

Assurance Argument
New Mexico Institute of Mining and
Technology - NM

2/22/2015

1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Argument

Established in 1889 as the New Mexico School of Mines, with the first year of instruction being 1893, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (New Mexico Tech) has evolved into a comprehensive Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) institution, with, as of Fall 2014, twenty-one Bachelor of Science majors (twelve majors that are Science, Technology or Mathematics and nine majors that are Engineering) and one multidisciplinary baccalaureate degree – the Bachelor of General Studies – as listed on page 3 of the [Basic Profile of the Student Body for Fall 2014](#). Further, we have sixteen Master of Science programs (nine Science or Mathematics programs and seven Engineering programs), one Master of Engineering Management, and seven Ph.D. programs (four Science or Mathematics programs and three Engineering programs), listed on pages 8-9 of the [Basic Profile for Fall 2014](#).

A [1947 State Statute, 21-11-1](#), ([Article 11 New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology](#)), regulates the focus and curriculum of New Mexico Tech (NMT).

As a STEM research institution, NMT prepares students for professional STEM careers: our focus is industry-prepared and advanced degree program-prepared graduates. Thus, our curriculum is an Engineering and Science curriculum offering almost exclusively Bachelor of Science, Master of Science and Doctorate of Philosophy degrees. Emphasizing research and design, NMT's curriculum is built around this emphasis, [even offering research opportunities for incoming freshmen](#).

This emphasis on a quality and applied STEM education reflects our institutional mission, approved by our governing body, The New Mexico Tech Board of Regents, as part of the 1999 Strategic Plan and updated in the [2006-2011 Strategic Plan](#). Our mission is as follows:

[New Mexico Tech Mission Statement](#)

New Mexico Tech (NMT) is an institute of higher learning that serves the diverse population of

New Mexico by integrating education, research, public service, and economic development through emphasis on science, technology, engineering, mathematics, natural resources, communication, and cultural awareness. Our mission is to:

1. help students learn creative approaches to addressing complex issues;
2. acknowledge state, national, and global diversity by developing an inclusive learning environment;
3. create and communicate knowledge;
4. solve technical and scientific problems.

The institution best demonstrates its service to our state by educating and graduating students who achieve professionalism through the challenging academic rigor and exacting academic standards that are expected for quality undergraduate and graduate degrees in STEM. Society depends upon and expects such excellence, as our graduates design bridges, supervise research laboratories, and perform surgeries. The ethical and professional responsibility of our curriculum, then, demands such rigor.

Since our last reaffirmation of accreditation in 2004-2005, NMT's [undergraduate student enrollment](#) has shifted from the majority of students being science majors to being engineering majors.

In [Fall 2013](#), our undergraduate student enrollment of 1489 degree-seeking students was 73.47% (1094) Engineering majors and 25.11% (374) Science majors. [1.3% (19) students reported undecided in their majors; 0.1% (2) students reported being Bachelor of General Studies majors, our only non-Bachelor of Science degree.]

Comparatively, our [Fall 2004](#) undergraduate student enrollment was 1171 degree-seeking students, with the majority of students, 51.6%, being Science majors (597 students); 44.8% (518 students) were Engineering majors.

Engineering students were a firm majority in [2008 with 56.5% of the Fall enrollment](#). In 2009, Computer Science was accredited by ABET and became Computer Science & Engineering, a shift in designation that added 10% more students to NMT Engineering degree-seeking students, for a total of 67.8% Engineering students.

Also since our last reaffirmation of accreditation, NMT has experienced remarkable growth in the undergraduate major of Mechanical Engineering – in 2005, Mechanical Engineering moved into first place of undergraduate majors with 15.3% (181 students) of our undergraduate student enrollment, as shown on page 6 of the [Basic Profile for Fall 2005](#). Mechanical Engineering has held this position, and as of [Fall 2013 \(page 5\)](#) is [22.7%](#) of our undergraduate student enrollment (338 students).

This is a notable increase, considering that in 2001, Mechanical Engineering was 2.4% of undergraduate student enrollment with 25 majors, as indicated on page 2 of the [Student Body Profile for Fall 2001](#). (With its related major of Engineering Mechanics, Mechanical Engineering was 7.2% of our enrollment with 74 students. [By 2006](#), Engineering Mechanics became part of Mechanical Engineering.) Further, this growth far exceeds the national trend in Mechanical Engineering undergraduate student enrollment; from 2001 to 2013, the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) reports an approximate 57% increase in Mechanical Engineering undergraduate student enrollment nationally, whereas NMT's growth from [2001 to 2013 was over 1400%](#).

This major, nearly one-fourth of our undergraduate student enrollment, [requires 136 credit hours](#) for graduation, with only 3 of these credits – a Technical Elective – being non-major elective credit, if so approved by the student's academic advisor. In addition, Math courses prior to Calculus do not count

for these 136 credit hours.

For example, as the [2012-2013 graduation data table](#) shows, Mechanical Engineering graduated 50 undergraduate students; of those, 39 entered NMT as first time freshmen (FTF). These 39 averaged 144.0 NMT institutional credit hours with an average time to degree of 4.8 years. However, the entire cohort of 50, which includes 11 transfer students, averaged 136.3 NMT institutional credit hours – the number of hours required to graduate in this major – and with an average time to degree of 4.6 years.

All NMT Science and Engineering majors have similar requirements, meaning most of our Bachelor of Science graduates who entered as FTF realize a five to six-year commitment before graduation. Based on 4.0 years and less being a four-year completion, 4.1 to 5.0 years being a five-year completion and 5.1 to 6.0 being a six-year completion, [in academic year 2012-2013](#), three programs had a four-year average time to degree; ten programs had a five-year average time to degree; six programs had a six-year average time to degree; one program had a seven-year average time to degree; and two programs graduated no FTF.

In return for this rigor, our graduates are rewarded for their commitment and perseverance.

According to *Payscale College Salary Report of 2013-2014*, [NMT ranks fourth in its region for salary potential](#) for graduates with bachelor degrees, surpassing all other New Mexico universities and being outranked only by the United States Air Force Academy, Colorado School of Mines, and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. In addition, the same *Payscale* report states [NMT ranks eleventh among state universities](#) nationally by salary potential for graduates with bachelor degrees, exceeding CalPoly, and, again, all other New Mexico universities.

In August 2014, *USA Today* reported [College Factual's ranking of NMT as eighth in the nation](#) for Engineering programs.

Also, in a September 8, 2014 article, *U.S. News & World Report* [ranked NMT as third](#) in Top Public Schools in its region, making NMT among “the highest ranked public colleges and universities in the 2015 Best Colleges rankings.”

Further, according to a [National Science Foundation \(NSF\) study of 2008](#), NMT is one of the top institutions that produces baccalaureate graduates who will become Science and Engineering doctorate recipients: as a baccalaureate-origin institution for doctorate recipients, NMT ranks fifteenth in the nation and first among public institutions.

Our [Post Grad Survey Data August 2011–May 2012](#), compiled by the Office of Career Services, states that 72.2% of NMT graduates (undergraduate and graduate students) reported that they were entering graduate school in their chosen fields or were employed in their chosen fields with an average salary of \$55,277.

In addition, NMT’s Graduate program grew 35.6% from 2001 to 2013. [Fall 2013](#) enrollment for degree-seeking graduate students was 396, compared to [352 in 2004](#) and [292 in 2001](#).

Persistence and completion at NMT, then, is based on our undergraduate students achieving an exceptional Engineering and Science education that is typically accomplished in five (4.1 to 5.0 years) to six (5.1 to 6.0) years.

Thus, we have initiated programs that are improving our retention, persistence and completion rates. Resulting from initiatives discussed in 4.C., [NMT’s IPEDS retention rate has increased steadily](#) from

69% in Fall 2008, making significant increases since the Fall 2011 piloting of the SES grant initiatives to 74% in Fall 2012 to 77% in Fall 2013, and to our Fall 2014 retention of 79%.

Based on this trend line, NMT projects that the 2016 Freshman cohort will have an [83% retention rate](#). In addition, we expect our increased retention to have a positive impact on our IPEDS six-year graduation rate.

Seven Divisions Support Our Mission

Supporting this exceptional education are the missions of all seven divisions, which align with the NMT Mission of “integrating education, research, public service, and economic development through emphasis on science, technology, engineering, mathematics, natural resources, communication, and cultural awareness.”

NMT’s seven divisions are headed by Vice Presidents or Directors who report directly to the [President](#): Vice President for [Academic Affairs](#); Vice President for [Student and University Relations](#); Vice President for [Administration and Finance](#); Vice President for [Research and Economic Development](#); Director of the [New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources](#); Director of the [Energetic Materials Research and Testing Center](#); Director of the [Petroleum Recovery Research Center](#).

Academic Affairs

All 15 academic departments, under the direction of the division of Academic Affairs, align with and support the NMT Mission. Aiding in the success of students in the primacy of our educational mission are the offices and positions under the direction of Academic Affairs, which are the [Dean of Graduate Studies and the Center for Graduate Studies](#), the Dean of Engineering, the Dean of Arts and Sciences, [Registrar’s Office](#), [Joseph R. Skeen Library](#), [Academic Center for Technology \(ACT\)](#), the [Office for Student Learning \(OSL\)](#), [Community Education and Outreach](#), and [Veteran Affairs](#).

Student and University Relations

The Office for Student and University Relations (SUR) aligns with the Mission of NMT through support for students. The following offices care for student needs and help to provide an inclusive learning environment in an effort to accommodate a successful college career at the university. These offices include: [Office of Admission](#), [Auxiliary Services](#) (ABQ Building, [Children's Center](#), [Golf Course/Shop](#), [Macey Center](#), [Residential Life](#), [Swim Center](#)) [Student Affairs](#) ([International Programs](#), [Multicultural Programs](#), [Career Services](#)), [Office of Counseling and Disabilities](#), [Student Health Center](#), [Financial Aid](#), [Performing Arts Series](#), [Physical Recreation](#), [Upward Bound](#), [Upward Bound Math and Science](#), [Science Fair](#) and [Science Olympiad](#), and [Public Information Office](#). The office that supports the economic development of the Mission that is under the direction of SUR is the [Office for Advancement](#), which includes the Alumni Office.

Administration and Finance

The missions of the offices of Administration and Finance (AF) align with the NMT Mission in maintaining the integrity of the Institute through professional financial planning and reporting; providing state agencies with timely information regarding budgets, audits and other required documents; training personnel to meet the specific criteria of their respective missions; and to ensure that the resources to meet the education and research missions of NMT are available and properly maintained. Offices that report to the Administration and Finance division are [Budget and Analysis](#), [Business Office](#), [Sponsored Projects Administration](#), [Human Resources](#), [Purchasing](#), [Property](#), [Campus Police](#), [the Bureau of Mine Safety](#), [Facilities Management](#), and [Information Technology and Communications \(ITC\)](#).

Research and Economic Development

The mission of the Research and Economic Development (R&ED) division aligns with the NMT Mission by, as the R&ED mission states, “encouraging interdisciplinary and collaborative work between faculty, students, and other universities and research entities.” Affiliate organizations associated with NMT through the Division of Research and Economic Development are the [Geophysical Research Center \(GRC\)](#), the [Magdalena Ridge Observatory \(MRO\)](#), [Langmuir Laboratory for Atmospheric Research](#), the [National Cave and Karst Research Institute](#), the [Incorporated Research Institutions for Seismology \(IRIS\)](#), the [Program for Array Seismic Studies of the Continental Lithosphere \(PASSCAL\) Instrument Center](#) and [EarthScope US Array Operations Facility \(AOF\)](#), and the [Etscorn Campus Observatory](#).

Research Divisions

The divisions of the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources, Energetic Materials Research and Testing Center, and Petroleum Recovery Research Center have missions that include research and economic development.

The [New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources \(The Bureau\)](#), a non-regulatory research and service division that serves as the state geological survey, collaborates with other state agencies, the mining industry and the general public. The Bureau publishes popular guides to New Mexico, scientific publications and magazines. The Bureau is home to the New Mexico Mineral Museum, which hosts more than 15,000 visitors each year. The Bureau supports the university's academic mission in a variety of manners. Students have access to its laboratories. In addition, many staff scientists are adjunct professors and teach classes regularly in the Earth and Environmental Science Department. Staff scientists also regularly employ students as research assistants.

The [Energetic Materials Research and Testing Center \(EMRTC\)](#), established in 2003 under NMSA 21-11-8.3, is a major research, development, testing and training organization for NMT. EMRTC actively supports NMT’s mission by serving the people of New Mexico through education, research, public service and economic development. EMRTC’s research portfolio of more than \$50M contributes vastly to the local economy. In addition to employing approximately 200 people, EMRTC significantly impacts small businesses and vendors throughout the state who provide goods and services to meet the operational and research needs of EMRTC programs. EMRTC supports NMT’s academic mission through collaborative research with other divisions and departments, joint faculty research appointments, support for students through scholarships, student research projects, other

scholarly activities, and various on-the-job training and graduate opportunities. One of EMRTC's major divisions – the Institute for Complex Additive Systems Analysis (ICASA) – is at the forefront of advancement in cyber security.

The [Petroleum Recovery Research Center \(PRRC\)](#), one of the nation's leading petroleum research centers, has a mission to “assist others in their efforts to recover petroleum and to transfer new and existing technology from our research labs to the oil and gas industry.” The PRRC has been the research arm of the oil and natural gas industry in New Mexico since its establishment as a research division at NMT by the state legislature in 1977. The PRRC participates in committees, boards, and panels to address evolving issues and changes in the energy industry. [In Fiscal Year 2013, the PRRC supported the university's educational goals by providing paid research positions for 25 graduate and 24 undergraduate students.](#)

In addition, there are many non-profit organizations that are affiliated with NMT but are not administered by the University. The mission of these entities is compatible with the research and educational mission of NMT.

