



HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

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July 27, 2015

Dr. Thomas Pleger
President
Lake Superior State University
650 W. Easterday Ave.
Sault Saint Marie, MI 49783-1699

Dear President Pleger:

Attached is a copy of the Multi-Location Visit Report completed following the visit to the Lake Superior State University. As detailed in the report, the pattern of operations at the locations visited needs attention. However, the institution can be expected to follow up on these matters without monitoring by HLC.

Within the Multi-Location Visit Report, you will find brief comments on instructional oversight, academic services, student services, facilities, marketing and recruitment and adequacy of assessment of student performance. Please consider these comments as advice for continued improvement of the additional locations.

Per HLC policy, completion of these visits and fulfillment of the requirement will be noted in your institution's history record and the completed report will be included in your institution's permanent file.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the Multi-Location Visit or the attached report, please contact Pat Newton-Curran (pnewton@hlcommission.org).

Sincerely,

Higher Learning Commission

Multi-Location Visit Report

Institution:	Lake Superior State University
Ad. Location #1:	Petoskey Regional Center, 1515 Howard St., Petoskey, MI 49770
Ad. Location #2:	Escanaba Regional Center, 2001 North Lincoln, Escanaba, MI, 49829
	(please include Additional Locations Name, Street, Town, State, Zip Code)
Date Reviewed:	<u>April 13 & 14, 2015</u>
Evaluator Name, Institution, & Title:	Dr. Betty RedLeaf Collett, Retired, Past President Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College, MT. Pleasant, MI 48858

Instructions: In order to document effective administrative systems for managing multiple additional locations, please complete the following. For each item, check **adequate** or **attention needed**, and indicate in Comments the institution's strengths and/or opportunities for improvement in controlling and delivering degree programs off-campus. If comments pertain to a specific location, they should be included along with the identity of that location.

Overview Statement. Provide information about current additional locations and the institution's general approach to off-campus instruction. Describe the growth pattern at the institution since the last review of off-campus instruction. Provide information about the involvement of external organization or other higher education institutions.

Lake Superior State University (LSSU), was founded in 1946, is located on 115-acre campus overlooking the Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan and Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario and is on the site of a former U.S. Army's Fort Brady. Fourteen of LSSU's buildings are listed on various historic registers, creating a unique campus environment (<http://www.lssu.edu/about/facts.php>).

LSSU's mission (<http://www.lsc.edu/about-lsc/mission-vission/>) is to provide high quality, affordable higher education that benefits diverse learners, employees, and the community. The college's academic, technical, continuing education, and workforce development offerings prepare learners for a rapidly changing global community. Their services support learning, and their partnerships connect the college and its learners to a broader spectrum of community life. Their mission is characterized by:

- A strong sense of community;
- Trust, respect, and integrity;
- Personal attention;
- Accountability;

- Innovation and flexibility, and
- Life-long learning and personal growth.

Lake Superior State University's vision is to continue as an area leader of higher education learning opportunities by delivering excellent instruction, innovative programming and dedicated service in an engaging comfortable environment, to excel in student development and community responsiveness.

The college's community affirms the worth and dignity of each individual and promotes equity of access and opportunity. Therefore, the institutional values include the following:

- Accessible and lifelong learning opportunities;
- Academic freedom and free inquiry;
- Integrity;
- Equity and diversity;
- Pursuit of excellence, innovation and initiative;
- Sense of community, and
- Values all its stakeholders.

Lake Superior State University (LSSU), (<http://www.lssu.edu/cmscatalog1415/regional-centers.php>), operates four HLC-defined locations, generally referred to as two Regional Centers and has locations in Petoskey and Gaylord with oversight provided by Center Director, and the Escanaba Regional Center has locations in Escanaba and Iron Mountain with oversight provided by Center Director.

Lake Superior State University Regional Centers offer bachelor degree-completion programs which provide students an opportunity to complete their degrees close to home and at a reasonable cost. As stated in the LSSU: Academic Catalog 2014-15 – Regional Centers all degrees require completion of general education core requirements. LSSU Regional Centers have the same program outcomes as the programs offered at the main campus but are provided in a fashion to benefit the non-traditional student who is a location-bound working adult, (Source LSSU Multi-Location Report, 2015.)

According to the Lake Superior State University (LSSU) Multi-Location Report, March 16, 2015, affirms their goal to serve the students of the region, and the Regional Centers play an important role in that mission as they extend the reach of the main camps to serve students in an expanded geographical region. Their mission is to help students develop their full potential; to serve the regional, state, national and global communities by contributing to the growth, dissemination, and application of knowledge. Supervision of the Regional Centers Directors is delegated to the Provost & Vice President Academic Affairs of Lake Superior State University, housed at the main campus located in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

The Escanaba Regional Center has ties with Bay de Noc Community College (known as Bay College) for the past twenty-five years. The collaborative effort facilitates students to continue their education, and earn a bachelor's degree at the Bay campus in Escanaba. With past enrollment increases at the Bay's West Campus students have access to a business degree in its entirety. Regional Center and the West Campus in Iron Mountain degree completion opportunities include:

Bachelor of Science:

- Accounting;
- Business Administration – Entrepreneurship;
- Business Administration – Generalist with an accounting/finance, international business and/or marketing minor;
- Business Administration – International Business;
- Business Administration – Management;
- Criminal Justice – Corrections with a law enforcement minor;
- Criminal Justice – Generalist
- Criminal Justice – Law Enforcement;
- Early Childhood Education, and
- Nursing Completion.

Bachelor of Arts/Science:

- Liberal Studies.

Academic programs offered in Iron Mountain:

Bachelor of Science:

- Business administration – with an international business and/or marketing minor.

Keeping with the overarching college's mission, vision, and values, Escanaba's personnel, give back to their community by serving on Bay's College Advisory Boards in areas of accounting, criminal justice and nursing.

The Petoskey Regional Center has strong ties with North Central Michigan College (NCMC) since 1988. The center offers an array of bachelor degree programs which can be completed entirely on-site and one bachelor degree program which requires main campus coursework. Petoskey Regional Center degree completion opportunities include:

Bachelor of Science:

- Accounting;
- Business Administration;
- Business Administration – Entrepreneurship;
- Business Administration – Management;
- Criminal Justice – Generalist;
- Criminal Justice – Law Enforcement;
- Early Childhood Education;
- Individualized Studies;
- Liberal studies, and
- Nursing Completion.

The academic programs offered at the University Center, Gaylord, MI are limited and include:

Bachelor of Science:

- Business Administration – Management;
- Criminal Justice – Generalist, and
- Criminal Justice – Law Enforcement.

The staff members from the Petoskey Regional Center serve on North Central Early Childhood Education and Criminal Justice advisory boards as well.

According to the LSSU Academic Catalog 2014-15 the institution has a Regional Center located at the Dearborn University Consortium Center, in Dearborn, MI. Completion programs are available for the following degrees at the facility:

- Business Administration – Entrepreneurship;
- Business Administration – International Business;
- Business Administration – Management;
- Business Administration – Marketing;
- Criminal Justice – Corrections;
- Criminal Justice – Law Enforcement, and
- Criminal Justice – Generalist.

For students transferring from a Michigan community college who have the “MACRACO stamp” on their transcripts, the general education core requirements are considered met by LSSU. **MACRO** certification requires six credits of English, eight credits of Social Science, eight credits of Humanities and eight credits of Natural Science and Mathematics. The Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology students who are admitted to the LSSU who have the **GEACERT** stamp (liberal studies degree) on their transcript are recognized as having completed the general education requirements at Lake Superior State University. For those students who earned credit at an institution not listed in the American Council of Education’s publication, Accredited Institutions of Post-Secondary Education is granted provisionally. A student must complete at least 15 semester hours of credit with a cumulative GPA of 2.00 at LSSU before provisional credits will become a part of their permanent record.

