criterion 5 Open Forum discussions indicated ongoing efforts to develop complementary metrics to assist coordinated planning. Collectively, this evidence indicates that the institution maintains a robust data infrastructure and leverages the information to support multiple decision making processes.

The institution uses a comprehensive program vitality dashboard that contains a suite of information to assist with decision making and planning. The program vitality report contains a rich variety of information including department enrollment, student credit hours, DFW rates, SCH per FTE faculty members, non-service load, retention rate by first department, and graduation rate by first department. A review of recent program review documents demonstrated mixed attention to the suite of information shared within the PVR. However, on multiple occasions during the team visit, individuals noted the importance of using academic program data to guide faculty hiring decisions and allocation. The PVR demonstrates the integration of essential data to guide decision making and strategic allocation of resources, which can be further leveraged in the academic program review process.

5.A.3

As noted earlier, the policy-making process and review process involve constituents across the institution. In addition, the academic policies are determined and reviewed by faculty in a collaborative manner. For example, the recent academic forgiveness policy originated from academic support staff and was approved by faculty senate. The institution recognizes the collaborative nature of these efforts, noting in the case of curricular changes that “although the faculty has primary responsibility for the curriculum, this responsibility is shared with academic administrators who must implement it.” Combined with the earlier statements in the rationale, the institution demonstrates clear collaborative structures for setting academic requirements.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

5.B.1

A review of the recruitment and hiring policy, the hiring procedures provided by Human Resources, and the suite of resources for various searches affirm that the university has clear policies directing the review and selection of qualified staff; with multiple checkpoints to ensure that selection committees receive training and review candidates based on candidate skills and position responsibilities. A review of these resources (search checklist, phone screen template, search process guide, resume scoring sample, and interview rating form) indicate that the institution follows its policies to select qualified staff. Merit positions follow a pre-interview qualification screening that is reviewed by the Office of Compliance & Equity Management to ensure candidates meet or exceed qualifications.

A review of the staff handbook indicates that the university provides online resource tools for educational videos and articles which provide various self-service resources to faculty, staff, and students (e.g., performance appraisal how-to, Lynda.com technology tutorials, safety training, counseling center modules, university development programs). The P&S Policies and Procedures also outline additional opportunities for development including encouragement to participate in professional organizations (at the employee's expense) and encouragement to apply for grants for tuition reimbursement for improvement courses. There was no evidence provided regarding the support provided to enhance specific skill development and professional involvement outside of the university. While the university demonstrates strong attention to the selection of qualified staff and provides self-guided general development resources, it is less clear how the institution supports specialized skill development within the professional areas. The current set of internal development resources provide a foundation for general skill development, but may not advance specialized knowledge.

A review of the University Fact Book indicates a ten percent reduction in the total university

workforce from 2016 to 2020 (-20% tenure track faculty, -18% clerical, -5% P&S; representing a headcount decline of close to n=175); with an accompanying reduction in headcount enrollment of 20% over the same five years. Interviews during the visit indicated that the institution uses deliberate and robust processes to identify resource needs (including personnel), that align with strategic initiatives. The institution maintains its commitment to have most courses taught by full-time faculty. Responses to questions during the visit also indicate ongoing efforts to monitor quality (e.g., review of retention/graduation rate, review of longitudinal NSSE data). Taken together, these efforts affirm that the institution engages in efforts to monitor the impact of these staffing reductions on the quality of student learning, overall staffing sufficiency, and effectiveness of support services.

In 2015 and again in 2020, the university retained a consultant to update the university space database and review utilization. The university created an office of Planning and Space Management to provide comprehensive facilities space planning, allocation, and data review. The results of space needs analysis indicated that there is a surplus of instructional space, academic offices, and administrative offices. As evidenced in the 2017 Facilities Master Plan, the institution identified needs to consolidate classroom and office space and to improve the quality of facilities in buildings built between 1960 and 1970 (comprising 38 percent of academic space and 62 percent of residential space). Ongoing efforts to evaluate space utilization represents an important review of the alignment of facilities with institutional needs and offers promise for success in right-sizing space over time.

