



# North Idaho College

MISSION  
FULFILLMENT AND  
SUSTAINABILITY  
MARCH 2020

Presented to the  
Northwest Commission on  
Colleges and Universities





**North Idaho College**

# **Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Report**

Prepared for the Northwest Commission  
on Colleges and Universities

Submitted March 2020

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AACU .....	Association of American Colleges and Universities
AACRAO .....	American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
AAWCC .....	American Association of Women in Community Colleges
ABE .....	Adult Basic Education
AC .....	Former acronym (Administrative Council) – now known as PAC
ADA .....	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADFS .....	Active Directory Federation Services
AEC .....	Adult Education Center
ALA .....	American Library Association
ALO .....	Accreditation Liaison Officer
AA .....	Associate of Arts Degree
AAS .....	Associate of Applied Science Degree
ACRL .....	Association of College and Research Libraries
ACT .....	American College Testing
ALEKS .....	Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces
AMP .....	Academic Master Plan
AS .....	Associate of Science Degree
ASNIC .....	Associated Students of North Idaho College
AY .....	Academic Year
BTC .....	Basic Technical Certificate
CAS .....	Council for the Advancement of Standards
CAAP .....	Council on Academic Officers and Program
CCM .....	Common Campus Measures
CCSSE .....	Community College Survey of Student Engagement
CEO .....	Chief Executive Officer
CEU .....	Continuing Education Units
CFI .....	Composite Fiscal Index
CISM .....	Critical Incident Stress Management
CLC .....	Cardinal Learning Commons
CLEP .....	College Level Examination Program
COG .....	Colleague Operations Group
COOP .....	Continuity of Operations Plan
CROA .....	Colleague Reporting & Operational Analysis
CRU .....	Critical Recovery Unit
CTE .....	Career-Technical Education
DAG .....	Data Assurance Group
DHC .....	Dormitory Housing Commission
DHS .....	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
DSS .....	Disability Support Services
EAC .....	Executive Accreditation Committee

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

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EITC	Electronic, Information, Technology and Communication Accessibility Committee
ERS-A	Equipment Replacement Schedule A – Office Equipment
ERS-B	Equipment Replacement Schedule B - Student Labs/Classrooms
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
ESPC	Enterprise System Priority Council
FCI	Facilities Condition Index
FERPA	Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
FY	Fiscal Year
GED	General Education Development
GEM	General Education Matriculation
GPA	Grade Point Average
HIPPA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HEOA	Higher Education Opportunity Act
HR	Human Resources
HVAC	Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning
ICTE	Idaho State Division of Career – Technical Education
ID	Identification
ITPPC	Information Technology Policy & Planning Council
ILL	Interlibrary Loan
ILS	Integrated Library System
IO	Institutional Optimization
IPEDS	Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
IR	Institutional Research
ISP	Integrated Strategic Planning
IT	Information Technology
ITC	Intermediate Technical Certificate
IVC	Interactive Video Conferencing
“i6 EDA”	U.S. Economic Development Regional Innovation Strategies
LERN	Learning Resources Network
LMS	Learning Management System
LRVP	Long Range Visioning and Planning
LVIS	Libraries Very Interested in Sharing
NACADA	National Academic Advising Association
NCCBP	National Community College Benchmarking Project
NCTA	National College Testing Association
NIHE	North Idaho Higher Education
NIOLA	National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment
NJCAA	National Junior College Athletic Association
NWAC	Northwest Athletic Conference
NWCCU	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
ODS	Operation Data Store
OBF	Outcomes Based Funding
OCLC	Online Computing Learning Center
PAC	President’s Advisory Council

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

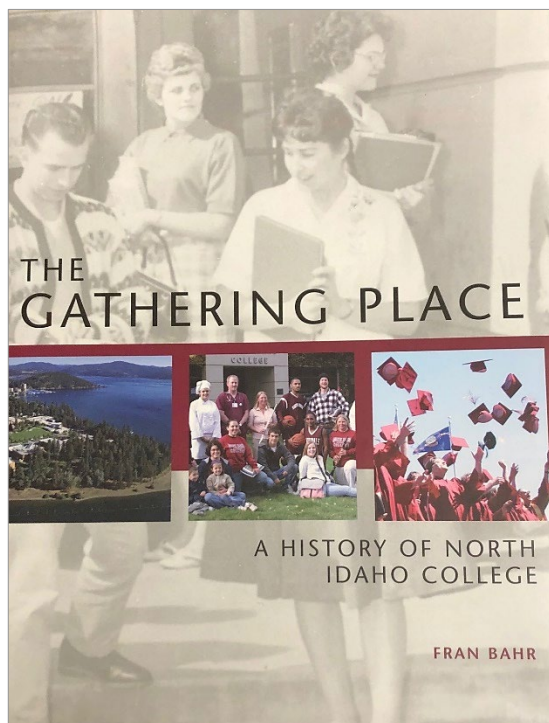
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PC	President's Cabinet
PTEC	Parker Technical Education Center (Rathdrum)
PUD	Planned Unit Development
SaaS	Software as a Service
SAT	Scholastic Assessment Test
SBOE	Idaho State Board of Education
SENSE	Survey of Entering Student Engagement
SEM	Strategic Enrollment Management
SLO	Student Learning Outcomes
SLOA	Student Learning Outcomes Assessment
SRO	School Resource Officer
SSL	Secure Sockets Layer
SSO	Single Sign On
SSS	Student Support Services
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics
SUAB	Student Union Advisory Board
SUB	Edminster Student Union
SUO	Student Union Operations
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats
SWRP	Student Wellness and Recreation Program
TAACCT	Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Training
TBD	To Be Determined
TEAS	Test of Essential Academic Skills
TRIO	Represents Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Student Support Service
TSA	Technical Skills Assessment
U.S.	United States of America
U.S.C.	United States Code
VPAT	Voluntary Product Accessibility Template
VPBA	Vice President of Business Affairs
VPI	Vice President of Instruction
VPSS	Vice President for Student Services
VFA	Voluntary Framework of Accountability
WCAG	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
WICHE	Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
WIN	Washington Idaho Network
WTC	Workforce Training & Community Education Center
Zoom	Video Conferencing Software

## Institutional Overview and Context

North Idaho College (NIC or “the college”) is a comprehensive community college serving nearly 20,000 people a year through its diverse educational offerings, including courses and programs for academic transfer and career and technical education, workforce training, continuing education, developmental education, and social service programs. NIC is one of only four community colleges in Idaho, each of which serves a large geographical area of the predominately rural state. NIC’s five-county region is located within the mountainous Idaho Panhandle, spanning more than 7,000 square miles, with approximately 235,000 residents that compose almost 14 percent of the state’s population.

NIC was founded as Coeur d’Alene Junior College, a private institution, in 1933. In 1939, the college became a tax-supported institution and changed its name to North Idaho Junior College. In 1949, NIC moved to its current location at the confluence of Lake Coeur d’Alene and the Spokane River. In 1971, the college changed its name to North Idaho College to more accurately reflect its mission as a comprehensive community college. NIC’s 75-acre main campus has a rich history, beginning thousands of years ago when the Coeur d’Alene Tribe used the lands as a gathering place, through the U.S. Army’s establishment of Fort Sherman here after the Civil War, to today when NIC is a focal point for regional education. The students, faculty, staff, and community take pride in the traditions that are an integral part of the college’s over 80-year legacy as an institution of teaching and learning.



NIC is governed by a board of trustees (the board) that comprises five members who are locally elected for four-year terms. The board derives its authority from the [Idaho Code for Community College District Law, Sections 33-2101 through 33-2144](#). The college president is appointed by the board. The president provides leadership and direction to students, faculty, and staff with the aid of a cabinet composed of the vice presidents for instruction, student services, and finance and business affairs, as well as an associate vice president for planning and effectiveness, chief communications and government relations officer, chief information officer, chief human resources officer, and the director of development/NIC Foundation executive director. The board and college administration are committed to meaningful participation among the college constituent groups in decision-making processes, inclusive of faculty, staff, and students, each of which have forums that contribute to institutional governance.

NIC supports wide access to higher education consistent with the philosophy of comprehensive community colleges through a commitment to meeting the needs of individuals with widely divergent interests and abilities and to being responsive to the needs of area businesses, industries, and governmental agencies by preparing competent, trained employees.

The college has adapted as the regional economy has evolved from one based in logging and mining of Idaho's natural resources to one increasingly characterized by manufacturing, especially aerospace and aviation, construction, health care, tourism, financial and insurance services, wholesale trade, transportation, and professional/scientific/technical fields.

Key examples of the college's adaptation to the new economy include the investments in the Parker Technical Education Center, Workforce Training & Community Education Center, the Aerospace Center, the Bob and Leona DeArmond College and University Center, and expansion of programs and collaborations for health professions education.

NIC offers associate degrees in 44 transfer academic programs, and associate of applied science degrees or certificates in 42 career-technical programs. In fall 2019, over 5,078 students enrolled in transfer, career-technical, and dual enrollment programs, representing 3,026 full-time equivalent students. In addition, during the 2018-2019 school year, 289 students enrolled in Adult Basic Education courses (12 or more hours of instruction), 5,419 students enrolled in non-credit community education and workforce training courses and another 10,121 people were served by NIC's Area Agency on Aging. NIC's Head Start Program also provided 352 students an early childhood education. The college works closely with the University of Idaho, Lewis-Clark State College, Idaho State University, and Boise State University to provide transfer options for students. In addition to the educational offerings and services on its main campus in Coeur d'Alene, NIC has outreach centers located in Post Falls, Kellogg, Sandpoint, Rathdrum, Bonners Ferry, and the Coeur d'Alene Tribal Institute in Plummer.

## Links for Supporting Evidence

This electronic version of the document contains links to supporting evidence. The Core Accreditation Team has made every effort to ensure all links work at the time of posting. However, some links are to secured sites, such as the North Idaho College intranet (My NIC Portal), which may require credentials or may not work if the reader is reading the report from a location other than North Idaho College. All organizations charts are presented with positions descriptions and personnel listings as of February 19, 2020.



## NWCCU REPORTS | Basic Institutional Data Form

Information and data provided in the institutional self-evaluation are usually for the academic and fiscal year preceding the year of the evaluation committee visit. The purpose of this form is to provide Commissioners and evaluators with current data for the year of the visit. After the self-evaluation report has been finalized, complete this form to ensure the information is current for the time of the evaluation committee visit. Please provide a completed copy of this form with each copy of the self-evaluation report sent to the Commission office and to each evaluator. This form should be inserted into the appendix of the self-evaluation report (see guidelines).

### **Institutional Information**

Mailing Address:	1000 West Garden Avenue
City:	Coeur d'Alene
State/Province:	Idaho
Zip/Postal Code:	83814
Main Phone Number:	(208) 769-3300

### **Chief Executive Officer**

Title (Dr., Mr., Ms., etc.):	Dr.
First Name:	Richard
Last Name:	MacLennan
Position (President, etc.):	President
Phone:	(208) 769-3303
Fax:	--
Email:	rick.maclennan@nic.edu

### **Accreditation Liaison Officer**

Title (Dr., Mr., Ms., etc.):	Dr.
First Name:	Steven
Last Name:	Kurtz
Position (President, etc.):	ALO
Phone:	(208) 769-7835
Fax:	--
Email:	steve.kurtz@nic.edu

### **Chief Financial Officer**

Title (Dr., Mr., Ms., etc.):	Mr.
First Name:	Christopher
Last Name:	Martin
Position (President, etc.):	VPF & BA
Phone:	(208) 769-3342
Fax:	(208) 665-2785
Email:	chris.martin@nic.edu

## Institutional Demographics

**Institutional Type (Choose all that apply):**

- Comprehensive    Specialized    Health-Centered    Religious-Based  
 Native/Tribal    Other (specify):

**Degree Levels (Choose all that apply):**

- Associate    Baccalaureate    Master    Doctorate  
 If part of a multi-institution system, name of system:

**Calendar Plan (Choose one that applies):**

- Semester    Quarter    4-1-4    Trimester    Other (specify):

**Institutional Control:**

- Local \*    County    State    Federal    Tribal  
 Public   OR    Private/Independent  
 Non-Profit   OR    For-Profit

\* NIC is a comprehensive community college governed and controlled by a locally elected board of trustees

## Students (all locations)

### Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Enrollment \*

**Official Fall:** 2019 (most recent year) FTE Student Enrollments

Classification	Current Year: 2019	One Year Prior: 2018	Two Years Prior: 2017
Undergraduate	3,000 (Fall 2019)	3,153 (Fall 2018)	3,226 (Fall 2017)
Graduate			
Professional			
Unclassified			
Total all levels	3,000 (Fall 2019)	3,153 (Fall 2018)	3,226 (Fall 2017)

\* IPEDS formula to compute FTE = full-time headcount plus calculation of part-time headcount multiplied by 0.335737]

### Full-Time Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment\*

**Official Fall:** 2019 (most recent year) Student Headcount Enrollment

Classification	Current Year: 2019	One Year Prior: 2018	Two Years Prior: 2017
Undergraduate	1,950 (Fall 2019)	2,080 (Fall 2018)	2,131 (Fall 2017)
Graduate			
Professional			
Unclassified			
Total all levels	1,950 (Fall 2019)	2,080 (Fall 2018)	2,131 (Fall 2017)

\* Count students enrolled in credit courses only.

## Faculty (all locations)

- ✓ Numbers of Full-Time and Part-Time Instructional and Research Faculty and Staff
- ✓ Numbers of Full-Time (only) Instructional and Research Faculty and Staff by Highest Degree Earned

Include only professional personnel who are primarily assigned to instruction or research.

**Total Number:** 154 Number of Full-Time (only) Faculty and Staff by Highest Degree Earned

Rank	Full-time	Part-time	Less than Associate	Associate	Bachelor	Masters	Specialist	Doctorate
Professor	37		0	0	0	28	1	8
Associate Professor	62		2	3	3	41	0	13
Assistant Professor	55		2	4	8	30	0	11
Instructor		185	13	11	50	90	1	20

Lecturer and Teaching Assistant - NONE  
 Research Staff and Research Assistant – NONE  
 Undesignated Rank – NONE

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Librarians, deans/division chairs, etc. that did not have "professor" listed as part of their title are not included.

## Mean Salaries and Mean Years of Service of Full-Time Instructional and Research Faculty and Staff

Rank	Mean Salary	Mean Years of Service
Professor	64,325	17.93
Associate Professor	61,061	12.08
Assistant Professor	54,770	3.08

Instructor - NONE  
 Lecturer and Teaching Assistant - NONE  
 Research Staff and Research Assistant - NONE  
 Undesignated Rank – NONE

---

Include only full-time personnel with professional status who are primarily assigned to instruction or research

# Institutional Finances

## Financial Information

Please provide the requested information for each of the most recent completed fiscal year and the two prior completed fiscal years (three years total).

Please attach the following as separate documents submitted with the Basic Institutional Data Form.

- Statement of Cash Flows ([FY 2017](#), [FY 2018](#), [FY 2019](#))
- Balance Sheet – collapsed to show main accounts only; no details ([FY 2017](#), [FY 2018](#), [FY 2019](#))
- Operating and Capital (Plant Fund) Budgets ([FY 2018](#), [FY 2019](#), [FY 2020](#))
- Projections of Non-Tuition Revenue: Published in [“Facts and Information”](#)
  - 2020-2021: \$2,250,000 (Projected)
  - 2019-2020: \$2,224,760
  - 2018-2019: \$2,268,195
  - 2017-2018: \$1,321,658

## New Degree / Certificate Programs

### Substantive Changes

Substantive changes including degree or certificate programs planned for 2020 - 2021 approved by the institution’s governing body.

Substantive Change	Certificate Degree Level	Program Name	Program Area
Notification – expansion program at Lewis-Clark State College in Lewiston. New courses/program, not a significant departure	AAS	Dental Hygiene	N/A
Notification – merging two programs (web design) and (graphic design) into one program	AAS	Graphic and Web Design	N/A
Notification – merging two programs (web design) and (graphic design) into one program	ITC	Graphic and Web Design	N/A
Notification – merging two programs (web design) and (graphic design) into one program	ATC	Graphic and Web Design	N/A
Notification – adding a third option that is not a significant departure	AS	Child Development	N/A
Notification – discontinuance of a program	AAS	Healthcare Computer Technician	N/A
Notification – discontinuance of a program	ITC	Healthcare Computer Technician	N/A

This listing does not substitute for a formal substantive change submission to NWCCU

## Domestic Off-Campus Degree Programs and Academic Credit Sites

Report information for off-campus sites within the United States where degree programs and academic credit coursework is offered. (Add additional pages if necessary.) This report excludes the main campus located in Coeur d’Alene and all internet courses.

- **Degree Programs** – list the names of degree programs that can be completed at the site.
- **Academic Credit Courses** – report the total number of academic credit courses offered at the site. Note: NIC reported the number of sections for this indicator.
- **Student Headcount** – report the total number (unduplicated headcount) of students currently enrolled in programs at the site.
- **Faculty Headcount** – report the total number (unduplicated headcount) of faculty (full-time and part-time) teaching at the site.
- Programs and Academic Credit Offered at Off - Campus Sites within the United States

Name of Site	Physical Address	City, State, Zip	Degree Programs	Academic Credit Courses	Student Count	Faculty Count
Aerospace	1845 Dakota Ave.	Hayden, 83835		17	32	5
Avondale Golf Course	10745 N. Avondale Lp	Hayden, 83835		4	19	1
Bonnors Ferry High School	6485 Tamarack Ln	Bonnors Ferry, 83805		1	4	1
Boundary Community Hospital	6640 Kaniksu	Bonnors Ferry, 83805		1	10	1
Coeur d’Alene Charter Academy	4904 Duncan	Cd’A, 83815		1	13	1
Coeur d’Alene High School	5530 N 4 <sup>th</sup> St	Cd’A, 83815		14	158	7
Coeur d’Alene Tribal Center	1115 Birch St	Plummer, 83851		2	5	2
Forrest Bird Charter School	614 S Madison	Sandpoint, 83864		10	24	2
Genesis Prep Academy	1866 N Cecil	Post Falls, 83854		1	10	1
Kellogg High School	2 Jacobs Gulch	Kellogg, 83837		1	17	1

NEW DEGREE / CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Domestic Off-Campus Degree Programs and Academic Credit Sites (Continued)

Name of Site	Physical Address	City, State, Zip	Degree Programs	Academic Credit Courses	Student Count	Faculty Count
Lake City High School	6101 N Ramsey	Cd'A, 83815		21	220	9
Lakeland High School	7006 W Hwy 53	Rathdrum, 83858		19	144	8
Lewis-Clark State College	500 8 <sup>th</sup> Ave	Lewiston, 83501	AAS-Physical Therapist Assistant	12	12	9
Memorial Field	414 Mullan Rd	Cd'A, 83814		2	9	1
North Idaho STEM Charter Academy	15633 N Meyer	Rathdrum, 83858		4	25	3
NIC at Sandpoint	102 S Euclid	Sandpoint, 83864	Certificate – LPN – every other year	20	102	10
NIC Bonners Ferry Center	6791 Main, Suite B	Bonners Ferry, 83805		9	66	5
NIC Silver Valley Center	323 Main	Kellogg, 83837		7	18	6
Orofino Jr-Sr High School	300 Dunlap	Orofino, 83544		4	33	1
Parker Technical Education	7064 W Lancaster	Rathdrum, 83858		76	226	23
Post Falls High School	2832 E Poleline	Post Falls, 83877		13	141	2
Precision Fitness	9641 N Eileen Ct	Hayden, 83835		4	19	1
Priest River Lamanna High School	1103 9 <sup>th</sup> St	Priest River, 83856		1	7	1
Saint Maries High School	424 Hells Gulch	Saint Maries, 83861		6	46	3
Sunset Bowling Alley	202 Sunset Ave	C'dA, 83815		1	14	1
Timberlake High School	5973 W Hwy 54	Spirit Lake, 83869		2	32	2
Workforce Training Center	525 S. Clearwater Loop	Post Falls, 83854		21	64	4

## Distance Education

Degree and certificate programs of 30 semester or 45 quarter credits or more where at least 50% or more of the curriculum is offered by distance education, including ITV, online, and competency-based education.

- Student Enrollment (In Program) = unduplicated headcount of students enrolled.
- Student Enrollment (Distance Delivery) = unduplicated headcount of students enrolled in program taking at least one Internet or IVC-R course
- Counts reflect Fall 2019 student enrollment as of October 15, 2019.
- Columns for “Physical Address” and “Co-Sponsoring Organizations” were eliminated. All programs on the table are from the main campus. None of the programs on the tables have a co-sponsoring organization.

Name of Site	Degree/ Certificate Name/Level	Program Name	Enrollment Program	Distance Delivery	On-Site Staff
Internet / IVC-Receiving Sites	A.A. A.S.	A min. of 30 semester credits are offered via the Internet/IVC that can satisfy core degree requirements for an A.A. or A.S. degree.	2,703	1,397	Yes
Main Campus	AAS	Accounting Assistant	37	30	Yes
Main Campus	AAS	Administrative Office Management Tech	11	10	Yes
Main Campus	AAS	Business Management	49	35	Yes
Main Campus	ITC	Health Information Fundamentals	9	7	Yes
Main Campus	AAS	Medical Administrative Assistant	4	3	Yes
Main Campus	AAS	Medical Billing Specialist	14	12	Yes
Main Campus	ITC	Medical Receptionist	0	0	Yes
Main Campus	ITC	Office Specialist/ Receptionist	1	1	Yes
Main Campus	ITC	Virtual Administrative Assistant	0	0	Yes
Main Campus	ITC	Medical Assistant	0	0	Yes
Main Campus	AAS	Medical Assistant	13	9	Yes
Main Campus	ITC	Pharmacy Technology	8	7	Yes
Main Campus	AAS	Medical Laboratory Technology	8	8	Yes

This listing does not substitute for a formal substantive change submission to NWCC



**Programs and Academic Courses Offered at Sites  
Outside the United States**

Report information for sites outside the United States where degree programs and academic credit coursework is offered, including study abroad programs and educational operations on military bases. (Add additional pages if necessary)

- Degree Programs – list the names of degree programs that can be completed at the site.
- Academic Credit Courses – report the total number of academic credit courses offered at the site.
- Student Headcount – report the total number (unduplicated headcount) of students currently enrolled in programs at the site.
- Faculty Headcount – report the total number (unduplicated headcount) of faculty (full-time and part-time) teaching at the site.

Name of Site	Physical Address	City, State, Zip	Degree Programs	Academic Credit Courses	Student Headcount	Faculty Headcount
NONE						



## COVER STORY

International adopted sisters get head start at NIC



Yolanda Boudro always told her daughters, “Make your sisters your best friends.”

Friends can come and go, she said, but family is forever—and her 13 daughters have taken those words to heart.

All of the Boudro sisters are adopted from countries like China, Korea and Ethiopia. Beyond culture shock and language barriers, each girl had to get to know her new sisters, as well as her new parents.

North Idaho College is playing a significant role in the girls’ achievement of their educational goals.

Five of the Boudro sisters—Anni, Abigail, Eyerusalem, Janie, and Naomi, all between the ages of 16 and 17—are attending NIC or just graduated last year. All home schooled originally, the sisters have taken advantage of NIC’s dual credit program and Adult Education Center to earn their high school diplomas and continue their educations.

[READ MORE: \*nic.edu/CoverStory\*](http://nic.edu/CoverStory)



## **Preface:**

Update on Institutional Changes since Last Report



## Update on Institutional Changes since Last Report

### Substantive Changes

**General Education:** The associate degree general education core has changed since NIC's 2013 comprehensive evaluation. In 2013, Idaho initiated a statewide general education reform for all public higher education institutions. The change process involved disciplinary teams of faculty members from all Idaho public higher education institutions who met to write competencies for six agreed-upon areas of general education: Written Communication, Oral Communication, Mathematical Ways of Knowing, Scientific Ways of Knowing, Humanistic and Artistic Ways of Knowing, and Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing. The faculty disciplinary teams also developed common rubrics for assessment of the new General Education Matriculation (GEM) competencies. In 2014 and 2015, all NIC courses then included in the general education curriculum were reviewed and a determination was made whether to revise, reconsider, or delete the course from NIC's general education offerings in light of the GEM framework. Following a systematic review by NIC faculty and administration, the new GEM requirements were launched in fall 2015. The GEM framework also consists of institutionally designated general education areas, which NIC defined as competencies for Wellness, and Integrative Inquiry. Collectively, the GEM and institutional competencies are the basis for assessing NIC's general education program.

**Aerospace Center:** To meet the fast-growing expansion of the aerospace industry in the region, NIC opened a new training center in Hayden in August 2013 to prepare students for careers in aerospace manufacturing and maintenance. The center was established with a \$2.97 million federal grant. The programs at the center prepare students for entry-level employment in aerospace technology manufacturing specifically pertaining to composite fabrication and

**Parker Technical Education Center:** In September 2016, NIC celebrated the grand opening of the Parker Technical Education Center (Parker) located in Rathdrum. The 110,000-square-foot facility, built at a cost of approximately \$20 million, offers state-of-the-art manufacturing and automobile repair and technology programs. Parker was a result of NIC's strategic planning goal of providing a highly skilled, adaptive workforce and aligning the college's training programs to the needs of business and industry. The project was funded by the college's allocated capital funds along with approximately \$5 million raised privately by the North Idaho College Foundation. The following programs are housed at Parker: Automotive Technology, Collision Repair Technology, Computer Aided Design Technology-Architectural, Computer Aided Design-Mechanical, Diesel Technology, Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration, Industrial Mechanic/Millwright, Machining and Computer Numeric Control Technology, and Welding Technology.

Since the 2013 Year Seven Evaluation, the college has submitted and been approved for 35 substantive and minor change requests for new or significantly changed programs. For a summary of all substantive changes see [Substantive Changes Including Minor Changes and Notifications](#).

### Grants

North Idaho College is nationally competitive in securing high-profile grants from state, federal, and foundation funders. Highlights of this accreditation cycle include a \$6.2 million grant from the U.S.

Department of Labor to assist in the development of new health care programs (see 2.F.2), two grants from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration to support equipment purchases for new high-tech programs and to support entrepreneurship (See NIC Venture Network below), and private funds to support strategic priorities and special projects for NIC. For example, NIC recently was one of 10 community colleges participating in the new [Metallica Scholars Program](#). As part of the program, the band’s foundation awarded \$100,000 to each of the 10 community colleges to support career-technical education, workforce development programs, and to remove barriers students face while learning a trade. NIC used the funds to support 63 students, with an average award of \$1,400, in five programs (Aerospace Advanced Manufacturing, Industrial Mechanic/Millwright, Machining and CNC Technology, Mechatronics and Welding Technology) with tuition assistance, transportation, and child care costs (See [NIC News release](#) and Board Minutes, [May 2019, p. 2](#)). News about the Metallica Scholars Program reach both statewide and international audiences such as [Idaho Educational News](#) and [Business Insider – Australia](#).

### **NIC Venture Network**

In fall 2019, NIC launched the Venture Network, a promotional identity to help promote and guide NIC students, staff, faculty, and regional business organizations to the wide range of entrepreneurship and business resources the college operates. The Venture Network includes five different resources available to the public including the Avista Center for Entrepreneurship which offers for-credit entrepreneurship education; Gizmo-CDA, a community makerspace featuring tools, workshops, and hands-on learning; the North Idaho Small Business Development Center, which offers business coaching, training and mentorship; and the Venture Center, which supports new product development for commercial purposes. In addition, the Venture Network promotes NIC Molstead Library research and business resources, which are instrumental to early stage entrepreneurship market research. The NIC Office of Entrepreneurship manages The Venture Network intake and messaging, acting as “first stop” for students, entrepreneurs, and small businesses looking for assistance, guiding them to the appropriate program and developing a business roadmap with clients (See [NIC Entrepreneurship Program Promotional Video](#)).

In spring 2020, the Venture Center, which was funded in part by a \$675,607 federal grant, is scheduled to open a new Product Development Lab, which will include in-house engineering design assistance, fabrication tools, and resources. NIC was honored by the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship (NACCE), the nation’s leading organization focused on promoting entrepreneurship through community colleges, as its [2018 Heather Van Sickle Entrepreneurial College of the Year](#) at NACCE’s 16th Annual Conference held in Fort Worth, Texas.

### **Changes in Leadership**

In December 2015, President Joe Dunlap announced his plans for retirement after serving in the position since 2012. The board conducted a national search, and on July 1, 2016, the college welcomed Dr. Rick MacLennan as the tenth president.

Three senior cabinet members remain in their roles since the mid-cycle review: Dr. Lita Burns (Vice President for Instruction), Dr. Graydon Stanley (Vice President for Student Services), and Rayelle Anderson (Director of Development/Executive Director NIC Foundation). Four members of the administrative team changed since the last comprehensive visit, all were hired after national searches that the board approved:

Chris Martin - Vice President for Finance and Business Affairs (2014),  
Ken Wardinsky - Chief Information Officer (2015),  
Laura Rumpler - Chief Communications and Government Relations Officer (2017),  
Karen Hubbard – Chief Human Resources Officer (2019).

One addition to the administrative structure since the last comprehensive visit was the hiring of Dianna Renz as Associate Vice President for Planning and Effectiveness in 2018. In order to align to a typical community college reporting structure, the president recently moved the responsibilities of the athletic director to the vice president for student services.

## **Focus on Student Experience**

NIC launched four quality initiatives with the goal of improving the student experience. In August 2017, NIC celebrated the grand opening of the Student Wellness and Recreation Center located in the heart of the main campus. The new 30,000-square-foot facility, financed by student fees, was constructed at a cost of \$7.9 million. The two-story building includes a gymnasium, a multi-purpose exercise room, weights and cardio spaces, an indoor cycling room, two fitness rooms, a learning lab, an elevated track, and an indoor climbing wall.

The new facility has enhanced the quality of recreational credit and non-credit offerings and promoted wellness for students and employees, while aligning with competitive amenities offered at other Idaho and Washington higher education institutions.

The college launched the Cardinal Learning Commons (CLC) in August 2018, replacing the former College Skills Center. The CLC provides more extensive tutoring, a form of supplemental instruction, a Math Education Center, a new developmental math course, two new student transition and success courses, and enhanced collaboration with instructional programs to improve retention and graduation completion rates. The proposal for the design of the CLC was part of extensive work in Guided Pathways, dubbed Pathways at NIC. The President's Cabinet approved the proposal, including newly configured positions, and supported an extensive remodel of the previous center to realize a dynamic teaching and learning environment. The CLC has become a hub of collaboration for educators across the college around key institutional goals to increase student readiness for college courses, reduce student departure from classes with high D, F, and W rates, and build completion rates across all programs.

In March 2019, the college introduced Cardinal Central, a one-stop-shop concept where students can complete all the essential components for registration, financial aid, and student payments at one location. This consolidation effort resulted in the cross training of all enrollment services employees, and a capital investment to create a new, attractive, and welcoming lobby for students. The goal of the project is for staff to care for 80 percent of student service needs coming into the lobby with 20 percent of the remaining needs referred to the appropriate office. The model will elevate staff efficiency and enhance overall service quality as the phone numbers, websites, and emails of the respective office functions are now combined into a single operation (See Video: [Celebrating Success: Cardinal Central](#), Board of Trustees Meeting, May 2019).

In September 2019, NIC, in partnership with Lewis-Clark State College and University of Idaho, celebrated the opening of the Bob and Leona DeArmond College and University Center. Here, NIC has combined the recruiting and admissions functions for prospective students in one location, where they will be referred for tours, to learn about NIC's programs and to assist with the admissions process. The welcoming design and location of the new facility is convenient for potential NIC students and their family and friends. Two full-time recruiters and a full-time front desk assistant are

located at the center. Students admitted to NIC use Cardinal Central for onboarding activities such as advising, placement, registration, and financial aid.

The 30,000-square-foot, \$9.5 million facility includes basic student services areas, computer labs, faculty work spaces, and flexible classrooms designed for future technological upgrades and space needs. The building optimizes energy consumption in part through abundant use of daylighting.



## Response to Recommendations

The Commission reaffirmed NIC's accreditation in July 2013 following the Year Seven Comprehensive Evaluation and asked the college to respond to five recommendations:

**Recommendation 1:** While evidence of effort is apparent, the evaluation committee recommends that the institution fully engage in integrated, comprehensive planning that offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies and is informed by the collection of clearly defined data used to evaluate mission fulfillment. Such planning should include budget and capital projections that inform resource allocation process, and that the institution ensures the creation of appropriate learning environments for all programs (including those at off-campus locations), wherever offered and however delivered, in order to effectively support student learning (Standards 1.B.2, 2.C.1, 2.D.1, 2.F.2, 2.F.5, and 3.A).

**Recommendation 2:** The institution has engaged in a comprehensive process to create and revise the college mission, vision, and values statements as well as to define core themes. The evaluation committee recommends that the design of each identified core theme be consistent with the institution's mission, supported by the comprehensive plan, and informed by both clearly defined indicators and the regular collection and analysis of meaningful data (Standard 1.B.1 and 1.B.2).



**Recommendation 3:** The evaluation committee recommends that the institution continue to refine its process of core theme assessment by collecting and using appropriately defined data to evaluate the fulfillment of its mission. The institution should regularly revise its assessment processes to ensure they appraise authentic achievements and yield meaningful results that lead to improvement (Standards 3.B.3, 4.A.1, 4.A.6, and 4.B.1).

**Recommendation 4:** The evaluation committee recommends that the institution employ sufficient qualified personnel to maintain library services support and operations functions; insuring quality, adequacy, utilization, and security of library and information resources and services, including those provided through cooperative arrangements, wherever offered and however delivered. The institution, consistent with its mission and core themes, must provide access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth, and breadth to support the institution’s mission, core themes, programs, and services (Standard 2.B.1, 2.E.1, and 2.E.4).

**Recommendation 5:** The evaluation committee recommends that the institution develop, publish widely, and follow an effective and clearly stated transfer-of-credit policy that maintains the integrity of programs while facilitating efficient mobility of students between institutions when completing their educational programs. Such a policy will ensure that adopted admission and placement policies guide student enrollment in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to assure a reasonable probability of student success (Standard 2.A.14 and 2.A.16).

Since 2013, the college answered all five recommendations in the following reports:

- Spring 2014 Year One Report: Recommendation 2
- Spring 2014 Ad Hoc Reports (2): Recommendations 4 and 5
- Spring 2016 Mid-Cycle Review Report: Recommendation 1
- Spring 2018 Ad Hoc Report: Recommendation 3

Reports available on the [NIC Accreditation website](#)

All recommendations were met.







## **Chapter One:**

### Mission and Core Themes



## Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirements 1, 2 and 3

### Eligibility Requirement 1.

**Operational Status** - *The institution has completed at least one year of its principal educational programs and is operational with students actively pursuing its degree programs at the time of the Commission accepting an institution's Application for Consideration for Eligibility. The institution has graduated at least one class in its principal educational program(s) before the Commission's evaluation for initial accreditation.*

North Idaho College was accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities in 1950 and has maintained its accreditation status. NIC was founded in 1933 as Coeur d'Alene Junior College, a private, two-year college. In July 1939, the North Idaho Junior College District, encompassing most of Kootenai County, was approved by the local voters as a result of the Idaho Junior College Act of 1939. Effective July 31, 1971, the name of the college was changed to North Idaho College in accordance with a law passed by the 41st Idaho Legislature. NIC graduated at least one class in its principal educational programs before the Commission's evaluation for initial accreditation. During the most recent academic year (2018-2019), the college graduated 1,342 students who were awarded degrees or certificates, and 239 students who were awarded General Education Development (GED) credentials.

### Eligibility Requirement 2.

**Authority** - *The institution is authorized to operate and award degrees as a higher education institution by the appropriate governmental organization, agency, or governing board as required by the jurisdiction in which it operates.*

NIC addresses Eligibility Requirement 2 (Authority) in the introduction to this self-study, stating that NIC is governed by a board of trustees, composed of members who are elected for four-year terms. The board derives its authority from the [Idaho Code for Community College District Law, Sections 33-2101 through 33-2144](#). The college president is appointed by the board in accordance with Presidential Authority and Responsibility [Policy 2.02.01](#).

### Eligibility Requirement 3.

**Mission and Core Themes** - *The institution's mission and core themes are clearly defined and adopted by its governing board(s) consistent with its legal authorization, and are appropriate to a degree-granting institution of higher education. The institution's purpose is to serve the educational interests of its students and its principal programs lead to recognized degrees. The institution devotes all, or substantially all, of its resources to support its educational mission and core themes.*

NIC addresses Eligibility Requirement 3 (Mission and Core Themes) in the body of this report in its response to Standard 1. NIC's purpose is to serve the educational interests of its students and communities, and NIC's principal programs lead to recognized two-year degrees and certificates of

varying length up to two years. Through its long-range planning processes the college ensures that its resources are devoted to fulfilling its mission and core themes. [NIC's mission statement](#) was reviewed and approved by the board in March 2012. Within the next few months, the college plans to revisit the mission statement in conjunction with the expectations for mission fulfillment by NWCCU and with the adoption of new accreditation standards.

## Standard 1.A Mission

### Standard 1.A.1 – Mission Articulation.

*The institution has a widely published mission statement, approved by its governing board, that articulates a purpose appropriate for an institution of higher learning, gives direction for its efforts, and derives from, and is generally understood by, its community.*

NIC's mission statement articulates the college's purpose as a community college and higher education institution. In spring 2011, the board directed the college to establish a Long-Range Visioning and Planning Committee (LRVP) to review the mission, vision, and values for the college, and to create a new strategic plan. This review coincided with the transition to NWCCU's standards current at that time. The committee recommended, and the board approved, the following mission, vision, and values statements for the college.

**Mission:** North Idaho College meets the diverse educational needs of students, employers, and the northern Idaho communities it serves through a commitment to student success, educational excellence, community engagement, and lifelong learning.

**Vision:** As a comprehensive community college, North Idaho College strives to provide accessible, affordable, quality learning opportunities. North Idaho College endeavors to be an innovative, flexible leader recognized as a center of educational, cultural, economic, and civic activities by the communities it serves.

**Values:** North Idaho College is dedicated to five values which also serve to guide strategic decisions and actions:

**Student Success:** A vibrant, lifelong learning environment that engages students as partners in achieving educational goals to enhance their quality of life.

**Educational Excellence:** High academic standards, passionate and skillful instruction, professional development, and innovative programming while continuously improving all services and outcomes.

**Community Engagement:** Collaborative partnerships with businesses, organizations, community members, and educational institutions to identify and address changing educational needs.

**Stewardship:** Economic and environmental sustainability through leadership, awareness, and responsiveness to changing community resources.

**Diversity:** A learning environment that celebrates the uniqueness of all individuals and encourages cultural competency.

NIC's mission statement is widely shared and published on the [website](#) and on the front page of the college catalog ([online](#)), and is posted in classrooms, displayed in buildings, and included in major long-range planning documents including the [Strategic Plan](#) (2018-2023) submitted to the Idaho State Board of Education (SBOE). The mission statement is read aloud at the beginning of board meetings.

NIC's mission statement provides a foundation for its commitment to the charge of a community college. NIC articulates this commitment through the following priorities: quality degree and certificate pathways; strong support for learning; access to programs and services relevant to student and community needs; management of financial resources; quality faculty and staff; support of professional development; assessment of institutional and program effectiveness and continuous improvement; positive organizational and governance structures; and a safe and inclusive college with state-of-the-art equipment and facilities. These priorities are reflected in NIC's core theme objectives and measures.

### **Standard 1.A.2 – Mission Fulfillment.**

*The institution defines mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations. Guided by that definition, it articulates institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.*

NIC's core themes and objectives are derived from the college mission. The core themes have continued to evolve since 2010 when the college participated in the selection of its original core themes: Student Success, Educational Excellence, and Community Engagement. Between 2010 and 2013, the college underwent extensive changes in senior leadership. NIC then completed the full Year Seven Comprehensive Evaluation in 2013 in a highly compressed timeline. As noted by the peer evaluators, these overlapping changes created confusion about the relationship between NIC's core themes, values, and strategic goals. In response to the 2013 evaluation and in an attempt to better align the core themes, values, and strategic goals, the college renamed its core themes in its 2014 Year One Report. Although a core theme team guided the work, the 2014 changes to the core themes caused significant confusion for the college community. Subsequently, with the help of the 2015/2016 Mid-Cycle Evaluation Steering Committee, the college adopted its five values as its core themes: Student Success, Educational Excellence, Community Engagement, Stewardship, and Diversity. These five values embrace the original core themes and are easily recognized by the college community. The five core themes now frame the strategic plan and departmental and divisional planning goals.

Over time, work around the core theme measures has also evolved. At times, the college has struggled with the development of the measures and the concept of core themes. Regardless, the new NWCCU standards framework has driven the college to focus on performance, outcomes, and continuous improvement. Early work on the core theme measures was managed by a Common Campus Measures (CCM) committee, under the direction of institutional research. This committee met at least monthly to develop measures that are used not only for accreditation, but for state performance reporting, strategic planning, or to document trends concerning particular goals. The CCM committee focused on process and outcomes measures whenever most appropriate, but also included qualitative measures such as expectations and satisfaction with accessibility to and participation in activities. The CCM Committee worked with various Accreditation Core Theme

Committees, and in consultation with staff, faculty, management, and executive leadership. Currently, some of the core theme measures have well-established analysis, while others lack benchmarks.

The 2015/2016 Mid-Cycle Evaluation Steering Committee worked with the Accreditation Executive Committee to further define the measures. Presently, the core theme measures work is led by the accreditation liaison officer, in conjunction with the Office of Planning and Effectiveness. NIC uses data from a variety of reporting sources including the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), internal measures, state longitudinal data, and the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA). CCM Committees assigned to particular core theme measures are responsible for gathering evidence, analyzing, and providing results to the Office of Planning and Effectiveness and the accreditation liaison officer.

In 2016, the college prepared its first annual Core Theme Report as part of the mid-cycle evaluation process. At the time of the Mid-cycle Report, the Community Engagement and Diversity Core Themes were not fully developed and thus were not evaluated in the 2016 Core Theme Report. Since the 2016 report was prepared during the spring semester, the college chose to delay the preparation of the next report to more fully develop the core themes and measures and transition to a fall core theme reporting cycle in advance of annual budgeting processes. Thus, a second Core Theme Report was not prepared until fall 2017 and finalized in January 2018. Since that time, core theme reports have been prepared annually. The reports are shared with the board and with the college through the college's [management team](#).

NIC measures achievement of mission fulfillment by rating its performance for the core themes, both individually and collectively. Each core theme has one or two objectives. Each objective has multiple measures that are weighted equally. These measures are drawn from national, institutional, and state indicators, including the VFA, and include consideration of trends for each measure. The mean of three prior years of data is used as a baseline measure, where available. The expectation for performance is set by the staff of institutional research and the accreditation liaison officer and cleared with the Executive Accreditation Committee. The institutional research (IR) team then rates each measure on a scale of 1 to 3 by comparing the current three-year mean to the expectation: 3 = Meets Expectations, 2 = Progressing, or 1 = Does Not Meet Expectations.

The mean score on each measure is then calculated for a composite score for each objective. Each core theme is then evaluated using the mean objective score. The following scale is used:

- 2.3-3.0 = Meets Expectations
- 1.1-2.2 = Consistently Progressing
- 1.0 = Does Not Meet Expectations

Finally, the mean of the five core theme scores are calculated. Collectively, the core theme objectives and measures are deemed sufficient to assess mission fulfillment. The college is achieving its mission when the mean for all core themes indicates that the college is either “consistently progressing” or “meeting expectations.” A core theme that is not meeting expectations or progressing indicates the college needs to take action to better fulfill its mission and that can be tied directly to one or more of the relevant measures.

During the annual ratings of the core themes, the college eliminated, altered, and created new measures. Graduation and cohort default rates are at the forefront of the analysis, in line with U.S. Department of Education requirements. The five core themes, objectives, measures, trends, and



expectations are reported in annual Core Theme Reports. The four most recent reports include: [2016 Core Theme Report](#), [2018 Core Theme Report](#), and the [2019 Core Theme Report](#). The college is currently compiling information for the 2020 Core Theme Report and anticipates releasing it to the college community by April 15, 2020.

To highlight the level of board engagement with mission fulfillment, the report contains links to videos of “Celebrating Success,” a segment of regularly scheduled monthly board meetings during which the trustees receive presentations of the college’s many success stories. Every example is directly related to NIC’s Core Themes. In addition, there will be links to board minutes for examples of other types of engagement presented as evidence throughout the self-study.

## Standard 1.B Core Themes

### **Standard 1.B.1 – Core Themes.**

*The institution identifies core themes that individually manifest essential elements of its mission and collectively encompass its mission.*

Student success, educational excellence, community engagement, stewardship, and diversity were established as core values for NIC in 2012. Since then, all five values have been thematic elements of NIC’s mission as a comprehensive community college. Appropriately, they form the core themes for the college. They represent a clear expression of the place and purpose of the college in a higher education landscape that calls for responsiveness to diverse student needs, adaptability to a changing economy, careful use of limited resources, and service to a wider community. Students cannot succeed without a commitment to a high-quality education. Public expectations call on colleges and universities to consistently demonstrate productive engagement on what matters locally, regionally, and nationally in a world of increasing complexity and diversity. The costs of higher education to individuals and families require that tuition, tax, and state funding always be conscientiously applied with the goal of creating value. Collectively, the college’s selection of student success, educational excellence, community engagement, stewardship, and diversity as core themes reflects a considered approach to the mission critical interdependencies of providing quality teaching and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Standard 1.B.2 – Core Theme Indicators.**

*The institution establishes objectives for each of its core themes and identifies meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement that form the basis for evaluating accomplishment of the objectives of its core themes.*

NIC’s five core values of student success, educational excellence, community engagement, stewardship, and diversity serve as the accreditation core themes. Planning and gathering evidence for the core themes occurs at the institutional level through four mechanisms: 1) The Office of Planning and Effectiveness, 2) the Accreditation Executive Committee, 3) departmental and divisional review and planning (annual operational goals), and 4) Student Learning Outcomes Assessment.

NIC uses data from a variety of reporting sources including IPEDS, internal measures, state longitudinal data, and most recently, VFA. The VFA is the first national system of accountability college serves students with diverse educational goals. The decision to use the VFA reporting system was made jointly by the presidents of the three community colleges existing in Idaho at the time. NIC has used the VFA reporting system since 2013. VFA data will be used to inform decision making by the community colleges at the state and local levels.

**CORE THEME I - STUDENT SUCCESS**

To provide a vibrant, lifelong learning environment that engages students as partners in achieving educational goals to enhance their quality of life.

Woven throughout the fabric of NIC’s mission, vision, and values, its core theme objectives, measures and expectations, and its program and service goals is a common thread of purpose – student success. NIC is a comprehensive, student-centered institution, committed to student success, to expanding students’ potential, and to helping students grow and learn. This is demonstrated not only through teaching and learning, but is also demonstrated through recruitment, enrollment processes, support services, facilities, student programs, recreational opportunities, athletics, performing arts, and co-curricular activities. The Student Success Core Theme is focused on providing students access to educational opportunities, and on helping students achieve their educational and career goals. Tables 1.1 and 1.2 describe the measures and expectations for Objectives 1.1 and 1.2.