According to http://www.lssu.edu/whats_new/article.php?articleid-2954, LSSU has approved a North American tuition initiative designed to attract academically talented students to enhance Michigan’s economy, intellectual capital and overall environment. Effective with the 2015 academic fall semester, every student throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico will be charge the same tuition rate. The “One Rate at Lake State” program will make unique opportunities available at LSSU open and affordable to a wider range of students. Lake Superior State University will be the first university in the state to establish a set tuition rate for all North American students.

Lake Superior State University has articulation agreements with area high schools to enhance applied and career educational opportunities at the post-secondary level. LSSU along with its regional secondary education partners has created pathways to applied education for specified curricula in business and technology. For additional information students are referred to

(www.lssu.edu/equivalencyguide). Effective as of July 2012 State law permits qualifying high school students to participate in dual enrollment for high school students. The institution also offers college credit for students who complete the International Baccalaureate (IB). Students will receive credit only for Higher Level exams and scores of 5 or above.

LSSU participates with the program accreditation organizations listed below.

- **Athletic Training:** The Athletic Training Education Program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE).
- **Business:** The following business programs at LSSC are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs. (ACBSP): Accounting (BS), Business Administration – Entrepreneurship (BS), Business Administration – International Business (BS), Business Administration – Management (BS), Business Administration – Marketing (BS), and Finance & Economics (BS). The Business Administration – Generalist degree is regionally accredited, but has been excluded from ACBSP accreditation at this time.
- **Chemistry:** The Bachelor of Science in Chemistry is approved by The American Chemical Society Committee on Professional Training.
- **Computer, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering:** The computer, electrical and mechanical engineering bachelor's programs are accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission ((EAC) of ABET.
- **Educator Preparation:** The Educator Preparation Programs at Lake Superior State University by the Inquiry Brief Commission of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).
- **Environmental Health:** The Bachelor of Science in Environmental Health is accredited by: National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC), Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI).
- **Fire Science:** The Bachelor of Science in Fire Science is approved by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress.
- **Manufacturing Engineering Technology:** The bachelor's program in Manufacturing Engineering Technology is accredited by the Engineering Technology Accreditation Commission (ETAC) of ABET.
- **Nursing:** The Bachelor of Science in Nursing is approved by the Michigan Board of Nursing and is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Evaluation in Nursing (ACEN).

LSSU values all of its stakeholders and in support of this the institution participates in partnerships with business, industry, labor and government agencies; participates in partnerships with other educational systems; facilitates entry into and transfer from Lake Superior College, and offers flexible use of the college facilities, personnel, and services.

Lake Superior State University Multi-Location Report, page 3, provides reference to its strategic planning efforts to facilitate growth within the existing regional centers and expansion of programming to serve the needs of the regional campus communities. One initiative is a state wide agreement with the University of Wisconsin Colleges to accept the Wisconsin-specific Associate of Arts & Sciences degree in fulfillment of the LSSU general education requirements. The other initiative currently being studied is in the Grand Rapids, MI area where LSSU maintains a Charter School P-20 school at one location. The college's task would be instruction in the technology and science areas. During the visit to the Petoskey's Regional Center, the

director shared that even though the Gaylord University Center has served an important role in the past, concerns of existing enrollment patterns and questioning if the regional needs are being met has LSSU administration reviewing the its viability.

Unfortunately, Michigan’s poor economy, loss of automotive industries, and most recently the closure of the ‘Mill’ near Escanaba Regional Center will continue to impact enrollment trends at the Regional Centers as well as the local community colleges. A review of the current academic year student enrollment at the Regional Centers by program is concerning especially from an economic perspective. Petoskey Regional Center Fall 2014 program student enrollment revealed a total campus enrollment of only 55 students in one of the ten program offerings, while the Escanaba Regional Center for the same time frame reflected a total campus program student enrollment of 58 in one of the nine program offerings, and the Gaylord University Center Fall 2014 program student enrollment was six (6) reflected in one of two program offerings.

An e-mail received by the reviewer, dated 04-01-2015, from the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs provided a 5-year review of enrollment patterns from Escanaba and Petoskey’s Regional Centers. Enrollment for this time period is reflected below:

Student Count Fall Semesters – 5 Year Enrollment Trend

Regional Center	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014
Escanaba	51	44	57	65	58
Petoskey	52	66	64	62	57
Regional Center’s Average Number of Enrolled Students Same Period*					
Escanaba	60	57	56	68	70
Petoskey	57	72	82	78	76

***Statistics presented in the LSSU – Regional Center’s Multiple Location Report Spring 2015, were in a graphic presentation format with scale of 0 - 100, variation scale between numbers were 10.**

Even though there are three statistical categories referenced (program enrollment, overall enrollment, and average enrollment) it would appear that patterns of evidence for the regional centers enrollment may be misleading, especially for strategic planning processes. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, shared through an e-mail dated 03-17-2015, that a specific strategic plan for each regional center is non-existent and the center’s needs are folded into the overall institutional strategic plan, for example activities, goals, initiatives, etc.. A review of the 2012 – 2015 Strategic Plan; Goal C: Strategy 5: Regional Communities – LSSU will collaboratively contribute to economic growth and improved quality of life in our (their) region, Point 5.6 states that LSSU will improve access for regional center students.

Academic courses at the Regional Centers utilize the same learning outcomes, syllabi, and assessment methodologies as those at the main campus. Many faculty members who teach at the centers also are faculty located on the main campus. This augments the alignment of the curriculum between the regional centers and the main camps. The hiring of adjunct instructors

is managed by the appropriate dean on the main campus, and includes a faculty review of the respective school on the main campus.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed
Comments:

In preparation for the visit several e-mail discussions and phone calls occurred between the Provost and Vice President Academic Affairs and the reviewer. One primary discussion was the request for the results from the most recent student evaluation of the Regional Centers. Students enrolled in evening classes have numerous external constraints while completing their educational course(s) and degree program of study. It is critical to have student feedback on their viewpoint on assessment of teaching and learning, as well as having equal access to Student Service Programs offered at the LSSU Main Campus location.

It was determined that there had not been a recent evaluation survey conducted at the centers. Therefore, in an effort to obtain student feedback the reviewer developed a survey questionnaire that consisted of ten open – ended questions requiring short answers. If a student chose not to answer a specific question either they left it blank, or inserted N/A, or inserted none.

Students were provided an informational letter, which include a Signature to Participate/Consent Form. Students need to be 18 years or older prior to completing the survey questionnaire. Petoskey Regional Center had 37 enrolled student participants and Escanaba Regional Center had 35 enrolled student participants. The total number of participants was 72. Center Directors and faculty members assisted in the administration and collection of the completed surveys. The data analysis reflects a period of time from a selected population of students from the Spring 2015 Semester. By no means does it reflect the total population of enrolled students.

Completed surveys were placed in an envelope separated from the signed student consent. Accepted best practices for research were utilized in the data collection and analysis stage. Survey outcomes provided thoughtful insight regarding students' perceptions of Petoskey and Escanaba Regional Centers. Student comments are recorded as written from their survey data.

Question number 8 on the Student Survey asked, "In your view, what are the three major strengths of the center?"

Escanaba Students' comments include but are not limited to the following responses:

- Online courses; quality instructions, bachelor programs thru Community College.
- Cost, availability, mostly kind people. Quality education, smaller class sizes, a lot of online options.
- Location, cost, and faculty.
- Location, quality teaching, quality learning experience.
- Good quality education, smaller class sizes, a lot of online options.
- Knowledge – They are very smart and work well together, Effectiveness, willingness to help you achieve your goals.
- Personal contact with advisors and instructors, smaller class sizes, being able to keep present job, child care, etc. while attending college.
- Advisor and other staff are always there to help, hours are great, I love the classes that are offered.

- Helpful, organized, excellent faculty members, great resources for studying. They really want you to be successful in your college life and want you to graduate.
- Small class sizes – connection with professor and other students, flexibility of night/weekend/online courses, good connection/advisors (≠with).
- Scheduling classes, informing who to talk to with a situation, keeping students in the loop through e-mail.
- Regional Center Director is a better communicator than the one previously.