Planning and Budgeting Processes

The NMT Mission and our emphasis on a quality STEM education informs our planning processes. The first step in success for our students is to enroll students interested in pursuing a degree in STEM fields, which is the goal of the Office of Admission. The Office of Admission sends the [Viewbook](#) to any student who inquires about the university. In addition to visiting high school campuses, college fairs and other recruiting events throughout the Western U.S. – at which a [fair flyer](#) listing all majors is distributed to potential students – the Office of Admission hosts a series of annual events to engage high school students. These events include [MESA Day](#), which invites high school participants of the [New Mexico Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement, Inc. \(NM MESA\) program](#). The Admission Office also hosts [Exploration Day in the Fall semester](#) and [Research@Tech Day in the Spring semester](#), both of which bring more than 300 visitors on campus.

The Admission Office also recruits new students through the New Mexico Science and Engineering Fair (Science Fair) and the New Mexico Science Olympiad, which are organized by and held at NMT. From 2008 to 2013, a total of 50 students who participated in the Science Fair or Science Olympiad enrolled as Freshmen at NMT and received a total of [\\$35,000 in Science Fair and Science Olympiad Scholarships](#).

However, even students who want to pursue a STEM degree often find our curriculum to be challenging. Thus, due to the rigor of our curriculum and our commitment to student achievement in an education that makes them industry-prepared or advanced degree-prepared, [our 2006-2011 Strategic Plan](#) sets student success as top priority, as stated on [page 8](#): “Goal 1. New Mexico Tech will enhance academic excellence and student success.” In particular, the strategies for “strong student development and retention” and the focus “on student learning and innovative teaching” have been piloted with success, as will be discussed more thoroughly in Components 3 and 4.

In addition, in recognition of our Mission's directive as serving the state of New Mexico and its emphasis on cultural diversity and awareness, our 2006-2011 Strategic Plan focused on increasing our Hispanic undergraduate student population, as stated on [page 10](#). NMT [accomplished the designation](#) of becoming a Hispanic-Serving Institution in 2008.

The Admission Office supports the university's Mission to increase diversity by focusing recruiting efforts in traditionally Hispanic areas in New Mexico and in other parts of the Southwest including Texas, Arizona, Colorado and California, efforts integral to our achievement as a Hispanic-Serving Institution.

In the Fall of 2013, NMT's incoming Freshmen class was [26.9% Hispanic](#). As this report is being completed, the Fall 2014 data shows that [94 first-time full-time students](#) reported themselves as Hispanic, which is 33% of the incoming class and the largest percentage in the university's history. Total Hispanic undergraduate students for [Fall 2014 is 27.5%](#), which is close to [our goal](#) of having 30% Hispanic undergraduate enrollment by 2015.

The goals of the 2006-2011 Strategic Plan that required additional time have been carried into subsequent years until the implementation our next strategic plan, the NMT 2015-2019 Strategic Plan. [The Institutional Strategic Planning Committee includes faculty, staff, students, administrators, local community leaders and alumni](#). The committee meets every other week in 3 to 4 hour planning sessions. The committee is drafting a revised NMT Mission and mission documents and is creating a vision statement. The committee reviews documents from our other accrediting agencies and examines data that will inform the Strategic Plan to help guide NMT with a [5-year plan](#) that will be ready to implement in Spring 2015.

The [Strategic Planning Committee Task Forces](#) are Quality Growth, Transdisciplinary Education and Research, Communication and Processes, Funding, Community of Scholars, Technology, Assessment (later renamed Student Success) and they have prepared drafts of their priorities. In addition, an Accreditation Task Force, composed of the Chairs of the other seven Task Forces, was created to ensure that the Strategic Plan is consistent with the Higher Learning Commission's Criteria for Accreditation.

[Our enrollment profile is consistent with our Mission](#), which highlights serving the diverse population of New Mexico but also develops an inclusive learning environment that acknowledges state, national and global diversity.

While New Mexico residents comprised 81.3% of our Fall 2013 degree-seeking undergraduate student enrollment, our inclusive learning environment provides our top quality STEM education to a significant percentage of out-of-state residents (16% in Fall 2013) and to international residents (2.6% in Fall 2013).

The [diversity of NMT degree-seeking Fall 2013 undergraduate students](#) included Hispanic (25.4%), Native American (3.6%), Asian (2.9%), Black (2.0%), Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0.1%), and students who reported more than one race (3.7%). 72.8% of Fall 2013 degree-seeking undergraduates were men and 27.2% were women, with ages ranging from 16 to 70 and the average age being 21.4 years.

Our Mission and our emphasis on a quality STEM education also informs our budgeting processes. In recent years, New Mexico universities have felt the effects of fiscal constraints. In spite of those constraints, NMT moved forward with student success initiatives that are showing significant positive results.

The Office of Academic Affairs submitted three proposals for U.S. Department of Education grants designed to provide resources that support the Mission and that respond to the 2006-2011 Strategic Plan. [After being awarded the three DOE grants in 2010, 2011 and 2012 for a total of \\$10.4 million](#), the Office of Academic Affairs has directed several student retention and learning initiatives that support a strong STEM education, which are discussed more thoroughly in Components 3 and 4.

Further discussion of how our budgeting priorities align with and support our NMT Mission is found in 5.C.

Please note that the NMT Assurance Argument has been written over a period of more than a year, so most information is based on Fall 2013 with some information provided after Fall 2013.

Commitment

As a Hispanic Serving Institution, we are committed to providing underrepresented populations, as well as all of our students, with the opportunities that will afford them a gratifying, substantial, ethical science or engineering professional life that serves the global good.

This report will detail our specific methods for doing so, with an emphasis on assessing our established curricular and co-curricular programs as well as programs we are piloting and other student learning initiatives to increase student retention, persistence and completion and how we make decisions for the improvement of student learning through integrated planning.

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Argument

The [NMT Mission](#) is articulated and works in conjunction with the [NMT Vision, the Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes and the Institutional Values](#). These are accessible to the public on the [President's Office School Mission webpage](#) and in the [NMT Catalog](#). In addition, framed print versions of the Mission and the Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes are located in many offices on campus.

NMT fulfills its vision through being completely mission-focused and mission-driven. The [NMT Vision](#) states:

New Mexico Tech is a center of higher learning at the forefront of education and research in advanced fields of science and technology. Members of this community are committed to a rigorous, yet caring, learning environment. Tech's goals are to promote intellectual growth in its students and provide skills to help them fulfill future leadership roles in our ever-changing society. Through excellence in education and research, Tech seeks to create an enriched and economically stronger society for the citizens of New Mexico, the nation, and the world. The entire New Mexico Tech community is committed to the success of our students, who are the heart of our efforts.

Our [Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes](#) are specific in how we educate and assess our students abilities in achieving the skills and experience to take the NMT Mission and Vision into the world as our alumni. These are discussed in Criterion 4.

Our [Institutional Values](#) are integral to the achievement of our Mission and Vision. Our Institutional Values are the following: creativity, excellence, integrity, collegiality and citizenship, service, leadership, and commitment to economic prosperity and technological development.

The best way to evidence how our Mission, Vision, Values and Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes are articulated publicly is by the ways we realize them for and with our constituents.

Exclusively Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

As discussed in 1.A., all [degrees are STEM degrees](#), including Management and Technical Communication, which are bachelor of science degrees. Management also has a Master of Engineering Management. The degree for teachers is a Master of Science for Teachers. (The Bachelor of General Studies, while not a STEM degree, is multidisciplinary, so thus typically includes the STEM departments in its requirements; it has only one student enrolled in Fall 2013.)

Our research and design advances the STEM fields statewide, nationally, and globally.

Our [15 academic departments](#) are:

Engineering

- Civil and Environmental Engineering
- Computer Science and Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Materials Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Mineral Engineering
- Petroleum and Chemical Engineering

Arts and Sciences

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Communication, Liberal Arts, Social Sciences (with the Technical Communication B.S.)
- Earth and Environmental Science
- Management
- Mathematics
- Physics
- Psychology and MST

Priority on Creativity, Reasoning and Analysis

Our institution places a high priority on creativity, which is mentioned twice in the Mission Statement and a third time in the Institutional Values.

As stated in our Mission, creativity is the key to “addressing complex issues.” We recognize that knowledge is first created, then must be applied and communicated effectively; thus, our faculty, various staff members, and our students – through our research and design – create knowledge.

This premium on creativity begins at NMT with our [General Education Core](#) requirement in Math, which is two semesters of Calculus. In addition, our Laboratory Science requirement includes Calculus-based Physics. These courses give students of Engineering and Science the language and tools to define, design, research and create. NMT's General Education Core Curriculum is addressed more thoroughly in Component 3.B.

Classes designed to augment student creativity include Communication, Liberal Arts, Social Science (CLASS) Department courses, such as Practical Creativity, Interdisciplinary Problem Solving,

Creative Writing, and several Technical Communication courses taught at the undergraduate and graduate levels. All courses in this department enhance reasoning, analysis, and critical thinking skills.

Priority on Communication

Communication, stated twice within our NMT Mission and again in our Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes, is a priority at NMT, with a focus on communicating STEM to a variety of audiences.

Those within the same discipline build on NMT's research and design; [the work by our faculty is widely referenced](#) for further innovations by other researchers.

However, funding for STEM research comes from the public. Aware that confidence in the science and engineering community correlates to the public's ability to understand scientific information, NMT emphasizes the need for communication to multidisciplinary audiences and the general public through courses, [co-curricular events](#), educational outreach, and [faculty and student workshops](#). For example, as educational outreach, faculty members have appeared in TED talks, *National Geographic* magazine, *Inside Edition*, *MythBusters*, the New Mexico PBS series *Why Did You Become a Scientist?*, and many TV news reports.

Our faculty, then, serve as researchers, as advisors for student research and design projects, and as mentors to students in communicating these projects successfully to appropriate audiences.

In addition to individual mentoring by faculty, the General Education Core course [Technical Writing \(ENGL 341\)](#), and its equivalent [Mechanical Engineering Technical Writing \(MENG 341\)](#), are designed specifically for NMT students to communicate their research or design to a variety of audiences in writing, culminating in an extensive technical report, and in speaking, culminating in an oral presentation. The Mechanical Engineering Department strengthened this link in 2013 by making [MENG 341 a co-requisite with the Junior Design course or Senior Design course](#).

Technical Writing is taught by the Communication, Liberal Arts, Social Sciences (CLASS) Department, a departmental name change (from Humanities Department) approved by the President in 2009 to reflect more accurately the teaching, research and service responsibilities of the department. The CLASS Department also offers a B.S. and a minor in Technical Communication and a graduate certificate in Scientific and Professional Communication.

Other communication-strengthening student opportunities and support, such as the [Student Research Symposium](#) and the Writing and Oral Presentation Center, are discussed throughout the Assurance Argument.

Commitment

Our mission documents are specific about our role as leaders in creating and communicating knowledge. We demonstrate publicly our Mission, our Vision, our Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes, and our Values – our commitment to excellence, integrity, collegiality and citizenship, service, leadership, economic prosperity and technological development – through written articulation and, moreover, through our actions and contributions to education, knowledge and its applications.

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

Our Mission states that NMT "serves the diverse population of New Mexico by integrating education, research, public service, and economic development through emphasis on science, technology, engineering, mathematics, natural resources, communication, and cultural awareness." As well, our mission is to "acknowledge state, national, and global diversity by developing an inclusive learning environment."

Thus, with our dedication to an advanced-degree-relevant, industry-relevant STEM education and as a Hispanic-Serving Institution, NMT focuses on the needs and opportunities that define New Mexico, as is articulated in the [introduction to the proposal of an awarded Department of Education grant](#).

A Diverse Student Enrollment

As stated in 1.A., New Mexico residents comprised 81.3% of our Fall 2013 degree-seeking undergraduate student enrollment.

Our inclusive learning environment also provides our top quality STEM education to a significant percentage of out-of-state residents (16% in Fall 2013) and to international residents (2.6% in Fall 2013).

[The diversity of NMT degree-seeking Fall 2013](#) undergraduate students included Hispanic (25.4%), Native American (3.6%), Asian (2.9%), Black (2.0%), Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0.1%), and students who reported more than one race (3.7%).

[72.8% of Fall 2013](#) degree-seeking Undergraduates were men and 27.2% were women, with ages ranging from 16 to 70 and the average age being 21.4.

Also as stated in 1.A., our Fall 2014 incoming Hispanic population is a [historical high at 33%](#).

Core Value of Collegiality and Citizenship

The value we place on diversity is articulated in the [NMT Core Value of Collegiality and Citizenship](#).

As stated in this core value, we believe NMT is a community, and thus, we offer courses, programs, services and resources to aid students, faculty and staff in sharing in this community.

Courses and Programs that Emphasize a Society of Pluralism

We teach courses and provide programs to aid students in the awareness that society is composed of many varied groups and identities.

This emphasis on cultural awareness within an inclusive learning environment is the focus of our Humanities and Social Sciences General Education Core Courses and through minors provided by the Communication, Liberal Arts, Social Sciences (CLASS) department, such as [Hispanic Studies, Literature, and Philosophy](#).

In addition, many courses offered as Social Sciences General Education Core Courses and major courses in the [Psychology Department](#), such as the [Developmental Psychology courses](#), emphasize aspects of growing up in a multicultural society and the way that individuals are socialized and how these influence our cultural beliefs and practices.

As a rigorous, STEM-focused institution, diversity at NMT also means having course offerings and co-curricular opportunities that include music, poetry, visual arts, and physical recreation, which is detailed in Components 3 and 4.

Programs and Resources for a Diverse Population

Supporting diversity means having programs and resources that help students feel included in a place that is not their primary residence – providing a home away from home.

NMT has several programs and resources for this purpose.

Through the PPOHA Department of Education grant, awarded in 2010 to address NMT's multicultural populations, and in conjunction with the CLASS Department, [the Writing and Oral Presentation Center](#) was developed to address deficiencies in communication skills at the undergraduate and graduate levels and includes [ESL resources](#), referred to as the ESL Resource Center. The WOPC, its resources, and their positive effects are discussed in Criteria 3 and 4.