**TABLE 1.1**

**Objective 1.1:** Provide regional access to quality education and training.

Measures	Expectation
Unduplicated annual headcount of credit students as a percentage of NIC's total service area population	3.6%
Unduplicated annual headcount of non-credit students as a percentage of NIC's total service area population	3.0%
Distance learning proportion of fall credit hours as a percentage of total student population	25%
Dual Credit unduplicated annual headcount as a percentage of total student population	18%

**Rationale:** NIC determines whether it is providing sufficient levels of access, particularly to segments of the population that have historically been underserved by higher education. This data validates the importance of transitional programs such as Adult Basic Education, GED, dual credit, as well as targeted outreach services to the college, students, and the community. High quality distance learning can add to the success of students by providing access, convenience, and a satisfying learning experience. The geographic region served by NIC covers over 7,000 square miles with a total population of 235,000. Driving distances for students from these communities range from 40 to 80 miles one way. One solution to these challenges is eLearning, and dual credit programs.

**TABLE 1.2**

**Objective 1.2:** Assist students with the attainment of educational and career goals.

Measures	Expectation
Retention Rate – Full time, first-time, degree-seeking student retention rates (IPEDS)	63%
Retention Rate – Part-time, first-time, degree-seeking student retention rates (IPEDS)	45%
Percentage of non-remedial courses completed in the fall term with a C or better	75%
Percentage of first-time and new transfer-in students who were awarded a degree or certificate, transferred, or are still enrolled, within six years as defined by VFA	70%
Percentage of students who complete the General Education Certificate over rolling three-year average degree-seeking FTE	Expectation will be defined after next round of data due to variance
The number of CTE concentrators who achieved positive placement or transition in the second quarter after leaving postsecondary education	Maintain 80% or above positive placement
Percentage of undergraduate, degree-seeking students completing 30 or more credits per academic year (Implement 2020)	11%

**Rationale:** Students who return to college after their first year are more likely to meet their educational goals. Examining the rate of retention by subgroups provides opportunity for more focused attention on specific portions of NIC’s student population. Students who succeed in their courses are more likely to meet their educational goals. Examining the rate of completion by subgroups provides opportunity for more focused attention on specific portions of NIC’s student population. Degree/certificate attainment rates are standard measures used to track students’ educational progress and achievement of educational goals. VFA tracks a cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students and transfer-in students, which provides baseline data for comparing completion rates from year to year. Certificate attainment rates are standard measures used to track students’ educational progress and achievement of educational goals. Career and technical education (CTE) students enroll in programs that prepare them to enter the workforce upon graduation. Tracking successful placement in related employment ensures that NIC’s programs are aligned with industry skills and that they reflect market demand.

**Core Theme II – Educational Excellence**

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Promote high academic standards, passionate and skillful instruction, professional development, and innovative programming while continuously improving all services and outcomes.

NIC fulfills its role as a comprehensive community college by offering courses and programs in five areas: transfer education, career and technical education, basic skills education, workforce

education, and community education. Programs are characterized by a curriculum that is well ordered and diverse, and by a faculty and support staff committed to teaching excellence and student success. The focus of the Educational Excellence Core Theme encompasses two objectives aimed at evaluating what NIC views as the underpinning for achieving excellence: to provide quality educational programs that result in student learning, and to help students develop skills and knowledge that promote lifelong success. Table 1.3 describes the measures and expectations for Objective 2.1.

**TABLE 1.3**

**Objective 2.1:** Provide quality programs of study that result in student learning.

Measures	Expectation
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Goals are met annually	80% percent or more of annual assessment goals are met over 3-yr plan
Percentage of employers (out of total respondents) who indicate satisfaction with overall preparation of Career and Technical Education completers	80% of employers indicate satisfaction with preparation of completers
Professional development resources are disbursed through a competitive and peer-reviewed process annually	Maintain or increase funding levels at \$82,000
Full-time to part-time faculty ratio	Maintain 0.8:1.0 Ratio
Instructional programs will describe changes/improvements to programs as a result of the program review process	90% of programs
Student perceptions of student-faculty interaction/advisor interaction (CCSSE)  (CCSSE administered every other year)	Maintain or improve average of 50% or greater when compared to cohort institutions

**Rationale:** Student performance is the most direct measure of the Educational Excellence Core Theme. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) demonstrate what students know and assessment of SLOs provides a means for analyzing the curriculum to continuously improve teaching and learning. In CTE, ensuring the satisfaction of employers who hire NIC students is essential to maintaining current and relevant programs. Professional development is necessary to enhance the expertise of faculty, support staff, and administrators and to improve programs, functions, and ultimately the success of students. The employment arrangement for part-time faculty often means less availability and thus less time to spend with students outside the classroom. Maintaining a healthy full-time to part-time ratio is necessary to maintain the professional involvement of faculty in academic disciplines to ensure quality, currency, and depth of content. The program review process provides a method to improve educational services, programs, curriculum, and teaching and learning. The student-faculty interaction measures the extent to which students and faculty communicate about academic performance, career plans, and course content and assignments. Student satisfaction promotes motivation, academic performance, and student retention. Table 1.4 describes the measures and expectations for Objective 2.2.

**TABLE 1.4**

**Objective 2.2:** Students develop skills and knowledge to ensure lifelong success.

Measures	Expectation
Licensure pass rates at or above national pass rates	Maintain at 85% or above
Career and Technical Education Technical Skills Assessment (TSAs) results indicate successful pass rates	Maintain within a 5% margin of 97%
Percentage of student evaluations of community education courses reflect a satisfaction rating of above average	85% of total number score a satisfaction rating of above average
Student perceptions of support for learners (CCSSE)  (CCSSE administered every other year)	Benchmark Score of 46.0
Remediation: Number and percentage of first-time freshmen who graduated from high school in the previous year requiring remedial education as determined by institutional benchmarks	No benchmark set at the postsecondary level. Note: the state benchmark for this measure is < 55%
Math: Percent of undergraduate, degree-seeking students taking a remediation course completing a subsequent credit-bearing course (in the area identified as needing remediation) within a year with a “C” or higher (Implement 2020)	30%
English: Percent of undergraduate, degree-seeking students taking a remediation course completing a subsequent credit-bearing course (in the area identified as needing remediation) within a year with a “C” or higher (Implement 2020)	65%

**Rationale:** Licensure examination results are critical measures of success for many professional programs. TSA attainment rates are customized measures used to track student educational progress and achievement of skills in CTE programs. Feedback from students regarding their satisfaction with community education is used in decisions related to curriculum, instructor selection and retention, scheduling, and marketing. NIC has developed targeted and innovative support mechanisms to enhance access to a college education and to complement a full range of student development activities. Soliciting student satisfaction with services provides validation for existing programs and allows NIC to improve or add services as necessary. One facet of promoting student achievement of educational goals is to provide courses, which equip students with the skills needed to perform college level coursework. Tracking placement scores for English, reading, and mathematics courses provides a means to prepare for tracking college-readiness and ensuring students are prepared to move to the next level, thereby ensuring students can reach their educational goals.

## Core Theme III – Community Engagement

Collaborative partnerships with businesses, organizations, community members, and educational institutions to identify and address changing educational needs.

Healthy community interactions, both internal and external, are vital to NIC’s continued success. As a community college, part of NIC’s mission is to meet the needs of the communities it serves. This requires institutional involvement with the community through education, scholarship, outreach, and partnerships. The Community Engagement Core Theme focuses on providing community and workforce needs. Table 1.5 describes the measures and expectations for Objective 3.1.

**TABLE 1.5**

**Objective 3.1:** Provide opportunities that meet community and workforce needs.

Measures	Expectation
Percentage of NIC Dual Credit Students that matriculate at other institutions within three years after enrolling as a new NIC Dual Credit Student	Maintain 25% average or above
Dual Credit annual credit hours taught via distance delivery and percentage annual increase	Increase by 5% annually
Percentage of degrees or certificates awarded in NIC Programs identified as Idaho Department Hot Jobs (2014-2024)	Expectation will be defined after 3 years of data is collected
Percentage of student evaluations of community education courses reflect a satisfaction rating of above average	85% of total number score a satisfaction rating of above average
Unduplicated annual headcount of non-credit students as a percentage of NIC's total service area population	3.0%
Percentage of students who answer often or very often when asked whether they participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course at NIC (CCSSE) (CCSSE administered every other year)	Expectation will be defined after 3 years of data is collected
Survey of membership of all CTE advisory committee members indicates NIC provides relevant programming to meet regional educational needs	TBD

**Rationale:** NIC regularly reviews degree requirements to align its curriculum with the curriculum of the four-year institutions in the state of Idaho. NIC monitors rates of transfer trends and progress over time to show that students are successfully transferring to other institutions of higher learning.

Dual credit enrollment rates help NIC determine whether it is providing sufficient levels of access, particularly to segments of the population that have historically been underserved by higher education. The percentage of degrees awarded that are considered “Top 50” by the state of Idaho substantiates that the skills and abilities of NIC’s graduating classes match the labor needs of business and industry. Student feedback regarding satisfaction with community education is collected and used in decisions related to curriculum, instructor selection and retention, scheduling, and marketing. Non-credit enrollment rates help NIC determine whether it is providing sufficient community access, particularly to segments of the population that have historically been underserved by higher education. NIC supports community-based projects with the goal of exposing students to the importance of contributing to society, increasing awareness of the cultural differences and social issues in their communities, and learning why it is important to help others.

**Core Theme IV – Stewardship**

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Effectively use college resources to ensure sustainability

With the uncertainty of state funding and tuition revenue resonating in almost every community college across the United States, NIC is committed to providing the resources, including financial, capital, and technological, that are vital to fulfilling its mission. This requires committing to financial stability in operations, exploring external funding sources, and maintaining profitability in auxiliary enterprises. The college is committed to a modified zero-based approach to budgeting that is linked to the mission and core themes of the college. Table 1.6 describes the measures and expectations for Objective 4.1.

**TABLE 1.6**  
**Objective 4.1:** Effectively use college resources to ensure sustainability.

Measures	Expectation
Dollars secured through the Development Department via private donations and grants	\$2 million annually
Tuition and Fees and IPEDS rank for full-time, first-time, in-district students (full academic year) based on IPEDS definitions	Rank of 60% against IPEDS comparator institutions
Tuition revenue as percentage of total revenue	Total tuition revenue not to exceed 37.5% of revenue
Composite Financial Indicator (CFI) Score	Maintain at least 4.5 Composite Score
Auxiliary services generate sufficient revenue to cover direct costs of operations	Annual direct costs maintained
Energy consumption per gross square foot as determined by gas/electric costs	Less than 1.0 (adjusted for inflation)

Table 1.6 – Continued ...

Year-to-year deferred maintenance	Investment of at least \$225,000 per year
Collegewide equipment replacement schedule for personal computers ERS A (Faculty & Staff Offices)Schedule – 42 months ERS B (Student Computer Labs)Schedule – 48 months	Maintain 94% or above

**Rationale:** The NIC Grants Office sets annual fundraising goals. Although achievement of these goals can be difficult to predict, this measure supports the NIC Grants Office fundraising efforts which are vital to the success of NIC’s programs, services, and students. The majority of students at NIC are from low-income families. Research shows that the increasing cost of college in conjunction with a high level of poverty is a significant barrier to education, thus, NIC closely monitors its tuition rates. This measure directly supports the [SBOE Complete College Idaho Plan](#). Tuition revenue is monitored to ensure NIC maintains a diverse revenue stream to maintain operations. NIC utilizes the Composite Financial Indicator (CFI) to gauge its financial viability. The CFI is a composite of four ratios derived from an institution's audited financial statements. The efficiency of auxiliary services is monitored to ensure services such as the bookstore, campus housing, food services, and fitness center. The college’s intent is to provide profitable overall combined services with the goal of keeping tuition affordable, maintaining viability and efficiency in auxiliary operations, and to increase the student experience at NIC. The college is committed to keeping energy consumption at a minimum while maintaining the required elements of operations to fulfill the college’s mission. This includes energy savings education and awareness programs with faculty, staff, and students. Deferred maintenance and the computer purchasing schedule are monitored to maintain the quality of facilities and equipment by ensuring a certain dollar amount in the budget is held for maintenance, repair, and purchasing.

**Core Theme V – Diversity**

Create an inclusive environment that fosters awareness of diversity

With respect to the history and heritage of the region, the college is committed to the core theme of diversity. The importance of creating an environment that is inclusive to all and fosters awareness of diversity is of the utmost importance to the college community. Table 1.7 describes the measures and expectations for Objective 5.1.



**TABLE 1.7**

**Objective 5.1:** Create an inclusive environment that fosters awareness of diversity.

Measures	Expectation
<p>Percentage of students enrolled annually from diverse populations - diverse student population based on race/ethnicity (IPEDS)</p>	<p>Maintain a diverse or more diverse population than that of the population within NIC's service region</p> <p>Service Region comparison: 90% White - 8.2% Other - 1.8% Unknown <i>US Census Bureau Quick Facts / As of July 1, 2018</i></p>
<p>Percentage of students surveyed who perceive that NIC encourages contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds (CCSSE)</p> <p>(CCSSE administered every other year)</p>	<p>Increase by 2% annually until the national average is met or exceeded</p> <p>Spring 14 = 52.7% Spring 15 = 53.5% Spring 17 = 55.1%</p>
<p>First-time, full-time degree-seeking diverse students (based on race/ethnicity) will complete their degrees/certificates within 150% of stated time at a similar rate to that of total population of first-time, full-time degree-seeking students</p>	<p>Increase diverse cohort completion rate to match that of cohort total completion rate</p>
<p>Number of degree seeking students who meet the proficiency outcomes or identified GEM 5 and GEM 6 diversity competencies</p>	<p>Proficiency outcomes will be defined by spring 2020</p>

**Rationale:** The college is committed to diversity and inclusion. Diversity expands worldliness regarding exposure to people beyond a single social set while enhancing social development and self-awareness, and preparing students for future career success. By monitoring the diversity of its population, surveying student perceptions, and measuring proficiency outcomes in the curriculum, the college can promote programs and services to introduce greater diversity and provide increased learning experiences to prepare students. As the U.S. becomes more diverse, it is crucial that institutions of higher education reflect this diversity.





## DIVERSITY

A learning environment that celebrates the uniqueness of all individuals and encourages cultural competency

NIC's Cardinal Reads is part of the college's diversity program, with book selections designed to encourage diversity awareness on campus. The diversity theme for 2018 to 2020 is cultural identity. The common read is one of the ways the college strives to encourage cultural awareness.

"The NIC student population and larger community of North Idaho benefit from understanding a variety of cultural perspectives of underrepresented populations," says the college's Diversity Council's Project Statement.

Common reads also encourage critical thinking and courteous, thoughtful discourse, even when opposing opinions emerge. The common read helps create some of those human connections that can foster a sense of community and a feeling of belonging.

The shared experience of NIC's common read is bolstered by events tied to the diversity theme: films, lectures, roundtables, and more.

College divisions collaborate each year to ensure multiple sections of Integrative Inquiry, an NIC GEM required course, are focused on the common read.



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## **Chapter Two:** Resources and Capacity



## Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirements 4 through 21

### Eligibility Requirement 4.

**Operational Focus and Independence** - *The institution's programs and services are predominantly concerned with higher education. The institution has sufficient organizational and operational independence to be held accountable and responsible for meeting the Commission's standards and eligibility requirements.*

North Idaho College is one of four comprehensive community colleges in the state of Idaho. NIC's programs and services are predominantly concerned with higher education and the college operates in accordance with policies established by the North Idaho College Board of Trustees (the board) and by the Idaho State Board of Education (SBOE). The board is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity. *See response to Standard 2.A.2.*

### Eligibility Requirement 5.

**Non-discrimination** - *The institution is governed and administered with respect for the individual in a nondiscriminatory manner while responding to the educational needs and legitimate claims of the constituencies it serves as determined by its charter, its mission, and its core themes.*

NIC is governed and administered with respect for individual rights in a fair and nondiscriminatory manner as reflected in its mission, vision, and values. (See [NIC Mission, Vision, and Values](#)) NIC reviews policy and procedure to remain current to relevant federal and state non-discrimination laws. The college has also instituted equitable procedures that respond fairly, respectfully, efficiently, and in a timely manner to complaints, issues, or grievances. *See response to Standards 2.A.15, 2.A.22, 2.A.27, and 2.A.28.*

### Eligibility Requirement 6.

**Institutional Integrity** - *The institution establishes and adheres to ethical standards in all of its operations and relationships.*

NIC adheres to ethical standards in all of its operations and relationships, ensuring institutional integrity. *See response to Standard 2.A.22.*

### Eligibility Requirement 7.

**Governing Board** - *The institution has a functioning governing board responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution and for each unit within a multiple-unit institution to ensure that the institution's mission and core themes are being achieved. The governing board has at least five voting members, a majority of whom have no contractual or employment relationship or personal financial interest with the institution.*

The board derives its authority from Chapter 21, [Sections 33-2101 through 33-2144](#) of Idaho Code. Board members, elected by the public for staggered four-year terms, have no contractual, employment, or personal financial obligations to the college. The general obligations and responsibilities of the board are outlined in Responsibilities [Policy 2.01.02](#), and include the following:

- To determine the broad general policies which govern the operation of the college district.
- To select and appoint the president of the college who is responsible for the general administration and implementation of board policies in the ongoing operations of the college.
- To approve annual budgets.

The policy also states the board will consider and act on the recommendations of the president in all matters of policy pertaining to the governance and welfare of the college and the welfare of students. Agendas and minutes from all board meetings are available on the board of trustees [webpage](#). The board meetings are also recorded and available on NIC's [YouTube channel](#). *See response to Standards 2.A.4 through 2.A.8.*

### **Eligibility Requirement 8.**

**Chief Executive Officer** - *The institution employs a chief executive officer who is appointed by the governing board and whose full-time responsibility is to the institution. Neither the chief executive officer nor an executive officer of the institution chairs the institution's governing board.*

NIC employs a president to act as the chief executive officer. (See [Curriculum Vitae of President/CEO](#)). The president is appointed and delegated to by the board by its authority and responsibility to administer the college in accordance with applicable laws, policies, rules, and regulations. The president is not a member of the board. *See response to Standard 2.A.7.*

### **Eligibility Requirement 9.**

**Administration** - *In addition to a chief executive officer, the institution employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators who provide effective leadership and management for the institution's major support and operational functions and work collaboratively across institutional functions and units to foster fulfillment of the institution's mission and achievement of its core themes.*

NIC employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators who provide leadership to support its operational functions (See [NIC Organizational Chart](#) and [Curriculum Vitae of Senior Administrators](#)). NIC Administrators work collaboratively to foster fulfillment of the institution's mission and achievement of its core themes. *See response to Standards 2.A.9 through 2.A.11.*

### **Eligibility Requirement 10.**

**Faculty** - *Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution employs and regularly evaluates the performance of appropriately qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs wherever offered and however delivered.*

NIC employs a sufficient number of full-time and part-time faculty with relevant and appropriate credentials and experience to teach in all programs offered by the college, whether credit or non-

credit. Qualification for employment as a full-time faculty member in a general education subject matter area typically requires a master's degree in the discipline for which the faculty opening exists. Full-time faculty in career and technical education programs must meet the requirements outlined in the current Idaho Credential Standards for Postsecondary Career and Technical Faculty and Administrators. All part-time faculty are required to have the minimally accepted level of credentials demanded in their discipline areas. The hiring of faculty at NIC is guided by Faculty Employment [Policy 3.02.08](#). College service for full-time faculty is a contractual requirement and includes participation in college governance and committees that have a principle role in the development of policies and the adoption of curriculum. All faculty are evaluated regularly through a process that includes review of teaching effectiveness, fulfillment of contractual obligations, and for full-time faculty, participation in professional development.



Tenure track faculty are evaluated using a paper portfolio process guided by Tenure Candidate Portfolio Notebook [Guidelines](#). The evaluation of candidates is a holistic process, whereby members of the Tenure Committee examine the candidate's complete portfolio as it relates to the five aforementioned criteria. Tenured faculty are evaluated every three years. The tenure process is explained in detail in 2.B.6. The evaluation of faculty is guided by Faculty Evaluation [Policy 3.02.21](#) and [Procedure 3.02.21](#). See response to Standards 2.B.4 and 2.B.6.

### **Eligibility Requirement 11.**

**Educational Programs** - *The institution provides one or more educational programs which include appropriate content and rigor consistent with its mission and core themes. The educational program(s) culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes, and lead to*

*collegiate-level degree(s) with degree designation consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.*

NIC provides educational programs, which include appropriate content and rigor consistent with its mission and core themes. All of NIC's educational programs contain clearly identified student learning outcomes, and lead to collegiate-level degrees consistent with the first two years of an undergraduate program in the state of Idaho, or employment. *See response to Standards 2.C.1. and 2.C.2.*

### **Eligibility Requirement 12.**

**General Education and Related Instruction** - *The institution's baccalaureate degree programs and/or academic or transfer associate degree programs require a substantial and coherent component of general education as a prerequisite to or an essential element of the programs offered. All other associate degree programs (e.g., applied, specialized, or technical) and programs of study of either 30 semester or 45 quarter credits or more for which certificates are granted contain a recognizable core of related instruction or general education with identified outcomes in the areas of communication, computation, and human relations that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes. Bachelor and graduate degree programs also require a planned program of major specialization or concentration.*

In 2013, Idaho initiated a statewide General Education Reform. General Education Matriculation (GEM) Reform involved disciplinary groups of faculty from all Idaho public higher education institutions who met and then wrote competencies for six agreed-upon areas of general education. The faculty disciplinary teams also developed shared rubrics for course and program assessment of GEM competencies. In 2014 and 2015, NIC chose to perform a comprehensive review of all courses in the NIC general education curriculum. All courses were reviewed using a common proposal and common rubrics. A GEM Council was created to review the proposals and ensure alignment to the new GEM competencies. Once approved, the proposals were then submitted to and approved by NIC's Curriculum Council. Although the process was rigorous, NIC faculty accepted the challenge willingly. The result is a statewide framework for general education that allows for smooth matriculation within Idaho's higher education institutions ([See SBOE Policy III.N](#)). The GEM Competencies are Written Communication, Oral Communication, Mathematical Ways of Knowing, Scientific Ways of Knowing, Humanistic and Artistic Ways of Knowing, and Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing. In addition, the reform provided for institutionally designated general education areas, which NIC defined as competencies for Wellness and Integrative Inquiry. Collectively, the GEM and institutional competencies are the basis for assessing NIC's general education program. See [NIC GEM Assessment Plan](#), and examples of GEM proposals ([ENG 102](#), [ENG 278](#), & [SOC 101](#)).

NIC's transfer associate degree programs are at least 60 semester credits and all have a minimum of 36 credits that meet statewide general education standards in designated competency areas as established in SBOE Policy III.N. The substantial and coherent general education core is universally transferrable to public two- and four-year higher education institutions in Idaho. Completion of general education is recognized and awarded as a certificate reflecting a set of institutionally approved learning outcomes.

As stated in SBOE Policy III.N., NIC requires a minimum of 15 credits of general education for all career technical associate degree programs in competency areas, including mathematics, oral communication, written communication, and social science, that support program goals and learning outcomes. *See response to Standards 2.C.9. and 2.C.10.*



### Eligibility Requirement 13.

**Library and Information Resources** - *Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution maintains and/or provides access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth, and breadth to support the institution's programs and services wherever offered and however delivered.*



NIC maintains access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth, and breadth to support the institution's programs and services. Faculty are consulted in the selection of additions to the collection. *See response to Standards 2.E.1 through 2.E.4.*

### Eligibility Requirement 14.

**Physical and Technological Infrastructure** - *The institution provides the physical and technological infrastructure necessary to achieve its mission and core themes.*

NIC provides the physical and technological infrastructure necessary to achieve its mission and core themes. The college plans for both [information technology](#) and [facilities](#) as part of the integrated strategic planning process, and has placed a high priority on the investment and sustainment of

technology to support teaching and student learning, including extra- and co-curricular activities, in fulfilling mission and core themes.

The college's main campus is approximately 545,000 gross square feet, consists of 24 buildings as is located on 77 acres. The average age of all facilities is 39 years, including the recent facilities expansion projects, which includes the Student Wellness and Recreation Center, Workforce Training and Community Education Center, Parker Technical Education Center, and the Bob and Leona DeArmond College and University Center. As part of the Facility Master Plan, the college conducted a building-by-building review of existing facilities to determine the state of each facility, identify issues and develop a more thorough calculation of deferred maintenance needs (and future capital needs). The systems of each facility have been documented, evaluated and given a life cycle evaluation and Facility Condition Index.

The college manages replacement lists with [information technology](#), [custodial equipment](#), and [landscape equipment](#) to track the useful life of current equipment and to provide guidance during the budget planning process. The college also tracks both deferred maintenance and the [performance measurement for the replacement of personal computers](#) as a component of the Core Theme of Stewardship. See response to Standards 2.G.1 through 2.G.8.

### **Eligibility Requirement 15.**

**Academic Freedom** - *The institution maintains an atmosphere in which intellectual freedom and independence exist. Faculty and students are free to examine and test all knowledge appropriate to their discipline or area of major study as judged by the academic/educational community in general.*

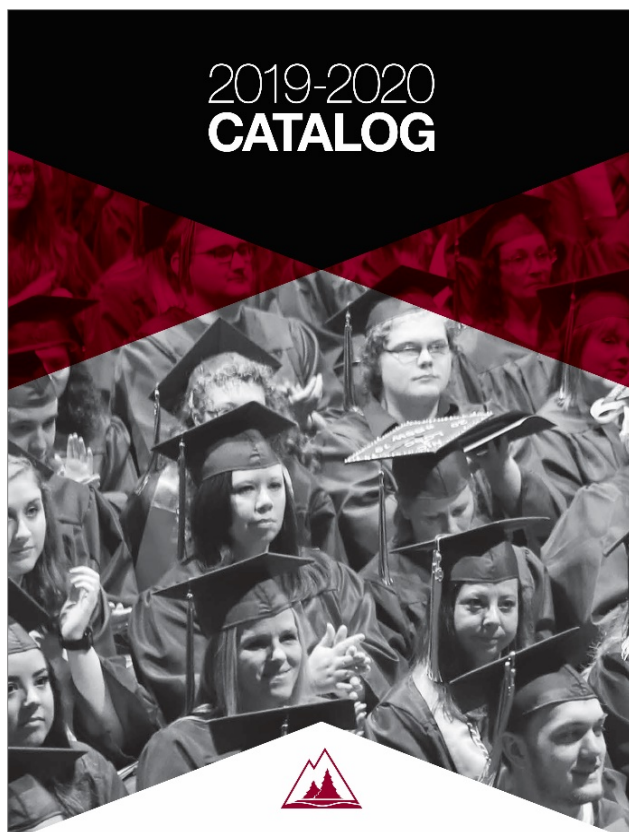
In keeping with its mission, core themes, and values, NIC demonstrates its commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge through specific policies and activities. See response to Standards 2.A.28 and 2.A.29.

**Eligibility Requirement 16. Admissions** - *The institution publishes its student admission policy which specifies the characteristics and qualifications appropriate for its programs, and it adheres to that policy in its admissions procedures and practices.*

NIC adheres to an open-door admission policy, which reflects its commitment to access to higher education for all individuals who can benefit from college coursework. The college catalog (pp. [18-19](#)) contains information relating to Admission [Policy 5.01](#). See response to Standard 2.D.3.

### **Eligibility Requirement 17.**

**Public Information** - *The institution publishes in a catalog and/or on a website current and accurate information regarding: its mission and core themes; admission requirements and procedures; grading policy; information on academic programs and courses; names, titles and academic credentials of administrators and faculty; rules and regulations for student conduct; rights and responsibilities of students; tuition, fees, and other program costs; refund policies and procedures; opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and the academic calendar.*



NIC represents itself accurately and consistently to its constituencies, the public and prospective students, through its [catalog](#), publications, official statements, and the college website. The college recently implemented a new [online catalog](#).

NIC's catalog and its website contain current and accurate information detailing its mission and core themes; admission requirements and procedures; grading policy; information on academic programs and courses; names, titles and academic credentials of administrators and faculty; rules and regulations for student conduct; rights and responsibilities of students; tuition, fees, and other program costs; refund policies and procedures; opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and the academic calendar. *See response to Standard 2.D.5.*

### **Eligibility Requirement 18.**

**Financial Resources** - *The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and, as appropriate, reserves to support its programs and services. Financial planning reflects available funds, realistic*

*development of financial resources, and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term solvency and long-term financial sustainability.*

The institution demonstrates financial stability and participates in responsible financial planning. *See response to Standards 2F.1 through 2.F3.*

### **Eligibility Requirement 19.**

**Financial Accountability** - *For each year of operation, the institution undergoes an annual external financial audit by professionally qualified personnel in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. The audit is to be completed no later than nine months after the end of the fiscal year. Results from the audit, including findings and management letter recommendations, are considered annually in an appropriate and comprehensive manner by the administration and the governing board.*

NIC participates in regular and appropriate financial audits and addresses audit results in an appropriate manner. The auditing firm conducting the external audit reports on the findings at the November Board of Trustees meeting. See board minutes, [November 2019, p. 4](#), [2019 Certified Financial Statements](#), [Management Letter](#), and *response to 2.F.7.*

### **Eligibility Requirement 20.**

**Disclosure** - *The institution accurately discloses to the Commission all information the Commission may require to carry out its evaluation and accreditation functions.*

NIC accurately discloses all information the Commission may require to carry out its evaluation and accreditation functions as reflected in its previous and current self-studies. See NIC's accreditation [webpage](#).

### Eligibility Requirement 21.

**Relationship with the Commission** - *The institution accepts the standards and related policies of the Commission and agrees to comply with these standards and policies as currently stated or as modified in accordance with Commission policy. Further, the institution agrees that the Commission may, at its discretion, make known the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding the institution's status with the Commission to any agency or members of the public requesting such information.*

NIC meets the standards set by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities concerning the nature and effectiveness of its mission and educational programs. *See response to Standard 2.A.3.*

## Standards 2.A.1 – 2.A.3: Governance and Policies

### Standard 2.A.1 – System of Governance.

*The institution demonstrates an effective and widely understood system of governance with clearly defined authority, roles, and responsibilities. Its decision-making structures and processes make provision for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students on matters in which they have a direct and reasonable interest.*

The participatory governance model at NIC is facilitated by the College Senate, which comprises members of [Faculty](#) and [Staff](#) Assemblies, and the student government organization, all of whom are



ANSIC (Associated Students of North Idaho) officers, fall 2019. From left: Nicolas Espinoza, Kaya Sedlmayer-Nardi, Ken Gedde, Paul McLeod, Hayden Blanks, Eryn Pierce, Abbey Rode, Brynna Sumey, and Jestine Lackner.

elected by their respective constituencies. The assemblies and the College Senate are the vehicles through which the constituent organizations of the college are able to participate in the decision-making process by making recommendations through the president to the board. See Governance-Initiation of Policies [Policy 2.01.04](#), and [Procedure 2.01.04](#)

A survey generated by Staff Assembly in 2018, included questions related to employee perceptions of the college's participatory governance model. Survey results show that 66 percent of faculty and 51 percent of staff understand the purpose of NIC's participatory governance model "moderately well" to "very well." See [Survey Report, pp. 8-9](#).

The college's [committee structure](#) provides for a collegewide focus on strategic issues and key processes vital to the operations of the college and its future direction. Through committees, constituent groups exchange information, deliberate, reach consensus, and make recommendations to the administration and through the president to the board. Faculty, students, staff, and administrators contribute ideas and opinions from a variety of perspectives to build consensus for positive change within the institution. See [Faculty Assembly Constitution](#) and [Staff Assembly Constitution](#).

Faculty and staff both take their governance responsibilities seriously. Both assemblies have their agendas and minutes posted so they are available to their respective constituent groups. See [Faculty Assembly Box](#) site and [Staff Assembly SharePoint](#) site. All faculty and staff under contract or other employment agreement are eligible to sit in their respective assemblies. Both assemblies have processes for the annual selection of officers. See [Faculty Assembly Bylaws, Article III: Officers](#), and [Staff Assembly Constitution, Article III-Officers and Responsibilities](#).

Representatives from the Associated Students of North Idaho College, Faculty Assembly, and Staff Assembly, and the College Senate all have a seat at the table during the regular board meetings and provide updates to the trustees.

The President's Advisory Council (see [President's Advisory Council Charter](#)) was established in 2018 to provide additional inclusion into the decision-making process and to improve communication among the college's employee groups. The committee was formerly known as Administrative Council (AC). A member of the President's Cabinet writes a summary of the meeting included in the college's internal communication known as NICNow. (see [November 22, 2019 example](#)) and also includes a link to the minutes in the [President's Advisory Council and President's Cabinet SharePoint site](#). Similarly, a member of the President's Cabinet writes a summary of the President's Cabinet meetings in NICNow. See [November 4, 2019 example](#). *President's Cabinet is described in 2.A.9.*

### **Standard 2.A.2 – Defined System of Governance.**

*In a multi-unit governance system, the division of authority and responsibility between the system and the institution is clearly delineated. System policies, regulations, and procedures concerning the institution are clearly defined and equitably administered.*

NIC is not part of a multi-unit governance system. There are four community colleges in Idaho (NIC, the College of Southern Idaho, the College of Western Idaho, and the College of Eastern Idaho) that operate in accordance with policies established by their respective boards of trustees, except for state appropriation requests, curriculum, and other matters governed by the SBOE [Policy III.A](#). While the board governs the college and its academic programs, the Idaho State Division of Career and Technical Education (ICTE) provides leadership and coordination for NIC's career and technical

education programs. The ICTE derives its authority from the SBOE as outlined in Chapter 22, [Sections 33-2202](#) of Idaho Code. ICTE is responsible for the secondary, postsecondary, and adult career and technical programs delivered throughout Idaho's public-school districts and six technical colleges. NIC is included as one of the six career and technical schools in Idaho. See [SBOE Governing Policy IV.E, Division of CTE](#).

### **Standard 2.A.3 – Compliance with Accreditation.**

*The institution monitors its compliance with the Commission's Standards for Accreditation, including the impact of collective bargaining agreements, legislative actions, and external mandates.*

NIC monitors its compliance with the Commission's Standards for Accreditation through the work of an Executive Accreditation Committee, composed of the president, the three vice presidents, associate vice president for planning and effectiveness, the chief communications and government relations officer, the dean of general studies, the health professions division chair, and the college's accreditation liaison officer. The group establishes and monitors institutional achievement of objectives outlined under its five core themes of Student Success, Educational Excellence, Community Engagement, Stewardship and Diversity.

The Executive Accreditation Committee provides leadership and oversight of the reporting requirements and major functions that are related to the Commission. The committee oversees the completion of the major reports including ad-hoc, mid-cycle, and the drafting of the current self-study, reviewing potential substantive change requests, planning professional development in accreditation, and the annual core theme report.

The college does not have collective bargaining agreements, but is impacted by actions of the Idaho Legislature related to state higher education funding allocations. Although the college is locally governed, it does monitor the policies and regulations set forth by the SBOE for applicability to the institution. Through institutional management processes, the college ensures compliance with federal and state regulations related to academic records, institutional fiscal health, Title IX, and safety and security.

## **Standards 2.A.4-2.A.8: Governing Board**

### **Standard 2.A.4 – Board Responsibilities.**

*The institution has a functioning governing board\* consisting of at least five voting members, a majority of whom have no contractual, employment, or financial interest in the institution. If the institution is governed by a hierarchical structure of multiple boards, the roles, responsibilities, and authority of each board, as they relate to the institution, are clearly defined, widely communicated, and broadly understood.*

The board derives its authority from Chapter 21, [Sections 33-2101 through 33-2144](#) of Idaho Code. [Section 33-2106](#) of Idaho Code specifically details the election process of the board of trustees. The board is made up of five volunteer members who are elected for staggered, four-year terms. Board members serve without remuneration and have no contractual, employment, or personal financial

interest in the institution. Responsibilities and Duties [Policy 2.01.02](#), defines the general obligations and responsibilities of the board. The policy states the board will determine the broad general policies that will govern the operation of the college district, approve annual budgets, and consider and act on the recommendations of the president in all matters of policy pertaining to the governance and welfare of the college and the welfare of students. Agendas and minutes from all board meetings are available on the board of trustees [webpage](#).

Through engagement in regular and special board meetings, workshops and retreats, the board remains informed of strategic institutional policy matters such as the college's fiscal status, strategic planning and strategic enrollment management (SEM). For example, the board participated in a study session on integrated planning (see board minutes, [June 2018, p. 1](#)), held a workshop (see board minutes, [March 2017, p. 1](#)) to review fiscal matters impacting NIC, participated in a SWOT analysis (see board minutes, [August 2017, p. 1](#)) with the administration as part of the planning process and received an update on SEM. (See board minutes, [January 2019, p. 2](#).) *Other examples are included throughout the self-study, including 2.F.3., and 2.G.4.*

### **Standard 2.A.5 – Board Authority.**

*The board acts only as a committee of the whole; no member or subcommittee of the board acts on behalf of the board except by formal delegation of authority by the governing board as a whole.*

Board members have authority only when acting as a board legally in session. In accordance with Board Authority, Appointment and Functions [Policy 2.01.01](#), the board is not bound, in any way, by any statement or action on the part of any individual board member or employee, except when such statement or action is in pursuance of specific instructions by the board. Section A of the Board Policy Manual is considered the board's by-laws and includes the following policies: Authority, Appointment, and Functions [Policy 2.01.01](#), Responsibilities [Policy 2.01.02](#), and Meetings [Policy 2.01.03](#), and Communication with Board of Trustees [Policy 2.01.05](#).

### **Standard 2.A.6 – Establishment of Policies.**

*The board establishes, reviews regularly, revises as necessary, and exercises broad oversight of institutional policies, including those regarding its own organization and operation.*

The board's authority to establish, review, and revise institutional policies is based in Governance - Creation, Revision, or Elimination of College [Policy 2.01.04](#) and [Procedure 2.01.04](#). Other board oversight policies include Authority, Appointment, & Functions [Policy 2.01.01](#), and Board Performance Review [Policy 2.01.08](#), which ensure that the board reviews its own function and operation.

The board has approved revisions for 41 policies, approved seven new policies and approved the elimination of three policies since the last Year Seven Comprehensive Evaluation in 2013 . The board considers recommendations based on changes to technology, state and federal law, recommendations from the U.S. Department of Education, the Internal Review Service, and the College Attorney. During the reflection period of the drafting of this self-study, the college realized the importance of a structured and regular review of board policy with the identification of policies that have not been updated in quite some time.

In fall of 2018, the College Senate activated an ad hoc committee to revise policy and structure for conducting comprehensive and ongoing reviews of the college's policies and procedures. This

structure encompasses the entire process to establish, review, and recommend revision of policies for board consideration and approval, and is reflected in 2.01.04.

The schedule for regular review is in Table 2.1 below and facilitated by a standing committee, parented by the College Senate, consisting of a member of President’s Cabinet, student government (ASNIC), staff, faculty, and the senior executive assistant to the President (administrative support).

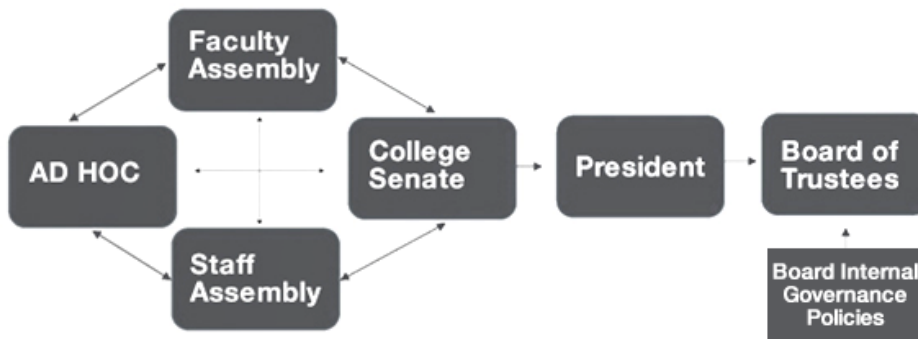
**TABLE 2.1**  
Board Policy Review Cycle

Year	Policies
One	Section 2
Two	Section 3: 3.01 – 3.02.17
Three	Section 3: 3.02.19 – 3.02.34
Four	Section 3C and 3D
Five	Section 3E – 3J
Six	Section 4-5
Seven	Section 6-7

College stakeholders have wide opportunity for shaping college policy and procedures. Figure 2.1 shows the general approval process of drafting and revising board policy. After an initial review by an ad-hoc or standing committee, drafts of new policy proposals or changes to existing board policies are taken to faculty and staff assemblies, as appropriate, for their input before consideration by the College Senate. The president or any recognized college group may form an ad hoc committee to research and draft new policy or changes to existing policy. Depending on their workload, the administration may weigh in on any policy draft at any time during the approval process. The president has final review before consideration by the board.

**FIGURE 2.1:**

### Board Policy Process Flow





**Standard 2.A.7 – Appointment of President.**

*The board selects and evaluates regularly a chief executive officer who is accountable for the operation of the institution. It delegates authority and responsibility to the CEO to implement and administer board-approved policies related to the operation of the institution.*

The president is appointed by the board and serves at its pleasure. The board delegates to the president its authority and responsibility to administer the college in accordance with the applicable laws and the policies, rules and regulations approved and/or sanctioned by the board. The president is given the authority and discretion to make day-to-day decisions in implementing and administering the policies of the board.

The board recognizes the importance of having exceptional executive leadership and that such leadership is dependent upon constructive review of how that responsibility is exercised. The annual performance review of the president includes a written management review statement by the president and a written report on goals from the previous 12 months, as mutually agreed to by the president and the board. It may also include proposed goals for the subsequent 12 months. See Presidential Performance Review [Policy 2.02.02](#).

**Standard 2.A.8 – Evaluation of the Board.**

*The board regularly evaluates its performance to ensure its duties and responsibilities are fulfilled in an effective and efficient manner.*

In accordance with Performance Review [Policy 2.01.08](#), the board conducts annual self-evaluations. During a predesignated and facilitated closed session scheduled concurrently with the board's May meeting, the board analyzes the summative results of an evaluation of their roles and responsibilities as trustees on such topics as board-president relations, community relations, the institution's fiscal health, institutional performance, and trustee education. From this analysis, the board identifies and reaches consensus on achievement of the previous year's goals and determines further action, where needed. During this time, the board also identifies and agrees on internal priorities and goals for the coming year, ensures board members understand their responsibilities, and clarifies expectations among board members and the president.

**Standards 2.A.9 – 2.A.11: Leadership and Management****Standard 2.A.9 - Leadership.**

*The institution has an effective system of leadership, staffed by qualified administrators, with appropriate levels of responsibility and accountability, who are charged with planning, organizing, and managing the institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness.*

The President's Cabinet (PC) represents the executive leadership team responsible for the overall administration of the college. This leadership team comprises the president; three vice presidents leading the areas of instruction, student services, and finance and business affairs; an associate vice president for planning and effectiveness, a chief communications and government relations officer; a chief information

officer; a chief human resources officer, a development director, and the senior executive assistant. PC meets three times each month. As mentioned in 2.A.1, a member of the PC writes a summary of the meeting published in the college's internal communication known as NICNow (see [November 4, 2019 example](#)), and includes a link to the [President's Cabinet SharePoint site](#).

Every position on PC reports directly to the president and is responsible for leadership, strategic direction, and operational guidance of their respective area. PC provides guidance and support for long-range planning, including mission fulfillment, and the setting and evaluation of annual operational goals. See NIC [President's Cabinet](#) and [Main Organization Chart](#).

### **Standard 2.A.10 - Leadership.**

*The institution employs an appropriately qualified chief executive officer with full-time responsibility to the institution. The chief executive officer may serve as an ex officio member of the governing board, but may not serve as its chair.*

The board delegates authority for the college's operations to the college president in accordance with President's Authority and Responsibility [Policy 2.02.01](#). The board conducts an annual evaluation of the president's performance in accordance with Presidential Performance Review [Policy 2.02.02](#). The intent of this review is to strengthen the president's performance, to enable the president and the board to reset mutually agreed upon goals, and to inform annual decisions on compensation and other terms of employment. Responsibilities [Policy 2.01.02](#) requires the board elect officers (chair, vice-chair, and secretary/treasurer) from the membership of the board. See [Curriculum vitae of President/CEO](#), and [Biography of President/CEO](#).

### **Standard 2.A.11 – Administration and Management.**

*The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators who provide effective leadership and management for the institution's major support and operational functions and work collaboratively across institutional functions and units to foster fulfillment of the institution's mission and accomplishment of its core theme objectives.*

In addition to the President's Cabinet, as mentioned in 2.A.9, the president meets monthly with a President's Advisory Council which includes President's Cabinet members, instructional deans, the dean of enrollment management, controller, the past chair of College Senate, and one representative from both Staff and Faculty Assemblies, and the College Senate.

The president also meets monthly with a [Management Team](#) which includes deans, division chairs, directors, assistant directors, vice presidents and other college leadership. Deans, division chairs, directors, and coordinators exercise responsibility and significant autonomy for day-to-day operations that are crucial to the success of the college mission.

Both the President's Advisory Council and Management Team assist in sharing the college's strategic direction by communicating ideals and initiatives to the President's Cabinet. While the board, president, and college management hold responsibility for strategic decisions, cooperative relationships with college constituents are facilitated through committees and workgroups. See [Committee Structure and Membership](#). Examples of these committees include: Curriculum Council, Strategic Enrollment Management Committee, Executive Accreditation Committee, and the Strategic Planning Committee. The president and members of the President's Cabinet also meet regularly with officers of the College Senate,

Faculty Assembly, Associated Students of North Idaho College (ASNIC), and Staff Assembly. See [Curriculum Vitae of Senior Administrators](#), and NIC [Leadership Organizational Chart](#).

## 2.A.12-2.A.14 – Policies on Academics

### **Standard 2.A.12 – Teaching, Service, Scholarship, and Artistic Creation.**

*Academic policies, including those related to teaching, service, scholarship, research, and artistic creation, are clearly communicated to students and faculty and to administrators and staff with responsibilities related to these areas.*

Communication of academic policies is provided in a number of ways that are available to students, faculty, administration, and staff. The college [website](#) includes the NIC policy manual on faculty duties and responsibilities with respect to teaching, grading, advising, and curriculum review in the Teaching Focus [Policy 3.02.34](#). In addition, the policy manual includes an Academic Freedom [Policy 3.05](#) relative to instruction, scholarship, and research. Faculty are expected to behave professionally and ethically, as defined in Professional Ethics [Policy 3.05.01](#), and to promote the free pursuit of learning by students, their faculty peers, and the wider community. For example, a clear expression of these principles is the [Position Statement on the Human Figure in the Arts](#) developed by faculty, with input from students and the administration, after objections were raised and damage done to publicly exhibited student artwork. Intellectual property and related rights to creative endeavors is covered under Intellectual Property [Policy 2.03.03](#) and [Procedure 2.03.03](#).

Faculty, staff, and the administration have access to [the Faculty Handbook](#) that resides in the MyNIC Portal. All instructors are introduced to the Faculty Handbook and Policy Manual at the time of hire and through new faculty orientation. Guidance on, and adherence to, these policies is a regular topic in division meetings, and instructional leadership team meetings. Any approved revisions or additions to NIC policies through the board of trustees are publicized internally in NICNow. See electronic policy revision example in [NICNow, November 21, 2019](#).