Petoskey Students' comments include but are not limited to the following responses:

- Location, Location, Location.
- Having on-campus professors, being able to use NCMC resources, class hours.
- The programs offered, advisor that's here.
- Ability to take classes at better location, provide good hours for class.
- Faculty, helpfulness, students.
- It is organized, helpful people, good atmosphere.
- RC Director, classes available for my major, professors that teach the classes.
- Central local, seats for sitting, tables for writing.
- Hometown, small class sizes, repeat instructors.
- Convenience, content, flexibility.
- Variety programs offered availability.
- Location RC Director.

Question number 2 on the Student Survey asked, "What do you understand to be your major responsibilities as an enrolled student at LSSU-RC?"

Escanaba Students' comments include but are not limited to the following responses:

- Support the LSSU-RC, commit to take course work.
- To absorb as much knowledge and experience through class participation and attendance.
- To Promote LSSU.
- To keep up with classes and to check with advisors to make sure you are on the right track to graduate.
- Go to class and learn the material.
- Just like any other student I believe my responsibility is to attend class and do the required assignments. In other words, take an active role in my learning.
- To represent the university locally to the best of my ability.
- Leaving work early to make it to class on time, as I live in Iron Mountain.
- My responsibilities is to learn as much as I can in my field. It is to grow-up, do homework and participate with class discussions. It is also to get good grades and GPA and graduate with a bachelor's degree in my field of study. It is basically being a responsible student that has a high range of learning as I learn and further my education so that I will be ready (to) work & go into my field and be successful in my job.
- Represent LSSU by attending classes and getting good grades. Support other students who may be struggling with class.
- My major responsibilities as a student include attending classes, participating in discussions, and connecting with other students.

- My major responsibilities are to schedule and pass all my classes. Talk to my advisor about any problems that I may have, or about anything else that could cause potential difficulties.

Petoskey Students' comments include but are not limited to the following responses:

- Attend class and complete all assigned work.
- Attend classes, strive to do my best.
- Engage in courses to best help myself and my fellow student learn.
- We are reflections of LSSU and must provide good discipline, grades, etc..
- Major responsibilities include respecting staff building, attending classes and participating on a regular schedule.
- It is my responsibility to attend class be an active participant in class discussion & projects to gain the most out of every class. It is my job to voice concerns and issues to those in charge.
- My major responsibility is to take my education seriously and work hard.
- I know my responsibilities are to show up to class get things done & be productive.
- Communicating w (with) advisor to ensure correct classes, coordinating between LSSU & NCMN, attending class retaining info and obtaining good grades.
- Respect equipment and building as well as the property.
- Attend class regularly and support my fellow students.
- To remain an active contributor toward my educational goals.

It was ascertained during conversations with personnel, faculty, external stakeholders, and students, from both Escanaba and Petoskey Regional Centers that the existing partnerships continue to be a win-win situation. However, there remain challenges at the centers especially with regards to enrollment trends, sustainability of current locations, existing communications patterns between the centers and the main campus. Students expressed concerns regarding degree completion expectations, especially within the nursing program. Students reiterated their concern of program sustainability, personal access to necessary resources on campus to complete assignments, such as computer lab access, student perception of being disconnected from the main campus especially with purchasing “branded” college items. These topics will be discussed in the remaining sections of the report.

Institutional Planning. *What evidence demonstrates that the institution effectively plans for growth and maintenance of additional locations? Identify whether the institution has adequate controls in place to ensure that information presented to students is adequate. Describe whether the financial planning and budgeting process has proven effective at additional locations.*

LSSU Multi-Location Report, submitted March 2015 on page three, states that the institution is not considering expanding the number of additional locations but instead continues to plan for growth within the existing regional centers, and to expand programming in ways which will serve the needs of the regional campus communities. Petoskey/Gaylord Regional Centers highest average number of students served over a five (5) year period (2010 -11 to 2014-15) was during the 2012-13 academic semester. Graphic enrollment numbers noted 80 to 82 students. Unfortunately, the available classroom space remains as a deterrent to enrollment, secondary to NCMC limitation of room size and seating capacity. Data reviewed reflected that seventeen classrooms had a seating capacity of <20, and one (1) classroom seating capacity was >20.

The Gaylord Regional Center seating capacity reflected eight (8) classrooms with seating for <20 students.

A review of Escanaba Regional/Iron Mountain Centers highest average number of students served over the same five year period reflected practically a tie as 68-69 students were served during the 2013-14 academic year while 70 students were served during the 2014-15 academic year. Seating capacity at the Escanaba Regional Center located at Bay College is significantly different as well since 28 classrooms have a seating capacity of >20. Iron Mountain facility has classrooms seating capacity for >10 students.

According to LSSU's agreement with partner institutions there will be space for growth of the regional center enrollment and programs, and additional partner spaces will become available at each location as needed.

Students who completed the survey questionnaire identified three major challenges faced by the Regional Centers at this time.

Petoskey Students' comments include but are not limited to the following responses:

- Low in-seat enrollment, quality instructors.
- Distance, low student population, professors who teleconference.
- Distance from LSSU, lack of teachers.
- Time & space.
- Expand amount of classes available & more of a LSU "feel."
- Having more classes offered maybe in the Gaylord University Center.
- Have a regular meeting place.
- More classes and degrees offered remotely and at greater frequency.
- More permanent instructors.
- More time offerings for classes/conflicting nights.

Students attending the Escanaba/Iron Mountain Regional Centers who completed the survey questionnaire identified three major challenges faced by the center at this time.

Escanaba Students' comments include but are not limited to the following responses:

- The shrinking community, getting the classrooms opened on time for the weekend classes, keeping good teachers.
- Low enrollment in Bay West areas (offer more classes ITV!).
- Not offering scholarships to regional center students, only offering certain classes, certain semesters.
- Getting more classes in the offering helping those finish a degree that is being phased out of regional center.
- Very little financial assistance, small amount of degrees available here. Don't always feel like you're really attend LSSU as we are not involved w /much here.
- We seem distant from LSSU. I want to feel more like a "Laker." No store for LSSU swag.
- Low enrollment, only caters to nontraditional students, student's not getting awarded scholarships due to LSSU rotation.

- No scholarships for part-time students, even though I had a 4 GPA I did not make the Dean's List at LSSU or Bay College because I was part-time at both.
- Reaching out to all students, it has room to grow, and it should.
- The connection between Bay and LSSU is a 0 percent without the regional center, on top of taking classes the student has to chase paper work from Bay to LSSU.

These same students were asked about their vision for the future of LSSU – Regional Centers. **Petoskey Student comments include but are not limited to the following responses:**

- More classes and degrees offered remotely and at greater frequency.
- Expand amount of classes available & more of a LSSU "feel."
- Having more classes offered may be in the Gaylord University Center.
- More time offerings for classes/conflicting nights.
- They would expand more classes down to the Petoskey Campus from LSSU.

Escanaba Students comments include but are not limited to the following responses:

- To grow and offer more programs and change with Business needs.
- To grow in students, size, etc. but keep the 'small' class atmosphere.
- To continue to operate.
- I think more could be done online. This way RC students could collaborate with students at Main Campus.
- A more diverse crowd – YOUNG!, more day/morning classes, more Escanaba public exposure, marketed better, LSSU gear for sale, more clubs.

LSSU Regional Centers are not directly responsible for the financial planning and budgeting process as these facilities are owned and maintained by the partner or University Center where they are located. Students have access to high-quality instructional facilities with little budget expenditure to Lake Superior State University – Regional Center. Thus financial planning and budgeting process have proven effective at the Regional Centers location.

In an effort to be assured that students receive accurate information on programs and processes each center has an established user friendly home page. The first item noted by prospective students is the institutional mission statement:

LSSU's Regional Centers are committed to excellence in serving the educational needs of the local communities by providing opportunities for intellectual, personal, and professional growth to area residents.