The university is experiencing a dramatic increase in deferred maintenance with an increase of \$30M to \$201M in FY20. The institution relies on a budget of \$1.4M for building repairs, representing 0.12% of replacement value that is below the Board of Regents Policy Manual benchmark (1.5% of replacement value). The institution planned to address \$6.5M of deferred maintenance projects in FY21. Interviews with the CFO indicated that part of this increase is related to a change in methodology, resulting in a higher reporting level of ongoing maintenance needs. A review of the long-term facilities plan and interviews with the CFO and the Assistant Vice President and Director of Facilities Management affirm that the institution actively monitors deferred maintenance needs and uses multiple strategies to address them in a systematic manner (e.g., annual allocation, strategic building management, partnerships with academic units to leverage end-of-year funds).

An annual review of classroom space conducted by facilities, information technology, and registrar staff identifies classroom deficiencies, necessary repairs, and technology needs. The institution demonstrates significant and ongoing efforts to review, manage, and plan for space infrastructure needs. The institution actively seeks additional resources to support the implementation of the Facilities Master Plan, given that the state commits to funding 90% of this effort. One example of this innovation was seen in the Transamerican partnership to renovate classroom space in the Business College.

An example that demonstrates the benefits of successful planning and innovation at the institution is the efforts to install baseline classroom technology across the institution. Initiated four years ago, the institution is 70% complete in efforts to upgrade and standardize classroom teaching technology. As a result of successful planning and creative funding, the institution was able to leverage this standard technology platform to redesign large meeting spaces across campus into new socially-distanced classrooms. During a tour of facilities, IT and Facilities noted that this partnership resulted in the ability to reconfigure a classroom space in 30 minutes due in part to the stable technology platform. The ability to safely offer 80% of Spring 2021 courses in a face-to-face or hybrid format was strongly supported by this planning and innovation effort and demonstrates ongoing institutional capacity to align technology resources with instructional needs.

During the student forum, students noted that the facilities supported their needs for curricular and co-curricular engagement. While students noted areas for improvement (e.g., improved accessibility, outdated decor, consistent COVID cleaning), students also noted efforts to attend to student needs (e.g., creation of meditation space).

5.B.2

A review of the current strategic plan indicates that several goals attend to the unique nature of the institution, its current resources, and opportunities for growth. For example, the community engagement goal attends to the opportunity to build external partnerships with local and regional organizations to increase experiential learning, promote cultural growth, and support economic development. Regarding resources, the campus vitality goal includes explicit attention to fiscal responsibility, holistic approaches to campus-well being, and enhancement of revenue streams. In one example of recognizing opportunities, the diversity and inclusion goal recognizes the chance to enhance a campus culture that reflects the evolving diversity of society and promotes inclusion. A review of the Finance and Operations budget request form indicates that requests must indicate alignment with university strategic goals and objectives. Taken together, the current strategic plan alignment with mission, the realistic nature of strategic plan goals, and the integration of budget requests with these goals demonstrate careful plans to maintain and strengthen quality.

5.B.3

While the university uses a decentralized budget with administrative responsibility within individual units, the institution maintains a series of policies that delineate the process, incorporates multiple levels of consultation and review (e.g., division leaders and budget advisory committee, cabinet), uses standard financial reporting tools and monthly financial statements to monitor progress, and provides a public mechanism to share annual budget summaries. A review of the summary of general fund annual budget from FY2015 through FY2019 demonstrates that original budget allocations across functions, divisions, and expenses remain consistent over time. A review of the comprehensive annual financial report through the office of Business Operations indicates the institution maintains sufficient internal and budgetary controls, demonstrates that the accounting and financial records are audited annually, and affirms that the institution provides clarity in financial statements. The university has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for twenty eight consecutive years, representing significant efforts to follow high standards for public reporting. Taken together, the evidence indicates that the institution will continue to exhibit success in following budgeting processes and monitoring finances.