The college [catalog](#), available on NIC's [website](#) and through multiple links from the internal college portal, provides information on academic policies, credits, grading, registration, satisfactory academic progress, and graduation. All catalog content, including college terms and acronyms, is regularly reviewed for accuracy and currency by a catalog workgroup composed of faculty, staff, and administration from various college departments. Student Services is very active in providing email, text, hard copy, and phone information to students on critical deadlines, processes, and requirements for their learning and progress. Standards and expectations of academic integrity are conveyed to students in the Student Code of Conduct [Policy 5.06](#), and by faculty on course syllabi (access to syllabi available at [Syllabi SharePoint](#) site). See example syllabus: [ENG101-105 Spring 2019](#).

### **Standard 2.A.13 – Library and Information Resources.**

*Policies regarding access to and use of library and information resources, regardless of format, location, and delivery method, are documented, published, and enforced.*

NIC's Molstead Library is located on the main campus. The library staff documents, publishes, and enforces [library use policies](#) and information resources regardless of format location and delivery method. Student conduct and behavior guidelines in relation to technology and behavior are established by the college and are documented within appropriate policy areas. Additional links and [research guides](#) are provided from the [library's site](#) to assist users in accessing and utilizing library and information resources.

The library's staff, procedures, and systems ensure consistent enforcement of all library policies for the development of and access to the physical and electronic collections, including password protected databases. Authentication is required when accessing materials off-campus with users entering their student credentials issued by the college's Information Technology (IT) Department. Circulation guidelines are enforced by staff and are integrated into the online integrated library system (ILS).

### **Standard 2.A.14 – Transfer.**

*The institution develops, publishes widely, and follows an effective and clearly stated transfer-of-credit policy that maintains the integrity of its programs while facilitating efficient mobility of students between institutions in completing their educational programs.*

NIC publishes Transfer of Credit [Policy 5.04.06.01](#). NIC honors the terms of a statewide articulation policy with all Idaho public institutions, and specific articulation agreements with other four-year colleges and universities. Under the SBOE [statewide articulation policy](#), students who complete the general education for an associate degree satisfy the lower division general education requirements for a bachelor's degree. Courses transferred to NIC are evaluated on a course-by-course basis for program requirements in adherence with college policy. A student or advisor can log in to the NIC student information system (Self-Service) and have immediate access to degree audit to run a "what if" scenario for any degree or certificate. The Registrar's Office evaluates course work for graduation requirements and applies any current articulation agreements for transfer of courses to a particular program.

Transfer evaluations for incoming credits are completed through the Admissions Office. Course equivalencies are maintained in the college's student information system, Ellucian-Colleague, ensuring consistent evaluations for all students. NIC publishes an [Advising Services](#) webpage and a [Transfer Center](#) webpage to support both incoming transfer students and those students who intend to transfer for further education. Students are regularly provided with transfer information and tools from staff advisors and instructional faculty members throughout their educational programs at NIC.

### **Standard 2.A.15 - Rights and Responsibilities.**

*Policies and procedures regarding students' rights and responsibilities, including academic honesty, appeals, grievances, and accommodations for persons with disabilities, are clearly stated, readily available, and administered in a fair and consistent manner.*

To ensure the college meets compliance standards and follows best practices regarding student rights and responsibilities, area administrators regularly attend trainings, certification courses, and webinars offered by their national and regional professional organizations. These include: Association of Title IX Administrators (ATIXA), Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP), National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), and the Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD). Extensive collaboration occurs with regional, state, and local agencies to insure seamless and comprehensive services. Examples of this collaboration include regular meetings with the Coeur d'Alene Police Department, local victim advocate organization, Idaho State

Board of Education, Panhandle Health District, Idaho Office of School Safety, local health care providers, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, and the School District 271 community threat assessment team.

Policies and procedures regarding students' rights and responsibilities, including academic honesty, appeals, grievances, and accommodations for persons with disabilities, are clearly stated, readily available, and published in the Policy Manual, the college catalog, the student handbook, all course syllabi, and on the college website. The college recently implemented a new policy and procedure for general student complaints, Student Complaints and Concerns [Policy 5.16](#) and [Procedure 5.16](#), and concerns not covered in other college policy. The college complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). ADA information is conveyed in person, in course syllabi, through in-class presentations, and through the [Disabilities Support Services](#) Department. The college adheres to federal, state, and institutional policies related to Title IX. The [Safe Campus Team](#) and the director of Title IX identify at-risk students and identify proper interventions and support. Policies and guidelines for students who wish to appeal matters concerning an instructor, change of grade, course substitutions, academic sanctions, or other instructional matters are communicated to students in the Academic Appeals/Instructional Petition, and Academic Probation, Suspension, and Disqualification sections of the college catalog (pp. [27-29](#)). Attendance and conduct expectations are published in the Student Rights and Responsibilities section of the college catalog (p. [30](#)). See Governance - Creation, Revision, or Elimination of College Policy and Procedure [Policy 2.01.04](#) and [Procedure 2.01.04](#), Student Complaints and Concerns [Policy 5.16](#) and [Procedure 5.16](#), Student Code of Conduct [Policy 5.06](#) and [Procedure 5.06](#), Academic Integrity [Policy 5.06.01](#) and [Procedure 5.06.01](#), Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct (Title IX) [Policy 3.03.06](#) and [Procedure 3.03.06](#), and Accommodations for Students and Employees with Disabilities [Policy 5.13](#) and [Procedure 5.13](#).

### **Standard 2.A.16 – Admissions and Continuation.**

*The institution adopts and adheres to admission and placement policies that guide the enrollment of students in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to assure a reasonable probability of student success at a level commensurate with the institution's expectations. Its policy regarding continuation in and termination from its educational programs, including its appeals process and readmission policy, are clearly defined, widely published, and administered in a fair and timely manner.*

The NIC Admissions Office provides fair, accurate, and timely services to potential and returning students. The Admissions Office provides information through applications, brochures, and financial aid materials. NIC's mission, Admissions [Policy 5.01](#), Academic Probation, Suspension, and Reinstatement [Policy 5.02](#) and [Procedure 5.02](#), tuition and fees, program and degree requirements, and other items pertinent to admissions are stated clearly in the college catalog, in program brochures, and on the college website. Selective and competitive entry program requirements are published on program-specific webpages. In handling and disseminating student data, the Admissions staff members follow the [guidelines](#) of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The college's policy regarding continuation in, and termination from, its educational programs, including its appeals process and readmission policy, is clearly defined and published in the policy manual, in the Appeal Process Information section on the [website](#), and in the Academic Appeals/Instructional Petition, and Academic Probation, Suspension, and Disqualification sections of the college catalog (pp. [27-29](#)).

Academic standards are also published in the policy manual under Academic Probation, Suspension & Reinstatement [Policy 5.02](#). In addition, the standards are available on the Registrar's Office [webpage](#). The Registrar's Office also makes available the [Academic Probation, Suspension, and Disqualification](#) policy. Student academic performance is reviewed at the conclusion of each semester. Students not meeting standards receive written notification of academic probation and are required to meet with their academic advisor. Students on probation who do earn at least a 2.0 semester GPA are placed on academic suspension. A suspended student who returns and then fails to earn at least a 2.0 semester GPA is disqualified. Reinstatement from suspension requires the student to sit out for a semester or appeal to the Admissions and Academic Standards Committee. This committee meets regularly throughout the year to consider appeals and strives to fairly and reasonably assess student readiness to return to their studies at NIC and to provide specific resources to support each student based on their particular situation and educational goals.

### **Standard 2.A.17 – Co-curricular Activities.**

*The institution maintains and publishes policies that clearly state its relationship to co-curricular activities and the roles and responsibilities of students and the institution for those activities, including student publications and other student media, if offered.*



Student Activity Fee Funds [Policy 5.12](#) and [Procedure 5.12](#), governs the assessment and use of funds “to foster, assist, or provide for the curricular, extracurricular, social, educational, cultural and/or recreational opportunities” of enrolled NIC students to “further [their] legitimate educational and financial interests.” Collection of student activity fees is authorized by Idaho Code, [Section 33-2110](#). The student board of the Associated Students of North Idaho College (ASNIC) has broad discretion to budget and allocate these funds that are managed by the director of Student Engagement, the Auxiliary Services accountant, and the vice president of Student Services.

Article III of the ASNIC Constitution outlines the responsibilities of an Events Board to promote the quality of students' educational experience through co-curricular activities and opportunities outside the classroom.

In addition, ASNIC also publishes a handbook for clubs that describes the Intra-Club Council that provides oversight, recognition, and policy guidance to student organizations. It provides links to policies and procedures on student conduct, Title IX, risk management, fundraising, advertising, and travel. The handbook and associated policy requirements are reviewed annually through the Office of the Vice President of Student Services. Information on student life, activities, and recreation are also published in the [Student Handbook](#).

Twice yearly, NIC publishes *The Sentinel*, a student produced and edited magazine. [The Sentinel](#) also has a website and a social media presence. A faculty member from the Communications-Journalism program serves as the advisor, provides guidance on adherence to *Sentinel* policies, which are found in its handbook (located in the [syllabus](#) for the course), and conformance to the Collegiate Media Association's Code of Professional Standards and Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists. There is no prior editorial review by the college of student-published material.

NIC strives for excellence with all co-curricular activities. Recent examples of success at NIC include a five-star rating of the Delta Kappa Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa with the chapter's college project taking first place at the both the national level (Distinguished College Project Award) and in the Greater Northwest Region, and *The Sentinel* [finishing third for the best Two-Year Feature Magazine](#) of the Year by the College Media Association. See [PTK Board Presentation](#), and Video: Celebrating Success: [Phi Theta Kappa](#). Board of Trustees, April 2019.

## Standards 2.A.18-2.A.20 – Policies on Human Resources

### Standard 2.A.18 – Human Resources.

*The institution maintains and publishes its human resources policies and procedures and regularly reviews them to ensure they are consistent, fair, and equitably applied to its employees and students.*

Human Resource (HR) policies and procedures are found under [Section III: Employees](#) on the website and are included in the [Standard Two wiki](#) on the accreditation SharePoint site. The [Faculty Handbook](#) also provides HR information to faculty.

The college engages in periodic HR policy review and has brought several revision recommendations to the board since 2014. Policy revisions relating to HR were initiated due to changes in legal responsibility, federal regulatory requirements, or the identification of internal need, at the request of college leadership, or a recommendation from the College Attorney. The board considered approximately 20 new or revised HR policies during this current accreditation cycle.

On June 26, 2019, the board approved a revision to Governance - Creation, Revision, or Elimination of College Policy and Procedure [Policy 2.01.04](#). Language was added to create a review cycle of the board policy manual. The regular review of all personnel policies will ensure that policies are revised

as necessary to ensure accuracy, timeliness, consistency, legality, and integrity for the fair treatment of all employees.

### **Standard 2.A.19 - Conditions of Employment.**

*Employees are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination.*

Employees are apprised of their conditions of employment through college policies in [Section 3.02](#) of the Policy Manual. These policies detail compensation, benefits, evaluation processes, grievance, and termination, among other conditions of employment.

Specific terms and conditions of employment may also be found in the employment agreements provided to all full-time faculty and professional staff. Annual employment agreements are typically distributed prior to the beginning of the contract term. Employees are required to return to HR, a signed copy acknowledging their understanding and acceptance of the stated terms and conditions of employment. Classified staff sign their initial agreement upon hire and receive a memo annually with their new rate of pay, if applicable.

All full-time employees participate in a new employee orientation process during which they are informed of employment-related policies, and provided information on benefits, payroll, and resources for their professional development. Employees also receive access to the MyNIC and HR portals that provide information and guidance on the processes related to college HR policies, including performance management, and recruiting. During the onboarding process, full-time employees meet with their supervisors and receive copies of their job descriptions outlining the duties of their positions and performance expectations.

### **Standard 2.A.20 - Confidentiality of Records.**

*The institution ensures the security and appropriate confidentiality of human resources records.*

HR practices are designed to ensure the consistent and secure handling of sensitive employee information. Internal procedures, practices, software, and physical safeguards provide appropriate confidentiality of employee records that are maintained by the HR Office in secure hard copy and protected electronic files. Personnel records are handled to ensure they are restricted except those records that are reviewable under the [Idaho Public Records law](#). All HR staff sign a [confidentiality agreement](#) acknowledging their responsibility in keeping employee information confidential.

Faculty Records [Policy 3.07](#) distinguishes central, confidential files from open files, and the rights of inspection, maintenance practice, and organization of these records. Confidentiality of personal information is also outlined in Privacy [Policy 3.11](#), and Privacy of Health Information [Policy 3.11.01](#), to comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Access to employee personnel files is strictly limited to supervisors within an employee's immediate organizational chain of command, and to HR staff. Access to personnel records by business office staff that is required for payroll and benefits processing is strictly controlled by the HR Department. Hard copies of documents are electronically scanned and maintained in an online system, SoftDocs Etrieve. Information Technology personnel have built the appropriate safeguards, firewalls, and restrictions to access to ensure proper and effective security of electronic data.



## Standards 2.A.21-26 – Policies on Institutional Integrity

### **Standard 2.A.21 – Accurate Representation.**

*The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently through its announcements, statements, and publications. It communicates its academic intentions, programs, and services to students and to the public and demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. It regularly reviews its publications to assure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.*

NIC represents itself clearly and consistently to the public and its constituents through a variety of media and publications, both electronic and printed. The Communications and Marketing Department works to ensure college publications are accurate, and positively promotes the college in line with institutional mission and values. These publications include the NIC website, catalog, financial aid brochures, and recruitment publications. For example, the college catalog outlines timely completion of all certificates and degrees, whether a student is enrolled full-time or part-time. (See [full-time pathway in AA in Anthropology](#), [part-time pathway for AA in Anthropology](#), [full-time pathway for AA in Criminal Justice](#), [full-time pathway for AS in Physics/Astronomy](#), and [part-time pathway for AS in Physics/Astronomy](#).) The college publishes an [operations guide](#) for communications and marketing, [logo and brand policy](#), internal and external [communications guidelines](#), and [procedures relating to website and design](#) to ensure accuracy and quality of college materials. These guidelines include [protocols for media inquiries](#) and response to emergent situations.

### **Standard 2.A.22 – Ethical Standards.**

*The institution advocates, subscribes to, and exemplifies high ethical standards in managing and operating the institution, including its dealings with the public, the Commission, and external organizations, and in the fair and equitable treatment of students, faculty, administrators, staff, and other constituencies. It ensures complaints and grievances are addressed in a fair and timely manner.*

In all of its interactions with students, faculty, staff, external agencies, Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), and the public, NIC seeks to cultivate an environment of institutional and individual integrity that nurtures trust and respect for all persons, and follows the highest ethical standards in its interactions, commitments, policies, and practices.

The college strives to respond quickly and thoroughly to inquiries and information requests from the media, legislators, and the general public by personnel within the President's Office and the Community and Government Relations Office.

For several accreditation cycles, NIC has dedicated a full-time employee to serve as the Accreditation Liaison Officer to assist with communications and inquiries from NWCCU.

NIC has instituted equitable procedures that respond fairly, respectfully, efficiently, and in a timely manner to complaints, issues or grievances. Supporting documents outlining internal and external complaints procedures include the Student Code of Conduct [Policy 5.06](#), [Procedure 5.06](#), [FERPA Compliance Statement](#), Grievances [Policy 3.02.23](#), [Procedure 3.02.23](#), and Professional Ethics [Policy 3.05.01](#) and Responsibilities [Policy 2.01.02](#).

NIC recently adopted Student Complaints and Concerns [Policy 5.16](#) and [Procedure 5.16](#) establishing a mechanism for college staff to address complaints from students that are not already established in board policy, such as Academic Integrity and the Student Code of Conduct.

The various college departments regularly review the integrity of programs. For example, in their most recent program review ([Ethics, Part 5, pp. 14-15](#)), Career Services was rated very high, demonstrating commitment to relevant ethical standards documentation relating to counseling, career counseling, and career development.

The college recently conducted several studies regarding the athletic program to be certain that it met all stakeholder concerns. A Title IX review ([Athletic Review Final Report](#)) found that no major inequities existed for student opportunity, financial support, or facility. The study resulted in slight modifications to Athletic Department personnel job descriptions to ensure that student experience was equitable.

There have been limited instances when a breach of institutional or academic integrity has been identified. In these instances, the NIC administration has responded to the reports in an expedient manner. Investigations have been conducted, employee and student concerns have been addressed in a confidential manner, and internal and external communications regarding incidents have been appropriately managed. For example, the Athletics program recently underwent an investigation by the Northwest Athletic Conference and breaches were identified. All breaches have been addressed with expediency, integrity, and transparency. See Results of NWAC Investigation and NIC's Appeal [webpage](#), and [NICNow](#) communication from the president regarding the athletic situation.

### **Standard 2.A.23 – Conflict of Interest.**

*The institution adheres to a clearly defined policy that prohibits conflict of interest on the part of members of the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. Even when supported by or affiliated with social, political, corporate, or religious organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose and operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy. If it requires its constituencies to conform to specific codes of conduct or seeks to instill specific beliefs or world views, it gives clear prior notice of such codes and/or policies in its publications.*

NIC consistently complies with institutional and state policies established to prevent misconduct, prohibit conflict of interest, promote autonomy and academic freedom, and ensure that education is the college's primary focus. NIC adheres to the following governance documents: Conflict of Interest [Policy 3.02.15](#) and [Procedure 3.02.15](#), Professional Consulting [Policy 3.02.12](#), State of Idaho Ethics in [Governance Manual](#), and Employment of Related Parties [Policy 3.02.05](#).

### **Standard 2.A.24 – Intellectual Property.**

*The institution maintains clearly defined policies with respect to ownership, copyright, control, compensation, and revenue derived from the creation and production of intellectual property.*

NIC supports the principles of intellectual freedom and resists all efforts to censor resources by supporting the American Library Association's (ALA) Library [Bill of Rights](#) and the [Freedom to Read](#) and Freedom to View statements, Intellectual Freedom Principles for Academic Libraries: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, and Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks: an Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights. The board approved a new Intellectual Property [Policy 2.03.03](#) during the December 2019 board meeting.

The NIC Molstead Library complies with the provisions of the U.S. Copyright Law (17 U.S.C. 107) and its amendments. It also supports the [Fair Use](#) section of the Copyright Law (17 U.S.C. 107) which permits and protects citizens' rights to reproduce and make use of copyrighted works for the purposes of teaching, scholarship, and research. The library provides guidance and advice on [copyright](#) as it pertains to instructional "fair use" [issues](#) and [course reserves](#). A research guide to [copyright, fair use, and creative commons licensing](#) for educators, developed by library staff, is available through the library's website. The library upholds and protects patrons' rights to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought, borrowed, and acquired, and complies with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ([FERPA](#)) when handling student information. In February 2020, the board adopted Copyright and Fair Use [Policy 2.03.04](#) and [Procedure 2.03.04](#) that establishes guidelines about the "Fair Use" of copyrighted material, use of multimedia and copyrighted works in the classroom, and information regarding the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

### **Standard 2.A.25 – Accreditation.**

*The institution accurately represents its current accreditation status and avoids speculation on future accreditation actions or status. It uses the terms "Accreditation" and "Candidacy" (and related terms) only when such status is conferred by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.*

NIC accurately represents its current accreditation status in the college catalog (p. [9](#)), and publishes its most recent self-studies and status on the college's accreditation [webpage](#). In addition to institutional accreditation, program-specific approvals or accreditations by professional organizations include the Automotive Technology Program, NIC Children's Center, Physical Therapist Assistant Program, Radiography Technology Program, Registered Nursing Program, Medical Assistant Program, Medical Laboratory Technology Program, Surgical Technology, and the Pharmacy Technology Program.

### **Standard 2.A.26 – Contractual Agreements.**

*If the institution enters into contractual agreements with external entities for products or services performed on its behalf, the scope of work for those products or services, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, is stipulated in a written and approved agreement that contains provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution. In such cases, the institution ensures the scope of the agreement is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, adheres to institutional policies and procedures, and complies with the Commission's Standards for Accreditation.*

Contractual agreements with external entities are governed by written agreements that clearly define the scope of work and delineate each party's roles and responsibilities. Through the president's delegated authority with Continuous Professional Service Contracts [Policy 7.01.04](#), and in collaboration with the controller and the [Office of Finance and Business](#), such agreements are [reviewed](#) by the vice president for finance and business affairs (VPBA) for adherence to NIC's educational mission, core themes, goals, policies, and procedures, and to assure compliance with the Commission's Standards for Accreditation and with [state](#) and [federal](#) guidelines.

The board has delegated the authority to sign contracts, leases, and grants only to the president. The president has further delegated that authority to the VPBA. Other employees may not approve or sign contracts, leases, or grants. Signing a contract when not authorized may result in the employee being held personally liable for the conditions in that agreement.

## Standards 2.A.27-29 – Policies on Academic Freedom

### **Standard 2.A.27– Academic Freedom.**

*The institution publishes and adheres to policies, approved by its governing board, regarding academic freedom and responsibility that protect its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures, and harassment.*

NIC has long-standing, board-approved policies that promote and protect academic freedom as a cornerstone of the educational process. Faculty, inclusive of librarians, are protected in their prerogative to freely choose materials, methods, and subjects for teaching and learning and to engage in research and creative works on matters of their choosing, including those that may be controversial. Further, faculty are protected in their ability to propose controversial or unpopular policies and to question and critique existing policies. Their ability to speak and publish freely as a private citizen is upheld when it is clear they are not representing the college in that free expression. As stated in Academic Freedom [Policy 3.05](#), faculty have responsibilities when exercising their freedom to do so within the law and “recognized professional standards.” Each faculty member’s contract includes language that upholds their “rights, powers, privileges, [and] duties ... under the laws of the state of Idaho and NIC Board policy.”

Historically, faculty have collaborated within program and division forums to address questions of appropriate content, curricula, materials, and pedagogy within acceptable academic practice.

As further evidence of its commitment to free expression, The NIC Board approved Time, Place, and Manner for Exercising Freedom of Speech [Policy 6.08](#), last reviewed in 2014, to ensure members of NIC and the public are protected in their ability to free speech consistent with the primary college purpose of education.

In December 2019, the board adopted a policy on Intellectual Property, that actively encourages NIC employees and students to engage in innovation, creative expression, and entrepreneurship toward “discovery and dissemination of knowledge” that is “central to the college mission and to society as a whole.” (See Intellectual Property [Policy 2.03.03](#) and [Procedure 2.03.03](#))

### **Standard 2.A.28 - Promotion of Freedom and Independent Thought.**

*Within the context of its mission, core themes, and values, the institution defines and actively promotes an environment that supports independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. It affirms the freedom of faculty, staff, administrators, and students to share their scholarship and reasoned conclusions with others. While the institution and individuals within the institution may hold to a particular personal, social, or religious philosophy, its constituencies are intellectually free to examine thought, reason, and perspectives of truth. Moreover, they allow others the freedom to do the same.*

NIC affirms its commitment to the free pursuit of knowledge, to the protection of both independent thought and diverse perspectives, and to the exploration of challenging, new ideas that are fundamental to academic freedom. In conjunction with the Academic Freedom [Policy 3.05.01](#), as cited in 2.A.27, professional ethics details the college’s active promotion of intellectual honesty and free inquiry for the educational community at large, inclusive of faculty, their colleagues, and students.

NIC employees are protected in their ability to express themselves as private citizens and participate in associations or organizations of their choosing free from institutional censorship or reprisal, and to serve in public office under Political Activities [Policy 3.02.11](#). Protection of academic inquiry is implicit in NIC's mission, core themes, and values, which are embedded in its policies, handbooks, procedures, and codes of conduct, notably Student Code of Conduct [Policy 5.06](#) and [Procedure 5.06](#) and Academic Integrity [Policy 5.06.01](#) and [Procedure 5.06.01](#).

In keeping with a climate and culture of academic freedom, NIC celebrates diversity, inclusion, and continued individual growth through a variety of organizations and clubs under the leadership of the Associated Students of North Idaho College (ASNIC). For example, ASNIC's Intra-club Council oversees a variety of established clubs such as the American Indian Student Alliance, Gender & Sexuality Alliance, and Phi Theta Kappa. To support diversity awareness across the college and fulfill the college's mission, the Diversity Steering Committee implemented "Cardinal Reads." The purpose of Cardinal Reads is to engage those at NIC, as well as the wider community, in discourse on a common topic with a diverse theme. The program is known throughout the United States as "Common Reads." These activities and others supported by the college advance independent thought, reasoned dialogue, and wide examination of perspectives on truth. A faculty member provided an update to the board on the Core Theme of Diversity. See Video: Celebrating Success: [Diversity and Cardinal Reads](#), Board of Trustees Meeting, March 2019.

### **Standard 2.A.29 - Teaching Scholarship.**

*Individuals with teaching responsibilities present scholarship fairly, accurately, and objectively. Derivative scholarship acknowledges the source of intellectual property, and personal views, beliefs, and opinions are identified as such.*

Faculty are expected to provide credit for the scholarship of others in the development of instructional materials. Part of the faculty evaluation process includes observation of teaching materials and classroom presentation to provide a check on fair and accurate representation of views, beliefs, and opinions, whether drawn from others, or the faculty member's own views. See Faculty Evaluation [Policy 3.02.21](#). As part of their evaluation process, faculty are required to address how they have upheld their ethical responsibilities. See Professional Ethics expressed in [Policy 3.05.01](#), Tenure, [Policy 3.02.09](#), and Teaching Focus, [Policy 3.02.34](#).

Moreover, publications by NIC faculty in scholarly journals and through university and public presses are careful to acknowledge their sources and represent their own perspectives and conclusions on a subject.

Copyright and Fair Use [Policy 2.03.04](#) and [Procedure 2.03.04](#) establishes guidelines regarding the "Fair Use" of copyrighted material, use of multimedia and copyrighted works in the room, and incorporating the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

### **Standard 2.A.30 – Finance.**

*The institution has clearly defined policies, approved by its governing board, regarding oversight and management of financial resources, including financial planning, board approval and monitoring of operating and capital budgets, reserves, investments, fundraising, cash management, debt management, and transfers and borrowings between funds.*

The institution has clearly defined policies, approved by its governing board, regarding oversight and management of financial resources, including financial planning, board approval and monitoring o

operating and capital budgets, reserves, investments, fundraising, cash management, debt management, and transfers and borrowings between funds.

The Office of Finance and Business (formerly the Business Office) is responsible for the recording, reporting, and planning of financial resources for the college. Business and Facilities Operations [Policy 2.03.02](#) requires the Office of Finance and Business to focus on two goals: ensuring a safe environment for students, staff, and the public; and keeping records for and custodianship of funds and other assets for the college.

The [Administrative Services Operational Guidelines Manual](#) is the vehicle through which the processes are communicated and updated. The manual is maintained by the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Business Affairs. The vice president for finance and business affairs prepares and presents quarterly financial statements for the President’s Cabinet and the board during the academic year.

## Standards 2.B.1-2.B.6 – Human Resources

### Standard 2.B.1 – Qualified Support Personnel.

*The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified personnel to maintain its support and operations functions. Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions accurately reflect duties, responsibilities, and authority of the position.*

NIC has an organizational structure to distribute and align personnel resources for support and operational functions to meet the educational needs of students, employers, and the community. Seven of the eight members of President’s Cabinet have non-instructional portfolios and lead key institutional functions for budget, student services, planning, information technology (IT), communications and government relations, human resources (HR), and foundation/development. The total number of support and operation staff roles has been relatively steady over the accreditation cycle, with the greatest variability being in part-time positions. Table 2.2 describes the makeup of support and operations personnel as of January 2020:

**TABLE 2.2**  
Number of Support and Operations Staff

Support and Operations Staff	
Administrative	4
Full-time professional	173
Full-time classified	188
Part-time	524
Total	889
As of January 2020	

As part of the ongoing assessment of sufficiency and qualifications of personnel, NIC has established processes for evaluating the employment needs of the college, actively recruiting for full-time positions, and screening candidates for the necessary and desired qualifications.

Through the annual budgeting process, the college may recommend to the board new full-time, benefited positions. These recommendations come forth following a vetting process involving the direct supervisor, HR, the Office of Finance and Business, and the appropriate cabinet position through to the president. The president may also authorize the establishment of temporary positions as needed. This full-time temporary status is defined generally for three years or less. Every vacant full-time position is re-evaluated based on the needs of the college. If the recommendation is to fill the position, the president approves it to be filled through the hiring process facilitated by HR. New positions are establishment in accordance with [Policy 3.02.02](#). Filling vacant positions follows [Policy 3.02.03](#).

As part of the annual performance evaluations described in 2.B.2, supervisors and employees are encouraged to review and update the job description to ensure that documentation of work duties and responsibilities is current and accurate. Updates to job descriptions are approved and published by the HR department.

Approved positions are advertised in accordance with established hiring practices. Prior to posting the position, HR works with the hiring manager to ensure that the job description accurately reflects the qualifications, duties, responsibilities and authority of the position. Positions are posted on the college website with full job descriptions to clearly communicate this information. Vacant positions are advertised in multiple sources to create a sufficiently competitive, diverse, and qualified applicant pool.

The college utilizes an online application system to manage the application process. This online system organizes information for HR and hiring managers. The hiring manager uses a committee to assist in the selection process. Various options for interviewing are available including phone, video conferencing, or in-person. HR assists the search process by reviewing interview questions, communicating with applicants, screening qualifications, and providing guidance to hiring managers. Selected candidates for all full-time positions require background checks prior to an offer being extended.

Managers may recruit for part-time positions following the process above, but it is not required. Only specified part-time positions are required to have background checks.

### **Standard 2.B.2 – Administrator and Staff Evaluations.**

*Administrators and staff are evaluated regularly with regard to performance of work duties and responsibilities.*

NIC promotes ongoing performance management through regular evaluation of administrators and staff. NIC administrators and staff are subject to annual performance appraisals (see Annual Staff Performance Appraisal [Policy 3.02.22](#)) and 360-degree administrator evaluations (see Evaluation of Administrators [Policy 3.09](#) and [Procedure 3.09](#)). The performance appraisal process is designed to reinforce NIC's Core Themes.

Annual formal performance appraisals are administered through an online system for all benefit-eligible staff and administrators. HR administers the online system to ensure consistency in the approach to evaluating employee performance. The process includes self-evaluation, supervisor's appraisal, and a second-level review. HR tracks and ensures 100 percent of benefit-eligible administrators and staff

employees receive annual performance evaluations, using the online performance evaluation system. Mid-year evaluations and evaluations of part-time staff are encouraged, but not required.

On a staggered cycle, administrators are evaluated in a 360-degree style process in which feedback is solicited from a variety of stakeholders. This includes input from their supervisor, direct reports, and colleagues, in addition to a self-evaluation. These evaluations are intended to assess leaders with the goal of improving management performance and thereby the work environment. Administrator evaluations were re-initiated in the 2018/2019 academic year after a lapse of several years. Policy and Procedure 3.09 is currently under revision with the goal of a two-year frequency. These evaluations are currently administered by a third-party provider.

### **Standard 2.B.3 – Professional Development.**

*The institution provides faculty, staff, administrators, and other employees with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development to enhance their effectiveness in fulfilling their roles, duties, and responsibilities.*

NIC demonstrates commitment to its core theme of educational excellence and the value of lifelong learning through professional growth and development for employees. Several programs and resources are available to employees to enhance their effectiveness in fulfilling their roles, duties, and responsibilities. A number of these opportunities are identified below.

Each year the college awards sabbaticals to tenured faculty members who seek opportunities for professional growth related to their professional discipline or teaching effectiveness. Sabbaticals are also available to staff to augment their professional development and improve their effectiveness and service to the college. Sabbatical applications are evaluated and ranked by a committee (See [Committee Structure and Membership, p. 16](#)) approved by the supervising President's Cabinet member. President's Cabinet has approved 10 sabbaticals in the last five years. College employees are invited to a celebration to honor NIC employees who were granted a sabbatical. See [NICNow, April 30, 2019](#). Funding for sabbaticals is contingent upon board approval of the annual budget. See Faculty Sabbatical [Policy 3.04.08](#) and [Procedure 3.04.08](#), and Staff Sabbatical [Policy 3.04.08.01](#) and [Procedure 3.04.08.01](#).

Divisions and departments have funds within their budgets to provide training and development to individuals, as appropriate and as approved through the annual budget process. Each budget manager is responsible for establishing the training budget and managing its use throughout the year. These funds are available to pay for conferences, workshops, seminars, and related expenditures for individuals as approved by the appropriate budget manager.

Several internal training and development opportunities are provided to faculty and staff to improve their personal and professional skills and capabilities. Courses such as Duo multi-factor authentication and security awareness training are offered regularly by departments such as IT, eLearning, HR, Instruction, and others to provide skills enhancement for employees. These opportunities are offered throughout the year at no cost to employees. In order to make these opportunities more accessible to employees in other locations, departments offering professional development activities are encouraged to make them available using live video-conferencing (Zoom), which allows remote participation. NIC's online eLearning environment is another method used to deliver training to employees at various locations. The HR Department recently offered training to employees on how to conduct inclusive searches for new employees. See [More Than Meets the Eye document](#), and [NICNow announcement - January 7, 2020](#).



The intent of professional development funds is to encourage the systematic planning of professional goals. The funds are available to benefit-eligible employees who have been employed continuously for one year or more. To be eligible for funds, staff and faculty must submit development plans that are approved by their supervisors. Funds may be used for approved activities such as credit classes, workshops, seminars, research, conferences, books and other related materials. See Faculty Professional Development [Policy 3.02.20](#) and Staff Professional Development [Policy 3.10](#).

NIC has established a professional development fund for employees, separate from funds described above. Funds are available to benefit-eligible employees who have been employed continuously for one year or more. An approval committee, made up of the vice presidents, reviews the applications and prioritizes fund distribution. The established criteria focus on funding those activities most closely aligned with NIC's mission and goals, with preference given to tuition and fees assistance for courses taken through an institution of higher education. The fund may also be used for noncredit courses, conferences, seminars, and learning materials. This benefit is appreciated by employees as demonstrated by the increasing utilization rate each year since its inception. Both faculty and staff have access to tuition waivers for any and all courses available through NIC. These waivers cover 100 percent of the tuition costs associated with the course(s) taken, up to eight credits. In addition, agreements with Idaho State University and Lewis-Clark State College allow for a significant reduction in tuition to pursue advanced degrees.

The faculty compensation schedule provides an incentive to employees who continue to enhance their learning and formal education. As faculty members earn additional degrees and/or professional development units, they may move to higher columns in the compensation schedule. See [Faculty Compensation Schedule](#).

### **Standard 2.B.4 - Qualified Faculty Staffing.**

*Consistent with its mission, core themes, programs, services, and characteristics, the institution employs appropriately qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and assure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs, wherever offered and however delivered.*

Consistent with its mission and core theme of educational excellence, NIC employs appropriately qualified faculty in sufficient number to achieve its educational objectives, execute academic policies, and assure the integrity and continuity of all academic programs.

The college employs 154 full-time and approximately 185 part-time faculty with 85.7 percent of full-time faculty holding master's degrees or higher. The college's student-to-faculty ratio in fall of 2019 was 13:1.

Eligibility for employment as a full-time faculty member in a general education subject matter area typically requires a master's degree in the discipline for which the faculty opening exists. Full-time faculty in career and technical education programs must meet the requirements outlined in the current Idaho Credential Standards for Postsecondary Career and Technical Faculty and Administrators. All part-time faculty are required to have the minimally accepted level of credentials demanded in their discipline areas. See Faculty Employment [Policy 3.02.08](#).

Faculty teaching online courses are held to the same hiring qualifications. Dual credit faculty are also held to the same hiring [qualifications](#); in instances where they do not, high school teachers must receive NIC faculty mentor approval as well as administrative approval. All dual credit teachers are assigned a full-time faculty mentor who ensures quality of outcomes in the high school setting by first ensuring the course

objectives are aligned with the college syllabus and approving assessments. See [Onboarding Process for Dual Credit Faculty](#).

The college expects that each academic unit will hire qualified faculty. National searches are conducted for all full-time faculty positions by a hiring committee made up of faculty and division chairs/directors from the respective area. All faculty are evaluated for appropriate education and professional experience, and finalists interview with at least one administrator.

### **Standard 2.B.5 - Faculty Responsibilities and Workloads.**

*Faculty responsibilities and workloads are commensurate with the institution's expectations for teaching, service, scholarship, research, and/or artistic creation.*

NIC defines a full-time faculty load as 30 credit hour equivalence per academic year. In addition, teaching development and other activities that directly advance student learning comprise the foremost responsibilities, and are the predominant focus of faculty time and effort. College service, including student advising and committee duties, is limited so as not to compromise this primary focus. Should additional college service be required, adjustments to the faculty member's contract may be made, subject to approval by the faculty member, the division chair, dean, and vice president for instruction (VPI). See Teaching Focus [Policy 3.02.34](#) and [Procedure 3.02.34](#).

NIC faculty workload is defined in Faculty Compensation Structure [Policy 3.02.16](#) and [Procedure 3.02.16](#), and summarized within the annual faculty contract (see [Academic Employee template job description](#)).

Faculty members are required to hold five office hours per week, and to spend an additional 10 hours per week on campus for committee assignments, office work, grading, class preparation, professional development and/or divisional responsibilities. With the agreement of the division chair, dean, and VPI, faculty contracts can be modified. Approved reassigned time is used for responsibilities such as performing assistant chair duties, working on special projects such as accreditation, and numerous other projects that provide service to the college.

In addition to teaching and advising, full-time faculty help develop curricula and instructional programs. They may also provide academic support and manage learning resources. Faculty help develop and revise standards and policies related to instruction and working conditions. Faculty Assembly, the College Senate, and a variety of committees provide the formal avenues through which faculty members actively participate in college policy, curricular decisions, budget, and workload concerns.

Librarians at NIC are considered faculty, and they perform duties as described in their position descriptions that are commensurate with the workload of full-time faculty. As faculty, their contracts require service on one or more college committees; however, librarians do not typically have instructional duties inside the classroom, but rather, they supplement and support instruction formally and informally.

Typically, adjunct instructors are only required to teach and are limited to nine credit equivalents per semester for fall and spring.

As part of an ongoing improvement effort, NIC continues to evaluate faculty workload and responsibilities to ensure there is adequate time to fulfill the institution's expectations for teaching, service, scholarship, research, and/or artistic creation.

### **Standard 2.B.6 – Faculty Evaluations.**

*All faculty are evaluated in a regular, systematic, substantive, and collegial manner at least once within every five-year period of service. The evaluation process specifies the timeline and criteria by which faculty are evaluated; utilizes multiple indices of effectiveness, each of which is directly related to the faculty member's roles and responsibilities, including evidence of teaching effectiveness for faculty with teaching responsibilities; contains a provision to address concerns that may emerge between regularly scheduled evaluations; and provides for administrative access to all primary evaluation data. Where areas for improvement are identified, the institution works with the faculty member to develop and implement a plan to address identified areas of concern.*

The purpose of evaluation of faculty at NIC is to maintain and enhance instructional excellence, to assist in making sound personnel decisions, and to assist in making tenure recommendations by providing information on performance of faculty in their major areas of responsibility. Faculty groups that are evaluated include tenured, probationary tenure-track, special appointment, part-time credit, librarians, and non-credit instructors.

Tenured and probationary tenure-track faculty members are evaluated according to the Tenure [Policy 3.02.09](#) and [Procedure 3.02.09](#), and based on the following criteria outlined in the Faculty Evaluation [Policy 3.02.21](#):

1. Academic or technical preparation
2. Teaching effectiveness
3. Dependability in meeting contractual responsibilities
4. Professional growth
5. Professional ethics

Faculty under the tenure track system are evaluated using a paper portfolio process, guided by Tenure Candidate Portfolio Notebook [Guidelines](#). The evaluation of candidates is a holistic process, whereby members of the Tenure Committee examine the candidate's complete portfolio as it relates to the five aforementioned criteria. Examples of tenure portfolios are available upon request during the team visit. Candidates for Tenure are approved and honored by the board (see board minutes, [April 2019, pp. 1-2](#)). The process concludes with a public celebration See [NICNow, April 30, 2019](#). All employees are invited and encouraged to attend. Tenured faculty are evaluated every three years.

All other faculty are evaluated based on Faculty Evaluation [Policy 3.02.21](#). Specific timelines, reports, and evaluation instruments, such as the [Faculty Classroom Observation Form](#), are outlined in the Faculty Evaluation [Procedure 3.02.21](#).

## **Standards 2.C.1 – 2.C.8 – Educational Resources**

### **Standard 2.C.1 - Content and Rigor.**

*The institution provides programs, wherever offered and however delivered, with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission; culminate in achievement of clearly identified*

*student learning outcomes; and lead to collegiate-level degrees or certificates with designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.*

NIC's educational programs fulfill the college's mission as a comprehensive community college dedicated to student success, educational excellence, community engagement, diversity, and stewardship. All degrees and certificates offered by the college meet the credit and competency standards defined by [\(SBOE\) Policy III.E](#). The college provides a wide array of associate degree programs (AA and AS) that support transfer to all four-year universities in Idaho, as well as regional out-of-state institutions. All degrees and certificates meet the general education requirements as defined in [SBOE Policy III.N](#).

NIC follows a Program Development Plan and Timeline [template](#) as a general guide for new program proposals and approvals.

The learning outcomes for all NIC credit programs are published within the Program Guideline section of the college catalog ([online](#)). Specific program outcomes examples published in the catalog include the [AAS in Accounting Assistant](#), the [ITC in Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning](#), the [AA in History](#), and the [AS in Engineering](#). A comprehensive overview of all programs is found in the Program Offering section of the college catalog ([online](#)). The program array reflects the college's commitment to meet its mission to "the diverse educational needs of students, employers, and the northern Idaho communities it serves...."

NIC is also a member of the [Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education \(WICHE\) Interstate Passport Program](#), a general education articulation agreement among a growing number of higher education institutions in the United States. The college recognizes completion of the Passport for those students who choose to align their general education courses with the WICHE requirements. Since joining the program two years ago, 165 NIC students that have completed the Interstate Passport.

NIC faculty worked closely with WICHE to establish congruence of the designated NIC courses with the learning outcomes of Passport. Completers of Passport at NIC are deemed to have met the general education requirements at any partner WICHE Passport institution, thereby facilitating student transfer across state lines to other participating colleges and universities.

### **Standard 2.C.2. - Identified and Published Learning Outcomes.**

*The institution identifies and publishes expected course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Expected student learning outcomes for courses, wherever offered and however delivered, are provided in written form to enrolled students.*

All courses, certificate, and degree programs at NIC have established learning outcomes that are widely available to all enrolled students.

As required in the college's [syllabus requirements form](#), approved course-level learning outcomes appear in all syllabi. Access to all syllabi is available at the NIC Concourse [website](#). ([How to access Concourse.](#)) The College recently created a [search function](#) for the most recent syllabi. In classes, faculty distribute hard copies of syllabi and/or post them in Canvas (the college's learning management system), so students can easily access the information in various formats. Syllabi may also be found at the following links on the MyNIC Portal: [Spring 2018](#), [Summer 2018](#), [Fall 2018](#), [Spring 2019](#), [Summer 2019](#), and [Fall 2019](#).

All program outcomes are clearly articulated and are accessible by clicking on the respective program under the Program Guideline section of the college catalog ([online](#)). Examples of program outcomes from selective programs are referenced in 2.C.1. Printed program sheets are used in advising sessions.

### **Standard 2.C.3 - Documented Achievement of Learning Outcomes.**

*Credit and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, are based on documented student achievement and awarded in a manner consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted learning outcomes, norms, or equivalencies in higher education.*

NIC's definition of a credit hour appears in Credit Hour [Policy 4.02](#) and [Procedure 4.02](#), and establishes defined ratios of contact hours and out-of-class expectations to award credit by the mode of instruction consistent with federal regulations for institutions of higher education. For example, lecture classes require one hour per week of the semester of direct instruction and at least two hours of out-of-class study per credit. The policy covers six types of courses inclusive of those delivered face-to-face, online (including interactive video), and hybrid at all locations where NIC provides instruction. All certificates and degrees awarded by the college require a minimum number of credits as established by [SBOE Policy III E](#), following review by the faculty-led Curriculum Council (CC), which is charged with consideration and approval of all credit-bearing courses and programs. Thus, students and the public are assured that the college adheres to generally accepted standards for any credit, certificate, or degree awarded by the college. The [NIC Curriculum Council SharePoint site](#) includes information about the CC including agendas, minutes, draft and approved programs and courses.

All courses and programs are required as part of CC review to have stated learning outcomes to promote measurability of student learning. All GEM courses require a description of the assessments that will be used to evaluate whether students have achieved the stated outcomes. Examples include [English 278 GEM Curriculum form](#) and the [English 278 Curriculum Council Course Outline](#). Further, the college has published standards for grading student performance to indicate sufficient course-level performance to earn credit, with a C- required for all GEM Courses. See [AA/AS degree requirements](#).

Programmatic grade standards may be higher, for example, as published by Nursing. See Nursing section of college catalog (p. [177](#)). In this example, a grade of C/2.0 or better is required in each Nursing course and general education course that is part of the nursing curriculum for the associate of science degree.

Faculty report grades through the Registrar's Office, housed in a one-stop enrollment center known as Cardinal Central. The Registrar maintains official transcripts and conducts degree audits to reflect credit earned and the completion of any certificate or degree for students seeking these credentials.

### **Standard 2.C.4 - Breadth, Depth, and Sequencing of Courses.**

*Degree programs, wherever offered and however delivered, demonstrate a coherent design with appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing of courses, and synthesis of learning. Admission and graduation requirements are clearly defined and widely published.*

Associate degree programs at NIC require at least 60 credits, with a minimum of 36 credits of general education for transfer associate of arts or associate of science degrees and at least 15 credits of general education for associate of applied science degrees. See [AA/AS Degree Requirements](#), and [AAS Degree Requirements](#). As developed by faculty from each discipline or field, and as published in curricular maps found in the college catalog (see [AAS, Accounting Assistant full-time](#) and [AAS Accounting Assistant part-time](#) examples) and program websites, general education is often tailored to prepare students for any required sequences for the program requirements of transfer degrees. For instance, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs require math and science sequences leading to other courses needed for transfer. An example is the [AS full-time path sequence for Mathematics](#). All transfer courses require at least one sophomore-level integrative course designed

to provide students with practice applying two or more disciplines to a key problem or question. Applied associate of science degrees are commonly cohort-based, with tightly sequenced curriculum to build knowledge, skills, and abilities needed in the workplace. This intentional design helps ensure that courses are available on a schedule that promotes progress and completion.



As an open access institution, the college admits students with a high school diploma or a GED. Limited enrollment programs also have additional measures (see college catalog, pp. [18-19](#)), such as a program [placement assessment](#) for Graphic Design. In addition, the college requires placement information prior to enrollment, using widely adopted measures, including the SAT or ACT, as well as math placement through Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces (ALEKS) and English placement through The Write Choice, as documented on Math and English Placement [webpage](#). The standards apply to any program at NIC, however and wherever delivered, including Coeur d'Alene, Rathdrum (the Parker Technical Education Center where many CTE programs are located), Hayden, Sandpoint, Bonners Ferry, or the Silver Valley.