The Regional Centers home pages provide students with a comprehensive access to the home page of LSSU main campus. Petoskey and Escanaba home pages are tailored to the community members being served and provide student(s) with a wealth of information pertaining to their goal of earning a Bachelor's Degree. Escanaba's Regional Center Director earned a bachelor's degree in business administration through the center and has worked at the center as an administrative assistant.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

As indicated in 2015 Multi-Location Report enrollment patterns are decreasing everywhere. Economic times are a factor; institutional downsizing affects marketing strategies, closures of business, such as the “Mill” in Escanaba service area, and company transfers to name a just few. Rural areas are especially affected with community economic changes. A review of students’ perceptions may assist in or addressing and/or resolving low enrollment issues and would require limited financial investment. Quality versus quantity of services remains a better choice. This also requires making difficult decision for sustainability of the centers. It is critical to the institution that both internal and external stake holders feel valued and appreciated for their individual constructive feedback. First and foremost stakeholders must identify problems and realize that they also play an active role in their resolution. It is equally important that all stakeholders be completely informed about the possible changes such as program revisions or closures prior to implementation to enhance support of the proposed change or present alternatives to such change.

The Regional Centers have had a long, positive partnership with the community colleges and have sustained this relationship despite previous hard times. The Higher Learning Commission, especially as noted in light of the recent audit by the Office of Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Education, has implemented several changes. For example, April 2014 Quality Assurance For Dual Credit Courses Or Programs; Quality Assurance Expectations In Determining Qualified Faculty of May 2014 with implementation beginning January 1, 2016; HLC’s Probation, Policy Changes February 27, 2015, and the New Expectations for Competency – Base Education.

It would benefit both the internal and external stakeholders to review and revised strategic plans, enrollment projections, and other policies to prepare for and sustain the partnerships for the future generations. Without the regional centers or the participating community colleges individuals would lack access to achieve their educational goals, increase their individual intellectual capacity and professional growth to become informed, responsible community members and community leaders.

The new era of post-secondary education is here; therefore, change must be embraced to achieve the new standards, acceptance of the innovative, societal roles and expectations of this futuristic and demanding educational environment. Accomplishment of these tasks will ensure that LSSU persists to provide educational opportunities across Michigan as well as being the institution of choice for individuals seeking to pursue their educational goals closer to home.

Facilities. What evidence demonstrates that the facilities at the additional locations meet the needs of the students and the curriculum? Consider, in particular, classrooms and laboratories (size, maintenance, temperature, etc.); faculty and administrative offices (site, visibility, privacy for meetings, etc.); parking or access to public transit; bookstore or text purchasing services; security; handicapped access; and other (food or snack services, study and meeting areas, etc.)

Central Michigan College, the Gaylord University Center, and Bay College sites allow classes to be held on weekends and evenings in order to meet the students’ needs (Source: Multi-Location Report 2015.)

Survey Question Number 5 asked participants to evaluate the learning environment (facilities, equipment, hours, etc.), and also how does it help you meet your academic requirements?

Petoskey Student comments include but are not limited to the following responses:

- The night classes fit well around my jobs.
- They meet the requirements because the facilities are open and we are able to use the NCMC equipment.
- The facilities make it possible for me to work towards my bachelor's degree. If I had to drive to the main campus I probably would have stopped at my Associates through NCMC.
- As the Facility is another institution, NCMC, equipment is not a problem, hours are convenient for those who also have day jobs which could be another boon (fortunate thing).
- The hours are great. I can easily fit classes into my work schedule. The Petoskey campus has great classrooms. They have projectors that are great for presentations.
- There are lots of advantages to having the equipment available to the students especially those who may not otherwise have access to computers or internet. Having the evening hours makes it easier to maintain employment while still being a student.
- The facilities are close to home. I like the accessibility.
- The environment is good. The hours work perfect with my schedule. Class rooms are set up appropriately & it is a clean safe environment for learning. Provided quite (quiet) area to study & focus on courses.
- The following comments refer to the nursing program only:
 1. The facility was very convenient. This was appreciated since all other BSN program are not available in the area.
 2. We use the hospital library, works well.
 3. Advisor availability and involvement was Great!
 4. The facility was good (at McLaen) the hours were fine when they were as planned on Wed. nights. When the hours changed from the planned during different times during the program, it made it very difficult.
- The facilities and equipment are great, since NCMC is the only college I have attended. It is all very familiar to me...
- NCMC could use some classroom updates. Desk, wall covering – etc..

Escanaba Students comments include but are not limited to the following responses:

- I don't like the nights & weekend classes. They are all built to cater to non-tradition students, *but what about us 20-25 years old?* I think the LSSU – RC does not market well to young students, besides convenience, there **NO** advantage.
- Computer labs challenges:
 1. I was not impressed that for a Friday night class, there was no lab opened for student use. No research could be done. Needs to be a 24/7 computer lab for students!
 2. This semester it has been the student's responsibility to set up the equipment & trouble shoot through it. The room should be set up & ready to go.
- Computer labs support services:

1. Great to use Bay's computer lab.
 2. ...The computer lab has been my most go to environment. The staff in there are always so helpful.
- LSSU – RC has a great environment setup for learning.
 - Perfect – to date, long, flexible hours.
 - I would rate them as great. They make it possible to actually grasp the material and graduate.
 - Getting a bachelor's degree close to home is really important to me. I am a non-traditional student and probably would have not pursued my bachelor's degree if it wasn't available at our Regional Center.
 - The facilities and equipment are high grade & useful. The hours work very well with job schedules.
 - The equipment is up to date and faculty are willing to help me at any point and time. The facilities are a great place and it is a pleasant environment for us to have to learn and study the material.
 - I would not have been able to complete any in class experiences if classes were not provided at Bay College. Some classes more than others will benefit me. None-the-less I did learn and take something away from every single class.

LSSU ensure that facilities at each location meet the needs of students and the curriculum through interaction between administration, students, Center Director, faculty, deans, and the host-site administrative and technology staff. The Regional Centers home pages provide relevant information for students to assist in their pursuit of a bachelor's degree.

On page 6 of the 2015 Multi-Location Report is a descriptive facilities overview. It supports the availability of laboratories, classrooms, faculty offices, administrative office, meetings space, parking accessibility, bookstore, food library, tutoring center, and ITV classrooms, which are accessible at all of the regional center.

Unfortunately, campus security is unavailable at all centers, Petoskey, Gaylord, Escanaba, and Iron Mountain. Iron Mountain, Petoskey, and Gaylord centers lack faculty office spaces. Iron Mountain lacks administrative office space as well. Food and library services remain unavailable at the Iron Mountain and Gaylord facilities. However, library services for regional center students and online students are available through the Kenneth J. Shouldice Library (<http://www.lssu.edu/library/LibraryServicesforRegionalandOnlineStudents.php>). Regional students have access to articles via MY.LSSU.edu, to LSSU's database systems. Students who need help in choosing an appropriate database, may contact a librarian through the Ask a Librarian link, or by e-mailing a librarian at reference@lssu.edu. A visit to the library's home page will provide students with information regarding library usage and services. Becoming familiar with library services is critical for academic success.

Disability Services and LSSU is committed to making individuals with disabilities full participant in its programs, services and activities. The program adheres to established and standard best practices for students who qualify for services. Disability Services are arranged through the regional center staff, who can assist with providing extended testing time, proctoring) in alternative locations, obtaining alternative format for textbooks and exams. Disability services serves as the facilitator among students, faculty, and regional center. Unfortunately, a

respondent from the Petoskey Regional Center admits to have a learning disability (*question Number 6: What personal or academic concerns are not adequately met at LSSU – RC?*) According to the student, there is no accessibility for services at the Regional Center, short of going to the main campus.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

While at the Petoskey and Escanaba Regional Centers, I observed an evening class session. Faculty, student, and peer interactions demonstrated a truly a safe and caring learning environment. Within just a brief period, class dynamics began to unfold in an open, honest manner neither student nor faculty seemed to notice the observer in the room. The safe learning environment also engaged the observer quickly in the class topics, presentation, etc..