A review of the financial ratios and annual financial report indicate that the institution maintains an overall sound financial health (e.g., growth in net position, increasing individual and composite financial ratios). A review of the 2019-2020 comprehensive financial report indicates that since FY18, the total assets increased by \$20M (partially due to immediate measures taken as a result of the pandemic - CARES funding, limits to spending), total liabilities decreased by \$24M (repeal of excise tax, lower medical claims, decrease in long-term debt), and total net position increased \$24M. This positions the university to use unrestricted net position to meet future university obligations. Strategic adjustment of the budget and refunding of debt have helped to offset tuition revenue declines related to decreased enrollment. Collectively, these affirm that the institution has the ability to sustain financial support for educational programs.

The university has effectively used various strategies (e.g., staffing reductions, enrollment contingency funding, spending cuts) to maintain financial health. The team noted during its

interviews that administrators are committed to maintaining a balanced budget each fiscal year. This strategy requires that the institution identifies effective budgeting processes to meet changing needs. One good example of this flexibility was the reallocation of baseline technology implementation funds to support the installation of additional classroom spaces in large meeting areas to support socially distanced learning.

5.B.4

Taken together, the financial position and institutional commitment to annual balanced budgets demonstrate the institution's ability to effectively allocate resources to ensure educational purposes are achieved. While the evidence indicates effective agility in addressing short-term challenges and collaborative budgeting/resource allocation processes to review budget requests, there was less clarity regarding how the institution proactively plans for continued strength should there be additional pressures (e.g., lack of success in enrollment management plan, continued financial impact related to pandemic, significant capital needs).

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

5.C.1

The university's budgeting processes involve constituents across the institution, who attend to strategic plan goal alignment when prioritizing requests for resources. The clarity of the strategic plan and strategic initiatives, combined with explicit budgeting processes and forms, promote the ability of the institution to continue strategic allocation of resources in an intentional manner. A review of the general fund annual budget indicates that over the past five years, the institution has maintained its support for research (\$279K in 2019) and public service (\$1.8M in 2019); while dedicating a majority of funds to instruction, academic support, student services, and institutional support. The institution provided support for faculty professional development assignments (43 during past three years), summer research fellowships (\$523K during past three years), and ongoing support for centers (>\$13M in FY20), which aligns with the mission of the institution.

5.C.2

The university uses multiple explicit mechanisms to connect academic affairs budgeting processes with continuous improvement efforts. For example, the faculty request form requires explanation of how learning outcomes assessment information demonstrates the need for the faculty position. Similarly, faculty hiring processes include attention to program vitality metrics that are compiled by the Program Vitality Committee. As a result of these efforts, the academic affairs office has increased spending in strategic areas over the past ten years to promote engagement, persistence, and retention. Interviews with campus constituents indicated current efforts to improve alignment between the university strategic plan and unit plans, including a strategic plan impact map to help articulate

alignment across various efforts and communicate demonstrated impact of initiatives. This effort will likely enhance the ability of the institution to integrate long-term planning processes (enrollment strategic plan, facilities plan, future visioning efforts, strategic plan) with embedded metrics that are designed to guide and refine planning efforts.

5.C.3

The university engaged a broad set of constituents in the development of the university 2017-2022 Strategic Plan, the 2018-2019 future visioning effort, and the 2020 academic positioning effort; including faculty, students, administrators, alumni, community members, and employers. A review of these efforts indicate a high level of engagement and communication regarding planning efforts, coupled with a high level of transparency and communication regarding the purpose and outcomes of planning efforts. Interviews with campus constituents, the Board of Regents, and community members affirmed that the university regularly engages internal and external groups. Examples shared in interviews (e.g., environmental scan of workforce needs with Iowa Workforce Development, economic development support in Cedar Valley area) affirm that the institution actively seeks input from stakeholders in efforts to fulfill its mission.