### **Standard 2.C.5 - Faculty Role in Curriculum and Assessment.**

*Faculty, through well-defined structures and processes with clearly defined authority and responsibilities, exercise a major role in the design, approval, implementation, and revision of the curriculum, and have an active role in the selection of new faculty. Faculty with teaching responsibilities take collective responsibility for fostering and assessing student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes.*

Faculty exercise a major role in the design, approval, implementation, and revision of the curriculum through the well-defined processes and responsibilities of NIC's Curriculum Council (CC). To ensure a broad cross-section of representation, the CC voting members are from 11 designated instructional groups.

Any proposal to implement or modify curriculum begins with faculty working with peers and their division chair, using approved forms. Submissions follow an established calendar, through an academic dean, to CC for consideration. Proposals that are approved for CC review have been vetted by an executive committee of CC led by the chair and vice chair of the council and are then placed on an agenda for a first read and discussion in a forum open to the entire college. All proposals must state the student learning outcomes that faculty will assess. Proposals approved by CC are submitted to the VPI for review. The VPI then decides to adopt or reject the curriculum change. Proposals not approved by the VPI are returned to the proposing department and may be resubmitted after revision.

Ex-officio members of the CC, including the instructional deans, an Associated Students of North Idaho College (ASNIC) representative, a representative of the Registrar's Office, and one from Academic Advising, along with the VPI, help inform and provide guidance to CC deliberations and actions. The primary goal of CC is to promote quality and excellence in the design and implementation of curricula at NIC. It has therefore adopted an additional step in the review process for any GEM course, made up of three nominated faculty from the instructional divisions, who recommend whether or not a GEM course proposal, after receiving divisional and dean approval, is ready for consideration by CC. See response to 2.C.1 above for details on GEM. After final approval of any course or program by the VPI and confirmation of any necessary NWCCU or SBOE approvals, changes are submitted to the registrar for inclusion in the college catalog. CC is also charged with annual review of its [guidelines](#) to ensure that the processes, membership, officers, and procedures meet institutional needs and are modified where appropriate. The last review of the guidelines took place during the April 22, 2019 CC meeting. See CC Minutes, [April 22, 2019, p. 2](#).

The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee ([SLOA](#)) is primarily made up of faculty, with the instructional deans serving as ex-officio members, and facilitated by faculty leadership. SLOA membership reflects the breadth of fields offered by the college to help ensure diverse representation and faculty ownership of the assessment of student learning. SLOA has maintained an assessment plan for the college, inclusive of general education courses and programs. See [2018 SLOA Goals Report](#), [2015-2020 SLOA Plan and Goals](#), and [GEM Assessment Plan for NIC](#). [Signature assignments for GEM](#) courses have been identified. Faculty, specific to the discipline, review student artifacts and norm their rating to gauge performance and indications of student achievement of the learning outcomes. NIC's overall assessment process is described in greater detail in standard four below. In addition, faculty lead the process of program review, which is completed on a five-year cycle (except in the case of accredited programs, which follow the applicable cycle) to collect a range of quantitative and qualitative data inclusive of student performance in courses and generally in the program. As noted in [the NIC Programs Outcomes Assessment Plan](#), through the planning and execution of program learning outcome assessments, as part of the regular program review process, faculty from each NIC degree program make the improvement of student learning a continuous effort. Program review is used to inform curricular changes and to strengthen assessment of student learning outcomes. For example, the [English AA Mid-cycle Program Interview and Action Plan Summary document](#) provides action plan recommendations to the curriculum such as how to engage more students in internet classes, and improved communications with dual credit instructors with 200-level course expectations for students.

Faculty are the chairs and the primary members of all search committees for faculty openings at the college. Although formal guidelines do not currently exist, faculty search committee members are selected most often with the input of the division chair or director of the program, to include at least two faculty members who will conduct the initial screening of completed applications for faculty positions, determine finalists, and hold interviews that usually consist of a formal teaching demonstration. The college is currently revising Faculty Employment [Policy 3.02.08](#) to formalize

faculty participation on search committees for faculty openings. Current practice allows for the VPI and the president to interview finalists. A recommendation for hire is then made to the VPI; all hires must have the president's endorsement, and are almost universally the candidate recommended by the faculty committee.

### **Standard 2.C.6 - Integrated Library and Information Resources.**

*Faculty with teaching responsibilities, in partnership with library and information resources personnel, ensure that the use of library and information resources is integrated into the learning process.*

The librarians of Molstead Library hold faculty status and provide instruction to help support student success and lifelong learning. The research and instruction librarian collaborates with fellow faculty using a [matrix](#) defining instructor and librarian roles with information literacy competencies, and also to promote library resources based upon the [Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education \(Framework\)](#). The Library Instruction [website](#) includes additional information on how students can access a classroom for library instruction, and additional resources for students and instructors regarding research skills into learning processes, assignments, and student learning outcomes across the curriculum. The library also makes available [electronic research guides](#) that are developed collaboratively as companion pieces to instructional sessions, stand-alone resources, or in support of faculty development and administrative initiatives.

There are several strong examples of the role of the library staff with the teaching and learning process. The library staff are invited to classes to provide instruction to students about the use of library resources. Faculty are then provided an opportunity to evaluate library instruction with the results published in a [Report for Library Instruction Faculty Evaluation](#) that is available to the NIC community. Instructors provide qualitative and quantitative feedback to the library, and this information is used for the improvement of their classroom presentations. The library staff also publish an annual [Division Meeting Report](#) that summarizes information presented at divisional meetings. The information documented includes presentation topics, ideas and requests, and any follow up required as a result of the meetings. The library's efforts in relationship to on-campus support and community engagement is published annually in [Connections](#).

### **Standard 2.C.7 - Credit for Experiential Learning.**

*Credit for prior experiential learning, if granted, is: a) guided by approved policies and procedures; b) awarded only at the undergraduate level to enrolled students; c) limited to a maximum of 25% of the credits needed for a degree; d) awarded only for documented student achievement equivalent to expected learning achievement for courses within the institution's regular curricular offerings; and e) granted only upon the recommendation of appropriately qualified teaching faculty. Credit granted for prior experiential learning is so identified on students' transcripts and may not duplicate other credit awarded to the student in fulfillment of degree requirements. The institution makes no assurances regarding the number of credits to be awarded prior to the completion of the institution's review process.*

NIC credit granted for prior and experiential learning is so identified on students' transcripts and may not duplicate other credit awarded to the student in fulfillment of degree requirements. The institution makes no assurances regarding the number of credits to be awarded prior to the completion of the institution's review process.



Policies for credit by examination, including challenge for credit, Advance Placement Examination, and the CLEP exam are included in the college catalog (pp. [29-30](#)).

NIC Credit for Prior Learning [Policy 5.04.07](#) and [Procedure 5.04.07](#) provides for the evaluation of prior learning for credit only in career and technical fields offered by the college. Learning must be documented and applicable to established course learning outcomes. Further, NIC policy caps such credit at 25 percent of the total credits needed for a certificate or degree. Although the procedures include specific preparatory courses to engage in credit for prior learning, there has been no offering of the courses since the policy was adopted in 2014. As of this writing, the college is reviewing ways to expand student access to prior learning assessment for credit toward established degrees and certificates inclusive of non-CTE and transfer curriculum. Any such adoption will adhere to NWCCU standards for prior learning assessment.

### **Standard 2.C.8. – Transfer Credit.**

*The final judgment in accepting transfer credit is the responsibility of the receiving institution. Transfer credit is accepted according to procedures which provide adequate safeguards to ensure high academic quality, relevance to the students' programs, and integrity of the receiving institution's degrees. In accepting transfer credit, the receiving institution ensures that the credit accepted is appropriate for its programs and comparable in nature, content, academic quality, and level to credit it offers. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements between the institutions.*

Guidelines for acceptance and articulation of transfer credit are outlined in Transfer of Credit [Policy 5.04.06.01](#) and [Procedure 5.04.06.01](#). Information for students interested in transferring NIC credits to four-year colleges and universities is included in the Program Offerings section of the college catalog ([online](#)). Transfer students are required to submit official transcripts from post-secondary institutions attended. The Admissions Office oversees the evaluation of transfer coursework and processes used to establish equivalencies and awards credit for similar courses taught at accredited institutions. NIC follows SBOE Common Course List for satisfying general education core requirements and follows the SBOE articulation policy for all public higher education institutions. Under this policy, a student who completes the general education core (GEM) for an associate's degree will, upon transfer, have satisfied the requirements at the four-year Idaho public institution. It is not intended to meet specific course requirements for unique or professional programs. NIC also maintains specific transfer agreements with other four-year colleges and universities. Information about the acceptance of Advanced Placement and CLEP credits is outlined in the college catalog (pp. [29-30](#)).

Four-year transfer institutions, to a large extent, determine the specific program course requirements. Students are encouraged to select a transfer institution as soon as possible and to consult with an advisor for assistance in developing an education plan. The education plan helps students achieve a solid base of subject matter knowledge related to their majors. Students wishing to pursue intellectual interests outside their areas of study may select from a wide variety of elective courses.

When a curricular change is suggested or recommended for a course used as an approved transfer course, the [Curriculum Council Guidelines](#) outline a clear set of instructions to be followed. As part of the analysis of a new course, the criteria require that the course will transfer as part of a college or university parallel degree program. Since a change in general education core requirements affects numerous degree programs, care is taken in making such changes. The criteria for considering changes to core requirements are published in the Curriculum Council Guidelines and are reviewed and approved by CC, division chairs,

deans, and the VPI. The [NIC Curriculum Council SharePoint site](#) includes information about the CC, including agendas, minutes, and draft and approved programs and courses.

## Standard 2.C.9 – 2.C.11 – Undergraduate Programs

### **Standard 2.C.9 - General Education and Applied Degree Component.**

*The General Education component of undergraduate programs (if offered) demonstrates an integrated course of study that helps students develop the breadth and depth of intellect to become more effective learners and to prepare them for a productive life of work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment. Baccalaureate degree programs and transfer associate degree programs include a recognizable core of general education that represents an integration of basic knowledge and methodology of the humanities and fine arts, mathematical and natural sciences, and social sciences. Applied undergraduate degree and certificate programs of thirty (30) semester credits or forty-five (45) quarter credits in length contain a recognizable core of related instruction or general education with identified outcomes in the areas of communication, computation, and human relations that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes.*

NIC's general education follows a framework adopted statewide by all Idaho public higher education institutions, both two-year and four-year. The framework, defined in [SBOE Policy III.N](#), is based on the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) learning outcomes that were designed to ensure a broad foundation of knowledge and ways of thinking to serve students in a variety of disciplines and fields. Transfer associate degree programs require 36 credits in seven GEM categories. The seven categories include Written Communication-GEM 1, Oral Communication-GEM 2, Mathematical Ways of Knowing-GEM 3, Scientific Ways of Knowing-GEM 4, Humanistic and Artistic Ways of Knowing-GEM 5, Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing-GEM 6, and an Institutionally Designated area-GEM 7.

In each of the three core "Ways of Knowing" areas: Artistic and Humanistic, Social and Behavioral Science, and Natural Science, students must take at least two different disciplines to support learning from multiple perspectives. Further, the institutionally designated component of GEM at NIC reflects college values for wellness, as well as a sophomore-level integrated inquiry course. Each course approved by NIC for GEM has completed a thorough vetting process as described above in 2.C.5 that requires an outline of how the course will advance student learning of the relevant competencies that are designed to develop students' abilities to think critically, use evidence effectively, and apply knowledge to varied questions and problems. All courses in GEM draw upon the value rubrics from the AACU. Applied associate degrees have a 15 credit GEM requirement, including written communication, oral communication, mathematics, a social and behavioral ways of knowing course, and any other course outside the required categories.

Further, as outlined in 2.C.5 and 2.C.10 the college is actively engaged in assessment of GEM as a program to help ensure that students see the coherence and relevance of general education for transfer and career. NIC faculty are active participants in ongoing statewide efforts to strengthen general education in part by comparing how colleagues at other institutions are offering and assessing their GEM courses and programs. This collective effort is a valuable component to having a well-established, rigorous, and meaningful general education at NIC.

### **Standard 2.C.10 – Assessable Learning Outcomes – Associate Degrees.**

*The institution demonstrates that the General Education components of its baccalaureate degree programs (if offered) and transfer associate degree programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that are stated in relation to the institution’s mission and learning outcomes for those programs.*

The statewide general education framework for associate of arts and associate of science degrees is defined in [SBOE Policy III.N](#). NIC recognizes completion of all GEM requirements as the General Education Certificate, which has published [outcomes](#). The SLOA committee publishes an outcomes report (see [Spring 2019 GEM Data Report](#)) and provides an analysis of the results (see [GEM Data Analysis Spring 2019](#)). All transfer associate degree programs include the General Education Certificate. The courses for the certificate, referred to as GEM, are listed in the General Studies (AC) section of the college catalog ([online](#)). GEM course outcomes for GEM 1-6 are aligned with competencies delineated in Section 4 of [SBOE Policy III.N](#). GEM 7 competencies and outcomes, per board policy, are established at the institution level. NIC ensures identifiable and assessable learning outcomes for GEM 7 courses by the procedure outlined in 2.C.5 of this document. The GEM Council publishes two rubrics for the review of GEM courses: [Integrative Course Proposal Rubric](#) and [Wellness Course Proposal Rubric](#).

### **Standard 2.C.11 – Assessable Learning Outcomes – Applied Degrees and Certificates.**

*The related instruction components of applied degree and certificate programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes. Related instruction components may be embedded within program curricula or taught in blocks of specialized instruction, but each approach must have clearly identified content and be taught or monitored by teaching faculty who are appropriately qualified in those areas.*

Program offerings leading to the completion of a certificate require that students complete courses in the areas of English, mathematics, and occupational relations (human relations). Several CTE programs also have pathways that lead to an AAS degree. In order to fulfill the requirements for the AAS degree, students must complete 15 credits of general education drawn from GEM courses as listed in the college catalog ([online](#)) in the areas of written communication, oral communication, mathematical ways of knowing, social and behavioral ways of knowing, and one institutionally designated or GEM 7, or another course not already taken from GEM 3-6. All these courses are delivered by qualified faculty hired by the transfer division offering said course, which are, in most cases, the same faculty delivering these courses for the AA and AS degree programs.

The inclusion of these courses is in keeping with state policy for general education as cited above to provide a breadth of knowledge, skills, and abilities to prepare graduates “as adaptive, life-long learners.”

Examples of related instructional components include selective general education requirements in the [AAS in Culinary Arts](#) and [AAS in Business Management](#) degrees. ITC degree programs also include related instruction components of general education, such as the [ITC in Automotive Technology](#) and [ITC in Aerospace Composite Technician](#). Other examples may be found in the [Program Guidelines](#) webpage.

## Standards 2.C.12 – 2.C. 15 - Graduate Programs

NIC does not offer graduate programs.

## Standards 2.C.16 – 2.C.19 – Continuing Education and Non-Credit Programs

### Standard 2.C.16 – Compatible with Mission.

*Credit and non-credit continuing education programs and other special programs are compatible with the institution's mission and goals.*

The Workforce Training Center (WTC) offers open access, non-credit courses that complement NIC's mission to engage the community and provide lifelong learning opportunities. To meet the needs of the community, the WTC develops courses that range from a few hours of customized training to four-year apprenticeships. In addition, the WTC provides a wide variety of community education enrichment courses. The WTC's [website](#) publishes the available courses and apprenticeships. The WTC publishes a [Workforce Training & Community Education Catalog](#) marketing the latest offerings in workforce training to the public. The WTC is centered in Post Falls and, in keeping with the college's commitment to serve the five-county northern region of Idaho, also maintains access points at NIC's outreach centers in Kellogg, Sandpoint, and Bonners Ferry.



### **Standard 2.C.17 – Responsibility for Academic Quality – Continuing Education and Special Programs for Non-Credit.**

*The institution maintains direct and sole responsibility for the academic quality of all aspects of its continuing education and special learning programs and courses. Continuing education and/or special learning activities, programs, or courses offered for academic credit are approved by the appropriate institutional body, monitored through established procedures with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and assessed with regard to student achievement. Faculty representing the disciplines and fields of work are appropriately involved in the planning and evaluation of the institution's continuing education and special learning activities.*

Several employees are involved in the finalization of standards for WTC non-credit courses. Management, including the dean and VPI, advisory committee members, faculty, and business and industry professionals help to create standards that are viable for the training involved. All courses in the workforce training program [Workforce Training & Continuing Education Catalog](#) are taught by qualified instructors that are either college faculty or proven subject matter experts. New instructors complete a [WTC Non-Credit Course Proposal Form](#) prior to selection. A handbook is provided for all instructors, and coordinators are responsible for observing instructors. Every class offered has a student evaluation, instructor evaluation, and a Class Quality Score that is recorded and stored for reporting purposes. Learning Outcomes and assessments are outlined for all workforce-related courses, with the exception of some Customized Training classes that are custom to the client (See [CNA Syllabus](#), and [Firefighter 1 Syllabus](#)). Community Education courses do not necessarily have learning outcomes but provide a social atmosphere and personal satisfaction.

Apprenticeship programs offered in electrical, plumbing, and HVAC adhere to state standards. The standards were established by the Idaho Division of Building Safety Electrical Board in conjunction with Idaho Career & Technical Education and journeymen from across the state. The standards are on the Apprenticeship section of the WTC [website](#). Current licensed journeymen are hired as instructors. There is a state-mandated end-of-year exam for first-, second- and third-year students in electrical. Due to low exam scores, the plumbing and HVAC exam is under revision by the ICTE and Career and Technical Education Consortium of States (CTECS) and will be piloted in 2019-2020. The coordinator and instructors monitor how NIC students perform on the journeyman exam and have implemented improvement measures to increase first-time exam pass rates.

Students who complete a non-credit apprenticeship program are eligible to receive credit in some trades. Once the apprenticeship certificate qualifications are met, a student can enroll and complete an additional 15 general education credits to receive an AAS degree in the specific trade. The degree program and courses are developed and approved by NIC's Curriculum Council to ensure credit equivalency and measurable learning outcomes exist.

NIC's Customized Training offers classes that are developed with the assistance of subject matter experts. Many classes are taught by full-time faculty from the main campus. When classes are taught by part-time faculty, the coordinators maintain authority over these individuals to ensure NIC's educational standards are met. For example, Customized Training has served as a long-standing educational consultant for the Idaho Association of County Treasurers (IACT). The WTC has offered quality customized courses for IACT annual conferences, annual meetings, and legislative meetings since 2004. Customized Training has partnered with IACT to provide training needs assessment, development and delivery of topics such as new treasurer orientation, communication skills, leadership, computer skills, professional credibility, county funds and budgeting, Idaho code knowledge, and investment knowledge. Customized Training has managed the IACT Continuing

Education (CE) data base, tracking CE hours for all the treasurers in the state of Idaho and awarding certificates of completion at designated milestones.

The WTC's ability to respond quickly to change is what makes its customized training so effective. For example, the WTC recently teamed with several local lumber mills and mines to create safety and educational training opportunities for employees. The WTC also works closely with the Idaho Department of Labor to capture opportunities for training based on statistics on employment needs in the labor market.

The WTC students are asked to complete classroom evaluations on all classes. The evaluations are an integral part of the quality assurance process. The results of the evaluations are a core theme measure (Common Campus Measure 054) under Core Theme Objective 2.2 "Students develop skills and knowledge to ensure lifelong success." NIC has performed well with this measure with a satisfaction rate of 98 percent over the past three academic years, as reported. [See 2019 Core Theme Report, 4.](#) The NIC administration and faculty are involved in the assessment, planning, and evaluation of the special programs.

### **Standard 2.C.18 – Continuing Education Units.**

*The granting of credit or Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for continuing education courses and special learning activities is: a) guided by generally accepted norms; b) based on institutional mission and policy; c) consistent across the institution, wherever offered and however delivered; d) appropriate to the objectives of the course; and e) determined by student achievement of identified learning outcomes.*

Continuing Education Units (CEU) at NIC are derived based on the overarching standards for individual professional organizations to standardize and accredit CEUs. CEUs are customized the same as training to meet the needs of employers in the local community. If no standard is available, NIC follows the accepted norm for CEUs at one unit per 10 hours of instruction.

The college has formal agreements for CEUs with outside entities. For example, the WTC has a formal agreement with the Idaho Association of County Treasurers (IACT) for the awarding and tracking of CEUs. See [Agreement between IACT and NIC](#), [extension of the original agreement](#), and [IACT Certification Recognition document](#). The IACT Education Committee works with Customized Training to provide professional training and development opportunities to its members during three annual meetings. IACT members work toward three levels of certification as they receive training relevant to their profession (see description of trainings under 2.C17).

The WTC also offers CEUs for journeyman electricians for the completion and certification of classes. The WTC maintains and uploads these CEUs to the Idaho Division of Building and Safety to assist with the tracking.

The college catalog ([p. 33](#)) clearly indicates that CEUs are awarded based on specified standards in certain approved programs. When applicable, granting of credit is based upon course outcomes completion that meets both NIC and state standards for issuing CEU credit. NIC maintains both print and electronic records that describe the number and nature/mode of learning provided through non-credit instruction.

**Standard 2.C.19 – Record of Non-Credit Course and Programs.**

*The institution maintains records which describe the number of courses and nature of learning provided through non-credit instruction.*

NIC has had a strong number of courses, completers, and contact hours for non-credit instruction at the Workforce Training Center (WTC) located in Post Falls and other outreach centers for the past six years, as evidenced in Table 2.3:

**TABLE 2.3**  
Headcount and Credit Hours of Instruction at WTC

Academic Year	Headcount	Completers
2014	3,649	3,391
2015	4,018	3,497
2016	5,916	5,376
2017	6,086	5,654
2018	6,672	6,240
2019	7,001	6,649

The records for the WTC are housed onsite for each student who has attended training at the center. The WTC staff is discussing the possibility of digitizing old records and aligning with the current NIC student information system (Colleague) for documenting non-credit courses to credited transcripts.

**Standards 2.D.1 – 2.D.14: Student Support Resources**

**Standard 2.D.1 – Student Learning Needs.**

*Consistent with the nature of its educational programs and methods of delivery, the institution creates effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning needs.*

The [Cardinal Learning Commons](#) (CLC) opened in the fall of 2018 as a centerpiece for NIC’s academic support services. The CLC fosters collaboration between academic and student support programs to enhance student success. In addition to providing classrooms for CLC course instruction, the CLC provides academic tutoring and the Math Education Center. See Video: Celebrating Success: [Cardinal Learning Commons](#), Board of Trustees Meeting, October 2018.

[eLearning](#) provides support and training opportunities for all faculty and students on the educational technologies used collegewide such as Canvas, the college’s learning management system (LMS). eLearning also offers professional development opportunities for faculty to become knowledgeable in current educational trends and best practices in order to improve the online classroom space (i.e. the

learning environment) of the LMS in order to increase consistency across disciplines and continuity for students throughout their college experience.

The [Academic Tutoring Program](#) provides small group tutoring for all NIC students. The CLC's hybrid drop-in tutoring program provides free tutoring for NIC students and employs peer, professional, and faculty tutors. In spring 2019, the CLC will introduce supplemental instruction and an online tutoring pilot program to serve students at NIC's outreach centers in Bonners Ferry, Kellogg, and Sandpoint.

The [Math Education Center](#) provides academic and non-academic support to enable greater success for students on their mathematics pathway and is available to all students enrolled in NIC math classes. The center is coordinated through the CLC, partners with instructors, academic divisions, and student support services and is staffed by NIC math faculty. The Math Education Center identifies math support needs, creates learning support solutions, connects students with math support services, and supports the development of mathematics learning skills. The Math Education Center also provides a wide range of electronic and other resources to support student learning, including nine computer workstations, free rental textbooks and calculators, two- and three-dimensional learning aids, and practice worksheets.

The [Dual Credit](#) program provides the opportunity for Idaho high school students to earn college credits at reduced rates while still satisfying high school graduation requirements. Students must be at least 16 years of age and/or have completed one-half of their high school graduation requirements. A grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 is recommended. NIC Dual Credit staff provide enrollment and other support services for dual credit students in their high schools or on campus.

The NIC [Molstead Library](#) is a dynamic partner in the educational experience that provides a welcoming environment for students and staff engaged in research and instruction at NIC. Molstead Library supports NIC students and faculty by encouraging information literacy, critical thinking, and the acquisition of knowledge by providing access to diverse materials and current information technologies. Molstead Library also provides instruction in the use and evaluation of those materials and technologies.

The [Testing Center](#) provides a secure, quiet environment to facilitate student test-taking. The center provides four flexible-use rooms with computer/web access for individual testing and a computer lab that can seat up to 22 for group testing. The center accommodates online and paper testing that adhere to both the National College Testing Association (NCTA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. Services include NIC course testing, CLEP, outside college/university testing, placement testing, professional certification, and the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS).

The [Writing Center](#) provides a student-centered environment that emphasizes the relationship between strong written and oral communication skills and success in college and beyond. Currently, the Writing Center has 20 stand-alone computers and space for students to use their personal laptops. The center serves approximately 7,000 students each semester. NIC's writing consultants are faculty members who work one-on-one with the students through the entire writing process. NIC expanded the reach of the center through agreements with both Lewis-Clark State College and the University of Idaho to provide services to students from those institutions who are taking courses locally.

The [Adult Education Center](#) (AEC) is designed for individuals 16 years of age and older who have withdrawn from public school and want assistance to prepare for the GED® Test. AEC also serves adults who have graduated but still have a desire to upgrade their basic skills. Tuition is free and most



learning materials are provided. The program offers self-paced small group instruction in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and English Language Acquisition (ELA). AEC's goal is for students to leave the program prepared for postsecondary education, training, or employment and with the foundational skills necessary to function in the 21st century (See Celebrating Success: [Adult Education Center](#), Board of Trustees December 2018).



[Disability Support Services](#) (DSS) is committed to supporting students with disabilities by providing academic accommodations, access, and other services. DSS offers a variety of assistive technology options and training to qualified students and provides meaningful access to all of its programs, events, classrooms and facilities for qualified individuals with disabilities who use service animals.

Technical support services exist across NIC and include general purpose computer labs, instructor-scheduled drop-in sessions, and special instructional labs to support various disciplines and tutoring centers. In addition, web browser support is available through MyNIC, online courses, the NIC website, online library resources, wireless access across NIC, and kiosks that provide access to enrollment management services.

[NIC Student Counseling Services](#) provides confidential, free, and focused brief therapy sessions to encourage student success. The department attempts to make referral for additional resources to students who may benefit from other kinds of counseling and for long-term care. The department partners with other area schools and agencies with resources for suicide prevention and provides support in the aftermath of unfortunate events. The college hosts, in collaboration with other area mental health providers, an annual suicide prevention summit emphasizing best practices in suicide

prevention. (See Video: Celebrating Success: [Suicide Prevention Summit and Collaboration](#), Board of Trustees Meeting, October 2019.)

[Career Services](#) provides high quality, responsive career counseling, resources, and education to students, prospective students, and alumni, to help ensure that their education is purposeful, to assist them in choosing and achieving meaningful career and life goals, and to increase their lifelong opportunities for success. Career Services at NIC adheres to the [National Career Development Association Code of Ethics](#), which are compatible with the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics, with profession-specific guidelines for career counselors. These services were provided to 3,023 individuals in the past year, through self-referral, NIC referral, and extensive referral through community partner organization and institution collaboration. Group offerings for 1,041 students include instruction in approximately 61 classes per year, plus a variety of workshops.

[TRIO Student Support Services Program](#) (SSS) is a federally funded academic assistance program with the goal of helping participating students to successfully complete their course of study at NIC and transfer to the four-year college or university that will best meet their academic and career goals. A key feature of SSS is the provision of peer tutors that meet one-on-one with SSS program participants for up to two hours a week per subject.

[Veteran and Military Family Services](#) is committed to the success of active and former military members, National Guard and Reservists, and military dependents. Veteran and Military Family Services provides the necessary resources for participants to reach their goals, such as academic resources, emergency resources, assistance accessing both veterans' benefits and the Yellow Ribbon Program.

[American Indian Support Services](#) provides onboarding, learning, and social supports for American Indian students. Located in the Edminster Student Union (SUB) building, the center provides a learning lab and social gathering area for American Indian students and others to gather and interact.

The college is also the managing agency for the [Area Agency on Aging](#). Through this affiliation the college touches approximately 6,000 seniors annually, providing services and information allowing individuals to stay independent and maximize quality of life as well as providing adult protective services.

The college is committed to ensuring that all learning spaces are conducive to active learning and support student success. In April 2016, the college conducted a listening session with faculty and students to determine an instructional furniture standard that would create optimum environments for student learning. See [Furniture Procurement Invitation](#). The result of this process is an instructional furniture standard that incorporates moveable tables and allows for multiple classroom configurations and enables small group learning. Since 2016, all classroom updates and new construction have incorporated the standard to ensure that high-quality, relevant learning spaces are available across the college. Additionally, the college has refreshed the informal learning spaces for student and group study in Boswell Hall and the Hedlund Building. The college also imbedded innovative informal learning spaces into the design of both the Parker Technical Education Center and the DeArmond College and University Center.

### **Standard 2.D.2 – Safe and Secure Campus.**

*The institution makes adequate provision for the safety and security of its students and their property at all locations where it offers programs and services. Crime statistics, campus security policies, and other disclosures required under federal and state regulations are made available in accordance with those regulations.*

NIC is committed to a safe and secure college environment. The college takes responsibility for providing quality security officers and support staff, with the goal of providing students, faculty, staff, and visitors a safe and stable environment that enhances student success.



In 2014, NIC added an assigned School Resource Officer (SRO) who is a detective with the Coeur d'Alene Police Department. The SRO position aids with law enforcement matters concerning the campus that include the adjacent and non-campus area crime trends, safety measures and emergency procedures. The SRO routinely conducts training and provides insight to the campus populace on lockdown procedures, domestic violence, sexual assault prevention, first responder duties, and victim response. Crime statistics, security policies, reporting options, training references and disclosures are made available to the college community and public as required under federal and state regulations.

The NIC Security Department [webpage](#) contains valuable information and resources on maintaining a safe and aware campus, incident/crime/Title IX reporting forms, crime prevention, and informational handouts, which are available to the campus community, outreach centers and the public.

[The NIC Annual Security Report](#) fulfills Clery reporting requirements and contains crime statistics for the past three years, as well as information on judicial and disciplinary processes. The report is emailed to all students and employees annually, at a minimum, is provided to all prospective students and job applicants, and is accessible on the security webpage.

The Security Department, along with the Community and Government Relations Office, provide access to the [Emergency Response and Crisis Protocol and Communications Plans](#), based upon the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Incident Command system model, which can be located on the security webpage. NIC provides an emergency notification system that informs subscribers, via email, text messaging, phone system and facility-installed notification devices, how to proceed should a situation arise affecting the safety and security of the college community. NIC security and the SRO, work cooperatively with city, county and state law enforcement, fire department, and Kootenai County Emergency Management entities to maintain needs for communication and emergency preparedness. The plan is reviewed annually with the last major revision taking place in 2016.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recently completed assessments of the campus to determine security infrastructure strengths and weaknesses and best practices for allocating resources. NIC presently has numerous interior and exterior surveillance cameras with additional enhancements scheduled annually. Because of the sensitivity of the information, the DHS report will be made available, upon request, during the site visit from the director of Title IX, Student Conduct & Security.

NIC provides [Green Dot](#) training classes and information to students and employees. See [NICNow, January 22, 2020](#). Green Dot, in its sixth year at NIC, is a violence prevention program that works on the premise that violence can be measurably and systematically reduced within a community via a proactive and reactive bystander.

The security department provides oversight on facility access by authorizing and assigning electronic identification card and key accesses for employees and students on the main campus and selected outreach centers. Authorization for building and office access is based not only on the need to conduct daily operations but on emergency sheltering protocols, if required. Campus Security provides a 24/7/365 presence on the main campus.

An additional officer is assigned during select hours to the Parker Technical Education Center (Parker) in Rathdrum, Workforce Training Center in Post Falls and Aerospace Center in Hayden. NIC security authority is limited to the geographical boundaries of college properties including land, structures, streets and parking areas.

Campus security works closely with the NIC SRO, Kootenai County Emergency Management, fire departments and law enforcement in their respective municipalities for both daily activities and emergency response and planning. Tabletop exercises are organized and conducted by Kootenai County Emergency Management with participation from on and off campus first responders to coordinate and assess response, communication, evacuation strengths - weaknesses and recovery efforts. "After action" reports are provided and utilized to enhance and adjust future emergency response protocols. See [After Action Report – 2018](#).

### **Standard 2.D.3 – Admissions.**

*Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational offerings. It orients students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information and advising about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies.*

NIC's admission policy reflects a commitment of access to higher education for all individuals who can benefit from credit and non-credit courses and wide array of transfer and career-technical programs. To be admitted, students must meet minimum age and education requirements as published in Admissions [Policy 5.01](#).

NIC does have selective and limited enrollment programs. These are clearly identified in the college catalog (pp. [18-19](#)), and professional advisors associated with those programs are intentionally assigned to assist those seeking admission to those programs. Requirements and pre-requisites are well documented and published in accessible form. These requirements are designed to promote a reasonable probability of student success after entry. Application packet for these programs, with the exception of Law Enforcement, are available on the Admissions webpage during the application

period. (See for example, [Radiography Technology Program](#).) Additional information may be found in the catalog program guidelines.

International students are required to meet the same admissions standards as domestic students. There are additional requirements on the International Students section of the [website](#) for international students to meet in order for NIC to issue an I-20 visa, such as proof of English literacy and sufficient financial resources. Information is also available in the college catalog (p. [18](#)).

NIC admissions and student service professionals lead recruitment efforts locally and regionally and along with other college personnel, including faculty, staff, administration, and advisors, participate in various organizations, groups, and events that generate awareness of the educational opportunities available at NIC. Per the [college recruitment plan](#), traditional age students are provided with information through high school visits, college fairs, campus visits, social media, the college website, and responses to phone or email inquiries. The NIC Connect program delivers admissions and enrollment information onsite at local high schools and has been recognized by the state as a model for increasing engagement and enrollment in higher education in Idaho. See: Video: Celebrating Success: [NIC Connect](#), board of trustees meeting, June 2018. Non-traditional students are provided information through local events, media outreach, targeted social media, college special events, and in collaboration with local agencies, chambers of commerce, agencies, and service providers. Students receive additional information to support their success through the [INside NIC](#) Orientation which is conducted several times prior to the start of each semester. INside NIC is delivered by faculty and staff who are well-prepared to advise, inform, and support new and returning students with relevant information regarding academic requirements, college policies, and resources that are vital to their success. To further support retention and degree completion, integrated academic support services, including [Advising Services](#), [Career Services](#), and [TRIO Services](#) are available to help students explore career areas, develop academic plans, and determine appropriate transfer institutions. Additionally, students are provided with critical information on the topic of transfer, as described in the Information about Transferring section of the college catalog ([online](#)). Included in this resource is information about the statewide articulation of general education requirements, transfer of specific program required courses, and out-of-state transfer through NIC's membership in WICHE's Interstate Passport.

The consolidation of services in Cardinal Central has also provided improved communication and delivery of services to help students navigate admissions and enrollment processes ([Student Survey](#)). A robust communication plan further provides frequent and timely information to prospective and current students ([Communication Schedule](#)).

### **Standard 2.D.4 – Program Elimination:**

*In the event of program elimination or significant change in requirements, the institution makes appropriate arrangements to ensure that students enrolled in the program have an opportunity to complete their program in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.*

The college views the representation of programs in its catalog as a contract with students, so it manages major program closures and changes carefully in order to minimize disruption to students. In the rare event that a program is eliminated, the college makes every effort to provide all instruction necessary for students enrolled in such a program to meet the necessary requirements and complete the program in a timely manner.

NIC adheres to ([SBOE Policy III.G](#)) and follows the NWCCU policy on Teach-Out Plans and Teach-Out Agreements. For example, NIC submitted a [discontinuance notification](#) for the AAS in Computer Aided Design – Architectural in spring 2019. As part of the teach out plan, NIC offered the courses for the currently enrolled students in the upcoming year.

### **Standard 2.D.5 – Publications:**

*The institution publishes in a catalog, or provides in a manner reasonably available to students and other stakeholders, current and accurate information that includes: Institutional mission and core themes; Entrance requirements and procedures; Grading policy; Information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion based on normal student progress and the frequency of course offerings; Names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty; Rules, regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities; Tuition, fees, and other program costs; Refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment; Opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and j) Academic calendar.*

NIC publishes a yearly [catalog](#), which is available on the college [website](#). The college catalog and website include current and accurate information, including:

The institutional mission and core themes are included in the college catalog (p. 5) and are available on the college [website](#). The mission is also framed and displayed in building hallways and in nearly every classroom throughout the campus and outreach centers.

Entrance requirements and procedures are described on the college website on the About NIC [webpage](#), and in the Admissions section of the college catalog ([online](#)). An [online transfer guide](#) is available on the Transfer Center [webpage](#).

Grading policies are published on the college website in the policy manual under Grading [Policy 5.04](#), and a transfer of credit policy under NIC Transfer of Credit [Policy 5.04.06.01](#). In addition, they are published in the college catalog (pp. 27-28), and a link to the catalog is published on the Registrar's Office [webpage](#). All faculty members are required to include grading policies in their published syllabi each semester (example syllabi: [Elementary Italian: ITAL-101](#)).

Information on academic programs, degree requirements, and courses are published under the Program Offerings section of the college catalog ([online](#)), and the college website on the [Instructional Programs](#) pages. Degree requirements are available in the catalog (See [AS/AA Degree Requirements](#), and [AAS Degree Requirements](#)) as well as through students' self-service accounts. Each degree and certificate program includes prerequisite requirements, if any, degree and program completion requirements ([Program Requirements for AS in Business](#)), and a guide for required coursework ([Full-time pathway for AS in Business](#)). All career and technical education programs include a semester by semester sequence outlining program completion ([Full-time pathway for AAS in Accounting Assistant](#)) within a typical timeframe.

Course learning outcomes are published in syllabi and available to students through links to faculty directory pages or Canvas course site. Access to recent syllabi are available on the [NIC Syllabi SharePoint site](#).

All programs are designed to be completed within one or two years although some programs do require prerequisite coursework. All programs are delivered within two years, assuring that students can complete all requirements within an appropriate timeframe. All program-learning outcomes are published in the catalog (See [Program Outcomes for AAS in Automotive Technology](#)).

The names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for [administrators](#) and [full-time faculty](#) are published in the college catalog (pp. [383-392](#)).

Student rules, regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities are published in the [Student Handbook](#), and are referenced in the college catalog (p. [30](#)). Key policies for students are also organized under Section V: Students of the [NIC Policy Manual](#).

Tuition, fees, and program costs are published and updated annually in the college catalog ([online](#), p. [24](#)), and in the Tuition and Fees section on the [website](#). A [printed flyer of Tuition and Fees](#) is also distributed by the Admissions Office to prospective and current students who request the information.

Information about the college's refund policy is available in the college catalog (p. [25](#)), on the Refund, Cancellation section on the [website](#), and accessible on the Student Finance section of the Student Finance [webpage](#). Information about procedures for withdrawing from enrollment are available in the college catalog (p. [26](#)).

Current and accurate information about the opportunities and requirements for financial aid are publicized in detail on the Financial Aid Information and Policy section of the [website](#) and in the college catalog ([online](#)). The Financial Aid [website](#) includes an overview of the application process, regulations, and timelines for both financial aid and scholarships.

The college calendar is published and updated annually in the college catalog (pp. [6-8](#)), and on the [website](#).

### **Standard 2.D.6 – Publication of Eligibility Requirements, Licensure, and Employment.**

*Publications describing educational programs include accurate information on: National and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered; Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession.*

Where applicable, the college catalog and webpages include information on special requirements and licensure associated with its programs. NIC's health professions and nursing programs, such as [Registered Nursing](#) and [Radiography Technology](#), have specific requirements that students must meet to be eligible for clinical experience and to obtain licensure. For example, the Health Professions and Nursing Division publishes an [Admissions Criterion for the Associate Degree Nursing Program](#) and [Admissions Information for the Radiography Technology for the Associate of Applied Science Program](#). Some selective admissions programs such as [Law Enforcement](#), require a full background check. This information is published in the catalog, on the college website, and is provided to students during special program orientation sessions. Employment requirements, such as successful performance on licensure exams or completion of internship hours, are specified for each program, as applicable. For example, NIC discloses that graduates of the [AS in Nursing](#) are required to sit for the National Council Licensure Examination, and graduates of the [AAS in Radiography Technology](#) are

required to sit for the registry exam of the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists. These requirements are reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

### **Standard 2.D.7 – Retention of Records.**

*The institution adopts and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records, including provision for reliable and retrievable backup of those records, regardless of their form. The institution publishes and follows established policies for confidentiality and release of student records.*

NIC is committed to the secure retention of student records. The college follows the [retention schedule](#) set forth by the SBOE. Appropriate backup and authentication systems are in place to ensure that data is not compromised and is retrievable. The [Duo service](#) for multifactor authentication has been implemented where students' personally identifiable information can be seen or modified by employees from off site. The [guidelines](#) to support data stewardship, security, and protection are published in [Policy 3.08.03](#) and [Procedure 3.08.03](#). The guidelines include the secure transfer of student information such as email encryption, Box, and secure file transfer protocol. All employees are required to complete security awareness training to further enforce student data protection. The college follows guidelines set forth by the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) regarding the confidentiality and release of student records. These guidelines are published in the Student Records, Confidentiality, and FERPA section of the college catalog (pp. 15-16) and on the [webpage](#). To ensure that students' rights are maintained, the college provides FERPA training for employees. At the completion of training, employees are required to sign a [FERPA Compliance and Confidentiality Agreement](#). The college also controls access to records through security levels in the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, Colleague, and has procedures in place for the release of information.

### **Standard 2.D.8 – Financial Aid.**

*The institution provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with its mission, student needs, and institutional resources. Information regarding the categories of financial assistance (such as scholarships, grants, and loans) is published and made available to prospective and enrolled students.*

The NIC Financial Aid Office is committed to providing the necessary information needed for students to be well informed about federal aid, state aid, and scholarships. The information provided is consistent with NIC's mission of providing students access to the funding options available for their education. MyNIC Self-Service, the student portal, contains all required documentation, award offers, and requirements for students' Federal Financial Aid.

Federal grants, including Pell and the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), are provided for eligible students based on their enrollment in Title IV eligible credits. For example, a student may register for 12 credits, however, only 10 credits are required for the student to graduate from their listed program. The student would only be awarded Pell based on their three-quarter time Title IV eligible enrollment. See [Sample Award Offer and Repayment Obligation Information](#) and [Sample Award email Notification](#).

NIC participates in both the Federal Work-Study and the State of Idaho Atwell J. Parry Work-Study program. These programs provide opportunities for NIC students to gain valuable work experience



while earning supplemental income on a flexible schedule. NIC has work-study positions available both on-campus and off-campus to include non-profit community service partners.

NIC is committed to helping students understand the cost of their education in relation to their long-term student debt. As a result, NIC implemented a split disbursement policy for student loans that are provided through the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program. Eligible students are offered Federal Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized loans. However, students who are subsidized loan eligible who wish to borrow an unsubsidized loan must complete a request on their MyNIC student portal. NIC requires an active confirmation process from students who wish to accept any federal loan funds. Additionally, first-time borrowers must complete Entrance Counseling and all students must have a valid Master Promissory Note on file with the U.S. Department of Education.

The NIC Foundation annually provides approximately a million dollars in scholarships to NIC students. The Financial Aid Office works closely with the NIC Foundation to ensure scholarship donors' wishes are honored in the distribution of scholarships. The scholarship application is available online through the MyNIC student portal. Additionally, the NIC Financial Aid Office processes scholarships provided by the State of Idaho, external donors, and institutional Cardinal Grants.

To ensure accountability, a yearly [audit](#) is conducted by an outside accounting firm for compliance in all material aspects that are applicable to each federal program requirement. The U.S. Department of Education also performs periodic program reviews to ensure institutional compliance. The NIC Financial Aid Office is committed to monitoring and reconciling the Federal Student Aid programs on a monthly basis.

As reported in 2.F.7, the college received findings in multiple years relating to the NSLDS enrollment reporting in reference to the Return of Title IV Aid calculations. There were instances in which the students' withdrawal date per the Return of Title IV Aid calculation worksheets was incorrectly reported to the National Student Loan Data System. See 2018 Certified Financial Statements (p. [66](#)). At the November 2019 board of trustees meeting, the external CPA firm reported that the college addressed this concern during FY2019. See Summary Findings and, Questioned Costs, and 2019 Certified Financial Statements (p. [74](#)).

### **Standard 2.D.9 – Student Loans:**

*Students receiving financial assistance are informed of any repayment obligations. The institution regularly monitors its student loan programs and the institution's loan default rate.*

The Financial Aid Office is currently contracted with RepayCentsibly, which, analyzes the institution's student loan borrower population on a weekly basis and uses targeted messaging to avoid and/or prevent delinquency and default. The NIC Financial Aid Office informs students about their repayment obligations at different intervals during the financial aid progression. As referenced in 2.D.8, the NIC Financial Aid Office notifies students of the available information regarding their repayment responsibilities on their MyNIC Self-Service, Cardinal Mail, and at studentloans.gov. Additionally, the Financial Aid Office has adopted a strict [policy](#) regarding awarding of the unsubsidized loan, as well as disbursement of all federal student loans. These efforts have helped NIC's default rates to decrease dramatically over the last 3 years, from 23 percent to 17 percent. In addition, the current draft loan default rate for the 2017 cohort is 14.6 percent. [See Cohort Default Rate as Reported on NSLDS.](#)

**Standard 2.D.10 - Advising.**

*The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates a systematic and effective program of academic advisement to support student development and success. Personnel responsible for advising students are knowledgeable of the curriculum, program requirements, and graduation requirements and are adequately prepared to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. Advising requirements and responsibilities are defined, published, and made available to students.*

NIC has a tiered advising model drawn from resources in both Student Services and Instruction. Full-time professionals in Advising and Student Success, and for TRiO, Veterans, and American Indian students are based in Student Services (See [Advising](#) organizational chart). Dedicated advisors in career technical education report through an instructional dean. (See the [Office of Instruction Organization Chart](#).) Full-time faculty have advising responsibilities primarily for students in their programs and there are personnel committed to advising in NIC's Dual Credit Office. As part of Pathways at NIC, there are currently five faculty Interest Area advisors who are selected to provide coordination and liaison functions beyond their primary teaching responsibilities. In addition, advising services are provided to students in the Silver Valley, Bonners Ferry, and Sandpoint outreach centers by a dedicated outreach/dual credit advisor reporting through Instruction. The Adult Education Center, reporting through Instruction, has a full-time advisor (See [position description](#)). Together, the college's professional and faculty advisors support students pursuing the full range of GED, career and technical education, and academic/transfer programs offered by NIC.

Advisors in all capacities at the college are expected to use the student information systems, college resources, and relevant policies and procedures to help students develop and implement a comprehensive educational plan suited to their goals.

The MyNIC student portal of the Colleague Student Information System, particularly the Student Planning and Advising modules, is an essential tool students use to prepare an educational plan, with the assistance of their advisor. In addition, Aviso Retention, implemented in 2019, is a system that facilitates early alert notifications and robust tracking of interactions with students for authorized users across campus. These systems and tools are critical for faculty and staff communication to advance student support.