Student survey responses indicated satisfaction as well as frustrations. Their expressed concerns were those that could be classified as ‘typical at any college or university.’ Regrettably student perceptions do require a serious review by the administration. There were two aspects that surfaced and they were 1)the absence of comprehensive student Disability Service at each center. 2) The other was the nursing completion program. The resolution is financially feasible, and realistic.

What’s remarkable is that a solution may already be available. Located on Lake Superior State University website <http://www.lssu.edu/disability/accomodation.php> there is a reader friendly document that explains the process to determine eligibility for services and accommodations. Especially helpful is the discussion of the *Key Differences Between High School and College*. The Regional Centers have a long-term partnership with either Bay College or North Central Michigan College. Should a student have a documented disability requiring accommodations, such as audio presentation of reading materials, sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or adaptive computer technology, they may be available through the community college. Because of the distance between the Regional Centers and the main campus located at Sault Ste. Marie, it may be impossible for a student to take advantage of the provided services. It may well be beneficial for the students to become familiar with the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (<http://www.lssu.edu/disability>)). Sadly, students sometimes do not ask questions regarding college expectations for the simple reason they do not know what to ask. LSSU has another interesting website *Student Consumer Information* located at <http://www.lssu.edu/hoenoties/> to educate students regarding The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2009 (H EOA). Continuous on-going education for students about the ins and outs of college is critical for student success and graduation.

RN to BSN Program students may not have been fully informed or fully comprehend prior to enrolling regarding the program’s rigor, program requirements, and time commitments required for completion. Question Number 6 asked: “*What personal or academic concerns are not adequately met at LSSU – RC?*” Two Petsokey RC participants enrolled in the Nursing Completion Programs as follows:

- Clinical hours are too lengthy and not at all logical for a completion program. Very frustrating and if I would have known about them I would not have done this program.

- RN-BSN completion courses were advertised as part-time for full-time employees – program was actually full-time!

Prospective students complete a Declaration of Intent Statement for Admission to RN to BSN Program. A review of the program literature provided for perspective students was comprehensive but omitted an overview of the difference in skill levels, which distinguished a two-year (ASN) or three year (diploma level) RN from a four year BSN level. Roles and responsibilities are not the same, career options are not the same, and pay scales are not the same. Perhaps an educational handout clarifying the roles and responsibilities might alleviate the frustration, especially during students' clinical rotations. If students are currently working in the field of nursing, scheduling conflicts quickly arise especially when 24/7 staffing needs are necessary. On-going student education pertaining to the medical field and occupations in related disciplines may help to defuse their frustration from repeating previous course work, for example going from an ASN to RN level. It is difficult for students to fully understand the various concept levels of nursing knowledge. A beneficial read for students enrolled in the RN Completion Program might be the *Role Development in Professional Nursing Practice*, 3rd edition, by Kathleen Masters, ISBN-13 978-1449691509, paperback, and is available from Amazon. The text examines the progression of the professional nursing role and provides students with a solid foundation for a successful career. There is a section that incorporates the "Nurse of the Future (NOF)", as well as the Core Competencies, based on the AACN's Essentials of Baccalaureate Education. The more in-depth knowledge base that students develop during their educational processes will facilitate nurses who are extremely qualified to enter into the art of professional nursing practices.

Instructional Oversight. *What evidence demonstrates that the institution effectively oversees instruction at the additional locations? Consider, in particular, consistency of curricular expectations and policies, availability of courses needed for program and graduation requirements, faculty qualifications, performance of instructional duties, availability of faculty to students, orientation of faculty/professional development, attention to student concerns.*

The overarching premise is that Lake Superior State University and its Regional Centers operate as one cohesive university educational system. The centers are proud of the high-quality instruction and the personal attention LSSU offers, with small class sizes, experienced faculty and the ability to pursue their educational goals close to home. LSSU's 2015 Multi-Location Report confirms that the institution utilized a comprehensive and evaluative methodology to assess instructional oversight at the Petoskey/Iron Mountain and the Escanaba/Gaylord Regional Centers. The centers academic courses are primarily taught by main campus faculty thus strengthening the curriculum alignment. When it is necessary to locally hire adjunct instructors for the regional centers the hiring process is managed by the appropriate dean on the main campus, and includes a review by the faculty of the respective school. It is standard operating procedures for center directors to work closely with their community college partners and to inform LSSU of any office, classroom, laboratory, and/or technology changes or a cost(s) that are being considered at the host location. Both Bay College and North Central Michigan College openly solicit and utilize LSSU input when considering changes.

Survey participants had the opportunity to respond to *Question Number 6: What personal or academic concerns are not adequately met at LSSU – RC?*

Petoskey Students comments include but are not limited to the following responses:

- Sometimes it seems like there is a struggle to find instructors for classes. This makes me nervous. This also leads me to question the dedication/qualification of “last minute” instructors.
- I have had a couple of professors that I felt taught me nothing. One gave us a project to work on in class but not much else; the other didn’t seem qualified to teach the material. I have trouble getting some of the courses I desire.
- Not having more classes offered at the same time. May have to delay until courses are offered again down her.

Escanaba Students comments include but are not limited to the following responses:

- The communication between the two campuses seems to be lacking.
- More online or ITV classes. Scheduling classes better around Bay’s classes so classes don’t overlap.
- In some cases, teachers are hired right before the semester starts. I do not believe this is “fair to anyone”, as the teacher is not fully prepared to teach yet.
- A few of the classes I only seen the instructors on a screen. I feel they really would be an advantage to meet the instructors for at least one of the class section. LSSU to provide tutoring sections for students that may need it for LSSU classes taken at Bay College.
- There is a limited amount of courses & degree programs available.
- By being part time at Bay and part time at LSSU, even though I am a full time student, I missed out on scholarship opportunities.
- Because of the rotation, a business/acctg. student cannot attend full time. So scholarships are not available. It would be wonderful if there were more online & ITV classes with Bay West.
- The business department need more adequate teaching staff.

As previously stated the overarching premise is that Lake Superior State University and its Regional Centers is to operate as one cohesive university educational system. Therefore, the centers utilize the same learning outcomes, syllabi, assessment measures, student faculty evaluation and faculty evaluations processes stipulated by the Faculty Agreement, in the same way as those on the main campus. For example one Escanaba’s survey participated stated the following:

“Some classes were awesome & really increased my knowledge in both my major & minor. I had a few courses that were not productive, which LSSU corrected asap & found new instructor’s or change the curriculum for that course.”

This is a prime example of the institution paying attention to a student’s concern and actively making a difference to perpetuate LSSU’s mission statement, which is to “provides high quality, affordable higher education that benefits diverse learners, employers, and the community.”

Regional Center instructors are held to the same levels of credential and experience as required on the main campus. Adjunct instructors are only determined to be qualified following a review of their credentials, and experience by the appropriate School faculty, and the deans maintain the list of approve instructors, as referenced on pages seven (7) and eight (8) in the Multi-Location Report, 2015.

Regional Students have access to the LSSU: Academic Catalog 2014 – 15 – Academic Policies through the following web page <http://www.lssu.edu/cmscatalog1415/academic-policies.php>. The current Catalog provides students with a glossary of terms and a section entitled Academic Integrity as a key component of the core values of the institution. The web page provides a comprehensive list of academic policies such as student classification, the academic year, academic credit, student curriculum choice and advising, semester course selection, adding/dropping course through the Add/Drop period, grading system and grade appeal policy to name a view. Students by viewing http://sss.lssu.edu/cmscatalog_1415/gen-ed-requirements.php can review LSSU General Education Requirements. Regardless of the type of on/off campus enrollment opportunities for students, there remains only one united Lake Superior State University.