5.C.4

Annually, the institution relies on a robust projection process for anticipated enrollment and state revenues. This planning allows the institution to effectively balance its budget each year through various strategies such as decreasing personnel and reducing operational costs. In addition to annual planning efforts, the institution recognizes the importance of long-term planning given the current context of steady enrollment decline of 27.9% from 2010 to 2020, increased spending on financial aid, modest tuition increases, and flat state appropriations. For example, the facilities master plan recognizes that the current facilities are oversized for projected enrollment and presents a plan to right-size institutional facilities. While the institution demonstrates effective mechanisms for managing short-term challenges (e.g., enrollment contingency fund used to support pandemic related enrollment declines in FY21), efforts to support and perhaps accelerate long-term planning for right-sizing the institution may help to strengthen the university's position in the future.

5.C.5

In 2017, the institution instituted a five-year strategic enrollment plan, designed to address fluctuations in undergraduate student enrollment due to decreasing high school graduates and a declining percent of Iowa high school graduates seeking postsecondary education. While the 2017-2022 Strategic Enrollment Plan identifies multiple strategies to enhance enrollment, a review of the Fact Book indicates that total enrollment declined from 11,905 at the start of the plan to 9,522 in Fall 2020. Although the institution is developing various strategies to expand market share (e.g., recruitment of underrepresented students, financial aid support for out-of-state students), the team did not note current updates to the strategic enrollment plan to reverse the decline since the start of the plan. While the institution demonstrated the ability to manage enrollment declines in the short-term, the current lack of success in the 2017-22 Strategic Enrollment Plan indicates additional efforts may be necessary to stabilize enrollment, to discern likely enrollment scenarios, and to develop long-term institutional strategies that align with current circumstances.

Faculty and staff who attended the Criterion 3 and 4 Open Forum spoke to an awareness of the enrollment challenges, including continuing projected declines in available high school students in the Midwest. Efforts are primarily focused on recruitment of students in surrounding states as stated

in the strategic enrollment master plan, as well as continuing to use program review and market data to ensure that they are offering curriculum that is relevant to the market. They are also looking at creating stronger partnerships with community colleges to improve transfer enrollment. UNI is also putting a strong focus on retention of the students that are admitted. The Board of Regents has set a goal of 85% retention for first to second year retention.

Criterion 5 Open Forum attendees articulated an awareness of the performance gap and have attributed some of the causality to recent events that have presented uncovered significant climate issues for underrepresented students. There does not seem to be a full understanding of all the factors that contribute to the gap, but the university is engaged in using data to inform them of specific gaps and working to address those. For example, while the Cornerstone program is designed primarily for first and second year students, an examination of the data showed that the greatest impact for some student populations such as black male students was seen in second to third year retention. The Retention and Completion Council has plans to continue to disaggregate data to inform next steps.

5.C.6

A review of the Assurance Argument narrative provides multiple examples of operational improvements (e.g., 10% reduction in campus utilities since FY2010, benchmarking housing and dining operations). A review of the annual strategic plan progress reports provides multiple examples of successful operational improvements (e.g., FY2020 increase in gender balance of faculty, FY2019 decrease in student loan indebtedness) and progress toward identified student outcomes (e.g., FY2020 met 4-year graduation rate target, FY2020 progress toward 84% 5-year first-time student retention). These successful gains in retention and graduation are likely related to systematic improvements (e.g., Cornerstone, success coaching, early intervention system). The strategic plan annual progress reports also identify needs for systematic improvement. For example, the 2019-20 progress report identifies the need to increase the percentage of underrepresented students in the entering class and recommended expansion of programs to mentor and serve this student population. Taken together, the operationalization of strategic plan goals coupled with annual progress reports positions the university for continued success in systematic improvement efforts.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Rationale

The university's recent efforts to adopt new shared governance policies, to include broad representation on university committees, and to increase transparency in decision-making provides multiple benefits for the institution including effective engagement across constituencies, improved trust, and greater accountability. Similarly, efforts to enhance data reporting, embed data in key decisions such as faculty line requests, and using metrics to monitor strategic plan goal progress contribute to informed decisions. The current administrative structures and collaborative processes at the institution provide a strong foundation for continued success in fulfilling the institution's mission.