Students learn the importance of these systems through multiple sources of information on advising requirements and responsibilities, including via the Advising Section of the college catalog (p. 31, and [online](#)), the [Academic Support Section](#) of the Student Handbook, and new student advising sessions for individuals or groups. (See InsideNIC [webpage](#).) The college publishes an [Advising Handbook](#) and provides other resources such as program handouts and materials associated with CTE and Health Professions programs, TRIO Student Support Services (for first-generation, low-income, and/or individuals with disabilities), veterans, and referral to other programs including Disability Support Services, and the Center for New Directions (for single parents and displaced homemakers). Advising Services uses email, phone, NIC Facebook, Twitter, and the Advising website to communicate with students to provide current information about deadlines, curriculum, program requirements, graduation, and transfer.

Professional advisors are selected based on qualifications and experience needed for delivery of such services to the diverse population enrolled at NIC and as specified in advisor position descriptions. See examples of [Student Success Advisor](#) and [Veteran and Military Services Advisor](#) position descriptions. Faculty advisors have received training on use of MyNIC and Aviso Retention. See course [training outline](#) and list of [advisor trainings](#).

In addition to professional development opportunities with organizations such as the National Academic Advising Association ([NACADA](#)) and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers ([AACRAO](#)), NIC offers periodic in-house information and training sessions for faculty and staff to help ensure they are current with curricular, technical, and student service information needed to be effective advisors. Advising Services staff, in collaboration with advising leaders among the faculty, identify advising training needs and develop training materials/workshops to meet those needs. Professional advisors responsible for advising in academic/transfer degree programs meet regularly with colleagues from top transfer institutions to ensure accurate advising for students with transfer plans. Professional advisors, in turn, train faculty advisors with this information.

Comprehensive evaluation of advising at NIC has most recently been a focus of the two instructional deans and the interim dean of Enrollment Services, as they have reflected on a set of key advising personnel changes in the last two years, the efforts to implement Pathways at NIC, and to build out a SEM plan for the college. The assessment of advising capacity and student needs are evolving, as the college establishes its new Integrated Strategic Plan. Consistent with other assessment efforts at the college, data is being collected on students' experience with advising and a CAS review has been scheduled as part of a rotation through Student Services. (See the [New Student Advising Assessment Survey report fall 2019](#), [Initial Appointment form](#), [Post-initial appointment Student Feedback form](#) and the [Student Learning Outcomes form](#).)

### **Standard 2.D.11 – Co-curricular.**

*Co-curricular activities are consistent with the institution's mission, core themes, programs, and services and are governed appropriately.*

Co-curricular programs at NIC foster student success through experiences with leadership, social involvement, citizenship, cultural enrichment, and physical and emotional health and are intended to promote development of lifelong learning in these areas. The diverse offerings provided through [Student Development](#), the Student Wellness and Recreation Program (SWRP) and the Associated Students of North Idaho College ([ASNIC](#)) clubs and programs contribute to educational excellence and instill a sense of belonging. In most cases, activities are open to students, faculty, and staff free of charge or at a minimal cost. The public is invited to attend many of these events consistent with NIC's core theme of community engagement.

The [Student Wellness and Recreation Center](#) opened in fall 2017. The center houses Recreational Sports, Fitness Programming, a climbing wall, and opportunities for members to enjoy open recreation and wellness pursuits. [Outdoor Pursuits](#) operates the Outdoor Center in McLain Hall, Sunspot Beach Rentals, and the NIC Challenge Course. Outdoor Pursuits engages students in a variety of educational activities, to learn outdoor skills, to build teams, to use and maintain equipment properly, and enjoy adventures in the natural environment beyond the classroom. Above all, the Student Wellness and Recreation Program demonstrates a commitment to creating a safe community that welcomes and respects everyone. Professionals in student services with the student interns and employees they lead ensure responsible supervision of these co-curricular programs.

[ASNIC](#) is governed through a constitution and by-laws that is regularly reviewed under the oversight of the vice president for student services. ASNIC represents the student body through college wide involvement and policy making, working hand-in-hand with administrators, staff, and faculty to make sure the students of NIC are represented in college governance and decision making. ASNIC-

sponsored volunteer programs and student clubs broaden the opportunities for student engagement at NIC.

Students, faculty, and staff have access to student club information on MyNIC under [Cardinal Life](#). The system allows for information pertaining to all of the co-curricular activities occurring on campus. Information pertaining to the governance structure of ASNIC, club meetings and activities, as well as information on how to join a club, how to participate in volunteer activities, outdoor recreation, recreational sports and a mechanism to provide feedback, is included on Cardinal Life. Information on student activities is also included in the Student Involvement section of the Student Handbook ([online](#)).

### **Standard 2.D.12 – Auxiliary Services.**

*If the institution operates auxiliary services (such as student housing, food service, and bookstore), they support the institution's mission, contribute to the intellectual climate of the campus community, and enhance the quality of the learning environment. Students, faculty, staff, and administrators have opportunities for input regarding these services.*

Auxiliary Services is comprised of the NIC Cardinal Bookstore, NIC Dining Services, NIC Residence Hall, Cardinal Card, and the Edminster Student Union Building (SUB). Each of these departments works to fulfill the mission of the college as well as maintain financial solvency. These departments have an active advisory committee comprised of students and staff who provide input regarding operational procedures and services referred to as the Student Union Advisory Board. All of these entities provide quality services and facilities to students, staff, and guests of NIC. Each program has measures in place in order to meet strategic goals and objectives in line with the college's mission and vision.

The [NIC Cardinal Bookstore](#) went through a transition two years ago from an in-house operation to a contracted operation through Follett Higher Education Group, Inc. The store is a for-profit enterprise, providing goods and services to students, faculty, staff, the college, and the general public.

[Dining Services](#) complements NIC's mission by providing students, faculty, and staff access to a variety of meal and snack options on campus. This operation was contracted with Sodexo beginning in 2019.

The [NIC Residence Hall](#) (Residence Life) houses a diverse community of 198 student occupants. The Residence Life program is dedicated to providing safe and comfortable housing and to enhancing the college experience through fun social activities, dynamic educational programs, and opportunities to become more involved with the campus living community. During summer months (mid-May through mid-August), the NIC Residence Hall joins with Dining Services and Conferencing and Events to provide facility and programming services to community groups.

The [Cardinal Card service](#), located on the first floor of the Lee Kildow Hall in Cardinal Central, is responsible for the issuance of NIC ID cards for students and employees. All students and employees require a Cardinal Card for identification purposes and to access campus facilities. The Cardinal Card can also be used for free/discounted admission to college events, and can be used to receive discounts from local businesses participating in the Students Shop Local Program. Cardinal Cash can be added to the card for dining, printing, and bookstore purchases. The Cardinal Card office was transitioned from Auxiliary Services to Cardinal Central, January 2020.

The [Edminster Student Union Building](#) (SUB) provides a welcoming and safe environment for students, employees, and guests to work and experience social, educational, cultural, and recreational activities. The SUB strives to complement the academic process and enrich the college experience by providing cultural, social, recreational, and intellectual experiences to be shared by students and the community. The SUB houses essential services (Advising and Career Services, TRIO, Student Services, and more) and provides a gathering place for students and a conferencing and events locale for students, clubs, and the community. Recently the Student Union Operations Department completed a successful program review using the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education Self-Assessment Guide. This has enabled continued and targeted quality improvement within the operation and plans are underway to extend these reviews (see [schedule of student services program reviews](#)) throughout the Student Services departments at NIC. See Student Union [Policy 5.11](#).

### **Standard 2.D.13 – Intercollegiate Athletics.**

*Intercollegiate athletic and other co-curricular programs (if offered) and related financial operations are consistent with the institution's mission and conducted with appropriate institutional oversight. Admission requirements and procedures, academic standards, degree requirements, and financial aid awards for students participating in co-curricular programs are consistent with those for other students.*

Along with recreational sports and student activities, [intercollegiate athletics](#) are an important part of NIC's student experience. Recent organizational changes, including moving the athletic director to report directly to the vice president of student services, have resulted in better integration, collaboration, and compliance with the same developmental and philosophical ideals as other co- and extracurricular areas. Students participating in co-curricular activities and intercollegiate athletics are held to the same institutional standards as all other students. A recent review of athletic facilities and operations has ensured compliance with Title IX and best practices and found no substantial inequities in programs or facilities, see [Title IX Review Report](#). The board of trustees also commissioned a study for the potential of expanding the intercollegiate athletic opportunities, but the findings of the study resulted in a decision to maintain the existing programs and provide them with consistent and improved support and facilities, see [Athletics Expansion Report](#). The change in reporting structure, the recent studies, and revision of the Athletic Handbook all occurred prior to a conference investigation that alleged three violations of association code. Further investigation revealed that two of the violations had proactively been addressed and corrected. The third violation regarding extra benefits for one athletic program resulted in sanctions that have been met, and changes in operations and personnel that have occurred.

NIC is a member of the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC) and participates in the following: Golf (Men's and Women's), Basketball (Men's and Women's), Soccer (Men's and Women's), Softball, Volleyball, and Cheerleading. NIC also participates in Wrestling as a member of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA).

Intercollegiate athletics is funded primarily through three resources:

- General fund support from the institution that goes through the same request and approval processes as other general fund budgets, which includes scholarships for athletic participation and athletic work-study.

- Designated fee support that is reviewed and approved by the Student Fee Advisory Board, Office of Finance and Business, and the board.
- Booster Club support that is provided through memberships and donations. Booster Club expenditures and processes are subject to institutional review and audit.

Expenditures for programs requesting use of Booster Club funds follow all of the institutional processes for approval and documentation. The Booster Club reimburses the institution for approved expenditures that follow annual goals and allocations. A Memorandum of Understanding between the College and the Booster Club provides specific guidance to both parties regarding operations and relationship.

Scholarship selections are made by coaches and are subject to approval by the athletic director and the vice president of student services and are subject to NWAC and NJCAA rules and regulations.

### **Standard 2.D.14 – Verification for Online.**

*The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in the distance education course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. The institution ensures the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.*

NIC complies with the United States Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) concerning the verification of student identity in [distance education](#). NIC's learning management system, Canvas, requires user authentication via input of a unique NIC network username and password. The college's cloud file sharing and collaboration options, Box and OneDrive, also require user authentication via a unique NIC network username and password. NIC uses ADFS (Active Directory Federation Services), an industry-standard authentication solution, to authenticate distance education students against active directory, the college's single source for authentication and authorization. Students are enrolled in Canvas course sites based on student registration in NIC's student information system (Ellucian Colleague). See User Authentication [Policy 3.08.05](#) and [Procedure 3.08.05](#).

Other methods used by NIC to aid in user authentication include:

- The college provides approved proctoring options for online students, including Respondus Lockdown Browse, a custom browser that locks down the testing environment within Canvas using two-factor verification.
- In-person proctoring via professional staff at NIC and other approved proctoring locations. A student's picture ID is required before each proctored test.
- Internal, instructor-controlled password protection for exams.

## Standards 2.E.1 – 2.E.4 – Library and Information Resources

### Standard 2.E.1 – Appropriate Library Resources.

*Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution holds or provides access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth, and breadth to support the institution's mission, core themes, programs, and services, wherever offered and however delivered.*

The Molstead Library is a well-equipped, 27,500 square foot facility occupying the first floor of the Molstead Library building. In addition to serving students, faculty, and staff of NIC and its outreach centers, the library is conveniently accessible to students at the Coeur d'Alene campuses of the University of Idaho (UI), Idaho State University (ISU), Boise State University (BSU), and Lewis-Clark State College (LCSC). Library resources and limited services are also available to community members throughout NIC's five-county service area. Open 68 hours per week during the academic year, the library offers in-house wireless service with multiple access points, 58 networked computer workstations, including four Macs and two Universal (accessibility) Workstations, printers with remote and in-house black and white and color print capabilities, multi-function copiers and scanners, three 10-seat group study rooms, a 28-seat classroom, and study carrel and table seating for 172.

The Molstead Library's collection consists of over 70,000 print volumes, close to 6,000 physical audio/visual titles, as well as access to just over 180,000 e-books and streaming media titles. The library subscribes to 81 electronic databases offering access to over 77,000 full-text periodical titles.

In addition, the library continues to expand its collection of over 2,500 Native American titles, in keeping with the [9-Point Agreement](#) between NIC and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe signed in 1998. The library actively promotes and markets this important feature of the collection.

Working closely with library staff and NIC teaching faculty, the public services/collection development librarian regularly conducts assessments of the collection's strength, currency, and use ([see Selection Criteria](#)). Collection evaluation is based on its value to the curriculum and the community served, in the context of NIC's mission, values, budget, and long-range planning priorities. Analyses use both quantitative and qualitative data, including reviews of the collection for relevance, age or timeliness, and the availability of resources through cooperative collection agreements with area libraries.

In addition to a wealth of print resources, Molstead Library engages students by offering 24-hour, remote access to a rich collection of electronic resources. Two of its most heavily used database collections, available through EBSCO and ProQuest, represent over 114,677 sessions and 367,856 searches during the last academic year. A recently implemented library management and discovery system (Alma/Primo by Ex Libris), an updated [website](#), and the addition of new, college wide single sign-on applications have also significantly streamlined the remote login and search process for library patrons. Further, [online appointment scheduling](#) and desktop videoconferencing, available through the use of platforms such as Zoom and Canvas, have given librarians more opportunities to serve and support on-campus students, distance learners, and off-campus programs. Molstead Library is an institutional partner that supports the mission and vision of NIC. As such, the library offers quality resources and innovative programs to support the curricula of the college, and to encourage information literacy, stimulate critical thinking, and facilitate an intellectual curiosity leading to lifelong learning.

### **Standard 2.E.2 – Library Planning.**

*Planning for library and information resources is guided by data that include feedback from affected users and appropriate library and information resources faculty, staff, and administrators.*

Planning is the responsibility of the library's leadership team, which meets each week to set goals, to assess progress, and to share gathered information to inform decision-making about library [goals and objectives](#), programs, services, and resources. [Budget preparation](#), purchasing, collection development and program/service decisions are tied to NIC'S mission, vision and core values, and further [guided by data](#) including circulation statistics, interlibrary loan tracking, feedback forms, use of electronic resources, and assessments of collection health and usage. The library also [samples student opinion](#) at various library-sponsored contests and events. Anecdotal feedback from students, faculty, administration, and others is also assessed through a variety of formal and informal channels [by library staff participation on numerous NIC standing and ad-hoc committees](#).

The Molstead Library [collects data on usage](#), [measures user satisfaction](#), and, most recently, solicits [feedback on library instruction sessions](#) from both faculty and students. [Librarians also attend every division meeting](#) at least once per year to develop and strengthen relationships and to gather information regarding the value and use of library resources.

Through analysis of results from all sources, including [gate counts](#) and [circulation totals](#), it is clear that over the last several years, significant progress has been made to attract visitors to the Molstead Library, and that a large majority of [survey respondents](#) rate the library facility, its services, and the quality of its resources very favorably.

### **Standard 2.E.3 – Library Instruction.**

*Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution provides appropriate instruction and support for students, faculty, staff, administrators, and others (as appropriate) to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in obtaining, evaluating, and using library and information resources that support its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered.*

The library is staffed by three full-time library faculty with ALA-accredited master's degrees, three full-time professional staff, including a library director with an ALA-accredited master's degree, three full-time classified staff, and six part-time staff. The librarians of Molstead Library hold faculty status and work proactively with faculty to provide instruction that supports student success through information literacy, critical thinking, and lifelong learning. The library also assists faculty to improve the quality of their courses and to develop new curricula.

The library faculty strongly believe that the practice of librarianship in an academic setting is intrinsically a teaching activity. Molstead Library bases its library instruction principles on the Association of College and Research Libraries' (ACRL) committee document, [Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education](#). This ACRL framework serves as a tool through which librarians can develop information literacy student learning outcomes, tailor their instruction to teaching those outcomes, and then assess student learning in the context of those outcomes. [See North Idaho College – Molstead Library Instruction Plan](#). For example, the reference and instruction librarian collaborates with fellow faculty to promote library resources and embed information literacy and research skills into learning processes, assignments, and student learning outcomes across the curriculum. Electronic [research guides](#) are also developed collaboratively by librarians as companion



pieces to instructional sessions, as stand-alone resources, or in support of faculty development and administrative initiatives.

The Molstead Library offers an array of services to help students, faculty, and staff to use library resources independently and effectively. Most on-demand library teaching activities occur at the reference (information) desk, where library faculty, assisted by highly-qualified reference assistants and professional staff, offer in-depth, one-on-one consultations to students in the use of the library, and in finding and selecting relevant and authoritative resources. Along with day-to-day teaching moments with students at the information desk, over the last several years librarians have also participated in “INside NIC” college orientation sessions, individual and classroom library orientation sessions, and have partnered with numerous NIC faculty to conduct subject-specific instructional classes. These multiple points of contact give students opportunities to meet librarians, receive help with classroom assignments, and learn the crucial fundamentals of research and information literacy.

Library faculty and staff also develop web-based instructional tools, including online research guides and tutorials to support classroom instruction or distance learning, facilitate independent use of the library, and to serve as quick entrees to subject collections, resources, or library processes. Since the hiring of a faculty librarian tasked with coordinating instruction efforts, librarians are more proactively involved with NIC faculty in teaching course-integrated library instruction programs ([see Library Instruction – In Practice](#)).

Librarians will continue to find new ways to collaborate with NIC faculty to integrate information literacy sessions into their curriculum. Additionally, Molstead librarians will continue to expand their in-class, one-on-one, or virtual reference offerings to distance learners through Canvas, at NIC’s off-campus outreach centers, and at the local high schools offering courses through the Dual Credit Program.

#### **Standard 2.E.4 – Library Resources Evaluation and Protection.**

*The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the quality, adequacy, utilization, and security of library and information resources and services, including those provided through cooperative arrangements, wherever offered and however delivered.*

Short- and long-term assessment, planning and evaluation takes place in numerous meetings and discussions both within the library, and with other academic departments including administration. Weekly library leadership meetings are attended by the library director, faculty librarians, the circulation/inter-library loan (ILL) supervisor, and the coordinator of learning resources’ technology. In addition to, or as part of their normal duties and functions, library faculty and staff also [serve on numerous standing and ad hoc committees](#) that participate in institutional planning.

Each year, and as an outgrowth of internal and external planning activities, the library director submits to the VPI, a [list of departmental goals](#), and the methods that will be used to evaluate the success or progress toward achieving each goal. Goal setting and planning are based on numerous quantitative and qualitative self-evaluation measures that assess and appraise the quality, adequacy, use, and security of the library’s collections, resources, and services. Use of services is generally measured through [data gathering](#), such as hourly and daily gate counts, circulation of books and other media, library instruction sessions and attendance counts, interlibrary loan tracking, and electronic database use. Service quality is measured using such methods as [student opinion surveys](#), library instruction feedback forms, and [relationships with faculty, staff, and students](#) throughout the college that offer input on program effectiveness and services. Assessing the adequacy of the collection is

guided by [library collection management guidelines](#) and quality reviews, include ILL requests/loans statistics, liaisons with faculty and other subject experts, circulation statistics, and internal inventories to assess the general health and use of the collection.

The Molstead Library has recently implemented a new library management and discovery system, Ex Libris Alma and Primo, which offers patrons quick and easy access to library resources, with multi-tier access control, including Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption, to protect sensitive patron information. This cloud-based system, compatible with NIC's single sign-on (SSO) system, also conforms to FERPA guidelines and other security industry best practices.

To further engage students, the Molstead Library offers 24-hour, remote access to a rich collection of electronic resources, including over 180,000 e-books and streaming media titles and 77,000 full-text periodical titles. Flipster, an easy-to-use, conveniently accessible digital magazine newsstand, was also recently added.

The Molstead Library participates in numerous local, regional, and national cooperative sharing arrangements, including Libraries Very Interested in Sharing (LVIS), a no-charge resource sharing group; the Washington Idaho Network (WIN), which consists of a consortium of academic libraries located in Eastern Washington, Oregon, and Idaho; Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), a worldwide library cataloging and sharing cooperative; and the Orbis Cascade Courier Service, which operates a physical delivery network for exchanging library materials across nearly 200 libraries in three states.

## Standards 2.F.1 – 2.F.8 – Financial Resources

### **Standard 2.F.1 – Financial Stability and Planning.**

*The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and reserves to support its programs and services. Financial planning reflects available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term solvency and anticipate long-term obligations, including payment of future liabilities.*

The college computes the Composite Financial Index (CFI) annually to measure financial stability as part of the Core Theme Report. The CFI is an index developed by the National Association of College and University Business Officers that shows the relative financial health of an institution. The CFI is derived using four ratios: Primary Reserve Ratio, Viability Ratio, Return on Net Assets Ratio and Net Operating Revenue Ratio. The ratios provide answers to specific questions and provide a baseline for ongoing evaluation of capacity and effectiveness. Primary Reserve Ratio: Are resources sufficient and flexible enough to support the mission? Viability Ratio: Are debt resources managed strategically to advance the mission? Return on Net Assets Ratio: Does asset performance and management support the strategic direction? Net Operating Revenues Ratio: Do operating results indicate the institution is living within available resources? Over the past four years, the college's CFI ranges from a 4.86 (FY'17) to a 6.71 (FY'15). A CFI score of 3 is the threshold of institutional financial health. A score of less than 3 indicates a need for serious attention to the institution's financial condition. The college has managed resources effectively with financial statements from the last four years that reflect positive cash flows and positive changes in net positions. The college has maintained a cash reserve

that represents 15 percent of all budgetary expenditures. An exhibit reflecting the CFI score since 2011 is included in 5.B.1.

NIC has instituted the following policy and procedures regarding financial planning and budget development and to provide proper stewardship of college funds: Cash Management and Investments [Policy 7.01.07](#), Business and Facilities Operations [Policy 2.03.02](#), Administrative Services Operational [Guidelines](#), Use and Limit of Debt [Policy 7.01.08](#), and Continuous Professional Service Contracts [Policy 7.01.04](#). The board is engaged and regularly reviews the [campus long range plan](#) including financing options (See board minutes, [May 2018, p. 4](#), [September 2018, pp. 1-2](#), [October 2018, pp. 1-2](#), and [August 2019, p. 1](#)).

With the goal of minimizing operational risk, the college has used two financing options for the construction of new facilities identified on the Facilities Master Plan. First, In May 2016, the board formally established a reserve designated for the purpose of future capital investment. This reserve is used for acquisition of property, new construction, execution of college infrastructure improvements, expansion or renovation of existing facilities or IT infrastructure improvements. The Parker Technical Educational Center (Parker) in Rathdrum was completed in 2016 and funded primarily from this reserve. Second, in spring 2016, the college financed a Student Wellness and Recreation Center through the Dormitory Housing Commission (DHC) of North Idaho, a separate legal entity sanctioned by Idaho Statute to enter into debt for the purpose of providing dormitories or other facilities for the feeding and recreation of students. An \$87 per semester fee paid by the student body is the pledged funding stream for these revenue bonds.

As mentioned previously, Parker, located in Rathdrum, opened in 2016. The 110,000 square foot facility, built at a cost of approximately \$20 million, offers state-of-the-art Trades and Industry programs. The project was funded by NIC's allocated capital funds along with approximately \$5 million raised privately by the North Idaho College Foundation used to supply equipment and develop CTE program scholarship funds. The building was financed without the use of debt.

### **Standard 2.F.2 - Resource Planning and Development.**

*Resource planning and development include realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and responsible projections of grants, donations, and other non-tuition revenue sources.*

As a guideline, the college works to ensure that no more than 33.3 percent of the general fund budget for the institution comes from student tuition and fees. This guideline serves as a key indicator in measuring fulfillment on the Core Theme of Stewardship. In FY18, 26 percent of general fund budgeted revenue was attributable to student tuition and fees, in FY19, 26 percent and in FY20, 27 percent.

Following the larger enrollment increases during the great recession, NIC has focused on ensuring resource planning and development through a more comprehensive approach seeking and sourcing new revenue and support streams such as grants and investing in changes that will produce greater revenues in areas such as the Workforce Training Center (WTC) to help offset declining enrollments and state funding. For example, the WTC set a target for revenue as recommended from their 2016 LERN program review. See 4.A.6. The initial goal based upon input from the external review was set at \$2,000,000 by 2022. The WTC developed strategies and now has achieved this goal (\$2,485,454 in FY2019). See [LERN Financial Screenshot](#).

In 2015, NIC was awarded \$6.4 million through the US Department of Labor’s Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant program. The TAACCCT grant supported the Idaho Center of Excellence (ICE) Healthcare Partnership, a consortium including two four-year institution partners. The project created five new healthcare training programs for growing occupations and enhanced or expanded seven additional programs. The project has awarded over 2,500 credentials to over 2,000 participants, most of whom came through NIC. This is an example of how the college has continued to leverage new resource streams to develop new programs and expand services to students within the landscape of changing resource allocations. There are other examples of NIC’s success in obtaining outside grants to assist with the development of new programs funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Commerce located in the preface and also in 4.B.2 under improvements for Core Theme Objective 4.1.

The college continues to experience tremendous support from the NIC Foundation. Notably in 2018, the college received the largest single gift in its history. This gift from Bob and Leona DeArmond was designated in support of helping develop long-term sustainable college programs and scholarships. In addition, the college has continued to work with the Governor and legislative leaders to ensure continued support for the college. During the 2019 legislative session, the college supported a proposed transition to an Outcomes Based Funding (OBF) model for higher education that would have increased direct state funding for NIC compared to the current Enrollment Workload Adjustment model. While the transition to OBF was ultimately not supported by the new Governor, this demonstrates the college’s continued efforts to work with the legislature to advocate for sustaining support.

As a major part of “non-tuition” revenue, NIC plans extensively to ensure that auxiliary enterprise revenue exceeds expenses and contributes to the budget. *See 2.F.6.*

Business Office and Facilities Operation [Policy 2.03.02](#) authorizes the Administrative Services Operational [Guidelines](#) that provide direction for major functions of budget planning and expenditures, including non-tuition revenue sources such as federal and state grants. Grants Coordination [Policy 7.03.01](#), [Procedure 7.03.01](#), Fundraising [Policy 7.03](#), and [Procedure 7.03](#) also provide guidance and responsibilities for grants and fundraising efforts at NIC.

### **Standard 2.F.3 – Policies for Financial Planning.**

*The institution clearly defines and follows its policies, guidelines, and processes for financial planning and budget development that include appropriate opportunities for participation by its constituencies.*

As highlighted in 2.F.2, Business Office and Facilities Operation [Policy 2.03.02](#) authorizes the Administrative Services Operational [Guidelines](#) that provides direction for major functions of budget planning and expenditures. One of the designated responsibilities of the board, as outlined in Responsibilities [Policy 2.01.02](#), is to adopt the annual budget.

The annual budget process has evolved to meet changing needs by actively engaging campus stakeholders. The budget process is launched annually using college wide open forums with administration presenting assumptions, guidelines, templates and timelines. Budget managers facilitate budget review and planning conversations within their areas. These conversations review the current budget year as well as the resources that will be needed for the next fiscal year. Resource allocation is aligned with operational goals, the core theme of stewardship, and strategic planning. Budget managers are assigned a manager in the Office of Finance and Business to assist with

budgeting questions and to participate in discussions. During the time the budget managers are creating their requests, the Office of Finance develops revenue estimates for state funding, property taxes and tuition revenue based on enrollment and tuition rate changes. See the [Office of Finance and Business Budget & Accounting](#) SharePoint site.

Each budget manager meets with his or her supervisor and the Office of Finance budget team to lead a discussion of the priorities established by the division. Requests are input into the budgeting system and new funding tracking spreadsheets.

During budget development, the administration hosts several public meetings where the college community may learn and provide feedback. See [NICNow, November 19, 2019](#) and [NICNow, May 9, 2019](#). The meetings are recorded and made available for viewing by employees unable to attend the meetings. The vice president for finance and business affairs also provides an update to both the Senate and Faculty and Staff Assemblies.

As salary and benefits comprise a major component of the budget, Meet and Confer [Policy 3.02.24](#) and [Procedure 3.02.24](#), provide for a committee with representatives from Faculty Assembly, Staff Assembly, the administration and Human Resources to develop recommendations on a salary and benefit package to be considered as part of the board's annual budget deliberations.

At the conclusion of the various budget meetings, the Office of Finance consolidates all budget requests with the revenue projections and mandated required adjustments (such as salary increases, benefit cost increases and fixed costs increases). Once this occurs, the budget will either show a deficit or surplus which will result in a further discussion by President's Cabinet until a balanced budget can be achieved.

The board is engaged in the process by holding workshops and special meetings for updates from the administration on the budget. Examples include budget workshops on [May 9, 2017](#) and [November 20, 2019](#).

The final proposal that is presented to the board for approval is a comprehensive budget reflecting all sources of revenues and expenditures under the financial control of the college for the upcoming year.

### **Standard 2.F.4 – Accounting.**

*The institution ensures timely and accurate financial information through its use of an appropriate accounting system that follows generally accepted accounting principles and through its reliance on an effective system of internal controls.*

As previously reported in 2.F.1-2.F.3, the Administrative Services Operational Guidelines provide guidance for budget and accounting processes as delegated by Business and Facilities Operation [Policy 2.03.02](#). Direction from the board is designed to provide an effective system of internal controls that include Student Activity Fee Fund [Policy 5.12](#) and [Procedure 5.12](#), Continuous Professional Service Contract [Policy 7.01.04](#), Cash Management and Investments [Policy 7.01.07](#), and Use and Limit of Debt [Policy 7.01.08](#).

NIC has used Colleague as its Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system since 1997. Colleague is a standard software solution for educational institutions and provides reliable support for the college's accounting functions. The software is used to account for all institutional financial transactions and

follows generally accepted accounting principles. Financial reports for individual departments are updated daily and are available to all budget managers. The Office of Finance and Business produces a month-end close calendar to communicate deadlines for paperwork and expected timeframes for monthly statements.

All transactions that originate outside the Office of Finance and Business are checked either through the ERP or manually when processing the paperwork for authorized approvals. Access to the ERP is controlled by role-based profiles with an additional level of security to define access to appropriate budget codes.

The staff of the Office of Finance and Business maintains a comprehensive webpage with all instructions, forms, and contact information pertinent to anyone who needs to interface with the office. In addition, newly hired employees with administrative support responsibilities are invited to come to the office for one-on-one training. The available online resources, orientation, and ongoing support of budget managers help ensure the integrity of NIC's financial accounting.

The college audits occurring within the current accreditation cycle were unmodified (clean). Reports from the external auditor confirm an effective system of internal controls and timely and accurate reporting of the financial information of the college.

### **Standard 2.F.5 – Capital Outlay.**

*Capital budgets reflect the institution's mission and core theme objectives and relate to its plans for physical facilities and acquisition of equipment. Long-range capital plans support the institution's mission and goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership, equipment, furnishing, and operation of new or renovated facilities. Debt for capital outlay purposes is periodically reviewed, carefully controlled, and justified, so as not to create an unreasonable drain on resources available for educational purposes.*

The [Facilities Master Plan](#) provides a framework and planning direction for the future development of the campus and provides direction for future capital planning. The purpose of the plan is to forecast future student growth that is likely to occur, to identify changes that will likely take place in delivery methods, offered courses, campus technology and to identify physical plant improvements needed to meet these changes. The plan was last updated in 2018 and is described in 3.A.4.

The board has authorized the use of a [plant fund](#) in the annual budget to manage revenue and expenditures of capital expenses and maintenance and repair items for the college. As part of the budgeting process, the administration reviews all revenues and potential grant opportunities (grants/funds from state and local governments and other entities) as well as related expenditures in the plant fund.

The Facilities Master Plan and the capital budget are both managed by the vice president for finance and business affairs.

NIC utilizes the North Idaho Dormitory Housing Commission (DHC) for debt relating to capital projects (See 2.F.6). There are three series of bonds (2008, 2012, and 2016) outstanding. The board and administration annually review long-term debt associated with capital expenditures for potential refinancing opportunities to take advantage of lower interest rates in the related bond markets. As a condition for the issuance of debt, NIC holds in reserve, an amount equal to the largest principal and interest payment for the bonds.

Outside of the DHC, NIC does not have any outstanding debt. The college has no financial obligation to pay the debts of the DHC. It does, however, have responsibility to collect the fees and revenue pledged to the bonds. With the establishment of the capital investment reserve, the college has set aside a revenue stream with the purpose of financing the construction or renovation of facilities. The fund was used to construct the Parker Technical Education Center without the use of debt. Pursuant to the Facilities Master Plan, the fund will assist in funding other identified projects such as the expansion of the Meyer Health Sciences building.

As part of the annual Core Theme Report, the college measures the performance of auxiliary enterprises. Every year, auxiliary services generate sufficient revenue to cover the direct costs of operations, as measured in College Campus Measure (CCM) 170. This measure falls under the Core Theme of Stewardship. The college's ability to cover principal and interest payments on part of the bonds is dependent on the performance of all of NIC's auxiliary services. See Use and Limit of Debt [Policy 7.01.08](#).

### **Standard 2.F.6 –Auxiliary**

*The institution defines the financial relationship between its general operations and its auxiliary enterprises, including any use of general operations funds to support auxiliary enterprises or the use of funds from auxiliary services to support general operations.*

Auxiliary Operations serves the college's mission and core values by serving as a multi-functional complement to the learning environment – enhancing the quality of campus life by connecting quality people, products, services, and facilities to students, faculty, staff, and guests of the college.

The operating units that comprise Auxiliary Operations include the Cardinal Bookstore, NIC Dining Services, Residence Life, Student Union Operations, Student Wellness and Recreation Center, and Auxiliary Financial Services. Each unit is well-established as part of the business of the college and supports student success.

Auxiliary Operations collaborates with the Office of Finance and Business and operates under the same organizational policies, guidelines, and accounting practices as outlined in the Administrative Services Operational [Guidelines](#). Other policies applicable to auxiliary services include Student Union [Policy 5.11](#), and Student Activity Fee Funds [Policy 5.12](#) and [Procedure 5.12](#).

Auxiliary Operations' annual results are included in the college's Annual Report. Financial decisions are collective and shared between the Auxiliary Operations accountant and the department managers, within college authorized approval levels. The college's vice president for student services, vice president for finance and business, and the college controller provide administrative oversight.

As mentioned in 2.F.5, the college measures the performance of auxiliary services as part of the annual Core Theme Report.

Annual budgets are developed by each department within Auxiliary Operations, reviewed by college administration, and presented for approval to the [North Idaho College Dormitory Housing Commission](#) (DHC). The DHC, a three-person body appointed by the Governor of the state of Idaho, maintains financial oversight over the Auxiliary Operations financial functions per Idaho Statute [Title 33 Education](#) – Chapter 21. The DHC cedes operational control to the college, functioning departmentally as Auxiliary Operations.

The DHC operations generally follow college budget recommendations regarding student enrollment forecasts and employee wage and benefit adjustments. Operating funds are generated from the sales and rental of products, services, and facilities, student fees, and commissions from contractual partnerships. As mentioned in 2.F.5, annual revenues are expected to meet the annual cost of operations, and the principal and interest of any outstanding bonds, including a reserve sufficient to meet the largest principal and interest payments.

### **Standard 2.F.7 – Auditing.**

*For each year of operation, the institution undergoes an annual external financial audit by professionally qualified personnel in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. The audit is to be completed no later than nine months after the end of the fiscal year. Results from the audit, including findings and management letter recommendations, are considered annually in an appropriate and comprehensive manner by the administration and the governing board.*

The college contracts with an independent external audit firm to conduct an audit each fiscal year as required by state law, the federal government and other interested parties. For the past four years, [Eide Bailly, LLC](#) has conducted and prepared the college's annual audit report. In June of each year, the auditors perform single audit and expenditure testing. In September of each year, field work is performed. The audit, including a [management letter](#), is presented to the board for acceptance no later than November of each year. See [Current \(2019\) Audited Financial Statements](#).

The external auditor granted unmodified (clean) opinions during this accreditation cycle. In 2015, NIC received a material weakness about internal control and the lack of procedures to ensure management is able to prepare their own financial statements (see 2015 Certified Financial Statements, p. [60](#)). The administration responded by preparing interim financial statements during the year and financial statements annually. See [Summary Schedule of Prior Year Audit Findings FY2016](#).

From 2015 to 2018, the college received significant findings relating to the awarding of financial aid. There were instances in which the students' withdrawal date per the Return of Title IV Aid calculation worksheets was not reported to the National Student Loan Data System (see 2018 Certified Financial Statements, p. [66](#)). At the November 2019 board of trustees meeting, the external CPA firm reported that the college addressed this concern during FY2019. See 2019 Certified Financial Statements, pp. [74-75](#).

### **Standard 2.F.8 – Fundraising.**

*All institutional fundraising activities are conducted in a professional and ethical manner and comply with governmental requirements. If the institution has a relationship with a fundraising organization that bears its name and whose major purpose is to raise funds to support its mission, the institution has a written agreement that clearly defines its relationship with that organization.*

Advancement activities for NIC are primarily coordinated through the Development Department, which encompasses Alumni Relations, Grants, and the NIC Foundation, Inc., a separate IRS Section 501 (c)(3) entity that is independent of the college, and organized under the [NIC Articles of Incorporation](#) and the [NIC Foundation Bylaws](#). The department reports directly to the college president through the director of development, who also serves as executive director of the NIC Foundation, Inc. and is a member of President's Cabinet.



Fundraising activities are conducted in a professional and ethical manner and comply with governmental requirements as well as fundraising best practices. The development director has over 27 years of experience as a development officer, possesses the Certified Fund-Raising Executive (CFRE) international certification, and has been actively engaged at the regional and national level. Fundraising [Policy 7.03](#) and [Procedure 7.03](#), Grants Coordination [Policy 7.03.01](#) and [Procedure 7.03.01](#) formally guide fundraising and grant coordination at NIC. [The Operating Agreement](#) between NIC and the NIC Foundation describes the relationship between the two entities.

A very popular fundraiser for the NIC Foundation is the [Really Big Raffle](#). For the past 27 years, the NIC Foundation raises funds for the materials used in the construction of a new home by the students enrolled in [NIC's Carpentry program](#). Every summer, the NIC Foundation sells a set number of raffle tickets. The winner of the house, along with winners of other generous prizes, is announced during the Really Big Raffle Drawing. Over \$422,000 in prizes will be given away at the next drawing on July 15, 2020.

The majority of resources or income held and invested by the foundation is donor restricted to the activities of the college. Because these restricted resources held by the foundation can only be used by, or for the benefit of NIC, the NIC Foundation is considered a component unit of the college.

The [NIC Booster Club](#), organized in the 1960s, is a separate non-profit organization that supports intercollegiate athletics, primarily through memberships. A board also directs the Booster Club.

The Development Department stewards college policy and procedure to coordinate fundraising efforts of the college. The college president oversees the development department, serves as the secretary of the NIC Foundation, and the college vice president for student services serves as the college liaison for the booster club.

## Standards 2.G.1 – 2.G.8: Physical and Technical Infrastructure

### Standard 2.G.1 - Physical Infrastructure.

*Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution creates and maintains physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support the institution's mission, programs, and services.*

The physical facilities and campuses at NIC are accessible, safe, secure, support the college's mission and provide for quality learning and working environments. As part of the Cultivate NIC integrated strategic planning work conducted collegewide in 2018, the college developed an updated [Facilities Master Plan](#) and instituted a system to quantify and track deferred maintenance.

Through the Facilities Master Plan, college leadership is aware of the current status of existing facilities, and is able to make informed decisions regarding the need for any additional structures. Annually, the board sets aside \$2,500,000 into a [capital reserve](#) for the purpose of capital improvements.

In the past three years over 175,000 square feet of new construction has been added to support student learning and wellness including the 115,000 square foot Parker Technical Education Center (Parker) that relocated most of the college's trades programs to a larger, state-of-the-art facility in Rathdrum. As mentioned in the preface, the college recently celebrated the opening of the Bob and Leona DeArmond College and University Center. In this facility, NIC combined the recruiting and admissions functions for prospective students in one location, to learn about NIC's programs and to assist with the admissions process.

An additional 90,000 square feet of facility space has undergone major renovation. The administration has undertaken several deferred maintenance and remodel projects since 2015. See the Permanent Building Fund Advisory Council (PBFAC) Funding and Projects for [2015](#), [2016](#), [2017](#), [2018](#), and [2019](#). See NIC Deferred Maintenance and Remodel Projects since [2015](#), [2016](#), [2017](#), [2018](#), and [2019](#).

Additionally, the college also procured new software, the 25 Live facilities scheduler, to manage room usage across NIC and measure efficiency to provide information to inform future project needs. As an example, data on lab usage and subscription rates was vital in the decision to launch an expansion of the Meyer Health and Science Building.

As reflected in the 2018 Facilities Assessment Report included in the Facilities Master Plan, most of the college's facilities are in good working order and are well maintained as evidenced by the Facility Condition Index (FCI) score, which is part of the Stewardship Core Theme measures. This is due, in large part, to the efforts and stewardship of the Facilities Operations team and collaboration with stakeholders and users across the college.

To ensure safe, secure facilities, the college publishes [Key and Building Security Guidelines](#) as part of the Administrative Services Operational Guidelines that address building access, including key and electronic cards.

The college uses several procedures to assess the adequacy of physical space including software to track deferred maintenance ([Ameresco screen shot](#)) and participation in annual State Safety Reviews. See safety inspections [2019-2020](#), [2018-2019](#), [2017-2018](#), and [Facility Report Recommendations](#).

The college adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as detailed in Accommodations for Students and Employees with Disabilities [Policy 5.13](#) and [Procedure 5.13](#). State Safety Reviews also cover access requirements under ADA.

NIC received the designation of Tree Campus USA from the Arbor Day Foundation. The college met five standards and implemented a service learning project for students. Details are described in 4.B.2, Objective 4.1.

### **Standard 2.G.2 – Safety.**

*The institution adopts, publishes, reviews regularly, and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the safe use, storage, and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials.*

The college has appropriate policies and procedures addressing the safe use, storage and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials. The college is listed as a [very small quantity generator](#) with Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) (See email communication to IDEQ – [January 27, 2018](#) and [November 25, 2019](#)) and has a college-wide collection and tracking process to ensure

appropriate and safe disposal. In addition, members of the college facilities leadership team regularly visit areas and conduct safety audits to provide guidance and ensure compliance.

With the addition of the Parker Technical Education Center and the Aerospace Center the college has centralized the management of chemical hygiene and disposal to the director of facilities to ensure that all programs and locations are operating safely and within college guidelines and laws. The director of facilities works closely with the Natural Sciences Division lab manager to coordinate all chemical safety efforts across college locations and ensure accurate inventory and disposal (See the Division of [Natural Sciences Plan Chemical Hygiene Plan](#)). The college has a risk management committee that includes both the director of facilities and Natural Science lab manager. In an effort to ensure a safer learning environment and better management of toxic materials, the college removed all underground fuel storage tanks on the main campus during the development of the DeArmond College and University Center and now utilizes a commercial fuel card system for procurement of campus fuel needs.

North Idaho College engages Clean Harbors for all hazardous waste management and emergency spill response. Clean Harbors is North America's leading provider of environmental services. The Company serves a diverse customer base, including a majority of Fortune 500 companies. Its customer base spans a number of industries, including chemical, energy and manufacturing, as well as numerous government agencies. These customers rely on Clean Harbors to deliver a broad range of services such as end-to-end hazardous waste management, emergency spill response, industrial cleaning and maintenance, and recycling services.

Clean Harbors provides an online record of all hazardous waste disposals that assists the college in complying with all governmental reporting requirements to ensure operations as a very small quantity generator. (See the [Clean Harbors Agreement](#) and the [Hazardous Waste Disposal Log](#).)

### **Standard 2.G.3 – Facilities.**

*The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a master plan for its physical development that is consistent with its mission, core themes, and long-range educational and financial plans.*

With broad input from stakeholder groups and oversight from the board, the college developed an updated [Facilities Master Plan](#) in 2018. This process was led by a diverse team of faculty and staff that received input from each department and unit on campus through peer led meetings. This master plan has been established in concert with the Academic Master Plan and is intended to be responsive to changing instructional needs. Throughout 2018 and 2019, the board has met regularly in workshops to provide direction on priorities and funding options to move the master plan forward. See board minutes, [October 2018, pp. 1-2](#) and [December 2019, p. 3](#).

Beginning with the acquisition of the (approximately) 18 acre mill site in 2009, the college has worked toward a comprehensive plan to cohesively bring together, the full footprint of the campus. In 2012, with the adoption of a [planned unit development](#) (PUD) to vision and establish a plan approved by the city of Coeur d'Alene, the college has worked to look to future needs and ensure strategic funding strategies to achieve long term facilities goals and needs. With the approval of the PUD, the college, in partnership with the city of Coeur d'Alene and the urban renewal district, added additional entrances to campus and created an enhanced presence along Northwest Boulevard, creating easier access to campus and developing roads and utility infrastructure for future development. In 2017, the college received funding in partnership with Lewis-Clark State College and University of Idaho to establish

the first building on the former mill site, a joint facility known as the Bob and Leona DeArmond College and University Center. In 2019, the college built a permanent parking lot in conjunction with the completion of this facility on what had been gravel parking lots. This was in keeping with the commitments within the PUD and [campus long range plan](#) work.

The college also completed substantial work on campus planning in 2013 with the development of Parker. The decision to locate the new CTE facility on the site in Rathdrum involved substantial planning work, looking at potential sites on the main campus in Coeur d'Alene, Post Falls and Rathdrum. With the decision to locate this facility in Rathdrum, the college developed a site plan for 10 acres of the 40-acre site, with a focus on future site expansion, including a commitment to complete roads and infrastructure around the site as development requires.

In further support of the campus long range plan, the college completed a development agreement with the City of Coeur d'Alene in 2018 to fund the development and landscaping of the vacated railway corridor between Hubbard Avenue and River Avenue along Northwest Boulevard. As part of this agreement, the city has removed all setback restrictions allowing the college to fully develop land assets along the northeast portions of the main campus.

### **Standard 2.G.4 – Equipment.**

*Equipment is sufficient in quantity and quality and managed appropriately to support institutional functions and fulfillment of the institution's mission, accomplishment of core theme objectives, and achievement of goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services.*

NIC maintains adequate equipment to support the college's programs and mission. While securing funding for the acquisition of new and replacement equipment is a challenge, the college allocates available resources to ensure continued operations and enhancements. The college manages replacement lists with [information technology](#), [custodial equipment](#), and [landscape equipment](#) to track the useful life of current equipment and to provide guidance during the budget planning process.

Since 2014, 23 individual classrooms across the college have been updated with new equipment and instructional furnishings. The college has adopted a standard for all instructional furniture after seeking feedback and conducting a review process with faculty and students. In 2016 the college established an annual allocation of more than \$115,000 for instructional furniture replacement. This has allowed the college to begin an ongoing regular update of all classrooms across the college.

The VPI manages a dedicated funding stream that provides for the adequate maintenance and replacement. This dedicated fund, created through an allocation of \$5 per student credit hour, is designated for instructional equipment replacement and was recently utilized to provide more than \$120,000 of funding. The purchases from this fund over the past four years have been budgeted in NIC's [plant fund](#).