Adjunct instructors, especial at the centers, training and orientation sessions occur at the School level and are overseen by the dean of the school. Adjunct teaching observations are completed by the appropriate dean. Therefore, support and evaluation of most of the instructional staff is completed within the parameters of the main campus.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

Patterns of evidence substantiates that Lake Superior State University effectively oversees instruction at the additional locatons. Policies and procedures are in place to facilitate the concept of one universal collegiate educational system. Faculty members evaluate resources and submit requests to the Center Director, which are then taken to the host-site. Thereby, LSSU can request and use computer, early childhood, ITV, and natural science labs to fulfill student instructional/education needs during the semester. If necessary the host-site technology support staff is available for technical assistance to LSSU center staff, students and adjunct instructors. All training, workshops are conducted through the main campus ensuring that personnel and instructors are current on processes and procedures.

One of the most critical aspects for the Regional Centers is maintaining positive relationships with their internal and external stakeholders. Without effective communication's strategies, especially with the main campus being at a distance, a perceived disconnect from involved stakeholders might become a barrier and affect the quality of education. The distance between the main campus and Petoskey/Gaylord and Escanaba/Iron Mountain Regional Centers may inadvertently affect ethical communications relationships. Communications face-to-face may be difficult at times even though you are able to scrutinize verbal and non-verbal language and behaviors. Utilization of effective e-mail communications adds a level of complexity.

According to the NCA Credo for Ethical Communication, November 1999, "Unethical communications has the power to impede the quality of all communication and consequently the well-being of individuals and the society in which we live. Ethical communications are fundamental to responsible thinking, decision making, and the development of relationships and communities within and across contexts, cultures, channels, and media. Moreover, ethical communication enhances human worth and dignity by fostering truthfulness, fairness, responsibility, personal integrity, and respect for self and other." NCA has endorsed and are

committed to practicing the nine (9) principles of ethical communication. Additional information can be found at the NCA Credo web site.

Unfortunately, when visiting with students, staff, and directors they perceived disconnects with the main campus. Directors are unable to attend face-to-face meetings even though they receive meeting minutes it is not the same as actually being present to participate, students would like to interact with main campus students especially to work on projects together, or faculty utilizing ITV but not fully connecting with students other than at the origination site or the 'screen' contact at the off-campus locations.

A review of the LSSU Student Government documents stated that the "student government" is the unified voice of the student assembly and strive to serve the students in a professional manner for the betterment of the University. Regrettably, the review did not clearly identify the actual relationship between the student government and their involvement with the regional center enrolled students. Frequently mention by students was the lack of access to purchase LSSU branded items. Ethical communications is a valuable means to feel connected and enhances retention rates. Feelings of disconnection and underappreciated enhances attrition rates.

There is an article entitled: *6 Hypotheses Why Internal Campus Communications Is So Challenging*, April 30, 2015 by Joshua Kim. According to him there is an on-going discussion about how important, and how difficult, it is to effectively communicate within the campus. The article begins with a series of questions: Why are higher education internal communications so challenging? What are the reasons that it is so difficult to have everyone on campus understand the thinking behind big initiatives, policy changes, and long term institutional Investments?...Why is it that we spend so much time thinking about communications and outreach, but seem to have so little success in getting our messages out to the larger campus. It may be beneficial for personnel, faculty adjunct instructors, as well as administrative personnel to review and begin their own discussion group.

Technology (*Innovations for Education*), Seeing is Communicating, by David Wilkins, January 1st 2015, shares information on the role of visual communications applications within higher education facilities continue to grow. This is yet another article focusing on the advantage in implementing facility-wide systems that allow administrators, students, and staff to directly engage with both internal and external sources of information.

David Wilkins is president of X20 Media, a Barco company, and provider of software for real-time visual communication applications that significantly improve enterprise-wide communications and drive business.

Institutional Staffing and Faculty Support. *What evidence demonstrates that the institution has appropriately qualified and sufficient staff and faculty in place for the location, and that the institution supports and evaluates personnel at off-campus locations? Consider the processes in place for selecting, training, and orienting faculty at the location.*

The prime staff person at the Regional Centers is the Director, who are supervised by LSSU's Provost/VPAA. Escanaba Regional Center also employs a full-time and a part-time staff member in order to be "one-stop shop" for students. The directors serve as the liaison between LSSU and the community college. They are accountable for marketing the programs, student retention, and in coordination with the University's academic leadership, to assure that

programs of demonstrably high quality are delivered in these settings. Works cooperatively with other regional Center Directors to assure that combined offerings, for example through distance learning and video conference technologies are offered whenever feasible, (Source: Job Description – Regional Center Director).

Their duties are numerous and include such undertakings as recruitment and retention tasks; academic advising and scheduling assistance to students, facilitate the hiring of qualified adjunct faculty who meet the University's hiring qualifications, and supervises any support staff or student workers assigned to regional site, if applicable. Regional Directors submit budget request through the annual budget development process that are reviewed by the Provost and incorporated into the General Fund budget. They assure that budgetary allocations do not exceed allocations and that revenue targets are met. Directors also assist in the training of faculty in the use of ITV at the regional site, as well as assists LSSU faculty assigned to teach at the regional centers.

Regional Centers staffing is monitored by the deans of the respective colleges on the main campus. Students complete end-of-semester evaluations in the same manner as students on the main campus. Outcomes from the student evaluations are shared with instructors and used by supervisors in the evaluation process prescribed by the faculty Agreement, in the same way as those on the main campus. Adjunct hire(s) at the centers also undergo scheduled observations by the appropriate dean. Student course completed evaluations are forward to the dean for review.

According to page nine and ten of the 2015 Multi-Location Report, faculty member support is provide through location-specific orientation on classroom technology, emergency procedures, contact list, and campus layout, delivered by the Center Directors. Adjuncts are given access to materials to which full-time already have accesses, including an electronic copy of the syllabus, the adjunct faculty handbook ([http://www.lssu.edu/handbook/adjunct handbook.php](http://www.lssu.edu/handbook/adjunct%20handbook.php)), the Anchor access faculty guide for the LSSUU student information system, and emergency guide (and/or shown the guide location in the classroom), and an orientation of the classroom technology. The Adjunct Faculty Handbook is exceptionally comprehensive and includes sections pertaining to:

- Resources available to adjunct faculty;
- Library/audio-visual resources, and
- Information Technology connectivity to Anchor Assess LSSU's online information system and Blackboard.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

The Regional Center Directors have impressive qualifications and experiences. They are highly regarded by the enrolled students in LSSU course and respected by faculty/instructors at the specific locations. The centers are co-located with partner community colleges; therefore, it is essential that effective communications with internal and external stakeholders are utilized.

The Associate Vice President for Human Resources and the Provost/VPAA are currently working together to develop and implement an evaluation instrument for the Regional Center's

Director. It was surprising to discover, on page 10 of the Multi-Location Report, that to date the Director evaluations have not been conducted by the current Provost/VPAA.

The Higher Learning Commission Quality Checkup Report Lake Superior College, dated April 2 – 4, 2014, page 3, alleviated to “significant administrative transition since the 2010 Portfolio Review... has necessitated change in overall direction, planning and organization.” The same report references the formation of the Climate Committee, to address communication challenges and perceptions of low morale and lack of trust. Even though the committee has been implemented for five years there continues to be a problem with effective and systematic institutional communications efforts. Types of communication methodologies utilized in Higher Education include vertical, horizontal, diagonal, and visual. Technology and immediacy of information play a major role in everyday campus communications. Each methodology has strengths and challenges; however, it may be necessary to determine who, what, and why of the proposed communication prior to selecting of the most suitable form to reach the identified target population.

Student Support. *What evidence demonstrates that the institution delivers, supports, and manages necessary student services at the additional locations? Consider, in particular, the level of student access (in person, by computer, by phone, etc.) to academic advising/placement, remedial/tutorial services, and library materials/services. Also, consider the level of access to admissions, registration/student records, financial aid, and job placement services, as well as attention to student concerns.*

The Regional Centers’ web page offers an in-depth overview of services for enrolled and prospective students, communities it serves, and its external stakeholders. Students also have access to Lake Superior State University main-campus resources as well as to their partner community colleges or at a University Center high-quality instructional facility. Main campus faculty instructs a high percentage of LSSU course offerings at the centers. Therefore, a continuous evaluation and feedback loop is available to assure quality education and continuity of mission, vision, and core values.