[The Women's Resource Center](#) provides gatherings, services and speakers on topics relevant to women and other underrepresented populations.

[The Office of Counseling and Disabilities Services](#) ensures that students with documented, qualifying disabilities receive services to aid them in their success as NMT students.

The [Office of Multicultural Programs](#) hosts and assists several events and activities on campus that support student success and ethnic diversity. These events include guest speakers, History Month celebrations, and scholarship and internship informational sessions. The Multicultural Programs' resource center provides students not only with a space for meetings and study sessions but also with information concerning scholarships and internships. These events provide both support for those living outside of their country and for those who wish to learn more about cultures and customs other than their own.

Similarly, the [Macey Center hosts cultural performances and serves as a conference center](#) throughout the year for a variety of interest groups.

It is the [mission of the Performing Arts Series](#) to present [a variety of affordable, quality, multicultural performances in music, theatre, dance, family entertainment, and arts outreach activities that appeal to the diverse community of Socorro.](#)

Training for Instructing a Diverse Student Population

Further, while we hire faculty who have experience with instructing in a diverse society and to a diverse student population, we realize that we must continue such training in faculty development offerings. One such opportunity was September 14, 2012, in which the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) hosted a [seminar on Diversity and Academic Success](#) that engaged faculty and staff participants in an interactive discussion that focused on the importance of role models for under-represented minority students, especially in the STEM disciplines.

[The Women's Resource Center has sponsored a variety of diversity-training events](#), such as the following presentations and workshops by Linda Ann Riley, Ph.D., Engineering Program Coordinator and Professor of Engineering at Roger Williams University on February 26 and 27, 2007: "[Increasing Diversity in the Sciences and Engineering: Statistics and Strategies](#)"; "[Effectively Teaching Diverse Audiences](#)" – a workshop for faculty and graduate students; and "Getting to where you're going: Achieving success as a female engineer" – an interactive workshop for students.

Residential Life requires [diversity training](#) for its Residential Assistants during their [training each semester](#) to aid in working with the diversity of the student residents.

Faculty and Staff Diversity

Faculty and staff serve as mentors to our students, so having a diverse faculty and staff strengthens our community. In [January 2014](#), our employees by ethnicity included: 491 (56.89%) non-minority, 297 (34.41%) Hispanic, 42 (4.87%) Asian, and 4 (0.46%) Black. Our faculty and staff include 354 (41.02%) women and 509 (58.98%) men.

Also in January 2014, Human Resources reported a [total of 121 Instructional/Research Faculty, with women faculty numbering 22, or 18%, while men faculty numbered 99, or 82%.](#)

Similarly, the [Fall 2013 percentage](#) of degree-seeking undergraduate student men was 72.8%, while the percentage of degree-seeking undergraduate student women was 27.2%. The [Fall 2013 percentage](#) of degree-seeking graduate student men was 62.6%, while the percentage of degree-seeking graduate student women was 37.4%.

Thus, with a ratio of nearly 3:1 men to women undergraduate students, and a ratio of nearly 2:1 men to women graduate students, NMT recognizes the minority status of women in academe at our institution. Addressing this, the Women's Resource Center offers a [Meet the Women Faculty Luncheon](#) for faculty, staff and students every Fall so that the women on campus can meet and mentorships among women faculty and students can develop. This event, held annually since 2001, shows success in the numbers of women who attend, which is from 50 to 100 annually. And, in our dedication to inclusiveness, men also attend.

Equal Opportunity Policy and Affirmative Action

To ensure the fairness of opportunity to all, the NMT Equal Opportunity Policy is found on the Policies and Procedures webpage. In addition, the Affirmative Action Director prepares an [Affirmative Action Plan](#) each Spring for internal distribution and it is [posted online](#).

Commitment

We are committed to an inclusive community. More details about our commitment to diversity, cultural awareness and an inclusive learning environment are addressed in Criterion 3.

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1.D - Core Component 1.D

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

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

New Mexico Tech is dedicated to the public good in three major ways:

1. By our focus as a Science and Engineering research institution;
2. By our affiliations in research and economic development and with industry, government agencies, national laboratories and other research universities;
3. By the communities we foster.

1. Our focus as a Science and Engineering research institution

Science and Engineering, with its applications of research and design, help advance the health and welfare of members of a global society. Recent national policy actions and reports have drawn attention to the opportunities and challenges inherent in increasing the number of highly qualified STEM graduates, including STEM teachers. Priorities include educating students to be leaders and innovators in emerging and rapidly changing STEM fields as well as educating a scientifically literate populace; both of these priorities depend on the nature and quality of the undergraduate and graduate education experience.

[NMT alumni are leaders in STEM](#); they are employed worldwide as scientists and engineers, corporate officers, consultants and educators.

NMT contributes to the education of New Mexico middle and high school students in STEM by educating educators through the [Masters for Science Teachers \(MST\) program](#). Secondary teachers earn a master's degree of substantial content in the disciplines of Science and Math through this interdisciplinary program of faculty from all academic departments.

Since Fall 2000, [NMT has provided over \\$4.5 million in scholarships](#) to approximately 1300 teachers to take STEM courses. Further, the degree-seeking enrollment of MST has increased significantly from our last affirmation of accreditation in 2004, with 26 enrolled in [Fall 2004](#), a high of 103 in [Fall 2009](#) and 65 in [Fall 2013](#). The effect of this program is exponential and broad, as these better-prepared teachers in STEM work to better prepare their middle and high school students in STEM.

2. Our affiliations in research and economic development and with industry, government agencies, national laboratories, and other research universities.

Five of our extensive examples of these affiliations are IRIS-PASSCAL, the Magdalena Ridge Observatory, and our three Research Divisions. The [IRIS-PASSCAL Instrument Center](#) employs more than 35 people and serves as the nation's largest lending library for seismological instruments. The Instrument Center supports student research projects every year, including an annual research expedition to Tech's Mount Erebus Volcano Observatory in Antarctica. The [Magdalena Ridge Observatory \(MRO\)](#) is an astronomy research division that includes a 2.4-meter telescope and a 10-unit interferometer that is under construction. Both facilities have provided numerous research and design opportunities for NMT students in a variety of engineering disciplines and astrophysics. Contributions of our three Research Divisions, the [Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources \(the Bureau\)](#), the [Petroleum Recovery Research Center of New Mexico \(PRRC\)](#), and the [Energetic Materials Research Testing Center \(EMRTC\)](#) are discussed in 1.A.

Other NMT contributions to economic development are outlined on page 1 of the [Council of University Presidents November 2013 Performance Effectiveness Report](#).

Additionally, NMT is part of the [New Mexico Consortium](#), a non-profit corporation of the three New Mexico research universities to advance scientific research and education, and of the [Technology Ventures Corporation](#), which helps startup companies that are developing technology from the national laboratories.

3. The communities we foster

Our communities extend from international, national and state affiliations, described in point 2, to our local community of Socorro, New Mexico, the home of New Mexico Tech.

[NMT is a major employer in the city of Socorro](#), providing [15% of the city's jobs](#).

Socorro is a small city, population of about 9,000, which is situated 75 miles south of the nearest metropolitan center of Albuquerque. Therefore, many lifestyle opportunities that are typical in other cities would not be available in Socorro without the community outreach programs provided by NMT.

For example, NMT provides university and local cultural opportunities through its Community Education and Outreach program. [Both NMT students and community members](#) benefit from a wide variety of [Community Education courses in Fine Arts, Physical Recreation, Lifestyle, Health and Wellness](#), as well as Certification courses and workshops. Students have the opportunity to balance stress with a myriad of enrichment courses. Over a hundred Community Education classes and workshops are offered each semester. In a one-year period that includes Fall 2013, Spring 2014, and Summer 2014, [471 community members were enrolled in 634 courses](#). The program also sponsors events for students and community members, such as an Art Show of student work each semester.

The Performing Arts Series (PAS) contributes to improving quality of life, educational enhancement, community service and economic development in the campus and greater Socorro community, all of which address the university's mission. For example, [PAS educational programs provide youth concerts, workshops and arts residencies for students K-12 in three school districts](#) – Socorro, Magdalena and Alamo-Navajo. PAS hosts a free community-wide 4th of July Celebration held on the NMT campus; free chamber music, Santa Fe Opera Apprentices and military ensemble concerts; free

community arts party with hands-on visual arts workshops. The PAS Director has been an officer of the NM Presenters Alliance for more than 20 years; this is a statewide organization of non-profit performing arts presenters that organizes affordable tours. PAS concerts are free to NM Tech students and highly subsidized for all attendees, with prices far lower than market. The goal of the program is always to cover expenses, not to make money.

NMT provides various additional opportunities for our local community. Many university facilities are available to the public and offer educational, entertainment, [enjoyment](#), and [health and recreational opportunities](#).

For example, the Joseph R. Skeen Library serves as both an academic and a public library. Anyone not affiliated with NMT can sign up for library cards, borrow materials, use the internet, reserve a room and/or use the library's public computers. All library services provided to the general public are free of charge except using the conference room and printing from a public computer.

[In 2013](#), 5066 items (23.5% of all the materials circulated by the library) were lent to non-NMT users. This figure was [up slightly from 2012](#) when 3168 items (21.4%) of all the materials circulated by the library were lent to non-NMT users.

The library also provides free public access to the Internet through both a Wi-Fi connection and through four public computers (one computer is ADA accessible for wheelchairs). In 2013, both the library's public computers and Wi-Fi hotspots were used 7,855 times by individuals not associated with NMT as compared to 2012, when both the library's public computers and Wi-Fi hotspots were used 2,508 times by individuals not associated with NMT. The Tripp Conference Room, the library's computer classroom, and two of the larger library study rooms can be reserved on a first-come-first-served basis and although NMT-affiliated groups get priority when reserving the room, the total use of the room by the public was 300 times in a year or 28% of all room reservations received by the library in 2013.

The Joseph R. Skeen Library works cooperatively with the Socorro Public Library to avoid duplicating public library services or collections.

The [Academic Center for Technology \(ACT\)](#), formerly Educational Outreach and Distance Education (EODI), serves the broader community, a significant part of its mission. ACT's missions states: "ACT uses its expertise in academic program creation and webcasting to aid community organizations in their goals whenever possible."

For the past four years ACT has [produced a live webcast](#) of the Commencement ceremony, allowing family members and friends from around the world to watch as graduates receive their degrees. After the ceremony, ACT posts a recording of the event online. For the 2013 Commencement webcast, there were 590 total logins to the webcast and recording, coming from [23 U.S. states and 20 countries, including nearly every continent](#).

When ACT received a request from National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to facilitate [a video meeting](#) between an astronaut stationed at the International Space Station and a local science fiction writer, ACT sent live video of the astronaut to NASA, which beamed it up to the Space Station.

Further, ACT created a statewide webcast from Moriarty, New Mexico, where the state's Congressional delegation held a [town hall meeting](#).

Among our external constituencies are secondary students. NMT's [Office of Admission engages this group](#) by offering novel ways for these students to pursue interests in STEM, such as SuperComputing Challenge, State Science Fair, [MESA](#), STEM Sisters, and New Mexico Science Fair and New Mexico Science Olympiad. More than [300 middle and high school students](#) from across New Mexico participate in the State competition of the Science and Engineering Fair, hosted by NMT, each year. More than [750 middle and high school students](#) participate in the Science Olympiad. These efforts serve the public good by creating opportunities for students that they would not otherwise have within a typical secondary education curriculum.

NMT maintains a cooperative agreement with Socorro Consolidated Schools that outlines how NMT will provide access for secondary school students for use of the [swimming pool](#) and the [golf course](#) for athletes. NMT students can use these facilities for free. Local high school students are granted access via this agreement, which is renewed every year.

[NMT teamed with the San Miguel Parish in Socorro](#) in obtaining \$1.1 million from the Hilton Foundation to repair the infrastructure of the church and associated school for an after-school astronomy program for at-risk youth. The grant includes converting a classroom to a "smart classroom" that is linked to NMT's 2.4M telescope at the Magdalena Ridge Observatory.

Strategic Planning

To expand our already significant public and outreach initiatives, the [Community of Scholars Task Force of the Strategic Planning Committee](#) has a goal of formalizing more outreach activities with the Socorro school district. This task force states that the Strategic Plan will include a goal of expanding communication and open institution policy to local citizens, alumni, corporations, and governmental employees.

Responding to the primacy of educational responsibilities, the [Growth Task Force states](#): "The institution recognizes that the success of the student supersedes enrollment goals. As such, the Strategic Plan includes steps to rethink admission and placement practices even though the result maybe lower enrollment."

Commitment

Because each of the three ways we contribute to the public good, as described in this section, offer educational opportunities for our students and our larger community, we are upholding our commitment that our educational responsibilities take primacy over all other purposes of our institution.

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1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Summary

New Mexico Tech is a mission-focused institution with Mission, Vision, and Values statements and Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes that are publicly stated and accessible for the greater campus community and the general public. The Mission is the driving force behind the university's initiatives, which include student success, research excellence, economic development, community involvement, collegiality and transparency. Our Mission documents are specific about our role as leaders in creating and communicating knowledge. All campus activities support at least one – but usually several – of these areas.

As a Hispanic-Serving Institution, we are committed to an inclusive community and to providing underrepresented populations, as well as all of our students, with the opportunities that will afford them a gratifying, substantial, ethical science or engineering professional life that serves the global good.

Because the ways we contribute to the public good offer educational opportunities for our students and the larger community, we are upholding our commitment that our educational responsibilities take primacy over all other purposes of our institution.