The Idaho Division of Career and Technical Education (ICTE) has historically supported new equipment needs for career and technical programs through program line items or through Perkins funding. NIC has been successful in obtaining grants to fund equipment needs. For example, NIC received a \$6.4 million TAACCT grant and part of the proceeds were used for equipment for the Simulation Center for Nursing and Health Professions programs. Technology for the Simulation Center was also partially funded by a grant from the NIC Foundation.

NIC funds equipment for maintenance of facilities and infrastructure equipment through the general fund budget. A facilities team reviews current inventory, including procurements over the past four

years, and makes budget recommendations for equipment replacement. The college has invested \$280,000 in facilities equipment replacement, including notable upgrades to landscape equipment, equipment for snow removal and updates to the college's transportation fleet. Facilities has a rolling equipment replacement schedule for all equipment based on useful life. In addition, the college utilizes lease and rental equipment for specific projects where advantageous.

### **Standard 2.G.5 – Technology Systems & Infrastructure.**

*Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution has appropriate and adequate technology systems and infrastructure to support its management and operational functions, academic programs, and support services, wherever offered and however delivered.*

NIC's Information Technology Department (IT) provides critical administrative and academic support through infrastructure and technology solutions that promote the mission and core themes of the college. IT is responsible for the network and computing infrastructure used by faculty, staff, students, partners, and college visitors. In order to meet this challenging need, IT has completed several projects over the last few years to enhance its infrastructure and communication technologies. Improvements were also made to all of the college's outreach centers and are listed in the document [Improvements to Infrastructure and Communications Technology](#).

NIC has also implemented many of its newer enterprise systems as a "Software as a Service" model (SaaS). By utilizing SaaS as a key resource for enterprise systems, IT does not need to focus resources on hardware or personnel costs to deal with updates and localized failures. These services provide highly available and secure services at the main campus and at the NIC's outreach centers. Improvements to IT services are summarized in the document [Information Technology Service Improvements](#).

These tools, along with others provide a robust set of technology services to students. In addition to the tools listed above, IT also receives funding for accessible technology for the college. IT has leveraged this resource to acquire some of the systems listed, and now ensures that any public facing service is accessible and meets the current standards of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines ([WCAG](#)) 2.0 before a contract is signed with the vendor. Vendor's must also provide a current Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) to show that they meet current ADA standards.

### **Standard 2.G.6 – Technical Instruction and Support.**

*The institution provides appropriate instruction and support for faculty, staff, students, and administrators in the effective use of technology and technology systems related to its programs, services, and institutional operations.*

IT and eLearning provide support and training opportunities to faculty, staff, and students in many different ways.

The helpdesk uses an online ticketing tool called [Team Dynamix](#). This system allows users to submit issues online. Once submitted, the user will then receive email updates about any and all changes to a ticket's status. The helpdesk also takes phone calls and supports walk-ins from any NIC user. The ticketing system provides a record of every incident or request, and provides quick and prompt feedback to the users. A satisfaction survey is also sent to users when tickets are closed. The helpdesk can also conduct chat sessions with users, through which, a support technician can initiate a shared

session with a user and provide remote technical support while talking to the user. IT documents and maintains user training materials for a variety of technical services at NIC. IT maintains a [searchable knowledgebase](#) and [service catalog](#) via the Team Dynamix support portal. The college added seven new information technology policies and procedures and has revised two others since the mid-cycle review. The policies are covered under 3.08.01 – 3.08.09 of the policy manual and are included in the [Standard Two wiki](#). Microsoft SharePoint is also used as a storage medium for documentation.

IT provides face-to-face training each semester on a variety of topics such as using Office 365, classroom and interactive video conferencing technology, and specialized training which can be requested by any department at NIC. IT attends every new employee and student orientation event to make a connection with users. IT provides information and support the first week of every semester by visiting classes and setting up information desks in several campus buildings.

IT has recently created a course in Canvas, the college's learning management system, that provides mandatory security awareness training to all college employees in accordance with Security and Awareness Training [Policy 3.08.08](#). IT is working on creating more online courses for both faculty and students in the future to further their knowledge and use of systems.

IT supports interactive video courses (IVC) in many ways. An IT support person or delegate physically visits each IVC course to ensure that the hardware and connection are established so that instructors do not need to take class time to make sure the technology is working. IT also monitors IVC courses carefully to see if a connection is lost or if there are any other issues with the technology.

The office of eLearning provides specialized training and support for faculty, staff, and students on educational technologies utilized by the college. Students, staff, and faculty are provided with customized documentation and resources in a variety of locations on the NIC website, and within the LMS in both faculty and student orientation courses.

eLearning offers face-to-face and webinar training workshops on a regular schedule or by request (individual or by divisions) on the best practices for using the LMS, as well as other educational technologies such as lecture capture, streaming media hosting, anti-plagiarism, syllabus, and textbook integrations.

eLearning staff are regularly invited to participate in student orientations, dual-credit orientations for both students and faculty, division meetings, Faculty Assembly meetings, and new faculty orientations. Faculty also regularly request eLearning to visit their classrooms or programs at the beginning of the semester in order to promote better understanding of the LMS and other educational technologies they may be asked to use in their courses.

### **Standard 2.G.7 – Technical Planning.**

*Technological infrastructure planning provides opportunities for input from its technology support staff and constituencies who rely on technology for institutional operations, programs, and services.*

NIC allows for input in its planning efforts in many ways. The college has an [Enterprise Systems Priority Council](#) (ESPC) which serves as a governing body for larger IT initiatives. This council has representation from several key college stakeholders, and is charged with communicating and coordinating efforts with a variety of other key stakeholder groups such as the Associated Students of North Idaho College (ASNIC), the Colleague Operations Group (COG), Faculty and Staff Assemblies, the Information Technology Policy and Planning Council (ITPPC), and the student communications

committee. NIC recently established a Data Assurance Group (DAG) which oversees data governance efforts. Finally, the college also has an Electronic Information Technology Committee (EITC), which aligns technology needs with accessibility.

COG provides leadership and guidance for changes in the colleges enterprise system, Ellucian Colleague. This group oversees updates, changes, and functionality enhancements for the student information system.

ITPPC is charged with managing formal NIC policies related to IT. This group reviews policy and procedure before they are submitted to the senate for approval or change. This group also works on creating guidelines related to policy and procedure.

DAG provides data governance to the college. This group is tasked with not only ensuring that data is accurate and used effectively, but also for ensuring that data is appropriately secured.

EITC was created to help prioritize the accessibility needs of the college as it relates to technology. Items such as website compliance to current standards, captioning of video, and universally accessible technology are some of the recent priorities that this committee has completed. Through the state legislature, NIC also received an annual line item for funding of accessible technology which funds one full-time equivalent position dedicated to accessible technology at NIC and also provides a funding mechanism to acquire and maintain accessible technology and services for the college.

Recently, the college has also undergone a large integrated planning effort. The IT Master Planning committee was comprised of IT staff and other college stakeholders for broad-based input and development of this plan. The [Information Technology Master Plan](#) focuses on several key areas of technology planning including: advancing teaching and learning, improving system processes, improving user experiences and outcomes, promoting data-informed decision making, promoting collaboration and shared decision-making, providing a secure technology environment, and supporting and maintaining a robust infrastructure. This plan provides for both technology planning but also integrates with other campus planning efforts such as the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, the Academic Master Plan, and Facilities Master Plan, which also have very broad-based college inputs.

## **Standard 2.G.8 – Replacement Schedules and Planning.**

*The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a technology update and replacement plan to ensure its technological infrastructure is adequate to support its operations, programs, and services.*

NIC allocates a portion of its budget each year to a Computer Equipment Replacement fund. The actual replacement of the computer equipment is managed by the IT department. The IT department divides the total equipment replacement into multiple schedules. Schedules [A, B, C, and D](#) are carefully monitored and primarily contain user equipment for staff, faculty, and students in support of teaching and learning. Schedules E, F, G, H, I, and J are used to replace infrastructure hardware. *See Summary Expenditure [Spreadsheet](#) for Schedules E-J (FY2017-2019).*

Schedule A covers all office computers for faculty and staff. The current replacement cycle for these machines is every four years. Schedule B covers all student computer lab machines. These are also replaced every four years. Schedule C covers all classroom presentation equipment which includes instructor workstations, projectors, document cameras, classroom control systems, and cabling. Computers are replaced every four years and other equipment is replaced as needed on different timelines. Schedule D covers all of the equipment needed for interactive video classrooms (IVC). This

includes cameras, microphones, codecs, and video equipment needed to broadcast or receive audio and video. Schedule E covers network transport which includes core switches, routers, firewalls, wireless access points, and other items that provide key infrastructure networking services. Schedule F is used for uninterruptible power supplies and covers the expense of battery replacement in key wiring closets. Schedule G is used to provide replacements for the campus virtual server infrastructure. Schedule H is used to replace the campus enterprise storage arrays. Schedule I is used to replace core Unix servers which operate the student information system. Schedule J is used to cover the leased phone handsets that the college contracts through a hosted phone system provider. Some schedules are not replaced each year, but IT adjusts its costs as needed.

When computer workstations are replaced, IT coordinates with the various departments and divisions for scheduling and approvals. New computers are paid for by the department budgets initially, and then placed on the replacement schedule for future replacements. The ERS is designed so that the oldest technology is prioritized for replacement. IT tracks and manages recycling and reuse of parts using current Department of Defense standards.

The equipment replacement schedules were developed with the goal of replacing 94 percent of the computers on schedules A and B each fiscal year and is included in the Common Campus Measure (CCM) 175. The performance of the college with CCM 175 is reflected in Table 2.4 below. NIC is generally on track with both computer replacement schedules.

**TABLE 2.4**  
**Performance on Computer Replacement Schedule (CCM 175)**

Equipment Replacement Schedule	AY 2015	AY 2017	AY 2018
A – 42 months – Office & Faculty Computers	93.98%	96.49%	93.03%
B – 48 months – Computer Labs	98.85%	93.99%	94.90%
Benchmark	94%	94%	94%

The IT department feels that the ERS funding level is currently adequate to maintain this replacement schedule moving forward. In years that the 94% goal was not attained there were substantial additions of either classroom computers or lab computers for new spaces. Examples include new classroom and labs in the Parker Technical Education Center in 2015-16, and a comprehensive remodel of the NIC testing center and incorporating lab computers to the library in 2016-17. In 2017-18, IT also began including computers for the NIC Head Start program in the ERS schedule. Even with these new additions to the ERS, IT was still able to manage the ERS and achieve results very close to goals set for both schedules A and B. Additional information with ERS is included in 4.B.2, under objective 4.1.







## EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

High academic standards, passionate and skillful instruction, professional development, and innovative programming while continuously improving all services and outcomes



NIC English instructors Aaron Cloyd and Molly Michaud took 15 Contemporary World Cultures class students on a trip in the summer of 2019 to London, Scotland, and Wales. It was the second time the instructors traveled to Europe with students taking the class.

“We will walk through the physical locations where the novels took place,” Cloyd said, as the 2019 class prepared to travel.

Destinations on the itinerary were assigned to students who led three-hour tours based on their research of the locations.

Sayviann Knoblich, a second-year NIC student who took her fellow travelers on a tour of the Roman walls near London Bridge, said she was excited for this experiential learning opportunity.

“I’m a more hands-on learner. This helps a lot,” she said.

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## **Chapter Three:**

### Institutional Planning and Implementation



## Standard 3.A: Institutional Planning

### Standard 3.A.1 - Systematic and Comprehensive Nature of the Plans.

*The institution engages in ongoing, purposeful, systematic, integrated, and comprehensive planning that leads to fulfillment of its mission. Its plans are implemented and made available to appropriate constituencies.*

North Idaho College (NIC or the college) engages in recursive, participatory institutional planning at a strategic and at an operational level. Strategic planning centers on mission, vision, and values, NIC Board of Trustees (the board) input, presidential priorities, and involvement from the college's constituency groups. Operational planning is framed by strategic planning and centers on vice presidential and cabinet-level administrators overseeing the development of goals and budgets for their reporting units.

In 2013, NIC completed its first seven-year comprehensive evaluation in three years under the new accreditation standards. During these three years, the institution underwent extensive changes in senior leadership in addition to revising its mission, vision, values, and strategic plan. As noted by the 2013 peer evaluation committee, these extensive and overlapping changes, made in a compressed timeframe, created confusion about the relationship between NIC's core themes, values, and strategic goals. In response to the recommendation, the college conducted a survey that suggested a distinction be made between NIC's core themes, values, and strategic goals. Based on the survey results, the Accreditation Executive Committee renamed the core themes in the 2014 Year One Report. The original core theme, "student success," was changed to "student access and achievement." The original core theme, "educational excellence," was changed to "effective teaching and learning." The original core theme, "community engagement," was changed to "commitment to community." Ultimately, this change caused more confusion, and the college community unanimously agreed upon the five college values as its core themes. In the 2016 Mid-cycle Report, the five college values reflect the core themes. The values were quickly recognized by constituents and have remained the core themes since that time. This summary illustrates that the college has thoughtfully examined how to integrate core themes and institutional planning. This alignment of values and core themes led to the first of two major strategic planning efforts.

The first began in the spring of 2014. The college launched a comprehensive, inclusive planning process called Institutional Optimization (IO) derived from the concepts of program prioritization (Dickeson, 2010.) IO's purpose was to conduct a self-study of program relevance, productivity, quality, and potential to further the college's ability to educate and support the students it serves toward achievement of institutional mission. Instructional programs, defined as those leading to certificates and degrees, and service programs, defined as any administrative, non-instructional unit, collectively submitted 150 reports in late fall 2015. The reports were reviewed by faculty, staff, and administrative teams and then read by President's Cabinet. The resulting set of recommendations and commendations were shared with the college in February 2016. That spring, the college surveyed participants in the two-year IO process to gauge and report on strengths and challenges with the planning and implementation effort.

IO informed all operational budget requests for the college in fiscal year 2017 and laid the foundation for additional planning efforts. IO resulted in baseline indicators that did not exist previously for needs and potential for all NIC programs, instructional and non-instructional. As described in detail in the Mid-cycle report in 2016, IO was a principle element of NIC's response to the planning recommendation from the 2013 comprehensive visit.

In the fall of 2016, following IO and the spring 2016 Mid-cycle Report, a diverse group of leaders were assembled to establish a process for integrated planning at NIC. This group was tasked with building a foundation for planning and executing several initiatives to prepare the institution for an update to the strategic plan. Ultimately, the effort was branded “Cultivate NIC.” Themes were elicited from the generative initial conversations. Cultivate NIC also included a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis and an environmental scan, generated by sub-groups selected from the initial participants. In the spring of 2017, the next phase began with the convening of the Integrated Planning Committee, a cross-institutional team of 12 individuals. This group was tasked with building a foundation for planning and executing several initiatives to prepare the institution for an update to the strategic plan. As part of the institution’s commitment to planning, the college hired an associate vice president for Planning and Effectiveness in spring 2018 to facilitate and sustain the multiple planning efforts. The college developed a calendar from the results of the Cultivate NIC process. See [NIC Planning Calendar 2017-2021](#).

In August 2018, these efforts culminated in an integrated strategic planning (ISP) framework, as shown in Table 3.1, that has three major goals: ensure affordable student access, completion, and transfer; invest in people, places, and processes; and engage with workforce and community partners. Each category is tied to one or more core themes. See [Integrated Strategic Plan 2020-2025](#).

**TABLE 3.1**  
Integrated Strategic Planning Framework

Goals	Values	Objective
Ensure Affordable Student Access, Completion, and Transfer	Educational Excellence Student Success Diversity	Provide an integrated and aligned student experience centered on engagement, development, and success.
		Improve curricular and student support infrastructure to enhance access, quality, success, and transfer.
		Provide excellent teaching and learning opportunities to a larger, more diverse student population
Invest in People, Places, and Processes	Student Success Diversity Stewardship	Develop a culture of leadership, respect, and accountability throughout the organization
		Redesign, reinvent, and re-set systems, processes, and facilities for improvement and efficiency throughout the organization
		Develop a culture of interdepartmental collaboration and communication
Engage with Workforce and Community Partners	Educational Excellence Student Success Community Engagement	Connect students, employers, and our community for lifelong learning
		Cultivate and support entrepreneurship and innovation for lifelong growth and development

The framework of the ISP is grounded in master planning efforts led by the respective President's Cabinet member from one of four major institutional areas of academics, enrollment, IT, and facilities. These plans drew from multiple stakeholders, representative of a cross-section of the college, some of whom were involved in more than one master planning group. All college plans have been made available on the Planning and Effectiveness [website](#) in an effort to promote availability and transparency to all NIC stakeholders. The four master plans include the [Academic Master Plan](#), [Information Technology Master Plan](#), [Strategic Enrollment Management Plan](#), and [Facilities Master Plan](#).

In an effort to improve upon one of the difficulties identified with IO, communication of the process and results of planning, an [online system for submission of operational goals](#), and designated alignment with core themes, was implemented in the fall of 2018. Thereby, throughout the most recent strategic planning effort, the college was able to effectively tie together resource requests and decisions for fiscal year 2019. This linkage of operational requests with core themes, a key element of IO, was particularly critical as the college used a modified zero-based approach that year. The work for FY 2019 was successful in that the budget resulting for FY 2020 carried over from the prior year with relatively minor adjustments.



Going forward, the current ISP Planning Team, with individuals selected through participatory governance entities, is charged with identifying alignment among the four college master plans and identifying potential action items within each objective of the framework. One example was the integration of the college's annual recruitment plan (see [FY 20 Recruitment Plan](#)) with the Strategic Enrollment Master Plan. The plan outlines a recruitment strategy that is now linked with the SEM plan, that considers past NIC practices, best practices in higher education recruitment, collaboration with college partners, and budget. Additionally, the team prioritizes all action items within the plan, develops appropriate timelines, and identifies assessment measures to determine success. The original planning team from the Cultivate NIC activity remains on-call in an advisory capacity to ensure appropriate interpretation of the Cultivate NIC work and to redirect, when needed, in the face of major external impacts such as legislative or funding changes.

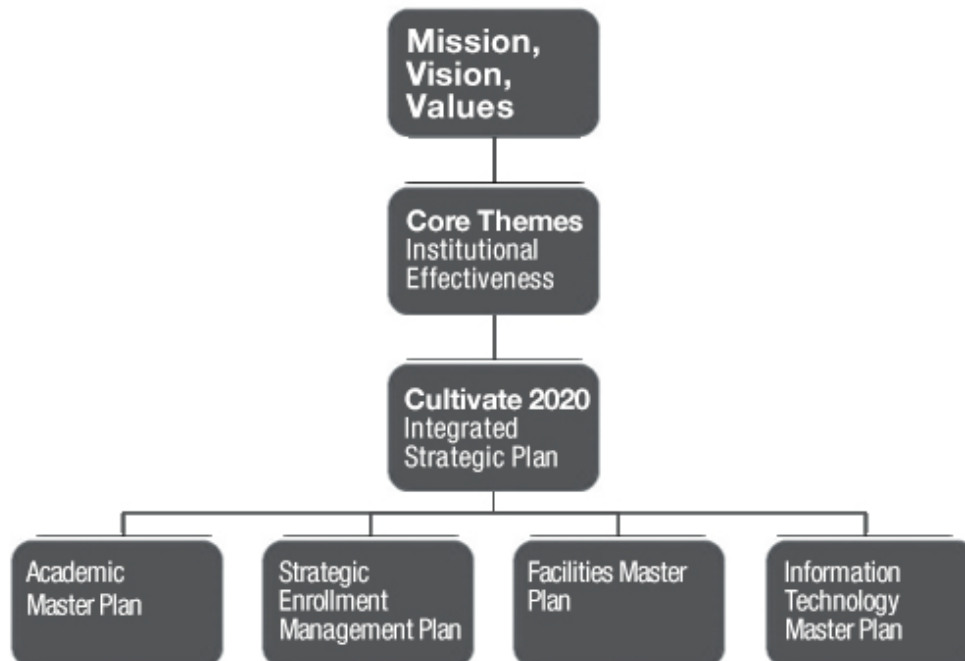
Strategic planning during the accreditation cycle has been marked by intensive, participatory development phases, the reframing of institutional core themes, and consistent connection of operational and financial

commitments to the mission. Throughout, the college has sought to strengthen the planning and implementation process toward a mature and effective means to fulfill mission.

The relationship of the strategic plan to mission, core themes (institutional effectiveness), and the four college master plans is exhibited in Figure 3.1. The term “institutional effectiveness” is used for transitional purposes with the new NWCCU standards.

**FIGURE 3.1**

## Relationship of Mission, Vision, Core Themes, and Integrated Strategic Planning



### **Standard 3.A.2 - Constituent Input into Planning.**

*The institution’s comprehensive planning process is broad-based and offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies.*

The Faculty Assembly, Staff Assembly, Management Team, and President’s Cabinet all have periodic and systematic opportunities for input into the major planning and policy documents. In addition, all the major planning and policy documents are reviewed twice by the College Senate and the board before adoption. The operational level planning documents are also derived from wide input from faculty, staff, and students.



As the college transitions to the new NWCCU standards, the collection and monitoring of measures for the purpose of mission fulfillment will shift from the use of Core Theme Teams to a smaller working group, in collaboration with the Planning and Effectiveness office, assisting individuals and departments who are responsible for particular institutional effectiveness measures. The college experimented with a similar method in developing the 2019 Core Theme Report and anticipates continuing with a similar process as the college defines a new mission fulfillment scorecard. The number of measures is expected to decrease as the college deliberates and develops measures for institutional effectiveness.

The institution continues to identify reporting methods that can help bring actionable meaning to values assessment, and leaders are still working to align this information with resource allocation. In coming years, the Planning and Effectiveness office will work with team leaders across the institution to identify their own sets of measures, or key performance indicators, to regularly assess the health of their areas of concern, such as enrollment numbers for the Strategic Enrollment Management Team.

### **Standard 3.A.3 - Comprehensive planning process is informed by data.**

*The institution's comprehensive planning process is informed by the collection of appropriately defined data that are analyzed and used to evaluate fulfillment of its mission.*

NIC maintains an annual planning table with sections for highlighting the details, frequency, timeline, authors, and audience of each of the college's planning strategies. This table is reviewed by the Executive Accreditation Committee. As the college transitions to the 2019 NWCCU standards, the college [projects changes to the table](#) that reflect movement away from core themes to institutional effectiveness, the advancement of program review, and improvements with the collection of data at the operational level.

A set of [Common Campus Measures](#) (CCM) to advance institutional planning and performance analysis were developed with collegewide input in 2011 and are maintained by the Institutional Effectiveness Team. The application of CCMs to each objective under the core themes is outlined in detail in Chapter 4. Data from the CCMs informs the annual submission of a [strategic plan document](#) mandated by the Idaho State Board of Education (SBOE) (see description of Strategic Plan Framework in 3.A.1 under Planning History). The SBOE plan requires annual data, using measures set by the state, whereas NIC uses a three-year rolling average for strategic planning.

In 2013, NIC also adopted the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) for capturing student information that is more applicable to community colleges than widely used measures such as the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). VFA data is incorporated into a widely distributed Commonly Reported Data Trends (See [sample report](#)) that has been used, for example, in the development of NIC Pathways (Guided Pathways).

As part of preparation for the mid-cycle review in 2016, instructional and institutional effectiveness leadership revisited the CCM set used to assess mission fulfillment. This work is reflected in the Core Theme Reports ([2016](#), [2018](#), and [2019](#)) that are shared with the college community and submitted to NWCCU. Upon completion of the Mid-cycle Review in 2016, a 2017 Core Theme Report was not produced to more fully develop the core themes and measures, and transition to a fall core theme reporting cycle in advance of annual budgeting processes community, such as the recognition of the need to strengthen measures for some objectives under the core themes.

As comprehensive measures inform planning, they are supplemented by the distribution of targeted and timely performance data to decision makers across the college. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness has implemented a series of dashboards that provide all employees “real time” and “snapshot” access to the most frequently needed data, such as enrollment, applicant, retention and completion, course scheduling, and CCMs.

To increase capacity for planning and decision making, Colleague Reporting and Operating Analytics (CROA), was implemented in the fall of 2018. CROA draws from an established NIC DataMart, and both reporting platforms are based on the Colleague Operational Data Store (ODS). The ODS is populated nightly with student, employee and financial data from the Colleague ERP information system. Additionally, the system allows for trend reporting generated out of the Institutional Research Office. A series of CROA workshops have been provided to employee groups, who have also been involved in developing tailored reports to support their ability to access, consume, and apply meaningful data to their roles and responsibilities to further student success and support mission fulfillment.

### **Standard 3.A.4 – Use of comprehensive plan to guide resource allocation and decision making.**

*The institution’s comprehensive plan articulates priorities and guides decisions on resource allocation and application of institutional capacity.*

The [Integrated Strategic Plan](#) (ISP) articulates direction and priorities for the institution providing for alignment with and among the master plans. Master plans are championed by leaders within their respective areas who will guide implementation with appropriate resource allocation.

The [annual submission of Operational Goals](#) from across the college provides an avenue for leaders to request resources for accomplishment of identified goals, which are tied to objectives within the master plans and the ISP. Moving forward, the President’s Cabinet can use this wide array of resources—operational goals, master plans, the ISP—to guide resource allocation during annual budget conversations. The design of the ISP is an extension of practices the college has used to commit physical, human, technical, and financial resources toward institutional priorities.

There are several significant examples of how planning before the launch of the ISP has resulted in strategic resource allocations. Among them is the establishment of the Parker Career Technical Education Center (Parker) in Rathdrum, reflecting the college’s response to needs for a current, well-equipped facility to provide trades and industry education. The building exemplifies the college’s pledge to serve regional employment needs and strengthen the economy as a whole. Parker is an impressive expression of community engagement, as it came to fruition after gathering critical support for the project over several years, based on a determination to dramatically improve the educational environment for students, and to drive educational excellence, and student success. Further, it is aligned with stewardship of college resources, as it is built on property owned by the college, and aligned with diversity, as the programs offered are actively promoted to widen the student profile from what has traditionally been the case.

Numerous other investments, such as the complete redesign of the [Cardinal Learning Commons](#), including a re-located and re-equipped Testing Center, are indicative of the college’s response to the need to implement developmental educational practices of Guided Pathways. Budget requests tied to the core themes include the detailed budget proposal for FY 19 by the [Library](#). The English and Humanities division has committed resources to advance student success and educational excellence across disciplines. In the area of curriculum design, the English department has developed a co-

requisite composition course (See [ENGL-114C](#) and [ENGL-114-D](#) syllabi and [course descriptions](#)) for students in need of additional support in their first-year college-level writing course. This co-requisite design has led to a dramatic decrease in students beginning their college career in a remedial writing course and a significant increase in students completing a college-level writing course in their first year. Although the co-requisite model was developed before the implementation of NIC's ISP, it was based in earlier versions of academic master planning. In addition to course design, the [Writing Center](#) advances a writing across the curriculum approach to student success and educational excellence by offering one-on-one feedback on student essays and research papers across all disciplines. The Writing Center has also purchased an annual subscription to online software, WC online, which allows for convenient scheduling of consultations by students in addition to an online, real-time consulting service for those students who are unable to visit the Writing Center in person. Through the financial help from North Idaho Higher Education (NIHE), the Writing Center has been able to expand services to NIC's outreach center in Sandpoint.

As previously mentioned in the Preface, the investment in a “one stop shop” known at NIC as Cardinal Central, including capital, personnel, and professional development, was directly related to the Strategic Enrollment Management plan and the core themes, and was linked to the resource allocation process.

The ISP will further harness this ability to marshal resources toward institutional priorities. Each of the master plans builds a set of action steps from larger, thematic goals. The leadership in each area then prioritizes actions that require investment, for submission during each budget cycle. Through these plans, the college will continue to systematically work to align goals and investment toward mission fulfillment as it has successfully done so in the past.

### **Standard 3.A.5 – Emergency Planning.**

*The institution's planning includes emergency preparedness and contingency planning for continuity and recovery of operations should catastrophic events significantly interrupt normal institutional operations.*

NIC maintains an [Emergency Operations Manual](#) and conducts regular trainings and exercises on micro and macro levels. Exercises include tabletop scenarios with security staff, college leadership, and community wide emergency response agencies. Security staff regularly participate in trainings offered by Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The college is an active member of the Kootenai County Office of Emergency Management, and also maintains and regularly trains a robust Critical Incident Stress Management Team that can respond post-event to facilitate the emotional recovery process.

The Critical Recovery Unit (CRU), otherwise known as a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team, consists of over 20 staff and faculty who are certified through the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation in group and individual crisis intervention. Though the CRU primarily provides services within the college milieu, representatives from the CRU were deployed in the community setting multiple times in the past year. The college, primarily with the NIC Counseling program, is currently working with Kootenai Health Behavioral Health, the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Division of Behavioral Health, and the Idaho Division of Health Panhandle Health services to train approximately 20 additional CISM Teams in North Idaho, within the next two years, to increase the community's ability to skillfully respond to community-based incidents.

The NIC Information Technology (IT) Department has developed an [IT Disaster Recovery Plan](#) in the event of a significant disruption to critical IT services at North Idaho College. The goal of this plan is to outline the key recovery steps to be performed during and after a disruption so that critical IT and telecommunication services continue within an appropriate period of time after an incident has occurred.

To prepare for emergencies, the college organizes routine fire drills, provides threat assessments for departments, participates in annual safety inspections with the state of Idaho, and conducts a mass notification drill using the college's texting and phone software system. Employees are provided an opportunity to provide feedback from safety drills (see example [employee communication](#)) as well as receive information on how to update contact information, and a reminder to contact IT for resolving access to all possible alerts. As mentioned in 2.A.2, the college has a formal relationship with the city of Coeur d'Alene for police services. The School Resource Officer assigned to the college routinely conducts training and provides insight to the college populace on lockdown procedures, domestic violence, sexual assault prevention, first responder duties, and victim response.

In October 2016, the Department of Homeland Security conducted Infrastructure Survey Tool assessments on NIC facilities. The assessments facilitated the identification of commendable actions as well as vulnerabilities and potential security or resilience enhancements. NIC continues to utilize the resulting recommendations to reduce vulnerabilities and increase resiliency. NIC needs to complete its continuity of operations plan (COOP) to include a large-scale event that would significantly disrupt normal operations. The current COOP addresses food and shelter for the Residence Hall, the Children's Center, and the NIC Head Start Program. Information Technology has also created service redundancy on the main campus, outreach centers, and regional locations to enhance the resiliency of college processes.

## References

Dickeson, R. C. (2010). *Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services: Reallocating Resources to Achieve Strategic Balance*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.





## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Collaborative partnerships with businesses, organizations, community members, and educational institutions to identify and address changing educational needs

North Idaho College was named the 2018 Heather Van Sickle Entrepreneurial College of the Year by the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship.

NIC President Rick MacLennan credited the award to the college's ability to respond to change.

“NIC has a history of engaging with longstanding and new partners,” MacLennan said. “The heart of our work is developing our business and community relationships to help fuel the economic vitality of North Idaho. Creating relevant learning opportunities for our students in today’s ever-evolving economy is one of our major imperatives here at NIC.”

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## **Chapter Four:**

### Core Theme Planning, Assessment, and Improvement

## Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirements 22 and 23

### Eligibility Requirement 22.

**Student Achievement** - *The institution identifies and publishes the expected learning outcomes for each of its degree and certificate programs. The institution engages in regular and ongoing assessment to validate student achievement of these learning outcomes.*

As presented in 2.C, all degrees and certificates with at least 30 credit hours have published program learning outcomes along with expected student achievement. In 2015, the Idaho State Board of Education (SBOE) revised the General Education requirements for all public higher education institutions with seven general education [competencies](#) defined in all associate of arts and associate of science degrees. North Idaho College (NIC or the college) has embedded five of the general education [competencies](#) for all associate of applied science programs. Course outcomes and general education outcomes are published for students in the course syllabi which are available on the college website. An overview of each program, including expected learning outcomes, are accessible in the Program Guidelines section of the college catalog ([online](#)).

The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee ([SLOA](#)) is responsible for promoting collegewide awareness of student academic achievement in general education, and program- and course-level assessment activities. Specific SLOA project results are published on the college's [SLOA SharePoint](#) team site.

### Eligibility Requirement 23.

**Institutional Effectiveness** - *The institution systematically applies clearly defined evaluation and planning procedures, assesses the extent to which it achieves its mission and core themes, uses the results of assessment to effect institutional improvement, and periodically publishes the results to its constituencies. Through these processes it regularly monitors its internal and external environments to determine how and to what degree changing circumstances may impact the institution and its ability to ensure its viability and sustainability.*

Since 2013 NIC has engaged in a number of planning, implementation, and evaluation processes utilizing the college's core themes (core values). One example of an evaluation process is the Institutional Optimization Process (IO), initiated in spring 2014 and concluding in fall 2015. An Institutional Master Plan was created in Spring 2016 based on the data and information gathered and the recommendations made from the analysis of the IO data. The five core themes served as the basis for the writing the objectives and outcomes in the Institutional Master Plan (IMP). The IMP was presented to the board of trustees at their April 2016 meeting. See board minutes, [April 2016, p. 2](#). During the June 2016 board of trustees meeting (see board minutes, [June 2016, pp. 3-4](#)), then President Dunlap reintroduced the IMP and highlighted some specific goals in the plan.

After assessing the planning climate at the college, NIC's new president, Dr. Rick MacLennan, assembled an Institutional Steering Committee; the committee was charged with developing an



Integrated Strategic Plan. See board minutes, [March 2017, pp. 1-3](#), and board minutes, [August 2017, p. 1](#). Cultivate NIC evolved from this committee. See [Environmental Scan](#), Cultivate NIC webpage.

NIC's long-range planning documents, including the Strategic Plan (2018-2022), Academic Master Plan (2019), Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (2018), Information Technology Master Plan (2018), and the Facilities Master Plan (2018-2028) all emerged from planning activities focused on the college's core themes. The long-term planning framework, including integrated planning efforts, known as Integrated Strategic Planning 2018 and Cultivate NIC, are included on the college website. The measures and expectations are published on the Institutional Effectiveness SharePoint site. Chapter One and Chapter Three of this report describe in detail, NIC's long-range planning processes and representation of mission fulfillment.

## Standard 3B – Core Theme Planning

### **Standard 3.B.1. – Consistency with the Strategic Plan and Guides Selection of Programs and Services.**

*Planning for each core theme is consistent with the institution's comprehensive plan and guides the selection of programs and services to ensure they are aligned with and contribute to accomplishment of the core theme's objectives.*

Student success, educational excellence, stewardship, diversity, and community engagement are all influential in the design and implementation of planning, as shown in the four master plans, and the [Integrated Strategic Plan](#) ([Academic Master Plan](#), [Strategic Enrollment Management Plan](#), [Information Technology Master Plan](#), and the [Facilities Master Plan](#)). Although core theme planning does not specifically guide strategic planning, the themes do frame and influence all the master planning documents and the ISP.

The Academic Master Plan sets out five goals that interweave the core themes:

- Goal 1: Investing strategically in systems, facilities, and technology for a 21st century education.
- Goal 2: Ensuring appropriate academic support services, co-and extracurricular activities, and access to educational opportunities
- Goal 3: Cultivating an inclusive culture that values collaborative communication for dialogue and action to realize shared goals.
- Goal 4: Promoting the impact of NIC's contributions to the greater community
- Goal 5: Fostering innovation to advance meaningful, diverse, and relevant educational experiences

Each goal is not mutually exclusive to a single core theme; together the plan provides full coverage of the themes as a whole. Goal 1 is primarily about educational excellence, but clearly addresses student success and community engagement. Goal 2 focuses on student success and educational excellence and includes objectives for stewardship. Goal 3 speaks to community engagement and diversity through an inclusive culture. Goal 4 emphasizes community engagement, and threads both diversity

and educational excellence into the objectives. Goal 5 is expressly about diversity, and includes multiple objectives around stewardship. Core themes, as a concept, connote integration across activities, and the AMP is intentionally designed to foster the interconnectedness of goals and objectives across the core themes.

The college acknowledges that such an approach does not lend itself to direct quantitative measures for each goal in the AMP and from each goal to a core theme. However, throughout the plan, all instructional areas that contribute to the plan identify specific actions and a timeline for evaluating completion. A summary of the actions by individual units and programs that flow up to the objectives and five overarching AMP goals is updated annually and used as a tool by Instructional Leadership to assess progress. ([AMP Goals spreadsheet.](#))

Each of the other three plans are structured around the AMP. This is exemplified in the Information Technology (IT) Master Plan that mapped each of its aspirations and objectives to the AMP. Although the IT Master Plan does not explicitly refer to each of the five NIC core themes, it is expressly aligned to the AMP that comprehensively addresses all the core themes, as described above. The chart in the opening section of the IT Master Plan depicts this relationship visually. See [Information Technology Master Plan, p. 6](#). As an example, objective 1.1 “Classroom, Lab, and Learning Spaces” under Aspiration 1, “Advance Teaching and Learning” references all five of the AMP Goals. See [Information Technology Plan, p. 7](#). The direct linkage to AMP goals is carried throughout the IT Master plan for each objective and each objective includes actions, metrics, and risks. The IT Master Plan is derived from and built upon the AMP that comprehensively addresses the core themes.

Similarly, the Facilities Master Plan is framed around the core themes of the college and makes explicit reference to the Academic Master Plan. See [Facilities Master Plan, p. 6](#), and [pp. 15-16](#). The commitments to investment in facilities is driven by the AMP. For example, the priority for an expansion of the Meyer Health and Sciences Building is to meet local and regional needs for healthcare and enhance the learning environment for teaching and learning. See [Facilities Master Plan, p. 7](#), and [p. 14](#). Thus, the expansion of Meyer is for student success, educational excellence, and community engagement. In addition, as evident in the planning documents developed by the architecture firm for the project, following extensive dialogue with college stakeholders, the design of the expansion attends to stewardship of the grounds and seeks to highlight the connection to the cultural heritage of the campus and the Coeur d’Alene Tribe, which is central to the college’s diversity core theme. Further, planning for facilities was embedded in the larger college strategic plan and anticipates an ongoing process through 2028 for such decisions. ([Facilities Master Plan, p. 14-5.](#)) Interdependence and connectedness of the AMP, IT, and Facilities Master Plan is an intentional characteristic of each.

The opening of the DeArmond College and University Center and Cardinal Central (see Preface) are two great examples of NIC’s integration of facilities, IT, and strategic enrollment management planning (SEM) efforts. The SEM plan includes retention and recruitment goals and strategies relating to these two initiatives. For the DeArmond College and University Center, the plan to combine services into a one-stop admission center is included in SEM plan strategy 1.2.2: Develop and Implement an operations program for the Bob and Leona DeArmond Building. See [Strategic Enrollment Master Plan, p. 5](#). For Cardinal Central, the plan to combine operations into a one-stop student services shop is included in SEM strategy 2.1.1: Consolidate Enrollment Services into Enrollment Services Center. See [Strategic Enrollment Master Plan, p. 6](#). Both these major accomplishments relied heavily on coordination with and investment from facilities and IT. As with all the plans, the steps completed for SEM are tied directly to an element of the AMP, specifically, AMP Goal #2: Ensuring appropriate academic support services...and access to educational opportunities.

The planning that has led to actions aligned with the core themes positions NIC to retain the enduring values of the college as it transitions to a new set of NWCCU standards. To that end, NIC will, through

an overall Integrated Strategic Plan, develop a set of indicators that document the ability of the college to fulfill its mission during the next accreditation cycle.

### **Standard 3.B.2. - Core Theme Programs and Services.**

*Planning for core theme programs and services guides the selection of contributing components of those programs and services to ensure they are aligned with and contribute to achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of the respective programs and services.*

Since the 2013 Year Seven Evaluation, the college has employed many planning strategies to achieve its core themes and align programs and services with the core theme objectives. Planning and gathering evidence for the core themes occurs through four means: 1) Institutional Research staff in the Office of Planning and Effectiveness (formerly the office of Institutional Effectiveness), 2) the Accreditation Liaison Officer working with the Core Theme Team, 3) departmental and divisional operational planning, and 4) the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee.

More recently, the college has taken an integrated approach with core theme planning practices. [Operational goals](#) are submitted annually for each working unit throughout the institution. NIC started collecting operational goals as a result of new NWCCU accreditation standards with the need to show better alignment of departmental planning to resource allocation and strategic planning efforts. After a brief period of inactivity, the college revisited and renewed the collection efforts in 2016. The college's first attempt at collecting operational goals was completely manual utilizing MS Word documents, and the Executive Accreditation Committee created a variety of analyses and reports that were used to guide planning.

Since the initial reports, the operational goals have been transitioned to an electronic format under the Office of Planning and Effectiveness. The centralized reporting has allowed for better alignment of the goals to the ISP and the Master Plans. Operational goals are tied to the core themes through a form on the college's intranet platform, which allows for reporting of goal completion by core theme affiliation. NIC has been engaged in this annual practice for the current accreditation cycle. Program Review processes have been in place for the academic areas for over 20 years. In May of 2019, the SLOA committee formalized a deeper approach to program outcomes assessment, further articulated in the [SLOA Program Outcomes Assessment plan](#). Student Services is working toward a similar evaluative model using the guidelines provided by the Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS).

Examples of the college selecting contributing components of programs and services to align with intended outcomes include several new facilities such as the Parker Technical Education Center, the Student Wellness and Recreation Center, and the Aerospace Center. The college planned for changes, such as improvements to the information system and the selection and upkeep of equipment and furniture for the new facilities. For example, improvements to the Information System, such as establishing service level agreements, is linked to Academic Master Plan (AMP) goal 1 (educational excellence core theme). The department also strengthened device security management (also linked to AMP goal 1), and provided training for core set of IT security fundamentals (linked to AMP goals 1, 4 and 5, educational excellence, student success, and stewardship core themes). NIC also invested in additional instructional technology (also linked to AMP goals 1, 4, and 5). The college also modified plans for the procurement and upkeep of equipment and furniture for the new facilities which relates to AMP goals 1 and 5 (educational excellence, community engagement, and student success core themes).

Components of academic program review and planning ensure that they are aligned with intended outcomes. For example, the program review process for the associate of science degree in business resulted in the revision of the program from three separate degrees to one degree with three tracks, with the goal of increasing both retention and completion rates (relating to core themes: educational excellence and student success). In addition, one of the English Department's 2016 operational goals was to seek adequate compensation for teaching writing-intensive composition courses. Their 2016 program reviewers affirmed this need, and together the goal-setting and program review process resulted in the creation, in 2018, of a different compensation model for faculty teaching only writing-intensive composition courses. See [2016 English Program Review, p. 47](#).

### **Standard 3.B.3. - Data are Used for Core Theme Planning.**

*Core theme planning is informed by the collection of appropriately defined data that are analyzed and used to evaluate accomplishment of core theme objectives. Planning for programs and services is informed by the collection of appropriately defined data that are used to evaluate achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of those programs and services.*

NIC engaged in a careful, inclusive, and transparent process to define and evaluate appropriate and meaningful measures and expectations for its core themes, as outlined in 1.A.1, 1.A.2, 1.B.1, and 1.B.2. During the drafting of the initial core theme report, a Core Theme Team, made up of administration, faculty, and staff, asked for input on decisions that were necessary for the completion of the report such as scoring, and expectations. To analyze achievement of the core theme objectives, data are extracted from a set of Common Campus Measures (CCMs) maintained by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. CCMs are entered into the college's data administrative software system known as Colleague Reporting and Operating Analytics (CROA). Data is available for the analysis of performance and improvement initiatives guided by the strategic plan, the four campus master plans, and at the operational level.

Institutional Research (IR) staff work closely with the accreditation liaison officer to maintain a foundation of institutional measures that indicate mission fulfillment. The process for the analysis of core theme objectives was recently changed to allow for a small team from the Planning and Effectiveness Office to directly communicate with users of the information for input into the measures, and expectations for every measure in the annual Core Theme Report. This change allows for direct engagement with the users of the information. The college posts the results of annual core theme assessment on its accreditation website, shares it with the NIC Board of Trustees (the board), and the Management Team, and seeks to strengthen direct messaging to a variety of stakeholders, including faculty and staff.

NIC uses data to evaluate achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services. One that regularly collects and analyzes data to make improvements is the college's state and federal grants programs. For example, TRIO, a federally funded academic assistance program, recently completed a program review process following the CAS standards. Two goals identified in the review process are to minimize TRIO student dependence on loans, and to reduce obstacles to admissions and registration. Both of these goals required planning and improved communication between the Financial Aid Office, the NIC Foundation, and Cardinal Central (NIC's centralized admissions and enrollment services center). The collaboration resulted in expanded scholarship opportunities for TRIO students, deeper communication between TRIO and Cardinal Central staff, and an increase in the number of admitted and registered TRIO students.

Academic program review is tied explicitly to accreditation and all reviews address the following question 1.2 "What needs does this program serve in meeting the mission, core values, and strategic plan objectives of the college?" Recent examples of how programs responded to this prompt and the

data that followed include [Anthropology](#) and [CLC](#). The template for program review was revised over the summer of 2017 and implemented in fall 2018 to help ensure that the data provided those preparing the review, and the teams conducting the review, with relevant, meaningful indicators of how well program goals were being achieved. The template then prompts the reviewers to provide their recommendations as to actions, resources, and measures that strengthen achievement of program goals. Two examples of how the reviews led to specific changes are referenced above in response to 3.B.2. Several healthcare programs utilize the program accreditation process as program review. In all instances, the programs develop a comprehensive self-study report and undergo a rigorous peer review that addresses the program mission and goals in relation to the mission of the college. Recent examples of program self-study reports can be made available during the site visit.

A subgroup of the SLOA committee designed the illustration below, in Figure 4.1, to assist faculty and staff in understanding the interconnectedness of various efforts at NIC that lead to mission fulfillment.

**FIGURE 4.1**

### Framework for Instructional Planning



Each of the nine light gray orbs represents an independent initiative or reporting document that requires NIC employee participation, whether through raw data collection, departmental input, and/or authoring efforts. The data used for each of the initiatives may overlap at times, but the results or reports from each effort meet distinct needs. They are also directly associated with one of four major planning areas that are essential to the continued health of the college. The efforts in these interrelated areas support both day-to-day needs and contribute to the core mission, vision, and values of the college. For example, a division chair can look to a program review document to guide course content or course offerings. An instructor can look to student learning outcomes assessment data to more effectively deliver said course content. A business office administrator can look to the strategic plan to know how to best budget for those course offerings. While the raw data may be the same, how it is packaged and presented makes it easier to apply to each stakeholder's planning efforts. It changes the conversation from "I have to create another planning document" to "I get to present my department's data in a way that best helps a specific group plan for our future." All of these planning and implementation efforts represented in the outer two orbs are grounded in NIC's established purpose. Planning does not exist as a hypothetical exercise, but is anchored in and influenced by NIC's specific mission, vision, and values. NIC strives through the constituent plans to accomplish its mission, vision, and values.

## Standard 4A - Assessment

### **Standard 4.A.1. – Ongoing Systematic Collection and Analysis of Data.**

*The institution engages in ongoing systematic collection and analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data, quantitative and/or qualitative, as appropriate to its indicators of achievement, as the basis for evaluating the accomplishment of its core theme objectives.*

As evidenced by the presentation of data on mission fulfillment, and the annual core theme reports, NIC has systematically and intentionally selected a set of Common Campus Measures (CCM), tied to specific objectives for each core theme, to assess achievement, and summarized those results to provide a measure of mission fulfillment.