Bay college’s testing centers, at the Escanaba and Iron Mountain campuses, are available for LSSU students to utilize. Testing center hours are located on Bay’s website: (<http://www.baycollege.edu/Student/Computer-Center.aspx>). Escanaba and Iron Mountain Regional Centers a technician will be available at the start of the class in order to establish the ITV connection. North central Michigan College allows LSSU instructors and students to use computer labs, library facilities, nursing labs, early childhood facilities, the testing center, and tutoring facilities. Students at the Gaylord University Center have access to library, testing center, and tutoring facilities at the nearby Petoskey Regional Center. Additionally, students with disabilities at the Bay College facility allow students from the Escanaba and Iron Mountain centers to utilize student support services when necessary.

The directors have posted hours and are available to students either face-to-face, through campus e-mail communications, or per phone. Should students need to problem solve and the directors are unavailable students have access to back-up telephone support from the Provost/VPAA administrative assistant (<http://www.lssu.edu/huanresources/apjobsdesc.php?id=198>).

The Regional Center Directors are essential in promoting LSSU enrollment, student retention, and other processes necessary for student degree completion. The directors assures the

centers, provides students with the necessary assistance to navigate the amount of paper work entailed to become a student at LSSU and becoming a student at the partner-community colleges should it be necessary to complete their general education requirements.

Students' primary academic advisor is the Regional Center Director. Occasionally, students may receive a faculty member from the main campus as a secondary advisor. Prior to each semester enrollment students are required to visit with their assigned advisor. The rationale is this way student and advisor discuss any changes in programmatic in institutional and ensures that the student remains on track for degree requirements. Should a problem arise either a phone call or contact information is provided to contact the appropriate main campus person. Students have access to on-line resources via the institution website. Most student inquiries are related to coordination and dispersement of financial aid, access to Blackboard, and access to online library resources.

Student's unresolved complaints are handled through the Provost Office at the main campus. A record from formal complaint programs are housed in that office. According to the center directors there are no unresolved issues at this time. Students may also contract the respective dean at the main campus with concerns and if the situation warrants may travel to the Regional Center to intervene in person. In special circumstances such as counseling or disability services are necessary, either the Provost, LSSU's Director of Counseling, LSSU's director of Disability Services and/or the Regional Center Director will arrange for services in the student's community or arrangements with the student's instructor(s).

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

The Regional Center Directors work diligently to adhere and promote the intuitional mission, vision, and core values. There are established policies and procedures in place at each Regional Center that are implemented accordingly to student needs.

A possible challenge is continued efficacy and burn-out of personnel. This has the potential to turn out to be problematic, especially at the Petoskey Regional Center as the only staff member is the director. With the current trends of decrease enrollments, travel expectations to visit the main-campus on a regular basis to attend staff meetings or other functions, the diversity of responsibilities within their job responsibilities, and the physical and mental demands of the position to decrease productivity and increase frustration and stress encountered in their day-to-day environment. Regardless of job demands, there is still only twenty-four hours in a day. Despite one's organizational skills 'your-to-do-list' can be continually lengthen while the accomplishment of completed task can become less and less. Even though LSSU plans to contain growth within the existing regional centers, and to expand programming in ways which will serve the needs of the regional campus communities there lays the crux of the issue. Staff is expected to do more and to stay within the projected funding from the general fund. A review of the current strategic plan has little discussion for improvements at the regional center with the exception of increase accessibility to the main campus.

Evaluation and Assessment. *What evidence demonstrates that the institution measures, documents, and analyzes student academic performance sufficiently to maintain academic quality at the additional locations? How are measures and techniques employed at a location*

equivalent to those for assessment and evaluation on the main campus? Consider, in particular, the setting of measurable learning objectives, the actual measurement of performance, and the analysis and use of assessment data to maintain/improve quality.

The 2015 Multi-Location Report discusses evaluation and assessment measures utilized at the Centers. Main campus faculty teach most of the courses at the Regional Centers thus a comparison of not only facilities and services but it provides an opportunity to compare student achievement levels with those of enrolled students at the main campus. Both the Regional Centers and main campus utilize the same instructional documents such as syllabi, course objectives and outcomes are consistent within the university academic system. Samples of syllabuses were reviewed from both the Petoskey and Escanaba for content as well as assessment measures. Faculty academic freedom was verified within the course syllabi. When examining course goals and objectives within the syllabi, it was unclear as to where in the course outline students would acquire the skill to apply concepts to measure achievement of the desired learning outcomes. In other words how does faculty/instructor know that learning has occurred?

Lake Superior State University Adjunct Handbook contains a section entitled: Assessment of Student Learning, which provides a comprehensive statement of what assessment is and isn't. <http://www.lssu.edu/assessment/trainingworkshops.php> links faculty members to a range of training materials available online from the assessment website.

LSSU Assessment Plan Evaluation Guide, November 2, 2012, assist faculty/instructors to connect program outcome/student learning with desired characteristic. It also refers faculty to additional information at <http://www.lssu.edu/assessment/resources.php>: Index of Assessment Resources and Writing Student Learning Objectives. References for assessment of means of course/program refer to Index of Assessment Resources and Methods and Strategies.

Several statements were made with regards to assess and compare Center students with enrollment students at the main campus. Unfortunately, a comparison of outcome data could be skewed because the target population dynamics are different in each learning environment. What is the intent for this comparison and what changes will occur from the comparison?

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

The 2015 Multi-location Report offered a brief discussion of current evaluation and assessment outcomes. An outcome theme throughout this section was one of comparison of student performance to the main campus counterparts especially concerning the senior project classes. The report addressed the Lukenda School of Business, which gives the Major Field Test in Business to all students. Student outcome, according to the report, provides a comprehensive overview of the student's knowledge compared against national data. Thus LSSU can evaluate student's performance against programs of similar institutions. However, assessment of student learning is more than comparing LSSU students to those of similar institutions.

The report continues by discussing student performance in capstone course taught at the Petoskey Regional Center and on the main campus during the period between 2012 – 2014 and another example of comparison data. Yet another example of comparison data was the

Regional Center student performance and main campus student performance in courses offered at the Escanaba Regional Center. What is gleaned from these data sets, how is it applicable to strategic planning, over all budgetary alignment, departmental instructional changes, and teaching and learning outcomes?

A search for additional institutional assessment outcomes resulted in a document dated March 12, 2015 – Assessment Lake Superior State University CABINET Reports – (VPAA) Provost. The report included, but not limited to, the following components:

Mission Statement for the Provost Office: The Provost is the chief academic officer of the university. Academic Affairs is organized into four Colleges, twelve Schools, and eighteen Departments. In addition to monitoring the academic programs, the Provost oversees the Division of Academic Services, Regional Centers, Sponsored Programs, Information Technology, Public School Academies (charter schools), and International Studies.

The Strategic Objective: Strategy 2 School of Choice – VPAA2. Desirable School of Choice (recruiting/academic reputation) The VPAA reporting units will attract an increasing number of students who are academically prepared and reflective of society's diversity.

Unit-level Outcomes: CABINET (VPAA) – Office of the Provost & VPAA – Institutional Mission – 2.2. The Provost's office supports institutional enrollment initiatives through active development and support of programs, activities and resources within Academic Affairs which are aligned with institutional mission.

Assessment Method: All Programs are scheduled for periodic review using established institutional template. Program review documents are evaluated with feedback by the Provost's Council and recommendations for change, monitoring reports where needed, and date of next review were specified.

Assessment Category: Strategic – Report or Audit.

Criterion/Target/Threshold: Meet HLC criteria for periodic program review.

Related Documents: Plan for Program Review V4a.pdf.