While the institution recently experienced a reduction in total university workforce, it continues to monitor the alignment of operational staff and infrastructure with educational offerings and quality. In addition, the institution is actively working to right-size its facilities with current needs. The institution maintains strong financial health, in part due to successful budgeting and various strategies (e.g., staffing reductions, enrollment contingency funding, spending cuts). The current strategic plan alignment with mission, the realistic nature of strategic plan goals, and the integration of budget requests with these goals demonstrate careful plans to maintain and strengthen quality. While the institution demonstrates effective agility in addressing short-term challenges, ongoing efforts to right-size the institution and stabilize enrollment may require additional attention to promote long-term success.

Current efforts to align university strategic plan and unit plans will likely enhance the ability of the institution to integrate long-term planning processes (enrollment strategic plan, facilities plan, future visioning efforts, strategic plan) with embedded metrics that are designed to guide and refine planning efforts. The operationalization of strategic plan goals coupled with annual progress reports positions the university for continued success in systematic improvement efforts.

FC - Federal Compliance

Rating

Does not require monitoring

Federal Compliance Filing Form

- UNI_FedCompFiling_2020_FINAL_FOR_SUBMISSION

Rationale

1. ASSIGNMENT OF CREDITS, PROGRAM LENGTH AND TUITION

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other two.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

A web page entitled "Office of the Registrar Minimum Minutes of Instruction" provides tables that each identify the minimum minutes of instruction required, per week and per term, for full semester (15 week) courses, half semester (7.5 week) courses, summer 4-week, 6-week, 8-week, and 12-week sessions, and for MOD (11 week) and MOD (12 week) sessions. A web page entitled, "Academic Calendar Guidelines" indicates that "a semester should contain a minimum of 74 scheduled instructional days, plus a final week".

The Course Credit Expectations published in the online catalog demonstrate that the institution's expectations are consistent with the traditional Carnegie model, "not less than: One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester; or, The equivalent amount of work in item (1) over a different amount of time; or, At least an equivalent amount of work in item (1) for other activities, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading toward to the award of credit hours/units of credit. In addition, distance/online courses and independent studies are expected to reflect equivalencies in the amount of instructional time and student work leading to equivalent learning outcomes as reflected in the same courses offered face-to-face."

A review of the fall 2020 course schedule and 18 detailed syllabi for CHEM1110, EARTHSCI1110, FIN6266, HUM1022, MGMT6260, MUSTHEO1110, POLINTL 1024, RELS1020, AND SPED 3150 indicated that all articulate student expectations that are consistent with policy expectations. Face-to-face, online, and off-campus (Hong Kong) syllabi were included for each of the courses identified above and demonstrated consistency across delivery models.

2. INSTITUTIONAL RECORDS OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS

Conclusion: The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

The institution maintains a student complaint policy that is easily accessible on UNI's public website.

3. PUBLICATION OF TRANSFER POLICIES

Conclusion: The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

UNI's detailed transfer policy is clearly articulated in the 2021-22 Online Academic Catalog. Specific articulation agreements that detail specific, transferrable course equivalencies are easily accessible on the UNI website in a database that is searchable by the name of the transfer partner. Online Transfer Plans of Study and a Transfer Plan-It tool are available to help students from Iowa colleges check their own transfer equivalencies. Exceptions and standards are defined at the end of each articulation agreement. Reverse Credit Transfer is a partnership between Iowa's public universities and Iowa's community colleges to facilitate the transfer of university credits back to one of Iowa's community colleges for the purpose of completing a degree, diploma or certificate.

4. PRACTICES FOR VERIFICATION OF STUDENT IDENTITY

Conclusion: The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

UNI reports that a secure login and password is assigned to each student. Students in online courses access course content and submit work by authenticating to UNI's learning management system using their unique login and passphrase. Proctoring services are available for exams. Faculty use anti-plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin. A link to the University's Academic Ethics Policy is included in each online course, and students are informed that they are responsible for adhering to the Policy.