This report details our specific methods for doing so, with an emphasis on assessing our established curricular and co-curricular programs as well as programs we are piloting and other student learning initiatives to increase student retention, persistence and completion and how we make decisions for the improvement of student learning through integrated planning.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Argument

Integrity, primary at our Institution, is one of our [Institutional Values](#). We state: "...integrity means having the courage to defend the truth, to act fairly and honestly in all our endeavors, and to be responsible members of the community."

Governing NMT, our Board of Regents exercises integrity and adheres to ethical conduct set by legislation, as outlined in the [April 26, 2013 Memo by NMT attorney Mark Adams – "Dos and Don'ts – Governmental Conduct Act, Financial Disclosure Act, and Gift Act."](#)

NMT ensures truthful, fair, honest, ethical and responsible conduct in a variety of checks and balances procedures, as is discussed throughout Criterion 2.

NMT policies are articulated and maintained on the [Policies and Procedures webpage](#) of the President's Office, which is accessible from any page of our NMT website. NMT Policies help to protect our rights, our safety and to ensure ethical behavior and other fundamental institutional values that define the vision of NMT, such as academic freedom, freedom of expression, shared governance, maintaining collegiality and citizenship, and upholding accountability for professionalism and diplomacy among administration, faculty, staff, students, other constituents and accountability to our accrediting and regulating organizations.

A revised Employee Handbook, which is expected to be approved by the Regents Spring 2015, is being referenced below; it addresses ethical behavior in several sections and section III is the Code of Ethics.

Some specific policies that address ethical behavior include, as specified in A.2. of the Assumed Practices worksheet:

- conflict of interest (NMT Employee Handbook; revised Handbook XL, pages 72-73 and Appendix A);
- conflict of financial interest (R&ED webpage);
- consulting/contracting (NMT Employee Handbook, pages 76-78; revised NMT Employee Handbook LIII, page 98, No.3);
- nepotism (NMT Employee Handbook, page 33; revised NMT Employee Handbook XII, page 17);
- undergraduate admission ([Undergraduate Catalog](#) pages 29-31);

- graduate admission ([Graduate Catalog](#) pages 27-30);
- financial aid ([Undergraduate Catalog](#) pages 38-44 and [Graduate Catalog](#) pages 30-31);
- privacy of information for students ([Undergraduate Catalog](#) page 56 and [Graduate Catalog](#) page 55; Student Handbook in 9.0; revised NMT Employee Handbook, in III, page 4);
- privacy of information for employees (NMT Handbook; revised NMT Handbook in III, page 4; XXIII F, page 45; XLII B, 75).

All policies, including those listed above, are available on the Policies and Procedures webpage.

Students, faculty, and staff are directed to this webpage during orientations. In addition, some orientations include distributing hard copies of the pertinent policies. For example, all regular employees receive an [Employee Handbook](#) from Human Resources after attending the new employee orientation for policies to protect both the rights of the employees and of the institution. They sign an acknowledgement of receiving it that is placed in their personnel file.

All academic policies for students are found in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#) and the [Graduate Catalog](#).

All policies and procedures for undergraduate and graduate student life are listed in the [Student Handbook](#).

The [Graduate Student Handbook](#) outlines procedures specifically for graduate students in following academic policies.

In addition, rights of students living in the residence halls are stated in the [Residential Life Community Standards](#), linked from the Residential Life website, the Policies and Procedures website, and the [Student Handbook](#).

The Responsible Conduct Policy with appeal procedure safeguards the rights of all students. The [policy for undergraduate students](#) is found on pages 60 to 76 in the 2013-2014 [Undergraduate Catalog](#); the [policy for graduate students](#) is found on pages 59 to 75 of the 2013-2014 [Graduate Catalog](#). Also in the catalogs are the [Academic Issues and Appeal Policy for Undergraduate students](#) and for [Graduate students](#).

Policies for students, faculty, staff and administration are either Board of Regents Policies or Administrative Policies and are explained on the [Policies and Procedures webpage](#). The Faculty Senate has an integral role in academic policies, which is explained on the Policies and Procedures webpage.

The [Policy Development, Amendment and Rescindment Policy: Policy and Procedure](#), a Regents Policy sponsored by the Office of the President, establishes procedures for all involved parties to be aware of the proposed policy or the revision or rescindment of an established policy and to have input for fairness, transparency and shared governance.

The President, the four Vice Presidents and the three Division Directors are the “gatekeepers” for the policies that their respective offices sponsor.

Fairness is enforced through policies, procedures, and practices, such as the following:

The [Faculty Senate Standing Rules](#) provide in VII.A.14 for ombudspersons who "function as confidential, impartial, independent mediators in employment-related problems of individuals."

The NMT [Office of Counseling and Disabilities](#) provides accessible programs, services, and

reasonable accommodations for any student with a documented, qualifying disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The [selection of the Department Chair](#) by an academic department and approval by the Vice President for Academic Affairs has several steps to help ensure that all who will be affected by the appointment of the new chair and that the candidates for chair have a voice in the selection process.

Policy Review

Campus policies are reviewed by their appropriate Vice President or Division Director, with revisions made to update such policies, such as to reflect changes in state or federal regulations. Relevant personnel routinely review transactions to ensure compliance with internal policies and procedures and with the various regulations that NMT is subject to as a recipient of state, federal, and private funds. Financial transactions are processed via journal vouchers, purchase orders, limited purchase orders, direct payment forms, personnel activity forms, graduate assistantship forms, non-employee travel reimbursement forms, fellowship grant forms, etc.

NMT requires that any updates or suggested new policies follow the procedures in the Regents Policy on [Policy Development, Amendment and Rescindment](#). This process requires public posting ([Campus Community Review](#)) of proposed new, revised or rescinded policies so as to generate input from any affected constituencies; [the Public Information Officer informs the campus community of policies under Community Review](#).

Financial Audits

Financial operations are reviewed thoroughly through audits. The number of audits is extensive because of the research funding received by NMT. Annual state audits are reviewed in accordance with the [New Mexico State Audit Rule](#).

In addition, the Defense Contract Audit Agency in conjunction with the Office of Naval Research and various other external agencies routinely perform audits to ensure compliance with federal requirements. Annual financial statements are available for review by any interested party.

Our financial operations, including the institutional [2012 Audit](#) and the [2013 Audit](#), are discussed in Criterion 5.

Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) Training and Information

New instructors, both TAs and new faculty, are given Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) training; as well, all faculty, TAs and staff receive via email an [informational sheet about FERPA](#) each semester with a release form to be used if a student wishes to discuss aspects of their academic or campus life in the presence of their parents or others. In addition, information about FERPA is found at several locations on the NMT website.

In Fall 2014, NMT began a [campus-wide review of our policies and procedures concerning the Jeanne](#)

[Clery Act Disclosure of Campus Security and Crime Statistics Act and Title IX](#). A committee consisting of an attorney, Campus Police, Residential Life, Affirmative Action/Title IX Officer, Graduate Office, Registrar, Counseling and Disability, and the Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs, Student and University Relations, and Administration and Finance meet to ensure NMT is in compliance with the new regulations assigned by the federal government.

Institutional Tracking of Student Complaints

This is explained thoroughly with data provided in the Federal Compliance report.

Commitment

Integrity is one of our institutional values. NMT functions with fairness to all educated by, employed by and whom oversee our institution. There are policies, procedures, processes and practices to ensure everyone has a voice, and is heard, at NMT.

Sources

- 1.A.SchoolMissionScreenshot [Redone]
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2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Argument

All information that should be available to students and to the public is accessible electronically, with links to electronic documents, such as the [NMT Catalogs](#), [Student Handbooks](#), [Employee Handbook](#), [our alumni magazine Gold Pan](#), [Audited Financial Reports](#) or to pertinent webpages, such as [Class Schedules](#). The general public and constituents can find more information about NMT through various social media platforms.

Our [Undergraduate Catalog](#), our [Graduate Catalog](#) and our [Program and Course Catalog](#) are our official documents for our students and for the public regarding academic programs, requirements, faculty, tuition and fees, grading, the academic calendar, admissions, academic policies (including transfer policy and refund policy), control and accreditation relationships.

The catalogs are found online with links from the Policies and Procedures webpage, the Academic Affairs webpage, the main catalog webpage, and the Alumni webpage.

Due to the growth of our Graduate Program that in Fall 2013 became nearly 22% (396) of our total of 1814 degree-seeking students, the Registrar's Office separated our single catalog into the three catalogs mentioned above, thus making information easier to find for each degree level:

- The [Undergraduate Catalog](#) contains a statement of fees, list of faculty and their degrees, and academic policies for undergraduate students.
- The [Graduate Catalog](#) contains a statement of fees, list of faculty and their degrees, and academic policies for graduate students.
- The [Program and Course Catalog](#) contains program descriptions, list of faculty and their degrees, program requirements, and course descriptions for all levels, as illustrated by [an example from Civil and Environmental Engineering](#).

The [Student Handbook](#) provides information for all students on all policies, as well as privacy of information, campus services and campus contacts. In addition, the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) provides information on academic procedures and academic progress for graduate studies. All appeal procedures are listed in the Undergraduate Catalog and the Graduate Catalog. All of these documents are accessible online.

The [accreditation statement from the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs](#) lists all accrediting bodies and is the same wording as is found on the President's [accreditation webpage](#); the HLC Mark of Affiliation is displayed prominently in the catalogs and on the accreditation webpage.

Further, the Registrar stamps [a legend](#) on the back of NMT's official transcripts as a public statement of our accreditation relationships.

In addition to providing the link to our catalogs and handbooks, our NMT website, while consistently being updated, provides information about programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to

students, control, and accreditation relationship under a variety of pertinent offices, such as the President's Office, Office of the Registrar, Office of Academic Affairs, Admission Office, and Financial Aid.

Following are a few examples of additional information provided on our website:

- Our [Institutional Research](#) mission states its important function for the public and for regulating agencies. Institutional Research provides, as listed menu items, Consumer Information, Student Data, Employee Data, Common Data Set, IPEDS, Outcomes and Assessment, Miscellaneous Reports and Datasets, and Other Resources.
- [Distance Education](#) programs and their associated courses are clearly identified and explained on the website of the Academic Center for Technology (ACT).
- The Business Office prepares a [statement of tuition and fees](#) every semester for the Registrar to distribute to the public. The document is available electronically on the Tuition & Fees webpage and by hard copy in the Registrar's Office.
- The [class schedule](#) for the current and prior two academic years is accessible to the public via the bottom of every page of the NMT website as Class Schedule.
- The [Faculty/Instructor Roster](#) is found on the Academic Affairs Faculty and Staff webpage and also on the University Catalogs webpage, where students look for information of importance to them.
 - The [Faculty/Instructor Roster](#) lists teaching instructors and their credentials each semester; at NMT these categories are professors (tenure-track or tenured faculty -- Assistant Professor, Associate Professors, Professors), Instructors (full-time permanent teaching instructors), Lecturers (part-time instructors), Community Education instructors, and TAs; this addresses 5.g. in the Assumed Practices worksheet.

Commitment:

All information needed by our students and public will continue to be available and accessible online.

Sources

- 2.B.AAFF.Registrar.Accreditation Statement from Catalog.2013
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- 2.B.AAFF.Registrar.Tuition and Fee Form.2013
- 2.B.AAFFCEECatalog&Recruitment
- 2014-2015_Student_Handbook
- Accreditation Webpage Screenshot [DC]
- Administration and Finance Screenshot
- Distance Education Screenshot [DC]
- Gold Pan Webpage Screenshot [DC]
- Graduate Student Handbook
- Institutional Demographics Screenshot [DC]

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

The focus of all responsibilities of the Board of Regents is to control and manage the interests of our internal and external constituents in keeping with our NMT Mission.

According to New Mexico Statutes Mandatory Duties of New Mexico Tech Regents, quoted in a [memo from the New Mexico Tech attorney](#), the Board of Regents manages and controls all aspects of the functions of New Mexico Tech, as specified in 14. § 21-11-4, 15. § 21-11-6, and 16. § 21-11-8.

The autonomy of the Board of Regents to effectively make decisions in the best interest of NMT and to assure its integrity is embedded in the New Mexico Constitution and the legislation that created the school. According to Section 13 of Article XII in the [New Mexico Constitution](#):

The legislature shall provide for the control and management of each of said institutions, except the university of New Mexico, by a board of regents for each institution, consisting of five members, four of whom shall be qualified electors of the state of New Mexico, one of whom shall be a member of the student body of the institution and no more than three of whom at the time of their appointment shall be members of the same political party; ... The governor shall nominate and by and with the consent of the senate shall appoint the members of each board of regents for each of said institutions.

This same section and article of the New Mexico Constitution provides for four members to serve six-year terms and the member from the student body to serve a two-year term. A member may only be removed for "incompetence, neglect of duty or malfeasance in office." Further, the New Mexico Supreme Court has "exclusive original jurisdiction over proceedings to remove members."

The NMT Board of Regents exercises its authority, making its responsibility and dedication to decision-making based on collaboration known to the campus community. For example, as part of the Board of Regents' Annual Retreat from Aug. 8-10, 2013 on the NMT campus, [Board of Regents Chair, Mr. Richard Carpenter, voiced](#) that the Constitution and laws of New Mexico give full power to the Board of Regents to run the University with authority that extends to hiring and firing and choosing books and courses taught. ... He stated, "We have delegated much of that authority to the President to operate the University under the policies established by the board. Best practice is to elicit as many viewpoints as possible."

To gain as many viewpoints as possible from internal and external constituents, the Board of Regents adheres to the [Open Meetings Act \(OMA\)](#), a State statute originally enacted in 1974 that has been amended in 1979, 1989, 1993, 1997, 1999, and 2013.

The OMA requires notice to the public of when and where meetings of NMT's Regents and other policymaking public bodies will be held and to give members of the public a reasonable opportunity to be present during such meetings. The OMA does not provide for participation in such meetings, by expression of points of view or otherwise, by members of the public.

Although not required to do so by the OMA, NMT's Regents include in their [meeting agendas](#) an opportunity for public comment; the Regent conducting each meeting consistently asks for such comment.