Updates, Summary of Findings: 10/10/2014

- During 2013-1024 a total of 15 Program Review documents were submitted, <20% of all programs.
- Each review was evaluated with feedback provided to each school.
- Program Reviews with substantial deficiencies will be required to provide a monitoring report by February 1, 2016 documenting progress in addressing the key concerns.
 - ✚ Programs with substantial deficiencies primarily lacked a clear understanding of program outcomes and assessment practices.
 - ✚ Deans will use the feedback provided to coach Schools in their development of the next cycle, and in the preparation of their monitoring reports.
 - ✚ Additional financial data is needed to evaluate the programs cost effectiveness.

- All programs will be required to submit their next full program reviews by May 2019.

Data was extracted from page two (2) of a fourteen page (14) document, which only evaluated One Strategic Objective as noted below.

Strategy 2 School of Choice – VPAA2. Desirable School of Choice (recruiting/academic reputation) The VPAA reporting units will attract an increasing number of students who are Academically prepared and reflective of society's diversity.

***Continuous Improvement.** What evidence demonstrates that the institution encourages and ensures continuous quality improvement at its additional locations? Consider in particular the institution's planning and evaluation processes that ensure regular review and improvement of additional locations and ensure alignment of additional locations with the mission and goals of the institution as a whole.*

Lake Superior State University does not anticipate expanding the number of additional locations. Their research reflects that there is the potential for growth at new regional centers, which may develop through partnerships with the Public School Academies which LSSU authorizes in larger population centers of the state. A review of enrollment patterns showed a downward trend in enrollment for the past three years at the Petoskey/Gaylord Centers, while Escanaba/Iron Mountain enrollment patterns reflect more stability but less enrollment numbers than the Petoskey/Gaylord Centers.

There are two major initiatives presented as noted on page three, 2015 Multi-Location Report. The first is the statewide agreement with the University of Wisconsin Colleges to accept the Wisconsin-specific Associate of Arts & Sciences degree in fulfillment of the LSSU general education requirements. Students would have the opportunity to transfer without the loss of important credits, to LSSU, including the programs offered at the Regional Centers. The second is currently under review by LSSU and is located in the Grand Rapids, MI area. The institution maintains a Charter School that has purchased a very large building and is looking to partner with several institutions to develop a P-20 school at one location. LSSU will not incur any fiduciary responsibilities associated with the P-20 School but only the responsibility of instruction in the technology and in the science areas.

LSSU agreements with the partner institutions facilitate for growth on the regional center enrollment and programs, and additional partner space can become available at each location as necessary. The partnership with the local community colleges also provides a seamless transition from the two-year college experience to a four-year institution. Regional Centers' program offerings have the same program outcomes as offered at the main campus.

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

LSSU believes in continuous improvement across the campus and at the centers it is the responsibility of the Center directors, the deans, and the faculty who instruct at the Regional Centers. Directors can streamline processes and paper work to fulfill the job responsibilities.

New initiatives, upgrade of equipment and/or technology are encourage, with resources being provided as necessary. Deans are responsible for ensuring courses are taught by qualified faculty and assessment occurs while faulty members are responsible for ensuring that students are achieving the learning outcomes as stated in the Lake Superior State University Assessment Plan (<http://www.lssu.edu/assessment/images/UAP-graphic-July201222d.jpg>).

Regional Center staff members have an open door policy and encourage students to bring concerns to their attention as quickly as possible. Faculty end of course evaluations are conducted by standard evaluation processes, which are a student is identified to administer and collect evaluative survey, returned surveys are given to the center's director in a sealed envelope and forwarded to the main campus Provost Office for review.

Data gathered through the formal assessments, faculty evaluations, and one-on-one interactions with students are used to adjust policies and procedures, and course content to improve all aspect of the student' experiences as they pursue their academic goals.

Marketing and Recruiting Information. *What evidence confirms that the information presented to students in advertising, brochures, and other communications is accurate?*

At the Petoskey Regional Center marketing and recruiting is primarily done face-to-face through student/director interactions. These interactions include enrolled students at both North Central Michigan College and the Gaylord University Center. A review of the Petoskey Regional Center web site will provide prospective and enrolled students, internal and external stakeholders' opportunities to gleam various insights into the world of higher education at Lake Superior State University.

Students have access to one-page degree program 'Cliff Notes', which provide degree requirements and contact number(s) for additional information. Important student forms including but not limited to: consortium agreement; consortium financial aid information, graduation audit form, new student checklist, application for admission and NCMC transcript request form. Additional links to course schedule and registration informational, LSSU library services, textbooks, and student services links such as My.LSSU and disability.

Escanaba Regional Center has similar marketing strategies. However, the center has recently launched marketing campaign, which includes billboards highlighting the partnership between Bay College and LSSU, has been directed by the LSSU main campus, assuring that enrollment at the remote location does not exceed the capacity of the institution to provide necessary support (source: page 6 of the 2015 Multi-Location Report).

To maintain uniform marketing materials the center's directors consult with and utilize the main campus graphics department in the production of locally produce materials which are used to market programs to students enrolled in partner community college classes. Information published is based on materials and resources from the main campus. It is extremely important that the Center Directors consistently consult with main campus department chairs and college deans to assure the accuracy and reliably of marketing materials (2015 Multi-Location report).

Judgment of reviewer. Check appropriate box: adequate attention needed

Comments:

The overarching premise is that Lake Superior State University and its Regional Centers will operate as one cohesive university educational system. The Lake Superior State University has

accomplished this task through their processes, policies and procedures requiring that the Regional Centers in referring day-to-day operations back to those on the main campus. Extensive academic information, including program information, program planners, course outlines, and the course schedule, is readily available online to current students through the student portal by accessing the Academic page.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Select one of the following statements. Include, as appropriate, a summary of findings.

- Overall, the pattern of this institution's operations at its additional locations needs some attention as defined in this report. The institution can be expected to follow up on these matters without monitoring by the Higher Learning Commission. The next scheduled comprehensive review can serve to document that the matters identified have been addressed.

During the Multi-location site visit there were identified challenges at both the Petoskey/Gaylord and Escanaba/Iron Mountain Regional Centers especially enrollment trends, sustainability of current locations, existing communications patterns between the centers and the main campus. Enrolled students at both centers reiterated their concern of program sustainability, personal access to necessary resources on campus to complete assignments, such as computer lab access, students' perception of being disconnected from the main campus in the area of joint course projects interaction and the ability to purchase university purchasing of memorabilia. A major disconnect between students and the nursing degree completion program of study.

Lake Superior State College was required to submit a monitoring reports due February 1, 2013 focusing on (1) aligning tenure and promotion with collective bargaining, (2) information technology planning and professional development, (3) implementation of assessment of student learning, and (4) shared governance./ The reports were accepted by the Higher Learning Commission.

The updated IT Strategic Plan, which was implemented January 2012, provided the restructuring of the department infrastructure necessary to provide the resources necessary to better serve the campus and its constituencies resulting in a more balanced division of responsibility. Changes include but not limited to personnel adjustments, software and hardware updates, support for online instruction, etc..

The comprehensive visit team commented on the assessment program at LSSU and the need to centralize repository for the collection, aggregation and reporting of assessment data, and secondly evidence of the use of this data in institutional decision making. The submitted monitoring report described four broad initiatives (1) Aggregation of Institutional Assessment Data, (2) Academic Assessment, (3) General Education Assessment, and (4) Administrative (Strategic) Plan assessment.

Although the monitoring report did not provide evidence of the integration of assessment findings into the operations and decision-making of the University, the monitoring report an assessment concluded:

“The next two years will be critical as we have the opportunity and responsibility to use assessment findings to drive institutional planning and execution in ways which will shape and position the university for

the future.”

The implementation of Shared Governance model has positively impacted the ne organizational structure since 2009. An important component of the Share Governance model addresses communication.

The concerns brought forth by the Multi-location visit are clearly resolvable with the institutional processes currently in place since January 2012.