The data for the CCMs are collected annually, three-year averages are used to track trends, and where indicated, benchmarks against institutional peers or comparators are used to indicate achievement. The data sources are verifiable and replicable and where gaps or improvements are identified, a plan is stated for strengthening the measure. Comprehensively, therefore, primarily through the personnel and expertise in the office of Planning and Effectiveness, the college has regularly evaluated the progress of core theme achievement and committed to analysis of the findings.

In 2016, the college prepared its first annual Core Theme Report as part of the Mid-cycle Evaluation process. At the time of the Mid-cycle Report, the community engagement and diversity core themes measures were not fully developed and thus were not evaluated in the 2016 Core Theme Report. Since the 2016 report was prepared during the spring semester, the college chose to delay the preparation of the next report to more fully develop the core themes measures and transition to a fall core theme reporting cycle in advance of annual budgeting processes. Thus, a second Core Theme Report was not prepared until fall 2017 and finalized in January 2018. Since that time, Core Theme Reports have been prepared annually.

Results of core theme assessment are posted to NIC's accreditation [website](#), and are available to internal and external users of that site. The annual Core Theme Reports include NIC's five core themes, their respective core theme objectives, and the associated measures (CCMs). The reports also include the expectations and rating for the CCM and summative averages for each core theme objective and overall core theme score. Program reviews and results from advisory board meetings are provided directly and immediately to the faculty and staff in that area. The program reviews for instructional areas are kept centrally and available through the college portal. ([5 year Instructional Review](#)). See annual Core Theme Reports for [2016](#), [2018](#), and [2019](#). *A summary of the measures is also included in 5.A.1.*

The accessibility of this information is critical to its use for planning and decision making. For instance, recommendations from instructional program review are used to inform annual operational planning and budgeting, for curricular changes, and allocation or reallocation of resources.

### **Standard 4.A.2. – Effective System of Evaluation of Programs and Services.**

*The institution engages in an effective system of evaluation of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered, to evaluate achievement of clearly identified program goals or intended outcomes. Faculty have a primary role in the evaluation of educational programs and services.*

North Idaho College has been engaged in program review for many years. The academic program review process has been redesigned more than once since its inception, in response to continuous quality improvement practice and also to comply with regional accreditation requirements. In more recent years, services and non-instructional programs initiated a program review process.

#### ***Academic Program Review:***

NIC's Program Review process has been well established for over two decades. During that time, the college has regularly updated the process, moving from a paper-based to an electronic template, revising the review cycle to ensure timely completion, and incorporating assessment data more systematically. Most recently, in 2017, an ad hoc team from Instructional Leadership revised the template to allow for direct integration of data from institutional effectiveness reports, reference college assessment efforts such as Institutional Optimization, and tie the recommendations from the prior review into the latest iteration. The process, resources, and rotation for the five-year reviews is well communicated, and widely accessible to faculty, staff, and administration. Examples of program review documents include [Cardinal Learning Commons](#), [Music](#), [Advanced Manufacturing](#), and [Carpentry](#). The [Program Review Rotation Schedule](#), and the [Program Review Checklist](#) are available at the [Program Review SharePoint site](#) and also on the [Program Review website](#).

Academic departments at NIC began formally reporting the results of their assessment activities in academic year 2008-2009. All transfer programs and CTE programs participate in this effort on a five-year cycle. Division chairs, lead faculty members, and division administrative assistants contribute to program review that culminates in a report and campus visit by an outside team. Review teams typically include representatives from regional two- and four-year institutions and as appropriate, members of relevant community organizations, industry, or business.

The reports include departmental or program updates of their annual assessment plan of student learning and analysis of assessment data to determine strengths, challenges, and areas for

improvement. The results are incorporated into individual department planning processes, which are tied to the college's mission and the planning and budgeting processes. Institutional results are analyzed through the core theme objectives and expectations and the strategic plan goals and performance measures. The results are analyzed by administrators, managers, deans, chairs, faculty, and staff. To further illuminate the transparency of the program review process, the vice president for instruction reviews all the reports and annually provides a brief report to the Curriculum Council on the program review outcomes. It is common for program reviews to lead to curricular revisions as stated in rationales for changes that are presented to Curriculum Council. Faculty are thereby involved full-circle in the process of program review and seeing outcomes through their consideration of new and revised curriculum. (See [PSYC Program Revision January 2016](#))

Since 2015, SLOA committee members, along with the assistant dean and dean of general studies, have played a crucial role in working with divisions to help define assessments/instruments to measure GEM. Leaders in this area adhere to three guiding principles for NIC's GEM and Program Assessment:

1. **Positive change:** Course and teaching improvement leads to an increase in educational excellence and student success, core values at NIC.
2. **Academic freedom:** Professors choose assessment and grading scales. Personal data is kept at the level of instruction.
3. **Meaningful practice:** Gathering data is insufficient. The data needs to be discussed and used to inform instruction.

Recent improvements in this area include the revision of the [program review template](#), with leadership from the SLOA coordinator, dean of general studies, and division chairs. The program review template includes a distinct section on student learning outcomes assessment, which asks programs to:

1. Define their outcomes
2. Discuss assessment methods
3. Interpret the data
4. Use the data to create actions for improvement as necessary

The SLOA Team strives to create valuable and home-grown assessment instruments which lead to meaningful conversations with colleagues; those conversations drive self-reflection and improvements in courses and programs across the college. SLOA members are also thinking through new ways to measure information literacy as it is embedded within the GEM framework, as is evident from the collaboration between SLOA Committee members (Reference/Instruction Librarian and an English Department Professor). See [Partnerships Across the Curriculum: Information Literacy, Health Sciences and First-year Composition Study](#). Faculty, division chairs, and deans, in collaboration with the SLOA Committee, identify criteria and methods to assess student outcomes.

May 2019 brought a new and deeper approach to Program Outcomes Assessment at NIC. The SLOA Committee's new approach is informed by best practices on other campuses, guided by the principles that SLOA Committee members outlined for the work, flexible enough to meet the needs of diverse programs at NIC, and fits well as integrated into NIC's already-established Program Review process (specifically within sections 7.5-7.7). The new approach is one that asks programs to follow more specific, meaningful, and cohesive program outcomes assessment practices. This Program Outcomes Assessment plan fosters regular collaboration among program faculty as they prepare for program review and is intended to result in more meaningful data, both qualitative and quantitative, by having all programs follow a similar Program Outcomes Assessment process.



In years two and three of an instructional program's review cycle, program faculty are asked to:

- Articulate and discuss expected program learning outcomes (and revise/update these as needed).
- Create a curriculum map: Identify where and how in the curriculum or co-curriculum learning experiences help students achieve the program learning outcomes.
- Gather evidence of student learning with regard to program learning outcomes using either quantitative, qualitative, or both approaches.
- Draw conclusions from the evidence and plan ways to improve student learning.
- Record/report results of the conversations and changes that have resulted from your program's outcomes assessment process.

To help usher in this new, deepened approach to program outcomes assessment, the SLOA committee invited to campus, a coach from the National Institute of Learning Outcomes Assessment, Sandra Bailey. She facilitated a well-attended curriculum mapping workshop in September 2019. See [Sandra Bailey Visit Program Maps](#), [North Idaho College Program Alignment](#) and [Program Alignment Workbook](#).

#### *Review of Services and Non-Instructional Programs:*

In 2011, the Student Services division completed a program review process that was developed internally and provided a robust description of current services and students served. [See Five Year Campus Services Review site](#). Beginning in 2014, these same departments, along with other non-instructional service areas, participated fully in a collegewide Institutional Optimization process that provided an opportunity to assess programs and look for efficiencies. In 2016, the Student Services division began formulating a program review plan that would assess and compare services to recognizable standards in higher education. Beginning in 2017, NIC formalized a review cycle of student services and non-instructional programs using the standards set by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). Initial departments participating in the program reviews included Student Union Operations, Student Life and Leadership, and Veterans Services followed by TRIO, Student Counseling, Career Services, and Student Conduct. See [CAS Self-Assessment Team site](#).

The current program review process for Student Services involves five programs and now utilizes a software solution that helps gather, organize, and present data and findings. Each student services program must participate every five years on a rotating cycle. Review teams include a cross section of college stakeholders and at least one external reviewer. The goal of the program review process is to provide a regular opportunity for individuals and programs in student services to develop, assess, and improve programs and services based on nationally recognized standards and practices. Results of the program review process are presented to the NIC community and findings are used to inform departmental planning and goal setting. Programs that are grant funded, such as TRIO, also utilize the grant renewal application for their respective program review template.

The overview of the CAS model includes the following seven steps:

1. Plan the process.
2. Assemble and educate the team.
3. Identify, collect, and review evidence.
4. Conduct and interpret ratings using evaluative evidence.
5. Develop an action plan.
6. Prepare a report. Example: [Veteran and Military Family Services Final Report](#)

7. Complete a feedback report on the program review process. See [Program Review Feedback Template](#).

The program standards from CAS cover 12 component parts including mission, program, organization and leadership, human resources, ethics, governance, diversity, internal and external relations, financial resources, technology, facilities and equipment, and assessment and evaluation.

An example of improvements that resulted from completing the CAS self-assessment can be found within NIC's Student Union Operations (SUO). The Student Union Operations Department is located within the Edminster Student Union Building (SUB). The department is supervised by the director of student engagement and SUB operations, has three full-time custodians serving the building, and offers student employment opportunities in support of the Student Union. One improvement within the SUO was to improve the process of developing meaningful learning outcomes for all student positions as they have extensive hands-on learning opportunities during their employment. Each student is asked for input upon hire as to what they would like to learn while employed with the Operations Department. There are also a series of questions to glean an understanding of a soft baseline of experience for each worker. This input is considered when developing and refining learning outcomes, student projects, and daily tasks during the semester. The [summative list of learning opportunities](#) is now organized and compiled for future use when assessing student needs. After a period of employment at the SUB, student-employees are surveyed again for their perceptions on how they felt the learning outcomes or tasks contributed to their overall experience and education in the workplace. Interviews are also conducted at the end of employment (when possible) to review the value of the work experience for each student employee. This qualitative and quantitative information drives refinements within the learning outcomes as needed for each student-based position within the SUO.

Additional improvement areas identified by the [SUO CAS self-assessment](#) was the need to guide discussions and decision-making of building occupants through the Student Union Advisory Board (SUAB). The SUAB meetings take place once a month during the semester and the operations coordinator guides members to keep tabs on proposed changes in building occupancy, and invites key department representatives and administrators to the meetings in order to develop and provide valuable student and stakeholder feedback to the final decision-making process on changes of use in office space.

In the most recent review of Career Services (CAS Standard 3.5, [p. 10](#)), the department was rated high with their collaboration with community organizations to provide career development services. Due to the strong economy, many businesses are collaborating with NIC Career Services to provide assistance in ensuring that individuals pursue career options that fit them best. This helps area businesses to hire engaged, dedicated employees, and significantly reduces turnover. Hundreds of professionals have partnered with NIC Career Services to provide informational interviews and job shadows for career explorers, and NIC Career Services provides students and employers with a new state of the art job listing program. In addition, Career Services also is considered a major recruiting medium for potential students, including many in high school, as they discuss potential careers with professional staff at NIC.

The college also conducted three program reviews of intercollegiate athletics, including a conference review, a [Title IX review](#), and an expansion feasibility study ([Athletics Expansion Review Report](#)). The conference review of 2013 resulted in all of the sports, with the exception of wrestling, moving membership from the National Junior College Athletic Association to the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC). The move was taken as a cost-saving measure that offered better opportunities

for student-athletes from the region to compete for North Idaho College. The Title IX review showed equitable opportunity for student athletes and equitable support for programs and facilities. The job descriptions for Athletic Department personnel were found to be inequitable and resulted in changes to some of the responsibilities. The expansion feasibility study of 2019 resulted in a decision by the board not to expand program offerings, but to focus on current program and facility improvements. (See board minutes, [March 2019, pp. 3-4](#)). Recent internal assessments of the athletic program have resulted in substantial changes to the Athletic Department handbook and formation of a Student Athlete Leadership Council.

### **Standard 4.A.3. – Effective System of Assessment of Student Achievement.**

*The institution documents, through an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment of student achievement, that students who complete its educational courses, programs, and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, achieve identified course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Faculty with teaching responsibilities are responsible for evaluating student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes.*

Faculty initially frame assessment of student learning through the curricular submittal process that requires identification of course and program learning outcomes, as well as a sample of measures (exams, assignments, projects, etc.) that will be used to indicate student achievement. Program maps published in the Program Guidelines section of the college catalog ([online](#)) are part of the documentation of the interrelationship of course, program, and degree outcomes.

Formal assessment includes multiple components. For example, at the course level, STEM faculty evaluate student performance through tools such as common final exams as a way to norm across sections and instructors. The findings have then led to discussion and course revision to improve delivery and content of instruction. English faculty have modeled what has become a wider practice in other disciplines with annual faculty meetings focused on course assessment, inclusive of all faculty, full-time, adjunct, and dual credit. A centerpiece of the English Department's efforts are faculty norming of assessments of student artifacts in response to designated assignments. The move to a co-requisite model of remediation in English and the phasing out of a non-credit ENGL 099 was one outcome of this effort, as was the creation of the common 'Purpose of Education' writing module to further unify the student experience across all English 101 courses. GEM Assessment Reports [2007-2015](#) and [2015-current](#).

In addition, for GEM courses, faculty have developed signature assignments to reasonably indicate whether students are demonstrating knowledge, skills, and abilities in one or more of the GEM competencies. Of the seven GEM categories (1-Written Communication, 2-Oral Communication, 3-Mathematical Ways of Knowing, 4-Scientific Ways of Knowing, 5- Artistic and Humanistic Ways of Knowing, 6-Social and Behavioral Science Ways of Knowing, and 7-Wellness and Integrative Inquiry), each has from two to six competencies. For example, GEM 4 faculty in the Natural Sciences Division have identified at least four of five competencies for GEM assessment, inclusive of:

- Apply foundational knowledge and models of a natural or physical science to analyze and/or predict phenomena.
- Understand the scientific method and apply scientific reasoning to critically evaluate arguments.
- Interpret and communicate scientific information via written, spoken and/or visual representations.
- Describe the relevance of specific scientific principles to the human experience.

- Form and test a hypothesis in the laboratory or field using discipline-specific tools and techniques for data collection and/or analysis.

Reports for student achievement were summarized in data provided at the end of spring 2019:

- The data show that NIC is capturing results from a large number of our general education student population, including classes taught at NIC and in our dual credit classes taught at area high schools, indicating the breadth of the general education assessment plan.
- Numbers of our students who are successfully meeting the state competencies are higher than 75 percent in all GEM areas. The results reflect NIC's commitment to student success and educational excellence, two of our core themes. Data shows student performance is strong across the GEM areas.
- The strong performance from our students indicates that faculty assignment design, curriculum design, and overall alignment of general education assignments/activities to the state of Idaho General Education competencies is successful. NIC faculty in all GEM areas have been engaged and highly involved in the assessment process from the start, indicating that this is a faculty-driven assessment system. Faculty are, truly, the heart of general education assessment itself, since it is up to NIC professors to align their curriculum and assignments to the NIC course outcomes, outcomes which are all directly aligned to Idaho state competencies.

The work of General Education Assessment at NIC goes beyond the creation of these signature assignments for each discipline group. Faculty groups from most GEM areas, including dual credit and adjunct instructors, meet on an annual basis to discuss assessment results and to drive decisions about course improvement. These General Education assessment workshops initiate heightened, thoughtful faculty collaboration, and lead to evidence-based actions. In several GEM areas (including, Written Communication-GEM 1, Oral Communication-GEM 2, Artistic and Humanistic-GEM 5, and Social and Behavioral-GEM 6) faculty meet, discuss the GEM assessment process, share assignments on disciplinary and interdisciplinary teams, and create action plans based on the evidence from their assessment results. Similar work has begun in fall 2019 for Scientific-GEM 4 and Integrative/Wellness-GEM 7. The actions taken from these discussions, thus far, include course-level improvements and assignment sharing and broader discussions about ways to better serve the increasing number of dual credit students who enroll in our General Education classes. Mathematical-

GEM 3 faculty meet each month, throughout the academic year, to discuss courses, assignments, and results for improvement. All GEM faculty, at the close of each assessment cycle, are asked by the SLOA committee chairs to reflect on the assessment process itself and consider actions they want to take from the data and the conversations that resulted. The content of these reflections is captured in report summaries. See [2019 GEM Assessment Discipline Summaries](#). See also [Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Campus Map](#), and Celebrating Success Video: [Student Learning Outcomes Assessment](#), January 2020.

This work has been informed by NIC's active participation in statewide General Education Summits that, in the past, have had a focus on development of assessment of courses in the framework adopted for all two- and four-year public institutions, effective fall 2015. The entire framework for GEM is based on the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) Value Rubrics, widely recognized as reliable instruments for assessing student learning. NIC's General Education Reform process, in fact, was truly a collegewide engagement with student learning outcomes assessment. From the years 2013-2015, faculty in all General Education areas: a) examined their GEN ED course outcomes, b) examined the assignments they created and assigned and how those assignments mapped to the course outcomes, and c) connected those assignments and the NIC course outcomes to

the new state of Idaho General Education competencies. This was a detailed, thorough, and comprehensive form of curriculum mapping that engaged all General Education faculty at NIC and connected them to their colleagues in other higher education institutions across the state of Idaho (See [Humanities 101 GEM Outline](#)).

At the program level, transfer program assessment is on a five-year cycle (see [Program Review Rotation Schedule](#)), except for accredited programs that follow the established schedule for that discipline. The program review process includes a self-study, using a common, faculty-developed, [comprehensive template](#) and a [checklist](#). See NIC Program Review [webpage](#). The self-study is reviewed by the reporting dean prior to it being sent to two or three external discipline experts, who are typically from regional two- and four-year transfer institutions, and from industry or business as applicable. The reviewers then spend a full day on campus for discussion with the division chair, faculty, and administration, including the VPI, and produce a summary of their findings. Meetings with students and review of facilities are commonly incorporated into the reviewers' visit to campus. Program review has helped to strengthen assessment, as it is often cited as a basis for curricular changes and considerations of other ways to improve program delivery. See [Program Review SharePoint Site](#) and [English AA Midcycle Program Interviews and Action Plans 2019 Summary Document](#).

Technical programs rely heavily on advisory committees that provide input on industry, business, and service sector needs leading to informed adaptation of the program to prepare students for work and career. Commonly, these inputs indicate a high degree of readiness and employability and heavily influence curriculum changes to maintain program relevancy in industry. Further, career-technical programs prepare students for Technical Skills Assessments (TSA) and these results show a high level of success in student achievement of relevant knowledge and application and are a key element of core theme indicators. The college has performed well in this measure with TSA pass rates above 90 percent in the three core theme reports.

Accredited programs such as Nursing and other health professions programs adhere to the standards for assessment of student learning embedded in those accreditation processes. As reported in 1.B.2 and later in this chapter in 4.B.1, NIC measures licensure pass rates as a core theme measure. One measure of degree success is the historically near-perfect pass rate for NIC nursing students on the national credentialing examination, the NCLEX, another core theme measure. The college has performed well in this measure with near-perfect scores over the past four core theme reports.

One indicator of degree outcome effectiveness is success after transfer. Although data are largely anecdotal, program reviewers from four-year institutions in Idaho consistently report that NIC students do well in their upper division courses, in some cases better than students who began their studies at the four-year institution. (For example, [Biology program review](#) comments.) It is clear that more systematic transfer degree outcomes measures would be valuable. The overall student transfer rates are an indirect indicator of degree success, and additional longitudinal quantitative and qualitative data are needed to strengthen assessment of degree outcomes for those who pursue further education.

#### **Standard 4.A.4. – Holistic Evaluation with Respect to Core Theme Objectives.**

*The institution evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation, and integration of programs and services with respect to accomplishment of core theme objectives.*

NIC conducted multi-year visioning and planning activities, termed “Cultivate NIC,” that led to the alignment, correlation, and integration of programs and services to an integrated strategic planning process (ISP). The ISP articulates direction and priorities for the institution, provides alignment for the four campus master plans and operational plans for every unit. The Cultivate NIC Planning Team identified areas of

strengths and challenges across the college while composing four master plans that provide a holistic approach to the alignment and integration of programs and services with the core themes.

The evaluation process for the ISP involves integrating the results of the Core Theme Reports, the four campus master plans, and the SBOE Strategic Plan, into spring budgeting and operational goal-setting activities. The results of the prior year allow the administration to evaluate and adjust programs and services in the four master planning documents with achievement of the core themes as the main objective.

During the evaluation process, the college acknowledged those core theme objectives that it achieves well, such as stewardship. NIC also acknowledged the components of the core theme objectives such as SLOA goal improvement, providing professional development opportunities, and maintaining and exceeding technological investments for the college community that were points of pride. During the evaluation process for the ISP, major initiatives such as countering enrollment declines and related revenue reductions caused by a dramatic increase in dual credit, and launching initiatives with the goal of improving the student learning experience, were acknowledged as areas that pose a challenge and for which additional time and energy must be invested.

The holistic review of the integration of programs and services supporting core theme accomplishment occurs through the work of the SLOA Committee, the committees of each of the campus master plans, the Office of Planning and Effectiveness, and the President's Advisory Council. SLOA's recent collegewide workshop on Program Alignment, for example, serves as evidence of this holistic approach. The event was widely attended by faculty and staff from multiple areas on campus, and the presentation encouraged participants to think about aligning the whole student experience at NIC, not merely the students' experience in individual classes or programs. See [North Idaho College Program Alignment Presentation](#)

#### **Standard 4.A.5. – Holistic Evaluation with Respect to Achievement of Goals or Intended Outcomes.**

*The institution evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation, and integration of planning, resources, capacity, practices, and assessment with respect to achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of its programs or services, wherever offered and however delivered.*

NIC initiated a comprehensive review of all programs and services in spring 2014, in part based on recommendations received during the 2013 comprehensive accreditation self-evaluation and site visit. The Institutional Optimization process took place fall semester 2014 through fall semester 2015. Reports on the findings and recommendations made by President's Cabinet were shared with the NIC community in February 2016. Under new presidential leadership in the fall 2016, the college became more keenly focused on integrated planning and developed tactics that led to the current Integrated Strategic Planning process.

In conjunction with the evaluation of the ISP, the college uses the information from the measurement of institutional progress to review and identify operational goals as part of summer planning activities. Every unit manager reviews the prior year's goals, and establishes new goals based upon the results of the ISP. As reported in 3.A.1., the college has utilized electronic forms to establish, measure, analyze, and adjust goal setting at the operational level. The Office of Planning and Effectiveness organizes and provides support for the setting and evaluating of operational goals.

As part of the Academic Master Plan, the results of program review are considered in regard to the analysis of results compared to intended outcomes. The college has an opportunity for improvement with the alignment of operational goals reporting with the program review process.

President's Cabinet and the President's Advisory Council spend considerable time every summer reviewing progress and identifying action plans for improvement initiatives. The discussions include the consideration of resource allocation when making decisions based on capacity, practices, and assessment data.

#### **Standard 4.A.6. Review of Assessment Processes to Ensure Meaningful Results**

*The institution regularly reviews its assessment processes to ensure they appraise authentic achievements and yield meaningful results that lead to improvement.*

During this accreditation cycle, the college has improved upon the evaluation of assessment and planning processes, including core theme analysis, program review, operational goal setting and evaluation, and master planning documents. Every major assessment and planning process involves committees representing faculty, staff, and administration. In addition, the college's governance structure permits faculty and staff the opportunity to provide feedback on the procedures and forms used in all assessment and planning processes. Most of the college assessment and planning processes are reviewed on a regular basis ranging from one to five years resulting in improvements such as a revision in the program review template (see 4.A.2), and also an enhanced and deepened tool for assessment that was adopted by SLOA in 2019. More globally, the college has invested in implementation of and training on Colleague Reporting and Operating Analytics (CROA), with wide access to reports for decision makers at the department, division, and administrative level. CROA includes, but is not limited to, student services, finance, human resources, enrollment, and financial aid. The college is gaining fluency with CROA that will advance the use of data for appraising achievements and focusing improvement efforts.

Similarly, the adoption of Canvas as the college LMS was driven in part by the ability to provide faculty with real-time, robust indicators of student progress or difficulty in classes. The eLearning Department conducted a deliberate process with an advisory committee to reach the recommendation for the switch, and eLearning provided leadership for the implementation through extensive workshops to promote wide use. The college avoided a decline in retention rates experienced during the previous LMS transition. Since the transition to the new LMS, retention rates for e-learning courses have been trending upwards.

As part of the regular review of practices, the Student Services Division has recently incorporated Council for Advancement of Standards (CAS) into its evaluation processes, beginning with programs like TRIO to model how other areas can use CAS for identifying strengths and areas for improvement in student operations. Student Union Operations (SUO) completed several cycles of the assessment of learning opportunities for student employees. Feedback from students is analyzed and modifications for the learning outcomes are updated after every cycle. In addition, the SUO also modified the decision procedure for the use of office space. Both qualitative and quantitative data from an established advisory committee, based upon the CAS standards, informs decisions on changes in office space.

The Workforce Training Center (WTC) conducted a program review in 2016 using an external consultant and [LERN](#) standards. As part of the LERN program review process, the financial activities and productivity levels are measured based upon comparable data. As mentioned in 2.F.2, the WTC developed strategies, based upon the recommendation from the program review to meet a multi-year revenue goal. In addition to revenues, the WTC also measures and tracks major expenditure categories such as promotion (marketing), production, direct costs, operating margin, and staff productivity. See [LERN Excel Spreadsheet Update](#). The program review process assisted WTC with the development of key performance indicators (KPI) for productivity and also identified obstacles that impede progress. See [WTC LERN Program Review Final Report](#).

NIC has followed the recommendations from the LERN review by centralizing operations, adding new positions, and modifying WTC's structure. The college added three key full-positions (operations manager, marketing coordinator, and an outreach coordinator) and added several part-time positions to assist in the areas of accounting, apprenticeships, customized training, customer service, and healthcare. WTC also shares an instructional designer with the Office of eLearning with the goal of offering additional online workforce training options and keeping curriculum up to date.

NIC has benefited from the LERN program review. WTC staff conduct quarterly reviews of KPIs and obstacles slowing the center down, and have developed strategies to increase both "repeat" rates and lowering "cancellation" rates by clients. The change in structure has allowed WTC to revamp the website, develop robust social media marketing, and increase other marketing efforts such as newsletters on the topics of health and mining.

The college made substantial software investments that improved its ability to collect, analyze, and document improvements at the operational level. For the past three years, employees have the ability to set and review goals that are linked to the master planning documents.

## Standard 4.B – Analysis, Results and Improvements

Student success, educational excellence, community engagement, stewardship, and diversity were established as core values for NIC in 2012. Since then to the present, all five values have been thematic elements of NIC's mission as a comprehensive community college. Appropriately, they form the core themes for the college. They represent a clear expression of the place and purpose of the college in a higher education landscape that calls for responsiveness to diverse student needs, quality programming, adaptability to a changing economy, careful use of limited resources, and service to a wider community.

At times, the college was challenged with the development of the measures and the concept of core themes. The work around the core theme measures has evolved and the scoring and benchmarks have changed. The college has eliminated, altered and created new measures. Some measures were created but the college had difficulty with responsibility and collection of data. Those measures have been held for future review and consideration. Currently, some of the core theme measures have well-established analysis, while a few still lack benchmarks.

Presently, the work around core theme measures is led by the accreditation liaison officer, in conjunction with the Office of Planning and Effectiveness. NIC uses data from a variety of reporting sources including the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), internal measures, state longitudinal data, and the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA). A core theme report is developed annually.

As outlined in Chapter One, NIC measures achievement of mission fulfillment by rating its performance for the core themes, both individually and collectively. The college is achieving its mission when the mean for all core themes indicates that the college is either "consistently progressing" or "meeting expectations." A core theme that is not meeting expectations or progressing indicates the college needs to act to better fulfill its mission. The five core themes, objectives, measures, trends, and expectations are reported in annual Core Theme Reports. The following section, addressing Standards 4.B.1 and



4.B.2, discusses the analysis, results and improvements for each of the core themes, individually. The most recent full report can be found in the [2019 Core Theme Report](#).

## Core Theme I: Student Success

### **4.B.1 - Results of Objective 1.1: Provide regional access to quality education and training**

NIC's credit and non-credit enrollment reflect national trends of enrollment decline in higher education for community colleges. However, the total population of the service region has grown, particularly in the last two years, as one factor in assessing NIC's overall performance in these two enrollment measures (CCM 037 and CCM 038). Population growth in the region has skewed to older adults, making it all the more imperative that NIC refine its enrollment management efforts. By comparison, NIC's dual credit program has grown dramatically, reflecting both a commitment of state resources through the "Fast Forward" initiative to encourage dual credit, and a conscious investment by the college into the administrative operation for NIC's Dual Credit Office. The Fast Forward program provides every student attending an Idaho public school an allocation of \$4,125 to use toward [Advanced Opportunities](#) in grades 7-12. Fast Forward funds, may be used by high school students for high school overload courses, dual credit, Advance Placement (AP) exams, College Level Examination Program exams, and regionally approved workforce training programs.

The large geographic region served by NIC places particular importance on distance education, which has been sustained over the last two years of assessment, following a decline in 2016. The drop is proportional to overall enrollment trends at the college. While not as strong as desired, NIC has maintained a vital role as a provider of access to educational programming across the accreditation cycle.

### **4.B.2 - Improvements for Objective 1.1: Provide regional access to quality education and training**

The ongoing development of a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan is indicative of the college's response to the results related to access. NIC Connect, as referenced in 2.D.3, is clear demonstration of NIC fostering access by delivering applications, financial aid, and placement services on site.

Workforce training, as a centerpiece of non-credit offerings, has been challenged by organizational changes during the accreditation cycle. To strengthen the working relationship with trade and industries programs at the Parker Technical Education Center and the Healthcare programs at the Workforce Training Center (WTC), leadership hired an external consultant from the Learning Resources Network ([LERN](#)) and conducted a program review. See 4.A.6. NIC has followed the recommendations from the LERN review by centralizing operations, adding new positions, and modifying WTC's structure. See [WTC LERN Program Review Final Report](#). Although overall enrollment is down, reflecting, in part, the strong regional economy and historically low Idaho unemployment rates of less than 2 percent, there has been an increase in revenue generated through WTC programs, providing a promising resource for investment (See 2.F.2). For example, it

is apparent that students in apprenticeship programs, particularly in the two high-demand fields of electrical and HVAC, have an interest in pursuing AAS degrees. This is an area in which both non-credit and credit enrollment can be increased strategically to target a segment of a population that is generally underserved by higher education.

Early in the accreditation cycle, the department of eLearning at NIC systematically engaged faculty for the critical decision to transition the college's LMS from Blackboard to Canvas, and supported the transition with a series of workshops and online resources that have led to, for example, significant participation in Quality Matters certification. Overall, there is a more technologically adept delivery of online education, resulting in increased pass rates for online courses. Further, the college has hired full-time instructional designers to advance online educational offerings, and selected faculty (a math assistant professor in Sandpoint) adept at online instruction. Access to online education is critical, and delivery of a quality online education has been a point of emphasis.

#### **4.B.1 - Results of Objective 1.2: Assist students with the attainment of educational and career goals.**

The college improved the overall measures used in the collection of data for this core theme. There are three measures for student attainment of educational and career goals that span the entire accreditation cycle and three measures that have been added since the first Core Theme Report in 2016. First-time full-time and first-time part-time student retention has been below expectation, set against national benchmarks, across the cycle. Part-time enrollment has increased as a proportion of overall enrollment in the last five years, reflecting a strong economy, as more people find viable employment opportunities in lieu of higher education. It is all the more critical for the college to improve retention rates for all first-time students, including both full- and part-time. These rates have been stubbornly below 60 percent historically at the college and efforts to increase persistence and completion are a focus. One positive indicator is the strong pass rate for classes, the third measure spanning the cycle, with incremental improvement each of the last three years.

To strengthen college measures of educational attainment, the college added trends of degree and certificate completion, transfer, and continuing enrollment rates starting in 2018, consistent with adoption of the [Voluntary Framework of Accountability](#) (VFA). Use of VFA measures is one of the intentional steps to incorporate meaningful indicators of mission fulfillment that IPEDS cannot provide. Although the college is below the target of 70 percent for percentage of awards, transferred, or still enrolled after six years (CCM 187, currently above 65 percent for the last three years) the number of certificates and degrees awarded by the college is up over 24 percent in three years, indicating progress. A second measure added in 2018 of positive placements for CTE concentrators is a very promising sign that students who complete NIC programs are successful in achieving employment.

Two additional measures, one for the completion of a general education certificate, with data to be available after 2019 for a three-year average, and the other for earning 30 credits in a year, an indicator of student momentum toward their goals, will be useful data points to see how work on pathways is benefitting NIC students.

#### **4.B.2 – Improvements for Objective 1.2: Assist students with the attainment of educational and career goals.**

Pathways at NIC has helped advance key steps to improvement of educational attainment. As referenced throughout the self-study, Pathways has included revision of the math sequences, as a targeted high impact area for curriculum re-alignment, for career technical students, STEM, stats, and general studies,

significantly enhanced learning supports through the Cardinal Learning Commons, implementation of program maps for full- and part-time study, and associated activities to promote persistence including steps toward adopting an early alert system and proactive advising strategies.

Program review incorporates data on course pass rates and has raised visibility of high DWFI rates, leading to, for example, the adoption of recitation and co-requisite courses for Biology, English, and Math. NIC continues to be a leading participant in statewide and national efforts associated with Complete College America (see [Complete College Idaho](#)) to put in place actions that build and sustain momentum. A highlight of such work is “3 for Free,” a tangible investment by the college to shift the predominate student tendencies from part-time to full-time enrollment. NIC initiated a program where degree-seeking students who take 15 or more credits and are in good standing will earn 3 free credits the following semester. Tracking placement for CTE graduates will continue to be a key way for the college to ensure it is successful in helping students achieve their career goals. Another highlight of the corequisite model is reducing the amount of time for students in remedial courses, preparing them more quickly for college-level courses, and allowing students a greater chance of completing their programs of study. Although key individual indicators are not met, overall, there has been progress on student success.

## Core Theme II: Educational Excellence

### **4.B.1 - Results of Objective 2.1 Provide quality programs of study that result in student learning**

After a revision in 2018, the college fared generally well with the collection of data used to measure attainment of educational and career goals. NIC used one measure (CCM 115) that remained consistent this accreditation cycle that involved the targeted investment of the NIC Foundation’s resources to advance innovation, best practices in programs and services, and acquisition of needed resources outside the general budgeting process. In each of the last three years an average of \$140,000 has been awarded through a competitive funding process. The excitement is palpable when the annual cycle is announced, as staff and faculty generate ideas, or revise previous submissions to advance educational programming. As noted below in results, the diversity, breadth, and impact is significant, as each recipient must provide a brief summary of how the funds were used. A spirit of entrepreneurship is fostered through the awarding process.

Three measures have been used for the last two years, Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) goals met (see [2018 SLOA Goal Report](#)), ratio of full- to part-time faculty, and student perceptions of their interactions with faculty and advisors, through CCSSE. In each case, expectations have been exceeded. Although a full data set would be ideal, the use of three-year averages for each of the two years reported is sufficient to state that the faculty have engaged effectively in assessing learning outcomes, and students’ experience with faculty and advisors is positive. The relative reliance on full-time instructors is a structural dimension of these results.

The college is also reassessing whether the measures used collectively for indicating quality programs and learning are indeed the best measures. Data collection proved challenging for employer satisfaction with CTE completers, for example. As the college looks toward transitioning to the new NWCCU standards, the measures of educational excellence will be reset.

#### **4.B.2 – Improvements for Objective 2.1 Provide quality programs of study that result in student learning**

Among the innovative projects supported by development are grant funding offset of the cost for study abroad for students enrolled in an English British Mysteries class; the purchase of technology, including a green screen to aid in delivery of American Sign Language instruction; and the provision of career assessment of Adult Education students to help guide their intentions after completion of their GED. SLOA has gained new footing as a resource for faculty dialogue on teaching and learning. In keeping with one of its primary goals to help change the culture around student learning outcomes assessment at NIC, the committee has continued to create innovative pedagogy workshops and workshops on assignment sharing and design. These workshops are a tangible result of the assessment process itself, bringing faculty together across disciplines to share student work, discuss best practices, and think through curriculum changes. The active engagement of faculty across all seven GEM areas also led to the decision to bring a coach from the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) to campus to further focus and guide program assessment efforts. See [SLOA Professional Development announcement](#). As part of the commitment to a majority of faculty being full-time, the college recently reviewed position titles, moving from a generic “instructor” designation, to ranks associated with tenure track, tenured, and post-tenured faculty with strong records of teaching and service. Further, the college systematically reviewed several long-standing “special appointments,” faculty positions that had been renewed on an annual basis without the opportunity for tenure. By selectively moving key positions that were associated with historically strong enrollment and where stable programmatic leadership was needed, the tenure process has now formally begun for these faculty. It is expected that they will solidify and advance quality programs as a result.

#### **4.B.1 - Results of Objective 2.2: Students develop skills and knowledge to ensure lifelong success**

Here, too, like objective 2.1, one measure has been consistently used throughout the cycle, the licensure pass rate for national exams. Students have performed at an exemplary level, nearly perfect, indicating their preparation has served them extraordinarily well for their chosen field. A second measure of performance, Technical Skills Assessment (TSAs) results, used for two years, also shows very strong student outcomes, indicating that industry standard preparations are being exceeded well above national averages. Two other measures collected for two years on student perceptions are mixed. One showing student satisfaction with courses indicates a norm of above average. However, a second, using CCSSE data shows students have been dissatisfied with institutional support for learners, in the most recent review. Finally, the measure of remediation of recent high school graduates will be dropped as it is not indicative of NIC’s delivery of education, but rather relative readiness of students in Idaho; a measure being reevaluated by the SBOE as part of their reporting framework.

#### **4.B.2 - Improvements for Objective 2.2: Students develop skills and knowledge to ensure lifelong success**

The results of student pass rates for licensure and TSAs are a point of pride for the college, reflecting close alignment of curriculum to accredited programmatic standards, to industry expectations, and to the needs of employers. The faculty in these programs, primarily healthcare and trades and industry, are models of commitment to teaching and learning practices resulting in student excellence. Further, the college has systematically invested in the spaces and technology needed for these high performing programs, as evidenced by the facilities in the Meyer Health and Sciences Building and the establishment of the Parker Technical Education Center. Future additions to Meyer are well underway and will add capacity for an even more dynamic learning environment for healthcare and sciences.

As noted elsewhere, the significant improvements in learning supports, most notably associated with the Cardinal Learning Commons, the library, and e-learning were not part of the last CCSSE survey. It is expected that the next cycle of student perceptions will show a marked improvement in the students' experience related to the collaboration, integration, and communication across academic support areas.

CCSSE data used for assessing educational excellence showed that students perceived the need for additional academic support. In 2017, the college redesigned and rebranded what had been a skills center to the Cardinal Learning Commons. This unit encompasses a revised tutoring/supplemental support program, a Math Education Center that collaborates across NIC, remodeled and technology-enhanced facilities to deliver a revised developmental math curriculum, a new facility for placement assessment and secure testing environment for current students, and new courses for first-year and returning students that count toward GEM requirements. The changes in this area of campus have benefitted students by making academic support services more responsive to their needs, in part by shifting from reliance on student tutors to tutors with bachelor's and master's degrees in key areas such as anatomy and physiology. The Math Education Center reached beyond the math department to all areas that provide math instruction, including healthcare, STEM, and the Adult Education Center, to strengthen delivery of math education. Faculty and the director of the CLC tailored the text used in the CLC 101 course to NIC student needs. Collectively, the investments in CLC have been a visible and effective indicator of NIC's response to assessment and efforts to improved educational excellence.

## Core Theme III: Community Engagement

### 4.B.1 Results of Objective 3.1: Provide opportunities that meet community and workforce needs.

NIC has performed well overall with the results collected with the CCMs associated with the core theme of community engagement. The college didn't have enough data in the 2016 Core Theme Report to provide a rating for the objective, and made improvements to the measures. Both 2018 and 2019 Core Theme Reports reflect that NIC "meets expectations" for this core theme objective.

Six CCMs, were eliminated from the 2016 to the 2018 report including measures relating to articulation agreements (CCM 119), the number of educational activities created by NIC as a result of community engagement (CCM 167), the number of external boards with representatives of NIC (CCM 136), the number of community activities sponsored by NIC (CCM 138), student engagement in NIC or community events (CCM 139), and effectiveness of outreach centers (CCM 175). Most of these measures were changes due to the difficulty of collecting data, including the creation of surveys, potential inconsistencies in data collection, or that the Core Theme Team reconsidered the validity of the CCM.

The only modification from the 2018 to the 2019 Core Theme Report was the measure (CCM 181 to CCM 201) that narrowed the dual credit matriculation to North Idaho College instead of matriculation to *any* postsecondary institution.

NIC has the opportunity to improve in the area of data collection with the following measures:

*CCM190 – Percentage of degrees or certificates awarded that are identified as Hot Jobs by the Idaho Department of Labor.* The Hot Jobs list developed by the state is only a statewide projection and is updated every four years. The college is changing to a new measure (CCM 190) based upon annually collected regional employment statistics including the top 50 occupational openings.

*CCM191: Survey of key stakeholders in NIC’s service region indicates NIC provides relevant programming to meet educational needs.* The college has conducted several community surveys and focus groups as part of the planning processes over the last accreditation cycle and has used the information for input into operational and master planning documents. The Executive Accreditation Committee is considering adding a new measure to the Core Theme Reports that “quantifies” the qualitative information collected from the college community surveys, advisor committee meetings, and focus groups to determine if key stakeholders in NIC’s service region perceive that NIC provides relevant programming to meet regional educational needs. Currently the recommendation is to develop a new survey for the members of all CTE advisory committees.

*CCM 188: Percentage of students who answer often or very often when asked if they participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course at NIC (CCSSE).* The CCSSE survey is only administered every other year. The college will have to shift this measure from a three-year average to an annual review in order to keep all CCSSE survey items in future Core Theme reports.

The college has performed well with CCMs relating to dual credit. The college is strong with outreach to the high schools in NIC’s service area with dual credit enrollment increasing annually during this accreditation cycle (CCM 201), and the number of students eventually matriculating to NIC after high school is at an acceptable level (CCM 097).

The college has not met aspirations for the benchmark set with *CCM 038: Unduplicated annual headcount of noncredit students as a percentage of NIC’s total population.* Even though the college has made improvements with non-credit online programs, the population of the region continues to outpace enrollment growth. NIC may have to reset the expectation for this CCM.

#### **4.B.2 - Improvements for Objective 3.1: Provide opportunities that meet community and workforce needs.**

The college has many examples of improvements with the core theme of community engagement. As a comprehensive community college, NIC is deeply involved in the larger community. NIC engages in a number of efforts to embrace and strengthen that relationship.

New facilities are a highlight of improving community engagement, such as the Parker Technical Education Center, the Workforce Training Center (WTC), and the Aerospace Center. NIC is positioned to provide a highly skilled, adaptive workforce, and align the college’s training programs to the needs of business and industry. The college is a major partner in regional economic development. The potential to train workers places representatives from NIC in the forefront of negotiations when attracting and retaining business and industry to the region.

The college has expanded additional non-credit and customized workforce training to the region with input from CTE advisory committees, Idaho Department of Labor, and local chambers of commerce.

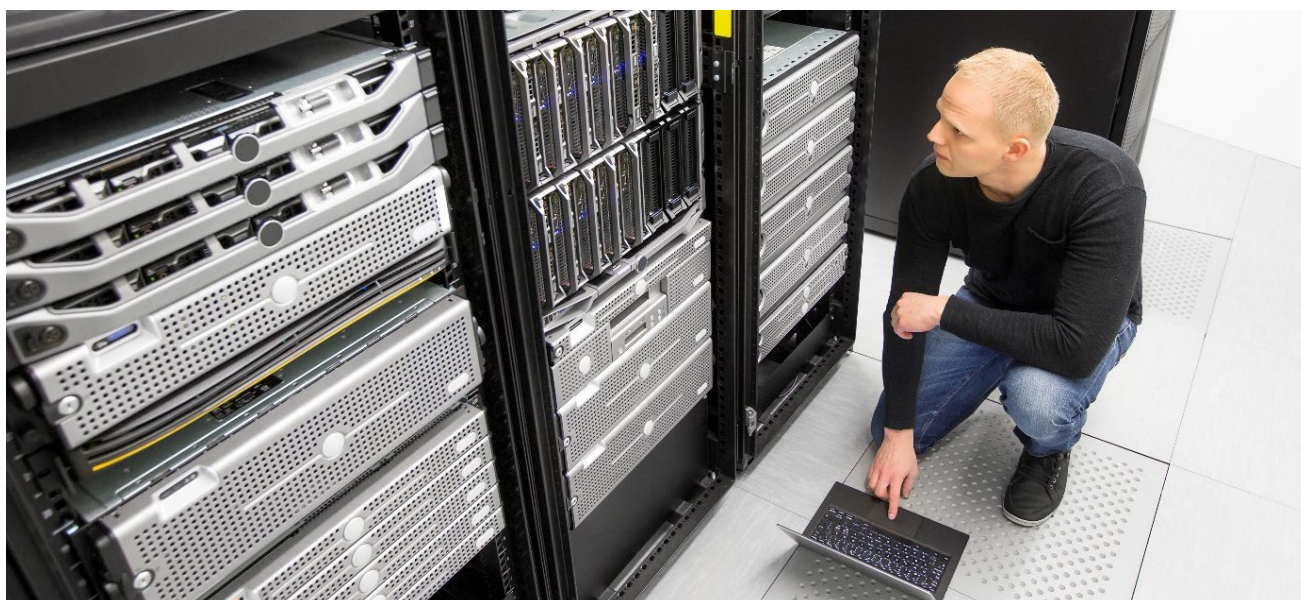
In 2017, NIC contracted with [EMSI](#), a research company, to perform a comprehensive environmental scan of the college’s service region. This information (see [main report](#) and [executive summary](#)) helped frame strategic planning conversations, and focus college leadership on the need to be responsive to the impacts these changes would have on the institution. The college was able to market this

information to the college community, including state lawmakers, through press releases and public presentations with the assistance of a [fact sheet](#). In a single fiscal year (2016), NIC and its students added \$181.7 million in income to the North Idaho economy, approximately equal to 2.3 percent of the region's total gross regional product (GRP). By comparison, this impact from the college is nearly as large as the entire agriculture, forestry, and fishing and hunting industries. This economic impact study provided an opportunity for NIC to quantify that impact on the region, demonstrating in hard figures what the college community already knew from the stories of NIC students. The study substantiates that NIC improves the careers, finances, and lives of individuals, which in turn improves the regional economy. See board minutes, [October 2019, p. 2](#).

Several programs within the WTC have maintained multifaceted relationships with local business and industry. In the areas of electrical, plumbing, and HVAC, advisory boards offer important feedback for the improvement of course instruction. Additionally, these same businesses provide valuable apprenticeship opportunities for students, which help create pathways to ensure students' success as they enter the workforce. In 2018, NIC expanded non-credit offerings for continuing education including courses in dental assisting, wood products training, and the expansion of the Certified Nursing Assistant Program.