Required by the Legislature to meet quarterly, [the NMT Board of Regents meets more often – eight times per year](#). In addition, the Board is notified of internal and external constituent interests by our NMT President at the meetings under “Announcements” and in providing background and supplemental information on Agenda items as needed.

The Vice Presidents and Directors of each division also attend Board meetings or send a representative. The NMT student body is represented by the Board's Student Regent, who carries a full vote and must be confirmed by the New Mexico State Senate under Constitutional law. A regular [agenda](#) item is a report to the Board from the Faculty Senate Chair.

The President also keeps Board members apprised of his activities on behalf of the University as a member of academic and research boards and committees. For example, [President Lopez chairs the Council of University Presidents \(CUP\)](#), which “... supports New Mexico's seven public universities through information sharing, collaboration, strategic planning, policy development, and community outreach.” As such, the President [regularly reports](#) on CUP's efforts to revitalize the state's funding formula for higher education in between Legislative sessions.

The Board of Regents stays informed through reports, such as the [President's \(Annual\) Report](#), which highlights student research and department activities. The yearly [President's Status Report to the Board of Regents](#) summarizes the goals and achievements of offices that fall under the four Vice Presidents and the three research division directors.

The annual August meeting is the Regents Retreat, which spans two days and kicks off the new academic year. The first day of the Retreat has served a planning format based on the accomplishments of each division in the past year and looking to the future, with the second day being the official meeting. This collaborative format of the first day was expanded in the August 2014 meeting to focus on future planning through discussion rather than on the former format of focusing largely on the past year's accomplishments with less time for future planning. Also at this meeting, outlines of the HLC Assurance Report were reviewed by the Board. Members of the Board of Regents commented that the revised retreat meeting format was comfortable and relaxed, a blend of gracious hospitality and improved Board-University relations. Chairman Carpenter [pronounced the retreat](#) “one of the best we've ever had.”

As discussed in 2.A., policies approved by the Board of Regents are so approved and called [Regents Policies](#), as described on page 8 of the Policy Development, Revision and Rescindment Policy, because these have institution-wide application and are intended to be enduring, rather than a response to a particular issue.

The law provides for delegation of authority by the Board (*New Mexico Statutes Annotated 1978*, § 21-1-10) as stated in II.B.6 of the [Duties and Powers of Tech Regents under New Mexico Law memo](#) from attorney Mark Adams. The [NMT Board of Regents has delegated authority and continues to do so when appropriate](#) to allow for the President to oversee effective daily functioning of the university. An example of the delegation of authority to the NMT President is our [Degree Conferral Policy](#), which is discussed in 3.D. and 5.B. In addition, the Board of Regents delegates most policies concerning day-to-day operations to administration (administrative policies and procedures) and academic policies to the faculty through work by the Faculty Senate and its committees.

Commitment

The NMT Board of Regents and the NMT President are guided by, protected by and regulated by laws, policies and procedures that ensure that decisions made are in the best interest of our students and the overall institution and according to our Mission.

Sources

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- 2C.4_Delegation of Duties_Retreat Notes
- AnnualReport2013
- Board of Regents Meeting Minutes Webpage
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2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Argument

As a small university without "layers of offices," NMT provides face-to-face interaction for any concerns with an open door policy to students, faculty, staff, and the public; thus, freedom of expression is part of our everyday work routine. To ensure this value fundamental to an institution of higher education, NMT has policies and procedures that enforce fairness and individual freedom.

NMT's [Regulations Governing Academic Freedom and Tenure](#), approved by the Board of Regents on April 1, 1985 and located on the Academic Affairs Academic Policies and Procedures webpage and the institution's Policies and Procedures webpage, protects "the freedom of inquiry and expression by its professional teaching and research staff," as stated in I.A.1.

The policy, in II.D.2., ensures that: "Dismissal shall not be used to restrain staff members in their exercise of academic freedom or other legal rights."

The policy provides for impartial review of cases of dismissal by an Ombudsman in II.E.4, as follows: "If a staff member on a probationary appointment alleges that violations of academic freedom significantly contributed to a decision not to reappoint him or her, the staff member's allegations shall be given preliminary consideration by the Ombudsman, who shall seek to settle the matter by informal methods." Further, as stated in II.E.2.a., if a hearing is required, members of the hearing committee must be unbiased or withdraw or can be disqualified from serving.

The policy extends the same freedom of expression rights to Graduate Assistants, Postdoctoral Fellows, and Professional Staff, discussed in [III: Graduate Assistants, Postdoctoral Fellows, and Professional Staff](#).

In addition, I.D. of the policy provides for a "Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure, selected by the Institute Senate, [which] shall have authority as set forth elsewhere in these regulations. . . ." According to VII.A.9 of the [Faculty Senate Standing Rules](#), found on the Faculty Senate webpage, the Faculty Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee "serve[s] according to the rules governing academic freedom and tenure, or in matters relating to policy in this area. The committee will serve as a source of information and advice to Faculty Senate members during informal grievance procedures. The Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee consists of five members (2-year terms, with a 2/3 rotation)."

The policy also states, in I.A.2., "The institute endorses principles of academic freedom and tenure set forth by the *American Association of University Professors in its 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* and the 1984 edition of *AAUP Policy Documents and Reports*." Further, NMT supports the mission of the AAUP to advance academic freedom and shared governance, to define fundamental professional values and standards for higher education, and to ensure higher education's contribution to the common good.

Upholding academic freedom and freedom of expression is an integral part of the [Academic Affairs](#)

[Mission](#), which states: "The Office of Academic Affairs supports faculty development and success through the following activities: upholds academic freedom, freedom of expression, and shared governance while maintaining accountability to our students and other constituents and to our accrediting and regulating organizations."

The [Chair of the Department of Psychology, Education and Master of Science for Teachers](#) states, "No one has ever told members of our department that we cannot teach any of the things that we teach in our classes. We are committed to evidence-based teaching, presenting theories and evidence, which support these theories. We concentrate on the critical thinking skills that will allow our students to evaluate and draw their own interpretations of the evidence which is presented."

In addition, students' rights to expressing any concern openly and without retribution is supported by faculty, Department Chairs, the Office of Academic Affairs, the Graduate Office, and the Student and University Relations Office.

Undergraduate students find an open door policy and attentiveness to all student life concerns in the Office of Student and University Relations and to all academic concerns in the Office of Academic Affairs. Graduate students find the same attentiveness to their concerns, both student life and academic, in the Center for Graduate Studies and in the Office of Academic Affairs. The [Academic Affairs Mission](#) includes student academic concerns by stating, "The Office of Academic Affairs facilitates student learning and success ... [Academic Affairs] serves in the appeal process for any student academic policy or concern."

Found in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#) (page 71) and the [Graduate Catalog](#) (page 70) is the following statement of policy for Responsible Conduct for students:

New Mexico Tech's primary purpose is education, which includes teaching, research, discussion, learning, and service. An atmosphere of free and open inquiry is essential to the pursuit of education. Tech seeks to protect academic freedom and build on individual responsibility to create and maintain an academic atmosphere that is a purposeful, just, open, disciplined, and caring community.

The [Academic Issues and Appeal Policy for Undergraduate Students](#) and the [Academic Issues and Appeal Policy for Graduate Students](#), outlined in the [Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs](#) respectively, and, thus, on the Policies and Procedures and Academic Affairs webpages, include contacts for academic concerns as well as non-academic concerns and sexual harassment issues.

[Syllabi frequently have classroom respect statements](#) to ensure that students have freedom of expression within the parameters of a respectful learning environment.

Co-curricular activities that contribute to student freedom of expression include:

- [Community Education classes that highlight student works through art shows](#), musical performances and exhibitions.
- The [Spring Fine Art Show and Sale at the Macey Center](#) that showcases works created by students as well as providing a venue for the Spring Musicals and other events.
- A [Creative Writing Contest](#) sponsored by the Communication, Liberal Arts, Social Sciences Department.
- [Paydirt](#), the student newspaper published by the Student Government Association, which is independent of any input from administration or faculty.
- [KTEC](#), a low-wattage campus radio station that is broadcast by the Student Government

Association, which is independent of any input from administration or faculty. Students are free to broadcast any sort of music or commentary that they wish.

Strategic Planning

The [Community of Scholars Task Force](#) reports the following goal of the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan in work: “Orientation to the community defines as a task the holding of informal social or town-hall type meetings regularly to allow interaction among all community members.”

Commitment

NMT continues to provide an open door policy to students, faculty and staff to ensure that freedom of expression is part of our everyday work routine with policies and procedures that enforce fairness and individual freedom.

Sources

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- Community Education Gallery Screenshot [DC]
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- HLC Criterion - Community of Scholars
- KTEK Facebook Screenshot [DC]
- Paydirt Webpage Screenshot
- Regulations_Governing_Academic_Freedom_and_Tenure_Web_version

2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

As a research institution, NMT thoroughly addresses academic and research integrity, offering numerous avenues for guidance and support.

Guidelines for faculty, staff and students can be found under the Research Policies and Forms link, on the Research and Economic Development (R&ED) webpage and on the Policies and Procedures webpage on the NMT website and include the University's [Policy to Assure the Integrity of Research](#), [Policy on Human Subjects Research](#), and the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#). In addition, [during new faculty and TA orientation](#), researchers are educated on NMT research policies and are directed to the Policies and Procedures link for detailed instruction.

Undergraduate student policies, including the integrity of scholarly activity and the Academic Honesty Policy are found in the [Responsible Conduct for Undergraduate Students](#) policy in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#). Graduate student policies, including the integrity of scholarly activity and the Academic Honesty Policy, are found in the [Responsible Conduct for Graduate Students](#) policy in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

The Academic Honesty Policy is enforced by the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs for undergraduate students and by the Graduate Dean for graduate students, with procedures outlined in the policies and with the incidents (no student names, course identifiers or other identifying information) [reported to the Faculty Senate](#).

Further, to assist students with integrity related to responsible conduct of research, the Center for Graduate Studies is in the process of developing training for all students (graduate and undergraduate) who are engaged in research.

In 2013, a [Professionalism in Engineering presentation](#) was offered by the VPAA to all graduate and undergraduate students that offered examples of ethical failures in the sciences and engineering and instructed students on applying research and knowledge ethically in their chosen fields.

New faculty and TAs, at their orientation, are instructed to refer to the Academic Honesty Policy on their syllabi. And an [email sent each semester from Academic Affairs](#) reminds all faculty/instructors to do the same.

Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcome number five, "[learn responsible values and ethics for their professional lives](#)," is assessed by academic departments in wording specific to their assessment plans. It is also addressed as a Student Learning Outcome for our General Education Core Courses

under [Area 1: Communications](#), which states that students will “Integrate research correctly and ethically from credible sources to support the primary purpose of a communication.” [Engineering program outcomes include ABET student outcome that states “an understanding of professional and ethical responsibility.”](#)

An important component of every Joseph R. Skeen Library instruction session is covering how to properly cite materials, how to avoid plagiarism, copyright ownership, and what constitutes an original work of authorship.

The library provides specialized instruction at the beginning of the Fall semester and whenever in-class library instruction is requested by a faculty member. During the 2011-2012 academic year, the library provided [19 requested instructional sessions and 1 fall orientation, which were attended by 32% of our undergraduate enrollment \(545 students\).](#)

Courses typically taken in student’s first year [College Writing: Exposition (ENGL 111) and College Writing: Argument and Analysis (ENGL 112)] introduce students to college-level expectations of finding and incorporating secondary source materials, making use of databases and resources available through the Skeen Library, and constructing a balanced, research-based, well-supported academic argument. In addition, these courses may also include projects and readings that challenge students to explore values and ethics in their professional lives, such as case studies in Engineering failures (e.g., the Space Shuttle Challenger and Columbia disasters) and ethical issues emerging from selected short stories.

Technical Writing (ENGL 341), a required General Education Core course taken in the Junior or Senior year, builds on discussions of ethical source use, citation, and research established in ENGL 111 and 112. ENGL 341 helps students apply these principles to research and design projects in their major fields of study. These courses not only provide students with the basic building blocks for ethical research and use of sources critical to college-level communication; they also offer opportunities to critically explore ethical issues within Science and Engineering fields.

Writing and Oral Presentation Center tutors work with students at all stages of their academic progress on everything from brainstorming and organizing academic and scientific papers to ethical use of sources and citation. Tutors are also trained to help students better paraphrase and integrate source material in order to avoid plagiarism.

WOPC tutors, in collaboration with the tutors from the Office for Student Learning, [offer workshops for students presenting in the Student Research Symposium](#), providing tips for creating posters, giving presentations, and writing extended abstracts. At these workshops, tutors work with students in small groups to guide them in the ethical representation of research findings and the use of source material.

At the graduate level, the WOPC offers consultations for students working on theses, dissertations, or articles for academic publication, focusing on everything from clear explanation of research protocols and results to ethical use of source materials and citation. The [WOPC offers a Thesis and Dissertation Boot Camp](#) for graduate students, which, in addition to providing a quiet space for thesis writing, provides workshops on bibliographic management software and NMT graduate school policies and procedures (including the copyright policy for theses and dissertations).

Controls over cheating and impersonation are vital to ensure that NMT’s policies on academic honesty are maintained. NMT’s Distance Education program adheres to the United States Federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), Public Law 110-315, concerning [the verification of student identity in distance learning](#). A number of technological methods and teaching procedures

have been put into place to [verify the identity](#) of students taking courses at a distance and to [minimize opportunities for cheating](#) on assessments, which is addressed in the Federal Compliance report.

Strategic Planning

Looking to the future, the [Community of Scholars Task Force](#) of the Strategic Planning Committee has the goal of developing a formal “honor/ethics code” that is to be signed by all employees and students of the institution.