5. PUBLICATION OF STUDENT OUTCOME DATA

Conclusion: The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

Student outcome data is publicly accessible on the Consumer Information webpage which is linked to the main UNI homepage. A Student Outcomes section includes graduation and retention rates for First-Time Full-Time Freshmen according to loan type, and outcomes related to athletic participation, intercollegiate program participation, job and graduate school placement, and transfer-out rates. The institution's Fact Book is also available from this webpage.

6. STANDING WITH STATE AND OTHER ACCREDITING AGENCIES

Conclusion: The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

A review of the following accreditation or approval organizations' websites confirmed that UNI is affiliated, and apparently is in good standing, with each of the following entities that it lists as affiliates on its catalog website.

- Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC)
- Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)
- Accrediting Council for Collegiate Graphic Communication (ACCGC)
- Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB - International)
- Association of Technology Management and Applied Engineering Board of Accreditation (ATMAE) Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE)
- Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)
- Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions (COPART)
- Accredited Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Foundry Educational Foundation (FEF)
- International Association of Counseling Services (IASC)
- International Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA)
- Iowa State Department of Education National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)
- National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST)
- National Council on Family Relations (NCFR)
- National Council of State Authorization of Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA)
- National Recreation and Park Association Council on Accreditation (NAPR)

The institution's catalog website reports affiliation with the following organizations but membership lists were unavailable on the websites. The institution provided documentation of accreditation/affiliation with each of the following:

- Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (Need login)
- Commission on Office Laboratory Accreditation (COLA)
- American Chemical Society (ACS)
- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
- National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)

APPENDIX A: TITLE IV PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Complete this section only if the institution has submitted an Appendix A. Review any negative actions taken against the institution and identify any implications for the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or other HLC requirements. Provide a detailed rationale for any Core Components identified as Met with Concerns or Not Met.

Rationale: Not applicable.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

Review Dashboard

Number	Title	Rating
1	Mission	
1.A	Core Component 1.A	Met
1.B	Core Component 1.B	Met
1.C	Core Component 1.C	Met
1.S	Criterion 1 - Summary	
2	Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct	
2.A	Core Component 2.A	Met
2.B	Core Component 2.B	Met
2.C	Core Component 2.C	Met
2.D	Core Component 2.D	Met
2.E	Core Component 2.E	Met
2.S	Criterion 2 - Summary	
3	Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support	
3.A	Core Component 3.A	Met
3.B	Core Component 3.B	Met
3.C	Core Component 3.C	Met
3.D	Core Component 3.D	Met
3.S	Criterion 3 - Summary	
4	Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	
4.A	Core Component 4.A	Met
4.B	Core Component 4.B	Met
4.C	Core Component 4.C	Met
4.S	Criterion 4 - Summary	
5	Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning	
5.A	Core Component 5.A	Met
5.B	Core Component 5.B	Met
5.C	Core Component 5.C	Met
5.S	Criterion 5 - Summary	
FC	Federal Compliance	Does not require monitoring

Review Summary

Conclusion

The University of Northern Iowa has met the five Criteria for Accreditation and Federal Compliance requirements as confirmed by evidence in the Assurance Argument and information gathered during the virtual and on-site campus visits. Plans and procedures are in place to continue moving the institution forward. The institution has demonstrated its ability to choose the Pathway they will follow as they continue the work of maintaining HLC accreditation.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation

Met

Sanctions Recommendation

No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation

Eligible to choose

Federal Compliance

Does not require monitoring

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.



Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

INSTITUTION and STATE: University of Northern Iowa, IA

TYPE OF REVIEW: Open Pathway Comprehensive Evaluation

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW: Visit to include a Federal Compliance reviewer: Dr. Kathleen Clauson Bash

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only the following reviewer will travel to the campus: Dr. Kevin Saunders. The rest of the team will conduct the evaluation remotely.