NIC has increased support for professional development opportunities with the aid of institutional funds toward employee participation in community leadership programs such as Leadership Coeur d'Alene and Leadership Sandpoint. The college sets aside funding for employee enrollment in these programs, with final participant selection made by the President's Cabinet. Employee, student, and board involvement with community service and business organizations such as Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, local chambers of commerce, and the Human Rights Education Institute allow the college to maintain and strengthen relationships and build connections with the community it serves.

North Idaho College received its designation as a [National Center of Excellence in Cyber Defense](#) in 2017, the only community college designation in Idaho. This designation established by the National Security Administration (NSA) and Department of Homeland Security recognizes colleges that have developed cybersecurity programs and are on the forefront of this expanding field.



The college has improved partnerships with external entities for the support of innovation and entrepreneurship in the region, and increased the number of grants and donations, and the number of formal agreements. For example, the college had engaged in a collaborative agreement with Gizmo-CdA, a nonprofit, innovative makerspace open to faculty members and students that facilitates learning through connections with NIC programs. The North Idaho Small Business Development Center allows for community members to develop plans for initiating and developing small business opportunities, which are valued in the local area. Additionally, the college has worked to strengthen and streamline the transfer of several key programs with the University of Idaho and Lewis-Clark State College.

The college has been successful with the increase in dual credit enrollment over the past five years and has developed strong relationships with the school districts within NIC's service region.

The college strengthened relationships with area libraries to assist NIC's Adult Education Center, especially for students completing the online GED Academy, a non-credit program. The expanded partnership allows students completing the online GED Academy access to computers at all local libraries in the region. This allows greater access to completing a GED for students who lack reliable home internet service and transportation. With unemployment at a historically low rate, NIC AEC frequently meets with business and industry leaders, with the assistance of the Idaho Department of Labor, to collaboratively provide short-term training with the goal of fulfilling unmet labor supply in the region.

The college improved marketing activities, especially in the use of social media, to better inform the community about NIC's cultural and intercollegiate events occurring on campus. For example, the Communications Department implemented a mailing list to remind patrons of upcoming events about a week or so before every cultural event. The Athletic Department frequently updates their social media pages to inform the community about upcoming events and results of the latest competitions.

In 2014, the college debuted the NIC Day of Dialogue, providing a venue to discuss gender equity and to celebrate women leaders. Audience numbers have been tracked for the past several years as a way to measure community engagement. The Day of Dialogue is now sponsored by the American Association for Women in Community Colleges (AAWCC). See Video, Celebrating Success: [Day of Dialogue](#), Board of Trustees Meeting, March 2019.

Members of the community are taking advantage of the Student Wellness and Recreation Center by participating in short-term fitness classes such as yoga, weight and resistance training, and dancing. Memberships to the SWRC are available to the public.

With the proximity of Lake Coeur d'Alene, the college provides a plethora of outdoor activities through its Outdoor Pursuits Program that are available to the local community, including activity courses and equipment rentals for snow and water sports. The bulk of summer programming is oriented to the community and the bulk of fall and spring programming is oriented to NIC students. The college has increased the number of trips and clinics, and the number of equipment rentals to members of the community. Outdoor Pursuits has also improved its programming with off-campus activities such as skiing, kayaking, backpacking, river trips, paddle boarding, sailing, and rock climbing. The department also started offering extensive short-term community events such as Dutch oven cooking, bicycle maintenance, and ski waxing maintenance.





## Core Theme IV: Stewardship

### 4.B.1 - Results of Objective 4.1: Effectively use college resources to ensure sustainability.

In terms of data collection and performance, the results of the measurements for the core theme of stewardship are arguably the strongest out of the five. NIC had two objectives for this core theme in the 2016 report, and combined both of them into one objective in 2018. For each of the last three years, the college consistently met expectations for sustainability.

The Core Theme Report reflects very strong performance with private donations (CCM042), tuition relative to total revenue (CCM172), Composite Fiscal Index (CCM 169 – see 2.F.1 for additional information), fiscal performance with auxiliary services (CCM 170), and equipment replacement and repair (CCM 075). North Idaho College is nationally competitive in securing high-profile grants from state, federal, and foundation sources. As mentioned in the preface, NIC was recently one of 10 community colleges participating in the new [Metallica Scholars program](#). As part of the program, the band's foundation awarded \$100,000 to each of the 10 community colleges to support career-technical education, workforce development programs, and removing barriers that students face while learning a trade. See Metallica Scholars Initiative Final [Report](#) and [recruitment brochure](#).

There were very few changes in the measures of this core theme during the latter portion of the accreditation cycle. NIC eliminated two measures from 2016 to the 2018 Core Theme Report. One measure (CCM 113 and CCM 131) related to the percentage of eligible students who qualified for federal financial aid or an NIC Foundation scholarship. The other measure was the number of upgrades that resulted in energy efficiency (CCM 141). In both cases, the Core Theme Team felt that

these measures were not valid measures for the core theme. Both CCMs could only be improved by a small variance, and there were circumstances beyond the college's control that could impact the measure in a significant way.

There were no modifications of the measures from the 2018 to 2019 Core Theme Report. There are no changes to the measures expected for the next data collection cycle.

Even though the Core Theme Report reflects strong scores, the college is aware that deferred maintenance expenditures are increasing (CCM171), energy consumption (CCM192) is on the rise, tuition and fees IPEDS ranking is dropping (CCM130), and computer replacement declined slightly (CCM075). Even though dual credit enrollment was higher than forecast, NIC may need to counter a budget "squeeze" with continued high growth in this area. Higher enrollments in dual credit offerings may translate into future lost revenue without stronger efforts to matriculate these students to NIC after graduation from high school.

#### **4.B.2 – Improvements for Objective 4.1: Effectively use college resources to ensure sustainability.**

North Idaho College is committed to the wise use of funds and resources entrusted by state and local taxpayers, and has identified stewardship as one of its core themes. The college has had successes this accreditation cycle with initiatives relating to stewardship. Several improvements, initiatives, and best practices are highlighted in this section.

North Idaho College is nationally competitive in securing high-profile grants from state, federal, and foundation funders. In 2015, NIC was awarded \$6.4 million through the U.S. Department of Labor's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant program. The TAACCCT grant supported the Idaho Center of Excellence (ICE) Healthcare Partnership, a consortium including two four-year institution partners. The project created five new healthcare training programs for growing occupations and enhanced or expanded seven additional programs. The project has awarded over 2,500 credentials to over 2,000 participants, most of whom came through NIC.

Grants played an important role in the campaign to construct and outfit the new Parker Technical Education Center. A \$1.3 million award from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) helped fund state-of-the-art equipment for the new building, which opened in 2016.

NIC partnered with the Department of Commerce again in 2018, when the college was awarded a Regional Innovation Strategies grant through the EDA Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship to support the NIC Venture Center. The college was one of only 24 institutions whose project was selected from over 200 applications, and is the first organization in Idaho to be awarded this grant.

The NIC Foundation also secures grant funds for strategic priorities and special projects of the college, including scholarships. For example, the recent Metallica Scholars Initiative (as mentioned above in the results section) provided \$100,000 to support manufacturing students. The NIC Foundation was one of only 10 applicants nationwide selected by Metallica's All Within My Hands Foundation to receive this funding.

As reported in 2.F.2 and in the preface, the college received the largest single gift in its history in 2018. This gift from Bob and Leona DeArmond was designated to support the development of longterm, sustainable college programs and scholarships. In September 2019, NIC, in partnership

with Lewis-Clark State College and the University of Idaho, celebrated the opening of the Bob and Leona DeArmond College and University Center. In this facility, NIC has combined the recruiting and admissions functions for prospective students in one location to learn about NIC's programs and to assist with the admissions process.



A key planning mechanism is the construction of the college's annual operating budget, which is reviewed and approved by the NIC Board. The college, like many community colleges across the nation, is experiencing lower tuition revenue and disinvestment from the state government. Consequently, modifications of the annual budgeting process have led to a "bottom-up" and zero-based budgeting approach that is more inclusive of needs in the breadth of the institution. All departments across the college invest heavily in identifying needs and allocating resources to best support departments, learning outcomes, and the mission of the college. Budget development is tied to strategic planning efforts and unit operational goals.

North Idaho College is conscientious about allocating student fees to fund particular aspects of the institution. Student fees are a primary funding source for athletics, commencement, health services, instructional technology, learning assistance, activities and recreation, and the SUB. These fees are posted on the [website](#). Recent improvements in this area include a Student Fee Review Committee (see [Student Review Committee Charter](#)), formed in fall 2017 upon request from the Associated Students of North Idaho College (ASNIC). Students, faculty, and staff comprise the committee members, who review the budgets supported by student fees. The committee reviews proper stewardship of student fee funds, and offers recommendations for fee changes to the President's Cabinet. See [Student Advisory Committee Fee Review FY2019](#).

Through the Facilities Master Plan, college leadership is aware of the current status of existing facilities, and is able to make informed decisions regarding the need for any additional structures. NIC procured a new system, The School Dude software system, for tracking and ticketing maintenance requests. The Preventive Maintenance module helps with planning. Tracking and trends within the system provide sustainability and knowledge-transfer as new maintenance employees join the team. Several employees in maintenance have been long-term; their collective knowledge is now documented in the Preventative Maintenance module, and the system sends reminders about scheduled maintenance items that need to be addressed. In the past, work orders have been more reactive, but the current goal is a ratio of 80/20, where 80 percent of maintenance is predictive, and only 20 percent is reactive.

The college participates in an energy savings program through the provider, Avista. This conscientious approach continues to reduce the college's carbon footprint. Savings have allowed for efforts to modernize the irrigation system. Light emitting diode (LED) devices have been implemented for decreased energy usage; 14,000 lights were replaced in the last 18 months, for an energy savings of 53 percent. New trash compactors saved about \$20,000 over the prior year.

In giving back to the land and the environment, NIC has received the [Tree Campus USA](#) designation from the Arbor Day Foundation. The college met five standards to achieve this designation including establishing an inclusive advisory committee, developing a Campus Tree Care Plan, establishing a Campus Tree program with sufficient revenue to succeed, publicly observing Arbor Day, and developing a service learning project that engages students with projects relating to trees and can be part of a campus or community initiative. See Celebrating Success: [Tree Campus USA](#), Board of Trustees Meeting, March 2018.

Additional improvement efforts in this area were identified from the results of a study from Amaresco ([Amaresco Executive Summary presentation](#)) that revealed risk factors based on building age and condition. This effort resulted in the purchase of Asset Planner software that documents the status of equipment and technology in buildings. This comprehensive data collection assists with long- and short-term planning by prioritizing needs based on age. Moving forward, the college will be able to use this tool to determine accurate square footage for calculations to track electricity usage per square foot annually; this information can then be benchmarked and assessed. The information also provides crucial points that help fulfill reporting requirements to the Department of Public Works to request funding for projects. The software clearly identifies deferred maintenance to allow for prioritizing needs for internal funding. The Facilities Condition Index (FCI) is a calculation that reveals what percentage of a building is in a deferred state. NIC currently has a collegewide average score of 8.3 (as compared to the national average score of 10). The preference is for a lower FCI, indicating fewer capital requirements. Additionally, beginning in summer 2018, the college worked to systematize grounds and landscaping efforts so that activities are planned in advance, and the custodial team put together a plan and record keeping for regular activities.

The college also procured new software, the 25 Live facilities scheduler, to manage room usage across NIC, and provide heating and cooling services for classes and meetings. The 25 Live application can produce reports for space usage, but this feature has not yet been utilized to its full extent for institutional planning and streamlining. The goal is to implement a new automated heating and cooling schedule to coincide with actual facility use with the goal of energy savings.

The college utilizes an equipment replacement schedule (ERS) approach to budgeting and planning. All technology purchases are centralized in the college's IT department, which ensures up-to-date and consistent technology throughout the institution. This centralization allows for pooled purchasing, which began in 2012, to allow for significant savings with bulk purchases (15 to 20 percent less than

individual purchasing). The general concept is still a "top-down" approach and departmentally driven, but in the past, equipment purchases fluctuated for some departments, and additional purchases became a status symbol. In 2014, the college worked to flip the ERS to a "bottom-up" approach, replacing the oldest tools first. Today, all electronics are 48 months or younger, and equipment has become not a status symbol, but tools available for everyone. The ERS approach means there is no need for college leaders to advocate for technology in their areas, and technology is consistent across the institution. The IT spending plan is built from the replacement schedule calculation, with the goal that 95 percent of tech tools are replaced within the expected lifecycle. With the success of the technological equipment replacement schedule, the college recently started an institutional furniture replacement structure with budgeted line items, allowing furniture replacement to become more of an institution-level planning effort.



## Core Theme V: Diversity

### 4.B.1 - Results of Objective 5.1: Create an inclusive environment that fosters awareness of diversity

The results of the measurements for the core theme of diversity are mixed. The college is very strong with the commitment to diversity and is very proud of the efforts over this accreditation cycle with fostering awareness of diversity and creating an inclusive environment. Unfortunately, the college had difficulty with obtaining data during this accreditation cycle that accurately reflect the positive results, and the college's commitment to this core theme.

The college attempted several measures with two core theme objectives in the 2016 Core Theme Report, but did not have enough measures to formulate a score. The college took a different approach and combined the two objectives from the 2016 report into one objective for the 2018 and 2019 reports. Both of these reports were rated "consistently progressing," the lowest rating of the five core themes.

There were three modifications of the measures from the 2016 to 2018 Core Theme Report dealing with the core theme of diversity. CCM 173 and CCM 124, that measured the understanding and perceptions of multicultural and diversity perspectives, were eliminated due to the difficulty of creating a valid survey. CCM 174, which measures the number of courses with diversity of courses, was changed to incorporate new Idaho State General Education (GEM) guidelines. The revised CCM 174 pertains to the number of degree-seeking students who meet the proficiency outcomes for identified GEM 5 and GEM 6 diversity competencies. The college completed a pilot assessment action project with the collection data, and is now in the position to report on this measure in the 2020 Core Theme Report.

There was a modification from the 2018 to the 2019 Core Theme Report. CCM 123, Student perceptions of an inclusive, respectful and safe environment (CCSSE), was eliminated because external factors, such as safety, could skew the results. There were also difficulties with communication with CCSSE, as this question was specialized and required adequate lead time to include in the survey.

NIC has enrolled a more diverse population than the diversity of the service region. Due to the discrepancy between the performance on the Core Theme Report and with the success of creating an inclusive environment, the college will have to decide how to ascertain the measurements for diversity as it transitions into the new NWCCU standards.

#### **4.B.2 - Improvements for Objective 5.1: Create an inclusive environment that fosters awareness of diversity**

As an inclusive and comprehensive community college that educates groups from multiple backgrounds and life experiences, NIC is dedicated to the promotion of diversity in all its forms. Even though the institution had challenges during this accreditation cycle developing consistent measures for diversity, the institution has fared very well with the accomplishment of this core theme. A few highlights and best practices are presented this section.

In an effort to ensure diversity maintains a central role at NIC, the [Diversity Council](#) was established as a standing committee to support diversity initiatives collegewide. See [Diversity Council Charter](#). The mission of the council is to promote cultural competence and to develop global and cultural awareness among faculty, staff, and students collegewide. The Diversity Council strives to meet three goals relating to this core theme: Develop cultural competence, increase global awareness, and support social justice and ethical responsibility.

The common read is a popular program at two- and four-year colleges across the U.S. The common read creates a shared experience which engages faculty and students in discourse on a chosen topic. Presently, about 300 colleges have some form of a common reading program. In an effort to support diversity awareness across campus and regional locations and to fulfill the college's mission, the Diversity Council implemented a common read program at NIC branded "Cardinal Reads." The purpose of Cardinal Reads is to create a shared experience by engaging students and faculty in discourse on a common topic. Specific goals of the program are listed below:

1. Prevent discrimination toward disadvantaged groups that are commonly marginalized.
2. Develop a common learning experience connecting community constituents with the goal of helping to increase student retention.
3. Strengthen community partnerships with organizations related to multiculturalism to fulfill the college mission and vision of community engagement.
4. Encourage cultural competency by educating college community members about the impacts of cultural identity as it affects student learning and student success.

This common read is developed and organized by the [Cardinal Reads Committee](#) and supports the common theme adopted every two years by the Diversity Council. The council also identified collegewide learning goals for all participants.

The diversity theme selected for 2018-2020 by the Diversity Council Executive Committee is [Cultural Identity](#). Cultural identity directly connects to diversity; creating a collegewide initiative to provide education concerning the structural causes of discrimination and overall social inequality, supports an understanding of diverse populations. The NIC student population and larger community of North Idaho benefit from understanding a variety of cultural perspectives of underrepresented populations.

As a culminating event at the end of the academic year, the Diversity Symposium was started in 2016 to highlight the Common Theme. NIC hosted the Fourth Annual Diversity Symposium in April 2019. This daylong event features various sessions hosted by experts with the intent of bringing awareness to specific diversity issues. In an effort to develop cultural competence, increase global awareness, and support social justice and ethical responsibility, symposium organizers reach out to students, NIC, and the wider community to identify presenters and attendees. The event offers a safe forum to discuss and experience the sometimes-difficult diversity issues in a productive way. The [Fifth Annual Diversity Symposium](#) is scheduled for April 14, 2020. See Video: Celebrating Success: [Diversity Symposium and Diversity Council](#), Board of Trustees Meeting, March 2019.

As a result of GEM assessment activities, during the AY2019, NIC started collecting and reporting proficiency outcomes for identified GEM 5 and GEM 6 diversity competencies. The data will be included in the 2020 Core Theme Report.

NIC implemented the [Green Dot](#) program and provides training classes and information to students and employees. Green Dot is a violence prevention program that works on the premise that violence can be measurably and systematically reduced within a community via a proactive and reactive bystander.

The Human Resources Department recently made improvements with the goal of demonstrating a commitment to the core theme of diversity. The department now offers employees training on ways to conduct inclusive searches for new employees. While the content is geared toward the hiring process, it is applicable to all committee work and to creating an inclusive work environment, and is therefore relevant for all employees. NIC also subscribes to [DiverseJobs.net](#), a job board of Diverse Issues in Higher Education, a news source on diversity, equity, and inclusion in education.

The college continues to strengthen its relationship with the Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations. The group was organized to stand up to hate and to organize through peaceful strategies. Faculty, staff, and students from NIC participate in the activities of the task force. A member of the board of trustees currently serves as president of the task force. In addition, the board passed a resolution supporting human rights after the Faculty Assembly passed a similar measure in the aftermath of tragic events at the University of Virginia. See board minutes, [September 2017, p. 3](#)). The resolution includes language renewing the college's commitment of respecting the equality of all persons regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity, and rejecting the ideologies of white supremacists, the Ku Klux Klan, Neo-Nazis, and other hate groups.





## STEWARDSHIP

Economic and environmental sustainability through leadership, awareness, and responsiveness to changing community resources



The NIC Student Wellness and Recreation Center officially opened its doors in September 2017 after a year of construction.

It was the voice of students willing to fund the 30,000-square-foot, \$7.9 million facility that brought the project to life. Financed by and built for NIC students, the construction was overseen by a former student – NIC alum Gabe Bujko.

“I felt like the prodigal son returned,” Bujko said. “When I was a student, NIC gave me 100 percent. Now, I’ve given back 100 percent.”

Planned and constructed with the approval and support of the NIC Board of Trustees, and in collaboration with staff, faculty, and the administration, the wellness and recreation center has enhanced the quality of NIC’s recreational course offerings while promoting health and wellness for students and employees.

[READ MORE: \*nic.edu/StewardshipStory\*](http://nic.edu/StewardshipStory)





## **Chapter Five:**

### **Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation and Sustainability**



## Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirement 24

### Eligibility Requirement 24.

**Scale and Sustainability** - *The institution demonstrates that its operational scale (e.g., enrollment, human and financial resources and institutional infrastructure) is sufficient to fulfill its mission and achieve its core themes in the present and will be sufficient to do so in the foreseeable future.*

NIC has sustained its operational scale to achieve its core theme objectives. As documented throughout the report, NIC has sufficient faculty, staff, and administration, instructional space, outreach facilities, engagement with K-12, and the community engagement to provide high quality learning opportunities for students. Despite enrollment declines over the past seven years, and a reduction in state funding, the college has managed its human and financial resources, programs, facilities, and technical infrastructure using an integrated strategic planning process. As a result, the college budget, drawing on the combination of tuition, local tax levy and auxiliary revenues, and state funding has generated a healthy financial reserve. NIC has made targeted investments in programs, facilities, and deferred building maintenance. For example, instructional program review is instrumental to informing decisions to modify resources to enhance alignment of enrollment demand and instructional capacity. The college maintains sufficient resources to fulfill its mission and to achieve its strategic planning goals into the next accreditation cycle.

## 5.A - Mission Fulfillment

### Standard 5.A.1. – Evidence-based Assessment of Accomplishments.

*The institution engages in regular, systematic, participatory, self-reflective, and evidence-based assessment of its accomplishments.*

NIC has regularly and intentionally engaged in assessment at multiple levels throughout the accreditation cycle. At an institutional level, the college has completed two comprehensive reviews, one described earlier as Institutional Optimization (IO) and the second most recent strategic planning effort called Cultivate NIC. In both instances, through a highly participatory process, with wide representation across faculty, staff, administration, and students, the college collected and analyzed relevant data, made recommendations, and informed decision-making. As depicted in the graphic in section 3.B.3 above, the major institutional level reviews were tightly bound to college mission and values. Flowing from, and in relationship to, the institutional level reviews, the college has both ongoing and targeted assessment practices. Instructional program review is one example of a well-established, cyclical process based on self-study, and used to inform curricular changes, budget requests, faculty recruitment, adaptation to industry standards, and connection with transfer institutions. Results of these evidence-based program review self-studies include additional funds being secured for NIC-hosted conferences such as the Northwest Undergraduate Humanities

Conference, adjustments to curriculum such as the restructuring of the English A.A. degree to ensure greater ease and course diversity for students in completing degree requirements, and the creation of 2 + 2 relationships with local universities, which have emerged within the Computer Science and English programs.

In spring of 2019, for example, the English program conducted student interviews (qualitative data gathering for program mid-cycle assessment) to seek input on the student experience in the NIC English A.A. Students reported the desire for more cohesive and streamlined advising, a result which led to the creation of one of the fall 2019 English Department's Operational Goals: Create more group advising for students. The English Department held a large group advising event in October 2019 which was highly attended and positively received by faculty and students. This is just one example of how assessment data led to departmental goal formation; the goal formation led to a concrete result; the concrete result (the group advising) ties directly to NIC's Core Themes of Educational Excellence and Student Success. The college also has an established cycle of administering nationally normed surveys, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), that are used to measure student perceptions of their NIC experience and inform the range and delivery of instruction, services, and programs. As one example of a targeted assessment process, faculty from general studies engaged with an institutional liaison with the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) and presented a case for joining the Passport program. This process contained all the elements of effective assessment, encompassing self-reflection, consideration of goal alignment, resources, capacity, and implementation. In sum, NIC has an ongoing, widely used assessment practice that is meaningful to institutional efforts toward mission fulfillment. The college has considered how to improve assessment, strengthen data consumption and data analysis, and apply assessment results. The college recognizes the importance of doing so at a higher level than ever before as it enters a new phase of accreditation under the NWCCU standards established in January 2020.

Other evidence that the college engages in regular, intentional, and impactful assessment practices includes the annual review of resources and expenditures by unit during budget development that is based on data and vetted for alignment with mission fulfillment. Operational goals are also submitted annually for each working unit throughout the institution. These goals are tied to the core themes explicitly through a form on the college's intranet platform, which requires assessment of progress on goal completion by core theme. There is direct interconnectedness between NIC's core themes, departmental annual operational goals, departmental/program assessment practices, and meaningful actions that take place as a result.

### **Standard 5.A.2. – Use and Communication of Assessment Results.**

*Based on its definition of mission fulfillment, the institution uses assessment results to make determinations of quality, effectiveness, and mission fulfillment and communicates its conclusions to appropriate constituencies and the public.*

As reported in Chapter 1, the college refined and adopted its five values as its core themes as a result of the mid-cycle evaluation process: Student Success, Educational Excellence, Community Engagement, Stewardship, and Diversity. These five values embrace the original core themes and are easily recognized by the campus community. The five core themes frame the strategic plan, institutional master plans, and help guide departmental, divisional, and operational planning goals.

NIC measures achievement of mission fulfillment by rating its performance for the core themes, both individually and collectively. Each core theme has one or two objectives. Each objective has multiple

measures known at NIC as “Common Campus Measures” (CCM) that are weighted equally. These CCMs are drawn from national, institutional, and state indicators, such as the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA,) and include consideration of trends for each measure.

The college is achieving its mission when the mean for all core themes indicates that the college is either “consistently progressing” or “meets expectations.” A core theme that is not meeting expectations or progressing indicates that the college needs to act to better fulfill its mission. Information on the ratings, expectations and how the core theme scores are calculated can be found in 1.A.2.

As summarized below in 2019, each core theme as well as overall mission fulfillment was achieved as presented in Table 5.1:

**TABLE 5.1**  
2019 Core Theme Scores

<b>2019 STATUS OF CORE THEME SCORES</b>		
<b>CORE THEME</b>	<b>SCORE</b>	<b>RATING</b>
Student Success	2.0	Consistently Progressing
Educational Excellence	2.8	Meets Expectations
Community Engagement	2.5	Meets Expectations
Stewardship	3.0	Meets Expectations
Diversity	1.7	Consistently Progressing
Mean Score for All Core Themes	2.4	Meets Expectations

The measures also indicate institutional strengths and areas needing support and improvement. Based on the latest report, the college aims to make continued progress, particularly in the Core Themes of Student Success and Diversity, and to review and modify appropriate measures for each core theme. Even though NIC struggled with adequately measuring Diversity, the quality initiatives for this core theme were of great value for many reasons. At first, college employees and students had difficulty understanding meaningful ways to measure the full breadth of the Diversity Core Theme and how to capture the numerous ways that diversity itself is woven into the college culture, the ethos of NIC, the curriculum, and the student experience on campus. However, over this accreditation cycle, the college’s constant promotion of the centrality of diversity in our campus life has resulted in increased knowledge and awareness of this core theme by faculty, staff, and students. The creation of an annual Diversity Symposium (in which faculty, staff, and students participate) and the assessment of established General Education courses—such as British Literature, American Literature, Philosophy, Humanities, and Interdisciplinary Studies courses—and how they tie directly to the Diversity Core Theme are two examples of these recent efforts.

Since the mid-cycle evaluation, NIC has collected and disseminated information pertaining to mission fulfillment with the annual Core Theme Report. The primary receivers of the information include the President’s Cabinet, Executive Accreditation Committee, and the President’s Advisory Council. The reports are easily accessible on NIC’s accreditation [webpage](#). Table 5.2 describes a summary of the scores from the Core Theme Reports:

**TABLE 5.2**  
Core Theme Report Score Summary

Core Theme	2016	2018	2019
Student Success	2.20	1.8	2.0
Educational Excellence	2.66	2.8	2.8
Community Engagement	*	2.5	2.5
Stewardship	2.79	3.0	3.0
Diversity	*	1.6	1.7
Mean Score for all Core Themes	2.47	2.3	2.4
* - indicates no report			

Even though the college reports that it is fulfilling its mission, there have been success and struggles with measuring mission fulfillment, including determining appropriate measures, core theme objectives, and the collection of data. After some reflection during the self-study process, the staff involved with the CCMs concluded that some measures revealed quite a bit of information and provided a path for improvement. Some of the measures were too broad, and there were some measures that had no path to an end. In retrospect, some of the measures didn't accurately reflect mission fulfillment.

The main challenge the college faced over the last half of the accreditation cycle was the difficulty of the collection of data to measure the true intent of the core theme objectives. In its first Core Theme Report in 2016, the college didn't have enough measures to report an overall score for two of the core themes – Community Engagement and Diversity. Another challenge was that it took at least three years to establish a baseline for most of the measures; and therefore, it took the college several years to determine expectations.

Over the past three Core Theme Reports, there has been consistency of the collection of data for three of the core theme objectives. There is still room for improvement identified for the completion of the upcoming 2020 Core Theme Report. There were two measures that were dropped due to a lack of data collection, and there are three CCMs that need to have a survey developed or an improved process implemented to collect data (CCMs 178, 190, and 174).

As the college completes the 2020 Core Theme Report, it is analyzing the new accreditation standards and how best to assess and report mission fulfillment. The college will learn from the experience of measuring the Core Theme Objectives and mission fulfillment to establish a new framework for the new standards that are expected to include appropriate comparative peer groups.

## 5.B - Adaptation and Sustainability

### Standard 5.B.1 – Evaluation of Operations and Mission Sustainability.

*Within the context of its mission and characteristics, the institution evaluates regularly the adequacy of its resources, capacity, and effectiveness of operations to document its ongoing potential to fulfill its mission, accomplish its core theme objectives, and achieve the goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered.*

As demonstrated in Chapter 4 and previously in Chapter 5, NIC is committed to regular, ongoing, and meaningful analysis of capacity and resources to ensure adequacy and sustainability. A key component of the ongoing analysis of resources and capacity is the college's use of the Composite Financial Indicator (CFI). The CFI is a standard financial metric for higher education that outlines the overall financial health of the institution through trend analysis of four key financial ratios. The college implemented the CFI as a key assessment in 2015 and has treated a CFI trend of these key ratios for a nine-year period beginning with FY 2011. A summary of the CFI is presented in Table 5.3. Detailed information about the four ratios are included in 2.F.1.

**TABLE 5.3**

Summary of CFI Components, 2013-2018

<b>RATIO</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Primary Reserve Ratio</b> Expendable net assets to expense. Measures the level of financial strength and flexibility.	0.95	1.24	1.33	1.43	1.24	1.40
<b>Net Operating Revenue Ratio</b> Operating income to unrestricted operating income. Measures operating performance.	0.20	0.39	0.80	0.61	0.47	0.64
<b>Return on Net Assets Ratio</b> Change in net assets to total net assets. Measures overall asset return and performance.	1.12	0.87	1.08	0.97	0.80	0.55
<b>Viability Ratio</b> Expendable net assets to debt. Measures the ability to cover debt with available resources.	3.50	3.50	3.50	2.45	2.36	2.98
<b>Total CFI Score</b>	<b>5.76</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>6.71</b>	<b>5.45</b>	<b>4.86</b>	<b>5.57</b>

Through the regular assessment of the CFI, the college has consistently moved to deploy resources that focus on transformation and allow the college to compete in the future. Examples of resources deployed include the creation of the Cardinal Learning Commons, the establishment of Cardinal Central, reorganization of the entire enrollment services unit, and the establishment of the Venture Center. The Venture Center is moving forward with plans for the development of a rapid prototyping lab requiring substantial investment in tools and equipment beyond the funding provided by the U.S. Economic Development Regional Innovation Strategies (i6 EDA) Innovation Grant.

Additionally, the college regularly evaluates reserves to ensure adequate funding for continuing operations in the event of unforeseen funding disruptions. In 2018, the college presented to the NIC Board of Trustees (the board) a plan for annual evaluation of reserves ensuring that at least 15 percent of operating reserves are maintained. NIC also maintains a renewing board-designated capital reserve that is regularly reviewed with the board and allows for investment in capital assets to maintain existing facilities and develop new facilities and infrastructure as may be determined through strategic planning efforts. See board minutes, [May 2016, p. 3](#)).

NIC continues to focus on the development of a diverse revenue stream to avoid dependence on a single resource, and to review operations to ensure effectiveness. While the college has traditionally viewed general fund revenue in three strands: state appropriation, local tax levy and student tuition and fees, NIC continues to grow additional revenue streams such as grant funding, auxiliary enterprises and non-credit revenue to prepare for continued reductions in state appropriations. An example of the ongoing efforts to strengthen auxiliary revenue was the decision to contract the bookstore to a third party in 2018 and foodservices in 2019. While difficult decisions, reviews of these operations demonstrated the college's difficulty to operate these enterprises efficiently and sustain longterm return to the college. Under the contracted model, the college has ensured financial return on these operations.

The college has adequate institutional capacity and has invested strategically over the past two years to expand instructional square footage through the development of the Parker Technical Education Center and the DeArmond College and University Center. The college has also invested in e-learning and has expansion capacity to reach additional students with online program delivery both from an IT perspective as well as an instructional design perspective. Due to declining enrollment over the past several years, the college has also reduced the number of adjunct faculty on contract and has significant supply of qualified adjuncts in the Coeur d'Alene region that can be employed as enrollment demands.

Human resources and enrollment are inextricably related elements of the college's efforts to adapt and build capacity for mission fulfillment. NIC has developed a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan to strengthen recruitment and retention that is critically important at a time of declining enrollment. Additionally, key elements within the Integrated Strategic Plan and the Academic Master Plan provide complementary support for addressing enrollment. The college has made a strategic investment in personnel for its Dual Credit program, which is an increasingly significant part of overall enrollment. Since 2013, the dual credit office has expanded from a one-person department to over four full-time and two part-time employees. The dual credit staff work collaboratively with other enrollment services departments to improve matriculation and onboarding of dual credit students to NIC. NIC initiated NIC Connect as previously described in Standard 2.D.3 that has assisted high school students with all aspects of enrolling in college. NIC has also continued to sustain and support high impact student support programs such as TRIO and recently has expanded tutoring and instructional support for all students. Student retention is supported by an array of traditional student support services and co-curricular programs.

There are additional efforts to build enrollment that are directed externally. NIC strives to provide programs that are relevant to regional business and industry. NIC partners with the Coeur d'Alene Area



Economic Development Corporation and chambers of commerce in the five northern counties to provide the education and training that new and existing companies need for a vibrant workforce. The development of the Venture Center (see Chapter 1) is an example of NIC's adaption to the changing business environment. The college also partnered with the University of Idaho to provide students the opportunity to earn a four-year Computer Science degree in Coeur d'Alene.

Despite NIC's recruitment and retention efforts, the loss of enrollment and other sources of revenue have impacted the budget and the number of employees that serve students. The college evaluates each position that becomes vacant to determine if it should be replaced, reallocated, or go unfilled. At the same time, the college has continued practices to retain the highly qualified faculty and staff currently serving the college and to position itself to continue to attract highly qualified employees. NIC is proud of the various professional development opportunities available to employees. Faculty and staff have access to training provided in-house and funds to attend regional and national conferences. The college subscribes to regional and national benchmarking organizations to assess the alignment of NIC salaries and benefits to peer institutions. The college's interest in, and commitment to, sustaining a high quality and engaged workforce is evidenced in Goal II of the Integrated Strategic Plan: Invest in People, Processes, and Places.

### **Standard 5.B.2 – Evaluation of Planning and Use of Results for Improvement.**

*The institution documents and evaluates regularly its cycle of planning, practices, resource allocation, application of institutional capacity, and assessment of results to ensure their adequacy, alignment, and effectiveness. It uses the results of its evaluation to make changes, as necessary, for improvement.*

As reported in the 2016 mid-cycle review, NIC has worked to establish and implement a meaningful and effective cycle of planning and resource allocation. In 2016, the college formally launched a manual paper process for the development and tracking of collegewide operational goals. This cycle of planning, monitoring, reviewing, assessing and adjusting goals annually has evolved. In 2018, following the hire of an associate vice president of planning and effectiveness, an electronic system for campuswide collection and review of operational goals was established, which provides tracking of goal assessment, organized by President's Cabinet members and is viewable campuswide on the Planning and Effectiveness SharePoint site.

These changes strengthened the ability to align unit operational goals with the budget development process. Each unit submits budget requests tied directly to their established goals. These improvements supported a zero-based budget development process in FY19 that called on each department to thoughtfully consider whether to keep or modify established operational goals and to identify aspirational goals. The alignment of unit operational goals during budget development has been especially helpful given the current economic environment, enrollment declines, and uncertainty of state funding. The resulting reallocation of resources, including reallocation of operational budgets and reduction of adjunct positions, helped ensure adequate institutional capacity for teaching and learning.

The development of a more aligned operational goal cycle and budget built upon IO concluded in 2016. The IO evaluation process positively affected the diligence and seriousness with which campus stakeholders engage in planning. Many of the IO recommendations have been completed or integrated into the strategic plan. For example, IO recommended that NIC fully review NIC athletic facilities and identify deficiencies. Subsequently, from the IO work, the NIC Facilities Master Plan prioritizes the establishment of safe, modern athletic facilities for all its athletics programs, including the replacement of Christianson Gymnasium. In fall 2018, the board commissioned a feasibility and cost study on the development of a new athletic facility that would address the majority of all identified deficiencies in athletic facilities. Another example is the inclusion of the IO recommendation to

strategically refine the scholarship funding process to most effectively impact recruitment, retention, and completion within the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan.

In 2017, under the leadership of President MacLennan, the college launched a formal strategic planning process known as Cultivate NIC to update all master plans and align them in one Integrated Strategic Plan such that the facilities and informational technology plans are in direct support of the Academic Master Plan and Strategic Enrollment Management Plan. Cultivate NIC was a comprehensive planning process that engaged all faculty and staff beginning with fall 2017 Convocation and resulted in a new integrated strategic plan known as Cultivate NIC, that was recently updated to Cultivate NIC 2020. See board minutes, [June 2017, p. 2](#), and board minutes, [January 2020](#). Through the development of the Integrated Strategic Plan, the cycle of planning has evolved to provide overarching institutional goals and priorities. Consistent with previous years, the operational goals of each unit are correlated to a strategic plan category and objective.

Beyond operational goals and the development of an integrated strategic plan, the college engages in numerous planning and review processes and uses the evaluation of these processes to seek continuous improvement. An example of this type of ongoing review is the use of Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) program reviews conducted in student services departments that follow a five-year rotation, which is consistent with the academic program review cycle. CAS program reviews provide both an internal perspective and an external peer evaluator perspective. The college modified the student services program review by switching to the CAS standards in 2017. Although the college is at an early stage of the student service program review cycle using the CAS standards, the results are expected to be valuable. The establishment of the process is evidence of institutional improvement efforts based on evaluation.

### **Standard 5.B.3 - Monitoring of Environments to Revise Mission.**

*The institution monitors its internal and external environments to identify current and emerging patterns, trends, and expectations. Through its governance system it uses those findings to assess its strategic position, define its future direction, and review and revise, as necessary, its mission, core themes, core theme objectives, goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services, and indicators of achievement.*

The process for monitoring NIC's internal environment primarily occurs through the regular assessment of programs and student achievement of identified learning outcomes. These assessments, part of the routine program review process and the annual General Education Assessment process, include faculty conversations on how student learning can be enhanced through changes in curriculum and pedagogical practices, and strengthened by periodic reflection on the effectiveness of assessment practices and the use of these results to improve student learning.

Additionally, the college monitors at the department and division level, where labor market analysis, changes in industry needs or transfer programs, standards from professional organizations, and changes in pedagogy are reflected in the annual operational goals planning process. Monitoring also occurs as part of workgroups, teams, and through professional and advisory committee meetings, statewide meetings and by individuals through contacts with business and industry and the community in general. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning routinely provides reports, data, and information on internal and external data trends that inform the current and predictive state of the college.

Also, critical to NIC's mission is coordination to provide education across its service region, including the use and support of academic technology at all campuses. NIC IT coordinates technical staff and faculty across its outreach centers to ensure continuous quality improvement and sustainability of academic technologies employed by NIC. For example, NIC IT has a dedicated FTE to serve as a technical liaison for the Workforce Training Center, Parker Technical Education Center, Aerospace Center and the outreach centers at Bonners Ferry, Sandpoint, and the Silver Valley. This liaison provides in-person and remote technical support to these areas as well as coordinates support for other IT service areas as needed. The NIC IT Help Desk also provides direct support to these areas.

External input from the state level into the planning process emerges from the president's participation in the Presidents Leadership Council (PLC) and the participation of the vice president for instruction in the Council on Academic Affairs and Programs (CAAP). These committees meet monthly to discuss statewide initiatives, and policy and procedures that have been identified by the Idaho State Board of Education (SBOE). Often these committees convene subgroups which identify and respond to state issues, promote efficient and effective instruction and operations through best practices, and lead to greater student success. One recent example is the development of a statewide common application.

The governor recently developed a task force to focus on access, affordability, a revised funding model, completion, and workforce development. As a result of the task force, 12 recommendations are being used as a part of the SBOE's [strategic initiatives](#).

NIC's most recent strategic planning process was conducted as a full-scale review because of the changing internal and external environments. Development of the previous strategic plan was conducted through a small stakeholder group and informed by the core themes. By 2016, and in preparation for the 2019-2020 self-study review, the college identified changes in enrollment patterns both locally and statewide; several programs and services were experiencing rapid changes, and the college's commitments to equitable access and student achievement were clear institutional priorities. As a result, the college undertook the work of the previously discussed comprehensive strategic planning process, Cultivate NIC.

The college's most recent formal internal and external scan occurred through the Cultivate NIC planning process. NIC performed an inclusive SWOT analysis gathering feedback of internal perceptions from nearly all constituents. The summary document provided topical themes of the college's perceived strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats. For example, the analysis identified challenges related to communication and collaboration, and the college has incorporated this into its strategic and academic master plans and developed strategies for improved communication among campus constituents. One example of an improved communication initiative is the formation of a President's Advisory Council. This council includes members of the president's cabinet, the instructional deans, the dean for enrollment services, the chief human resources officer, the controller, a representative from the faculty and staff assemblies, and the College Senate.

Concurrently with the SWOT, a subcommittee of the Cultivate NIC team worked to perform a comprehensive environmental scan of the college's service region. This [main report](#) explored anticipated changes within demographics and the national and regional economy, a review of labor markets with special regard to demand for people with college degrees, and the rise of online learning.

[EMSI](#), a research company also published an [executive summary](#) used as part of our environmental scan. This information helped frame strategic planning conversations, and focus campus leadership on the need to be responsive to the impacts these changes would have on the institution. The college

was able to market this information through press releases and presentations to the community with the assistance of a [fact sheet](#). The strategic plan framework was drafted in spring 2017 and is currently under further construction with an anticipated completion during the summer 2020. The framework reflects a commitment to the student experience, especially with innovation and instructional quality, and positions the college to respond to the changes in NWCCU standards concerning mission fulfillment. (See Video: [Economic Impact Survey](#), Board of Trustees, October 2017.)

The internal and external monitoring has resulted in planning and action. For instance, the president commissioned a new Strategic Enrollment Management Steering Committee (SEM) that developed a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan focused on recruitment, retention, and completion initiatives. The Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Steering Committee has guided efforts across the college in these three areas. The Instructional Leadership Team has priorities for retention, centered on faculty professional development, faculty's role in advising, and course scheduling. The reorganization of departments that created the Enrollment Services unit was led by the vice president for student services (VPSS). Since January 2018 leadership for enrollment services has been provided by an interim dean for enrollment services, a new position created for NIC. The VPSS and dean guided the development of the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan. Early accomplishments from that plan include the implementation of a new model for advising at NIC, an "early alert" system for better student support, planning for more strategic use of scholarship and institutional grant-in-aid funding, renewed focus on enhancing new student onboarding programs and services, and the development of a one-stop enrollment services center.

The Office of Finance and Business uses financial forecasting models to anticipate trends in primary revenue streams. The models allow for future planning based on presently known variables to ensure the college is responsive to changing external dynamics. To ensure financial stability, the college, through the integrated strategic planning process, has identified initiatives to create new revenue streams. Examples of the identified initiatives include diversifying programming by developing applied baccalaureate degrees and developing a rapid prototype lab that will allow for participation in commercialization and patent development.

Information Technology has a comprehensive plan for developing a technology infrastructure that is aligned with the college master plans. IT provides avenues for input through the IT Policy and Planning Council, the Enterprise Systems Priority Council, the Data Assurance Group, and the Electronic Information Technology Committee. The IT Master Plan focuses on several key areas, including advancing teaching and learning, improving system processes, improving user experiences and outcomes, supporting and maintaining a robust infrastructure, and promoting collaboration and data-informed decision making.

Virtually every individual associated with the college, including community members, students, staff, faculty, and the administration can provide input that helps shape the college's future. NIC's participatory governance system uses findings to assess and make strategic decisions. NIC's student population is served by an internal culture that focuses on equity and student success. This culture is reflected in the college's core themes and monitored through Institutional Effectiveness, the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment processes, and Program Review. Operational goals are aligned to the Strategic Plan, the Academic Master Plan, and the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan. The board holds work sessions that integrate information and presentations on topics that are impacting and informing the college's direction. The President's Cabinet and President's Advisory Council meetings are structured to include monthly data/research topics that are discussed to help inform and support

decisions around the environmental impacts that are influencing the college. Student Surveys provide valuable information on student perceptions of the college's services and instruction.

Because of the accreditation self-study process and related discussions about continuous quality improvement, and in light of the 2019 changes to the NWCCU standards, the college anticipates a review of its mission and core themes. This Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability report has opened a discussion on the core themes, and there is agreement that the themes will not carry forward as a framework for mission fulfillment. However, the college values of Student Success, Educational Excellence, Community Engagement, Stewardship, and Diversity will still provide meaningful direction for growth. Three categories emerged from the Cultivate NIC process that strongly position NIC for the new standards, including how NIC measures mission fulfillment. The three categories became the goals of the ISP: Ensure Affordable Student Access, Completion, and Transfer; Invest in People, Places, and Processes; and Engage with Workforce and Community Partners; and these three goals provide a pathway for the measurement of mission fulfillment. The work the college has done to date includes refining the strategies to meet the goals of the strategic plan, developing tactics to achieve the strategies, and identifying metrics to assess achievement. The culmination of the work in completing the ISP is establishing a college scorecard to track progress and visible accountability to internal and external stakeholders, demonstrating mission fulfillment.

Throughout the self-study, examples are provided that highlight NIC's commitment to students. While many of NIC's current initiatives on improving the student experience are new or emerging, they are grounded in NIC's historical commitment to access and student success. NIC has examined its position in the community by seeking out trends and needs and setting expectations for the college's future. The college has developed a robust strategic plan framework and objectives to address its position in the community. The completed plan will identify measures to assess the progress and effectiveness of the initiatives of the four master plans with the goal of enhancing the student experience.

## Conclusion

This Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Report marks the end of an accreditation cycle for North Idaho College. Through a comprehensive and inclusive process, contributors from across the college have devoted hundreds of hours over the past two years to prepare a report that is reflective of the college's efforts to realize its goals.

The record of accomplishments documented in the report is a source of pride and a significant measure of mission fulfillment. A commitment to an environment that fosters high quality teaching and learning through a wide array of curricular and co-curricular programs and services is clear. To improve the realization of the core themes, the college has striven to strengthen assessment at multiple levels. Although much good work is captured in the report, it cannot fully show all that has been achieved. The process of composing the self-study has also elevated our ability to understand and recommit to the work that remains to more effectively achieve mission fulfillment. From this work, NIC reaffirms the values of student success, educational excellence, community engagement, stewardship, and diversity. As the college soon begins a new cycle of accreditation under a new set of standards, all five core values are embedded in comprehensive planning for the future.

The college has positioned itself for further achievement of those values with the NIC Integrated Strategic Plan. The four constituent master plans of the Integrated Strategic Plan frame the strategies and tactics for the day-to-day operation of the college and set a foundation for measuring mission fulfillment. With the purposeful engagement of the entire college, NIC is prepared to successfully meet the high expectations for providing meaningful educational opportunities for the students, the community, and the region it serves.