Commitment

Academic Honesty and Research Integrity are the foundation of our institution’s Mission of creating and communicating knowledge. Ethical research and scholarly activity is essential to advancements in STEM that benefit humankind and to being a good citizen. NMT has numerous ways to educate students in ethical research and scholarly activity; we enforce consequences for violations of our honesty policies.

Sources

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- New Faculty Emails Screenshot
- SRS Workshop
- Teaching at Tech Training (Faculty and TA) Agenda 2014
- Verification of Student Identity in Distance Education Courses and Programs
- WOPC data

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Summary

Academic Honesty and Research Integrity are the foundation of our institution's Mission of creating and communicating knowledge. Ethical research and scholarly activity is essential to advancements in STEM that benefit humankind and to being a good citizen. NMT has numerous ways to educate students in ethical research and scholarly activity; we enforce consequences for violations of our honesty policies.

Integrity is one of our institutional values. NMT functions with fairness to all educated by, employed by or to whom oversee our institution. There are policies and procedures to ensure everyone has a voice, and is heard, at NMT. All information needed by our students and public is accessible online.

NMT provides an open door policy to students, faculty and staff to ensure that freedom of expression is part of our everyday work routine with policies and procedures that enforce fairness and individual freedom.

The NMT Board of Regents and the NMT President are guided by, protected by and regulated by laws, policies and procedures that ensure that decisions made are in the best interest of our students and the overall institution and our Mission.

Sources

There are no sources.

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

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

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

Argument

As of Fall 2013, NMT offers two Associate degrees, 21 Bachelor of Science degrees, one Bachelor of General Studies degree, three Graduate Certificates, 17 Master of Science degrees, and seven PhD degrees.

Because virtually every undergraduate student who attends NMT is in a Bachelor of Science program built on the mastery of Calculus, our programs are STEM-rigorous and, like our Masters and PhD programs, are based on research or design projects.

Undergraduate students who are not ready to take Calculus upon entering NMT will take Math courses (College Algebra, Pre-Calculus, Trigonometry) that, at NMT, are elective credit preparatory or foundational courses but at the other New Mexico state institutions of higher education count toward the General Education Core Curriculum requirements. To bolster student compositional skills in English, we offer a one-credit hour English Composition Workshop that can be a co-requisite for College Writing: Exposition (ENGL 111), our entry-level writing course.

Learning Outcomes

- The university sets and assesses [institution-wide student learning outcomes](#).
- Our General Education Core Curriculum courses are assessed to learning outcomes consistent with all state universities, as set by the New Mexico Higher Education Department, called [Core Competencies](#).
- Each academic department has specific learning outcomes and curriculum rigor for their undergraduate programs and their graduate programs, as shown by these examples from the departments of [Petroleum Engineering](#), [Mechanical Engineering](#), [Biology](#), [Mathematics](#), [Civil and Environmental Engineering](#), and [Communication, Liberal Arts, Social Sciences](#). Engineering departments align their [undergraduate learning outcomes with those required by](#)

ABET.

These outcomes and their effectiveness, with [career placement data](#), are reviewed internally by academic departments, in the Institutional Student Learning Team, the Faculty Senate Student Learning Committee, Academic Affairs, Deans, and, for Graduate programs, the Dean of Graduate Studies, and, in some departments, also by [graduating seniors](#) and externally [by alumni](#) and [advisory boards](#).

Examples of learning goals, learning outcomes, curriculum rigor, assessment reports, assessment methods, syllabi and graduate placement have been provided by the academic departments, such as from [Mathematics](#), [Electrical Engineering](#), and [Civil and Environmental Engineering](#). Other examples are discussed and evidenced in Criterion 4.

Consortium Agreement for Financial Aid and Scholarship

The consortial relationships the university has entered into are student-specific, not school-wide. The activity in our consortium relationships do not meet the 25% threshold that create the requirement for reporting to the Higher Learning Commission.

Students can complete a [Consortium Agreement](#) allowing them to use credit earned concurrently at another institution toward their enrollment status at NMT. The NMT Consortium Agreement must be approved by both universities, the NMT Academic Advisor, and the NMT Financial Aid Office, thus ensuring consistent academic rigor.

Contractual Agreements

The university does not have any contractual relationships with Higher Learning Commission accredited institutions to deliver education programs.

Consistent Modes of Delivery

Dual Credit courses are our university courses offered to local high school students. Thus, the expectations are the same for all students.

NMT has one campus. Thus, the only mode of delivery provided other than the live classroom setting is through Distance Education. Even then, [most of our DE courses are offered synchronously](#), with students sitting in the classroom on campus while distance students [participate in the same class](#) using video, audio, and text chat to interact with both instructor and other students. [Synchronous distance students view and hear everything](#) that the instructor and other students view and hear. Students in these courses have the same [learning outcomes and syllabi](#) and the [same assignments](#). The [Verification of Student Identity for Distance Education Courses and Programs policy](#) ensures the identity and the privacy of the students.

For asynchronous Distance Education courses (almost exclusively Masters for Science Teaching courses), students are offered multiple ways to stay in touch with the instructor and with other students, including video conferences (virtual office hours), email, and discussion boards. All

Distance Education courses are approved by the Faculty Senate; instructors are hired and assigned based on the same standards used for all NMT faculty.

The Academic Center for Technology's [distance delivery technology is evaluated every semester](#) as part of the overall course evaluation and regularly receives extremely high scores.

Commitment

NMT provides a curriculum that builds from preparatory courses (for those students who need them) and our General Education Core courses through the levels of our undergraduate courses and onto our graduate courses. Through learning outcomes for these levels and through assessment by the departments and institution and review by advisory boards, we maintain the rigor expected of a respected institution of higher education.

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3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

Argument

Together, NMT Faculty and Students Solve Problems and Create Knowledge

While NMT is an institution that specializes in STEM education, our [Mission, Vision, Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes and Institutional Values](#) recognize that STEM expertise is applied within a diverse world of STEM needs. We articulate this through an emphasis on creativity, problem-solving and application of STEM expertise with cultural awareness, global citizenship, and communication proficiency to a variety of audiences.

Therefore, our educational and pertinent co-curricular programs instruct and assess according to our Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes, as is articulated on our [Creating an Assessment Method webpage](#) and within our [Institutional Student Learning Team meetings](#).

New Mexico Tech General Education Core Curriculum Courses serve two main purposes:

1. Provide introductory foundation in Communications (Area I), Math (Area II), Laboratory Sciences (Area III), Social Sciences (Area IV), and Humanities (Area V)* applicable at all NM state institutions of higher education and therefore should/must be transferable among NM state institutions of higher education;
2. Provide introductory foundation for NMT students and thus include courses that every NMT student must take in Communications (Area 1), Math (Area 2), Laboratory Sciences (Area 3), Social Sciences (Area 4), and (Area 5)** Humanities.

(*The NMHED uses Roman numerals for each Area; **NMT uses Arabic numerals for each Area.)

Because NMT is an institution specializing in a STEM education, virtually all students (except

Associate Degrees and Bachelor of General Studies) take a more extensive General Education Core than required at non-specialized universities; this Core includes the foundation courses for a broad inquiry as well as foundation courses specifically for a B.S. in STEM. Thus, the [NMT General Education Core Curriculum](#) is a combination of General Education Core and major requirements that might be found at other institutions, for a total of 53 credit hours with 18 credit hours required in Laboratory Sciences rather than the 35 credit hours with 8 hours of Laboratory Science required for all New Mexico state universities.

[New Mexico legislation Rule 5 NMAC 55.3](#) governs the requirement of General Education Core Curriculum of at least 35 credit hours distributed in five Areas (Area I: Communications; Area II: Mathematics; Area III: Laboratory Sciences; Area IV: Social/Behavioral Sciences; Area V: Humanities and Fine Arts) and the transfer of these courses between New Mexico Public Post-Secondary Education Institutions.

NMT assesses each of these five areas according to the [New Mexico Higher Education General Education Core Competencies](#), which are statewide student learning outcomes specific to each area, and is discussed further in 4.B.

Area 2: Math and Area 3: Laboratory Sciences

Within the NMT General Education Core requirements, passing (with a C- or better) two semesters of Calculus (MATH 131 and 132) is required, and passing into the first semester of Calculus is the basis for advancement into the Laboratory Science requirement of two semesters of Calculus-based Physics. Thus, students build their curricula in STEM on their proficiency in Calculus, which provides students of Engineering and Science with the tools for understanding, researching, designing, and creating within their disciplines.

Students who begin their career at NMT before they are ready to take Calculus enroll in the Calculus preparatory courses appropriate for their Math ability, either College Algebra (MATH 101), Pre-Calculus (MATH 103) or Trigonometry (MATH 104). Students must have passed Pre-Calculus before they can enroll in the second Laboratory Sciences requirement of two semesters of General Chemistry.

It is imperative, then, that students master Math skills and advance steadily in order to progress and persist in majors that require anywhere from [130 to 136 credit hours](#).

Thus, assessing the success of the Math foundational and General Education Core courses is essential to advancing our students through their programs. A discussion of the recent assessment of foundational gateway Math courses and adjustment to increase student proficiency and progression is found in Component 4.B.

Communications (Area 1), Social Sciences (Area 4), Humanities (Area 5) General Education Core

The Communication, Liberal Arts, Social Sciences Department, with a [mission](#) that focuses on the skills that all students in higher education need, provides most of the courses in the General Education Core required areas of Communications (Area 1), Social Sciences (Area 4), and Humanities (Area 5).

The Psychology Department also offers Social Sciences courses that cover the understanding of

behavioral and mental processes and how to carry out well-controlled research, which is critical for students in the sciences to understand. The Management Department offers two courses in Economics, part of the Social Sciences General Education Core Courses selections.

Engaging Students in Collecting, Analyzing, and Communicating Information

Undergraduate major programs have adapted the [Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes](#) to the specifics of their disciplines. For example, Computer Science and Engineering [links learning outcomes](#) that are specific for course content and level to the major learning outcomes, which are versions of the Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes.

While each department can contribute examples that address this component, only a selection, as examples, will be given.

[The Earth and Environmental Science \(E & ES\) Department strives](#) to teach undergraduate students to (1) think critically, both qualitatively and quantitatively, (2) develop problem-solving skills (e.g., most of E & ES undergraduate courses have lab sections and are not strictly lecture-based, providing hands-on experience with problems), (3) integrate different types of observations with theory, and (4) be able to communicate their ideas in writing. Integrating field-based observations with lab results is required for many upper-level courses. For example, in Metamorphic Petrology, students [collect rock samples](#) to write a final report that integrates all observations and analysis into a coherent metamorphic history.

Electrical Engineering students enrolled in Senior Design (EE 481 and EE 482) undertake a two-semester capstone project during their senior year. The culmination of the project is a final presentation where the students present their design, justification, status and results. Evaluators of the final presentation include an external advisory board, faculty and graduate students. A [summary of the evaluations](#) shows that averages of all scores are above 4 out of 5, indicating above satisfactory abilities at communicating information.

The redesign of [Intro to Engineering](#) (ES 189), with the [Engineering Design Lab](#) created and installed in 2012, engages Freshmen Engineering students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information and in the practice of engineering design.

As outlined in the [Graduate Degree Requirements](#) section of the Graduate Catalog, all graduate students are required to complete a research project that culminates in an independent study paper, thesis or dissertation. In addition, for the thesis and dissertation, students are required to present their work in a public forum. Finally, Ph.D. students are required to submit at least one paper on the subject matter of their dissertation for publication to a recognized journal in their area of specialty.

Faculty and Student Research/Design: Contributing to Scholarship and Creating Knowledge

One of the most outstanding aspects of NMT education is the research opportunities for both undergraduate students – beginning Freshman year – and graduate students.

An impressive innovation is the Living Learning Communities, in which [faculty supervise Freshmen in research or design](#) projects. [One hundred ten Freshmen \(nearly 40% of our Fall 2014 incoming Freshman\)](#) are in the Living Learning Communities for Fall 2014; they are engaged in research

projects discussed in 3D.

After Freshman year, all undergraduate students have the opportunity to be involved in research or design, and virtually all are before they graduate. In addition, the Dean of the Center for Graduate Studies reports that all of our graduate students are engaged in research or design projects.

Faculty Research, which includes publications, patents, and grants awarded, is provided in the annual Departmental Activity Reports (DAR); [an example](#) of this listing in the DAR is provided by Electrical Engineering.

Because every department offers research or design opportunities to students, [both graduate and undergraduate students often are published with their Faculty Research Advisor](#). These papers and presentations are highlighted by departments, such as with [Civil Engineering](#) and with [Chemical Engineering](#).

In many cases, undergraduate student research projects are tied to a work-study program, often at one of NMT's research divisions. For example, undergraduate and graduate students work part-time during the school year at [EMRTC](#), providing additional work force support for the division and work experience for students.

The [PRRC](#) also supports the University's educational goals by including undergraduate students and high school interns in its research programs.

NMT [recognizes the importance of research projects](#) to prepare all students for their career. Therefore, all researchers, even those who are not tenure-tracked faculty members, are strongly encouraged to hire students and give them active roles in projects.

Thus, while virtually every student is engaged in research or design projects, a significant percentage actually have employment by NMT in research and design. For example, during the 2013-2014 academic year, [449 \(30%\) of NMT students were employed in research or design projects](#).

Nearly all professors in every academic department maintain active research projects that involve undergraduate students. Also, more than 400 graduate students are conducting research – along with their academic advisors and committees – to finish their Master's and Doctorate degrees.

Student Research Symposium

From 4% to 7% of our degree-seeking students, as evidenced in the [Student Research Symposium brief](#), with the guidance and approval of their faculty research advisors, have showcased their research and design projects each of the three years we have had a Student Research Symposium, our HLC Quality Initiative Project.

Cultural Diversity

This emphasis on cultural diversity within an inclusive learning environment is the focus of our Humanities and Social Sciences General Education Core courses and through minors provided by the Communication, Liberal Arts, Social Sciences (CLASS) department, such as Hispanic Studies, Literature, and Philosophy, detailed on pages 29-32 of the [Program and Course Catalog](#). One of the

goals of NMT's [Institute-Wide Learning Outcomes](#) is that students "exercise their role as members of diverse societies and cultures."