DATES OF REVIEW: 3/29/2021 - 3/30/2021

No Change in Institutional Status and Requirements

Accreditation Status

Nature of Institution

Control: Public

Recommended Change: No change

Degrees Awarded: Bachelors, Masters, Specialist, Doctors

Recommended Change: No change

Reaffirmation of Accreditation:

Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2010 - 2011

Year of Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2020 - 2021

Recommended Change: 2030 - 2031

Accreditation Stipulations

General:

The institution is approved at the following program level(s): Bachelor's, Master's, Specialist, Doctoral

The institution is not approved at the following program level(s): Associate's

The institution is limited to offer the following program(s), within the approved program levels listed above: Doctor of Industrial Technology and Doctor of Education



Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Recommended Change: No change

Additional Location:

The institution has been approved for the Notification Program, allowing the institution to open new additional locations within the United States and internationally.

Recommended Change: No change

Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs:

Approved for distance education courses and programs. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.

Recommended Change: No change

Accreditation Events

Accreditation Pathway

Open Pathway

Recommended Change: Eligible to choose

Upcoming Events

Monitoring

Upcoming Events

None

Recommended Change: No change

Institutional Data

Educational Programs

Undergraduate

Certificate	60	_____
Associate Degrees	0	_____
Baccalaureate Degrees	100	_____

Graduate

Master's Degrees	47	_____
Specialist Degrees	1	_____
Doctoral Degrees	2	_____

**Recommended
Change: No
change**



Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Extended Operations

Branch Campuses

None

Recommended Change: No change

Additional Locations

Central College, 401 Broadway St., Pella, IA, 50219 - Active

Hong Kong, Units 31-33, 1/F., Tower 1 South Seas Centre, 75 Mody Road, Tsimshatsui East, HONG KONG, - Active

North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC), 500 College Drive, Mason City, IA, 50401 - Inactive

Shanghai Wei Qian Culture Communication Co. Ltd., Room 905-906, Building 1, Fudan Science and Technology Park, No 2539, Shanghai, CHINA, - Active

Recommended Change: No change

Correspondence Education

None

Recommended Change: No change

Distance Delivery

13.04 - Educational Administration and Supervision, Certificate, Certificate in Superintendency

13.04 - Educational Administration and Supervision, Master, M.A. in Educational Leadership-Principalship

13.05 - Educational/Instructional Media Design, Master, M.A. in Instructional Technology

13.10 - Special Education and Teaching, Master, MAE in Special Education-Early Childhood

13.12 - Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Levels and Methods, Bachelor, B.A. in Elementary Education

13.12 - Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Levels and Methods, Master, M.A. in Early Childhood Education

13.1202 - Elementary Education and Teaching, Master, M. A. in Elementary Education

13.1299 - Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Levels and Methods, Other, Master, M. A. in Professional Development for Teachers

13.13 - Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Subject Areas, Master, M.A. in Literacy Education

13.13 - Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Subject Areas, Master, M.A. in School Library Media Studies

13.13 - Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Subject Areas, Master, M.A. in Science Education

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

13.13 - Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Subject Areas, Master, M.A. in Social Science for Teachers 6-12

13.13 - Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Subject Areas, Master, M.M. in Music Education

13.13 - Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Subject Areas, Master, MA in English: Teaching English in the Secondary Schools

13.13 - Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Subject Areas, Master, MA in Physical Education

13.14 - Teaching English or French as a Second or Foreign Language, Master, M.A. in English (ESL/TESOL)

21.01 - Technology Education/Industrial Arts Programs, Bachelor, B.A. Technology Management

21.01 - Technology Education/Industrial Arts Programs, Master, M.S. Technology

24.01 - Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities, Bachelor, Bachelors in Liberal Studies

52.02 - Business Administration, Management and Operations, Master, M.A. Philanthropy & Nonprofit Development

Contractual Arrangements

None

Recommended Change: No change

Consortial Arrangements

None

Recommended Change: No change