The threefold [Mission of the CLASS Department](#) includes the goal "to provide an intellectual experience that increases students' awareness of human history, human cultures, and human values."

The participation in our Student Research Symposium is consistent with our institutional demographics, as evidenced on [page 14 of our Quality Initiative Impact Report](#).

Our emphasis on cultural diversity is articulated more fully in 1.C.

Commitment

Faculty mentor our students in solving problems and creating knowledge at NMT. We build our reputation on this. Freshmen have opportunities for research; virtually all undergraduates and all graduate students engage in original research and design and learn to communicate this knowledge to a variety of audiences.

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3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

Argument

NMT faced two major factors that could have affected student-to-faculty ratio in recent years: one negative factor – the economic downturn beginning 2008, and one positive factor – growing enrollment with the highest numbers of degree-seeking students in our history.

However, even with these factors, NMT continues to maintain a low student-to-faculty ratio for degree-seeking students. Consistently, this ratio is 11 to 1 with an occasional year of 12 to 1. As reported in our NMT 2013 Common Data Sets, [page 22, the ratio for Fall 2013 was 13 to 1 due to our increased enrollment of 134 FTE \(1813\) degree-seeking students over the Fall 2012 FTE \(1679\) degree-seeking enrollment, shown on page 23](#), with Fall 2013 being the highest enrollment of degree-seeking students in our history.

Our full-time faculty numbers, as reported in NMT's Common Data Sets under Section I. Instructional Faculty and Class Size, have remained consistent, as follows: 121 in [Fall 2006](#); 119 in [Fall 2007](#); 125 in [Fall 2008](#); 124 in [Fall 2009](#); 121 in [Fall 2010](#); 123 in [Fall 2011](#); 124 in [Fall 2012](#); and 124 in [Fall 2013](#). Part-time faculty range in number from 26 in [Fall 2006](#), [Fall 2007](#) and [Fall 2008](#) to 55 in [Fall 2011](#). In [Fall 2013](#), NMT employed 47 part-time faculty.

Thus, the FTE Faculty numbers are: 130 in [Fall 2006](#); 128 in [Fall 2007](#); 134 in [Fall 2008](#); 134 in [Fall 2009](#); 136 in [Fall 2010](#); 141 in [Fall 2011](#); 137 in [Fall 2012](#); and 140 in [Fall 2013](#).

Even though we experienced a loss in revenue from the state and had to impose a hiring freeze in 2008 to 2010, we kept our faculty and staff employed and never imposed a furlough. Additionally, [our three Department of Education grants, awarded 2009, 2010 and 2011, provided \\$10.4 million in revenue](#) and staff positions, with three being instructor positions.

In Spring 2014, searches began for six additional full time (tenure-track) faculty members; in

addition, all full-time (tenure-track) faculty who left in 2013-2014 have been or are being replaced.

Nearly all of NMT's full-time faculty are tenure-track and, thus, hold Doctorate degrees. In fact, for Fall 2012, the [number of faculty with a Doctorate degree was 99%](#) [Table 17 of Performance Effectiveness Report], a consistent percentage. Part-time faculty must have advanced degrees or significant industry experience and often have both.

Each full-time faculty member submits a [Professional Activity Report](#) each January, which is reviewed by the Department Chair and then by the VPAA, according to the Regents Merit Pay Policy.

Department Chairs self-selected in making contributions to this section about their Departments, which are compiled in this reporting of [Staffing and Qualifications](#).

Academic Affairs, Research & Economic Development and individual Academic Departments contribute to funding the annual attendance by faculty members at conference presentations. This particularly true for new faculty who are working to obtain Research Projects to support their progress toward tenure.

Faculty regularly publish in referred journals and present at conferences, as evidenced in this example by [Computer Science and Engineering](#).

Internal faculty development workshops include the use of teaching technology and software, [best practices in pedagogy](#), [communicating STEM](#), [new faculty/TA training](#), and [diversity training](#); bi-weekly grassroots faculty development meetings, led by faculty, are the [Research Coffee Hour](#) and the [Teaching Coffee Hour](#). Departments also sponsor seminars, such as the [Biology seminar series, funded by NIH-INBRE, in 2012-2013](#).

Faculty Role in Assessment is discussed in 4.B.

Office Hours

The number of required office hours are set by department, but are not less than three hours a week with additional hours by appointment. [These are posted on syllabi, office doors, and given to department administrative assistants, such as in this example from Electrical Engineering.](#)

Faculty Advisor Training

Faculty advisors participating in the New Student Advising Program [receive training](#) that covers academic rules and regulations, advising and registration procedures, general education degree requirements, degree progress auditing, and available support services for advisees.

Student Support Services Staff Professional Development

Office for Student Learning (OSL)

Ongoing professional development for the OSL staff is provided through participation in national and regional conferences focused on Learning Communities, innovative teaching, academic student services, assessment of student learning and student retention. Staff members attend these conferences with the specific goal of increasing their knowledge in the areas of student engagement and success; in turn, they share that information and provide training to the other OSL staff and faculty through seminars held in the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL). Knowledge gained is also documented in the corresponding conference [travel report](#). To share best practices developed at NMT, OSL staff present at professional conferences; two examples are the "[Leveraging Multiple Grants to Catalyze Institutional Change](#)" presentation at the 2014 Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institution Educators (AHSIE) conference and the "[Communicate to Educate: Creating a Co-curricular Event for Mission Assessment](#)" presentation that has been accepted for the upcoming 2015 Higher Learning Commission Annual Conference.

Registrar's Office

The Registrar's Office is central to the academic mission of NMT, and the Registrar and her staff train regularly. The Registrar's Office provides student support services in the area of catalog and academic policy interpretation and recognizes that the impact of misadvising students about academic policies can be detrimental to the student both financially and academically. Thus, professional staff, support staff, and student staff participate in small-group training with the Registrar, which includes discussion of the policies and expectations about policy enforcement. The sessions include role playing and practicing scenarios to ensure that the staff is comfortable with the topics and know how to use available resources to provide accurate answers to students and faculty. An example of a training and reference document used by the staff in the Registrar's Office is a grade matrix, [the Grade Option Rules by Major](#), to ensure that the staff gives proper information about pass/fail rules in each major. The Registrar's Office is also trained to advise about students' [eligibility to register for classes with respect to pre-requisites and co-requisites](#).

In 2009, the Registrar's Office experienced a staff turn-over of nearly 100%. Representatives from the New Mexico Higher Education Department came to the campus to [train the new staff](#) on data collection and reporting standards.

Also in 2009, the Registrar completed a [Strategic Enrollment Management course](#) offered by the American Association of College Registrars and Admission Officers. In addition, a [Banner consultant was hired](#) in early 2010 to spend a week on the NMT campus training the new staff to use the student database. Also in 2010, the Registrar and Institutional Researcher attended [IPEDS Training](#) in Albuquerque to learn about new federal ethnicity reporting requirements and new CIP code reporting requirements.

In 2011, the Registrar's staff received training on scanning and indexing documents using [Banner BDMS](#) extender in 2011. Additionally in 2011, the Registrar's Office hired two new administrative assistants who [were trained internally](#) to use the student database. The Registrar's staff received training on using the functional components of [Banner Workflow in 2011](#).

Also in 2011-2012, the Registrar participated in a two-semester [Supervisor's Training](#) provided by the Human Resources Office and New Mexico Tech Management Department, which is part of an ongoing program. In 2012 the Registrar attended a workshop about [writing effective policies and procedures](#), and received a Certificate of completion.

Further, the Registrar is often asked to train new faculty, staff and graduate TAs on the Family Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA). [Two handouts](#) used for these training sessions detail the information that sometimes can be released to the public, as well as information that can never be released to the public. In addition, the Registrar's staff received training to set up and use [Banner Degree Works](#) in 2013.

Financial Aid

The Financial Aid Director reports, "The financial aid staff does training and professional development through our state and regional financial aid associations. We also utilize the federal Department of Education annual conference to stay up to date on new or changing regulations. This year our newly hired scholarship counselor will attend the state one-day training and the [regional boot camp](#) and [conference](#). I will attend the state, regional and federal trainings and the Assistant Director will attend the federal training as well."

Office of Admission

The Office of Admission coordinates programs necessary for student support, which include: Registration, [Orientation](#), "[Meet the Campus Days](#)", and Open House programs designed to give information relative to the Mission of the university. Admission staff undergo regular training; for example, in 2011 the staff [was trained and appropriately qualified](#) to enroll students into the undergraduate degree programs through the Banner database.

Residential Life

The Residential Life staff qualifications are listed in their [Position Descriptions](#). Residential Assistants (RAs) working for the Office of Residential Life are trained in effective student leadership through a 111-page [RA Training Manual](#). Among issues covered are social and diversity training, conflict resolution, crisis counseling, security and safety issues, how to enforce policies, to how to file reports. [RAs are given training](#) in areas from drug use to eating disorders – in short, a comprehensive training designed to give men and women the tools they will need as RAs.

Commitment

NMT continues an impressive student-to-faculty ratio and consistent numbers of faculty and staff, even during the economic downturn. Professional development for faculty and staff is an expected part of the annual review process and is supported by the institution.

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3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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

Argument

Incoming students enroll into a major at NMT. Again, because this major is STEM and is based on their ability to pass the Math preparatory and General Education Core courses that are the foundation for all majors, undergraduate academic support services are also focused with the same goal. In keeping with our Mission, academic support services for undergraduate and graduate students emphasize student communication effectiveness, research and design projects, and industry and advanced degree preparedness.

Office for Student Learning (OSL)

[The Office for Student Learning](#) was [established in June 2013](#) to advance the academic support services and resources offered to students and to organize these services under one roof. Prior to this consolidation, services were not as expansive and were offered from various offices. In the March 2014 Regents Meeting, Regent Rodriguez-Rios, who is also a student, [praised the impressive work of the OSL](#) and the improvement to academic support services since its inception. Indeed, the large number of students using the services and programs of the OSL and the assessment of the programs and services attest to its importance to the NMT student's academic life.

Innovative Services

Office for Student Learning services include tutoring, study groups, test corrections, student success workshops in the [Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning \(CITL\)](#), incoming student advising, and [First-Year Research and First-Year Design through Living Learning Communities](#). Some of these were piloted through funding by the Department of Education Student Engagement and Success grant.

Tutoring

During its initial semester of offering tutoring services in Fall 2013, the [OSL held an average of 100 tutoring sessions per week](#) for a total of 1621 visits.

By the Spring 2014 semester, [tutoring sessions averaged 130 per week](#), totaling 2136 visits and representing 30% growth in tutoring services.

[Data, such as visits requested by course and discipline and whether a student is a Freshman, Sophomore, Junior or Senior](#), is kept and reviewed by the OSL Director and Academic Affairs and shared with Academic departments.

Innovations in tutoring include the following:

Learning Coaches

[Learning Coaches](#) are successful upper division undergraduate students who serve as tutors and mentors. Most Learning Coaches hold regular tutoring hours in one or more of the OSL tutoring locations. Some Learning Coaches directly support the research and design project components in the First Year Research/Design courses. Other Learning Coaches attend gateway courses so that they are familiar with the instruction their tutees are receiving. This also establishes a trusting mentor relationship between the Learning Coaches and the students in the course.

Accessible Tutoring Locations and Hours

Learning Coaches and Tutors work in the main location of the OSL and in the residence halls, with hours available seven days a week. The OSL employs approximately 30 to 40 Learning Coaches. Students can easily access the [tutoring schedule](#) on the OSL website.

Test Corrections

Test Corrections, developed in collaboration by the Living Learning Coordinator of the OSL and a Math instructor, is an innovation that allows students to work with any Learning Coach on problems that they missed on the test. If the student successfully demonstrates the ability to solve the problem, the Learning Coach signs off on the correction. Several faculty are giving points to students who use this service. This service has grown rapidly in one semester to include Pre-calculus, Trigonometry, Calculus I and Introduction to Chemistry.

First Year Research and First Year Design

Students come to NMT to do research and design. So that they do not have to wait until they are Juniors to work on a research or design project and in hopes of bolstering our retention rate by allowing Freshmen to engage in research or design, the OSL piloted Living Learning Communities with a novel and sophisticated research or design component for Freshmen in 2011. Called First Year Research and First Year Design, these are the NMT First Year Experience; these highly successful initiatives are contributing to our increased retention rate, which is discussed in 4.B. Projects in First Year Research and First Year Design for Fall 2014 are outlined on [page 4 of The Tech Experience: Innovations for Increased Retention, Persistence and Completion brief](#). [Nearly 40% of our 2014 incoming Freshmen are in the LLCs](#), and thus, [working with faculty on research or design projects](#).

Advising Incoming Students

[New Student Experience meetings](#), led by the Vice President for Student and University Relations, began in August 2012, with the purpose of bringing together all of the offices that serve incoming students to discuss their needs. Representation, in addition to the VP for SUR, includes the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Registrar, the Director of Admission, the Director of the Office for Student Learning, the Financial Aid Director, the Director of Residential Life, the Director of Student Affairs, and the Director of the HSI-STEM grant. All processes for incoming students have been discussed and streamlined with an emphasis on the individual needs of each student, whether an incoming Freshman or a transfer student.

One exciting initiative that resulted from these meetings are our [Tech Calls](#) made to our admitted students by the OSL Director, which are welcome and follow-up phone calls made by the OSL Director that provide a campus community connection, as outlined in a [memo describing the process presented to the Council of Chairs on October 21, 2014](#).

In addition to discussing the topics outlined in the memo, the OSL Director answers any questions the student might have, such as the length of bed sheets needed for the dorms. Thus, a personal relationship with both the Director and, later, the academic advisor is developed. In addition, students will not have to be on a “scavenger hunt” for getting Tech-ready.

Soon after the conversation with the OSL Director, the student receives their advisor information through a Workflow from the OSL, which sends the information to their NMT email address. The advisor makes initial contact with the student via email. The student responds to the advisor with the preliminary schedule. Further email discussion results in confirmation of the student’s schedule and the student receives their registration Alternative PIN. Students have the opportunity to meet their advisors and visit their departments during several orientation days in the summer.

Due to this personal and educational experience provided to the students, we expect to see a higher admission rate, and, over time, a higher retention rate, better completion rate, and greater investment in managing their academic career by students. Assessment is in progress.

Advising and Intervention

NMT has always engaged faculty as academic advisors in the belief that this is a vital relationship for student engagement in their majors, for research or design opportunities and for professional connections for continuing with internships, jobs or to graduate programs.

To augment this support experience for our students and as professional development for our faculty, the HSI-STEM grant piloted a new program in 2011 for advising incoming Freshmen and transfer students. [Select faculty](#) from each department are trained to serve as incoming student advisors. The grant also provided funding for [Starfish Early Alert/Connect software](#) that notifies academic advisors when any student is struggling.

The Associate Dean for Student Success leads other intervention, such as meeting with students who need this help and overseeing the [Academic Warning](#) program, [which has shown positive results](#). In fact, the percentage of students who are suspended has [decreased from 5.7% in Spring 2007 to 3.7% in Spring 2013 to 2.4% in Spring 2014](#).

After the Freshman year, students receive a new academic advisor based on matching academic interests. Departments advise their graduate students by a combination of Research Advisors,

Academic Advisors, and graduate advisory committees.

The Master of Science for Teachers (MST) is an interdisciplinary program; advisors attend a special training session to acquire a thorough understanding of the program's requirements for students' progress and completion of the MST degree. Approximately 50 faculty members have been trained to serve as advisors or committee members on an [MST Masters Degree Advisory Committee](#). Additional training sessions are held as needed for new faculty. The manual is updated to reflect any program changes.

In efforts to review and continually improve our advising processes, NMT hired a National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) consultant, funded by the HSI-STEM grant, in September 2014. In early 2015, we initiated a [Student Advising Committee](#) composed of faculty, students and staff.

Tutoring Services by Academic Departments

In addition to the tutoring provided by the OSL, the academic departments of Math, Chemistry, Physics, Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Engineering, and Communication, Liberal Arts, Social Sciences (Writing and Oral Presentation Center) also provide tutoring, [with an example of the schedule provided by the Math Department](#). The OSL publishes, online and on flyers, the [tutoring schedules of their office as well as of the academic departments](#).

Tutoring in the Writing and Oral Presentation Center (WOPC) is available for undergraduate and graduate students. Over the past years, [the number of students using the services of the WOPC has increased dramatically](#).

For example, total visits for Spring 2010 was 27 (Undergraduate: 21; Graduate: 6). In just a year and a half later, total visits for Fall 2011 was 379 (Undergraduate: 292; Graduate: 87), a 1303% increase due to the hire of an enthusiastic and dedicated faculty member who serves as the Writing Center Director and through financial support from the PPOHA grant for hiring undergraduate and graduate student tutors. In Fall 2013, the WOPC served 198 students (Undergraduate: 142 Graduate: 56). The WOPC has seen dramatic increases in certain semesters where it has partnered with undergraduate student retention efforts, such as the LLCs, but in general averages about 180-200 visits a semester.

The [STEM Communication Fellows Program](#) addresses specific deficiencies in graduate-level communication skills. Graduate Fellows, funded through PPOHA, develop and implement communication programs for their respective departments as well as inter-departmental collaborations. Fellows engage peers in mastering modes of communication analysis and delivery through various workshops, classroom-embedded instruction and tutorials, and staffing the WOPC. The STEM Communication Fellows program was sustained after the close of the PPOHA grant by linking program participation with a scholarship for graduate students from minority and unrepresented backgrounds offered through the graduate school.

ESL resources offered by the WOPC, referred to as the ESL Resource Center, have been expanded to include print materials and electronic learning devices that help students understand or interpret the complexities of the English language and scientific and technical vocabulary in disciplines. It offers a [Conversation Café](#), which is a gathering opportunity for international students to learn about one another while practicing conversations in English. Incoming non-native English speaking (NNES) students are paired with native English speaking volunteer conversation partners, most of whom are American students who help students prepare for the written portions of the TOEFL and GRE

exams. The [WOPC serves students whose native languages, other than English](#), are: Chinese, Arabic, Farsi, Spanish, Hindi, Yoruba, Turkish, Russian, Tigrigna, Arabic, Portuguese, Nigerian, Russian, Gonja, Vietnamese, Somali, Tamil, Telugu, Ulghur, German, Persian, Alcan.

Further, in 2010, the CLASS Department began piloting an [English for Academic Purposes](#) (EAP), a graduate-level ESL course that addresses the needs of incoming graduate students who needed further development of English language skills. The course more thoroughly addresses deficiencies than regular ESL by covering the technical language in the Sciences and Engineering disciplines, which is often overlooked in typical conversational English courses. The EAP course prepares graduate students for the language, research, and communication-intensive workload of graduate programs.

Registrar's Office

NMT allows students to order unlimited official transcripts for a [flat fee of \\$15 per year](#). This eases the financial burden of our undergraduate students who order as many as 20 official transcripts when applying for graduate school.

To facilitate our graduates beginning their careers in a timely manner, NMT, with the formal approval of the Board of Regents, instituted a new policy in 2011, the [Degree Conferral Policy](#), to award diplomas [every month of the year](#). This policy, which is rare among U.S. universities, was instituted in response to our students' needs and concerns. Specifically, NMT learned that many graduates require a diploma in hand before beginning work, particularly for government agencies and multinational corporations. In addition, graduate students defend their thesis or dissertation any time of year. Under the old degree conferral policy, graduates waited for their diploma for up to five months because the institution only awarded degrees in May, August and December.

Direction to Appropriate Courses

In addition to our advising services to guide students to appropriate courses, the institution, through the Mathematics Department directs entering students to Math courses for which they are adequately prepared through Math Placement processes, with information on the [Math Department](#) website, the [Admissions](#) website, the [Office for Student Learning](#) website, the [Living Learning Communities](#) website and [in the Undergraduate Catalog](#) (pdf of page provided).

Research and Information Resources Instruction and Support

The Joseph R. Skeen Library provides support services for students that strengthen academic performance through research and information resources. With the increasing prominence of Junior and Senior group projects in Engineering, [90% of the library study space has been retrofitted to accommodate groups of students with 10% of the library's seating being single study carrels](#).

[Providing access to campus computing](#) has also become an important function of the library; thus, the library has steadily increased the number of dedicated student computers to 27 with four additional workstations that are available to both students and the public. Three computers in the library have oversized 36" computer screens so that groups can all view the screen at once, and 25 computers have three or more seats available per workstation so that it is possible for groups to sit down and use the

computer together. The library also has seven password-protected wireless nodes that can accommodate as many as 1,131 wireless users at the same time and can be used as far away as halfway across the campus.

The [library's print and electronic material collections](#) also play a large part in student success. With a collection of almost 500,000 books, a substantial eBook collection (over 106,000 items), and an extensive electronic journal collection, the library works to ensure students have access to the materials that they need to succeed.

As the library purchases more electronic journal databases, the [demand for interlibrary loan services has decreased significantly](#). As a result, interlibrary loan requests have become more esoteric and are more likely to be for foreign or rare materials. At the same time that interlibrary loan and circulation services have seen a decline, the [library's door count has risen steadily](#) despite a small decline in the number of hours that the library is open.

To accommodate the growing number of distance students, the library contains a large and varied collection of digital resources. [Distance students can access all of the library's digital books and journals](#) through the library's website. In addition, the library has [online video tutorials](#) to help all students understand how to access the library's digital resources.

Additional Academic Support Services

[Research and Economic Development \(R&ED\) provides academic support](#), such as: summer salary support for new faculty members; [research jobs for students](#); the [machine shop](#), the [instrument room](#), and the [corporation yard](#) for faculty and students to construct or design their projects.

The Earth and Environmental Science Department (E&ES) is one example of how an academic department provides research, informational and infrastructure support, [detailed as provided by the E&ES Department Chair](#).

Infrastructure and Technology

In 2009, 2010 and 2011, NMT secured federal grants totaling [\\$10.4 million, which includes funding to modernize 24 classrooms, 21 learning lounges and the Cramer 114 SmartLab](#). Due to these grants, as of December 2014, [71% of our lecture classrooms have been upgraded to smart technology](#).

[Data compiled by the Registrar for Spring 2013](#) reveals lecture classroom use (lecture classroom meaning classrooms that are not labs). During that semester, the most popular lecture classrooms were those equipped with smart technology and moveable desks, followed by classrooms with computer-projection technology and moveable desks and smart classrooms with fixed auditorium-style seating. The least utilized lecture classrooms were computer labs, which are the rooms with a computer monitor on every desk. All lecture classrooms were used for 328 classes and 717 hours of instruction per week.

The popular smart classrooms are equipped with Lecture Capture technology, which records lectures and allows student viewing of previously recorded lectures, as well as hosting conferences via one of the three web conferencing platforms with high quality sound and visuals. Lecture Capture allows students to review difficult concepts at their own pace, allows ESL students to slow playback speed,

and allows faculty to pre-record classes so that no classes are missed when faculty or students attend conferences. Student viewing of Lecture Capture recordings has grown steadily; [by June 2014, the cumulative student viewings had grown to 14,000 views.](#)

[Fourteen departments received a new learning space through the PPOHA grant.](#) The Biology Department calls its space “Ananda.” [Ananda](#) is used for small research seminars, regular lab meetings, journal clubs, graduate seminar courses, and informal social gatherings. It is well equipped with interactive multimodal technology.

The [Engineering Design Lab](#) is a good example of recent teaching lab improvement. It features audio/visual equipment including computer projectors, interactive computing surface, wireless “airplay” display of video from iPads, and 25 Elvis boards, 24 desktop computers, 6 laptop computers, 3 rack-mount computer terminals, two 3D printers for fast prototyping of student designed projects, and a laser-cutter.

Technical Communication majors of the CLASS Department have two technology spaces – [the TC Lab and the Design Lab](#). These spaces are equipped with computers, printers, large screen TVs, and recording equipment.

The [Music Performance Program](#), also of the CLASS Department, utilizes Macey Annex, which includes a small performance space and practice rooms available to students.

The [Mineral Museum](#), operated by the Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources, serves 15,000 visitors annually, [as stated on page 6 of the Bureau's annual report](#), and is a valuable educational resource for students. Its mission states, "The mission of the museum is to procure, display, and curate geological, mineralogical, and paleontological materials, primarily from the State of New Mexico, for the purposes of research, education, posterity, and enjoyment for the citizens of the state." The Museum accomplishes its goal through public display of the best and most representative specimens and materials, educational programming, and interpretation of natural history information, and selective collection, preservation, research, and publication in the Museum's chosen fields. The Mineral Museum will be moving into a new home in 2015 with the completion of the new Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources building.

NMT has modern facilities for most of the academic departments on campus. One exception is the Chemistry Department, which is housed in an aging building, Jones Hall; thus, NMT mounted a campaign to secure state funding to build a [new Chemistry Building](#), which was approved by New Mexico voters in the November 2014 general election. The new building will be 50,000 square-feet and purpose-built for a modern Chemistry Department.

Data, such as [Enrollment by Department since 2005](#), prepared by the Registrar in Spring 2015 will be an aid to the Faculty Senate Space Allocation Committee in making its recommendations for space distribution and expansion.

[As presented to the HED in the 2012 Yearly Capital Outlay Request presentation](#), the next construction project will be for a new Student Recreation Center that will include gymnasiums, a swimming pool, workout rooms and other facilities. Currently the gyms and pool are separate from each other and housed in aging facilities.

[NMT closely monitors residential life resources \(dormitory spaces\) on an ongoing basis.](#) Experiencing a significant increase in students annually from 2004 to the present lead to a housing crunch beginning in 2010. With dormitories at maximum capacity for two years, [NMT secured more than \\$7](#)

[million in 2010](#) to begin construction of a new 150-bed dormitory, which was completed in time for the Fall 2013 semester.

Recent and ongoing support of the quality of student life is [outlined by Administration and Finance](#).

Supporting student academic success are the offices of Admission, Residential Life, Student Affairs, International Programs, Multicultural Programs, Career Services, Office of Counseling and Disabilities, Student Health Center, Financial Aid, Auxiliary Services, Performing Arts Series, and Physical Recreation. These are discussed in 4.B.

Strategic Planning

The [Growth Task Force of the Strategic Planning Committee reports](#) that the strategic plan includes:

- goals to extensively assess what resources will be needed in each academic and administrative department in order to support effective instruction, advising, student services, and research experience, both for current capacity and projected growth;
- a new process for students to cross-enroll in community colleges programs that will help them become better prepared for Tech.

The [Community of Scholars Task Force reports](#) as a goal that meets this criteria: “Goal; Incentives to Innovate defines as a task the creation of more innovation spaces for faculty, staff, and students.”

Commitment

We guide and support our students in efficient course scheduling through innovative academic support and in quality of life through our co-curricular programs and student affairs services and our technology and building infrastructure.

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- Smart Technology Memo
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3.E - Core Component 3.E

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

Argument

At NMT, learning happens outside of the classroom, according to our Mission, with various co-curricular learning opportunities.

As research is *what we do* at NMT, we provide opportunities for students to expand their resumé while building community.

Communicate to Educate!

For example, our Quality Initiative Project, the [Student Research Symposium \(SRS\)](#), launched April 13, 2012 is a campus-wide co-curricular event open to all NMT students and organized by faculty, students, administrators and staff. In an interactive conference format, the SRS directly addresses all four points of the NMT Mission and supports all six of [our Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes](#), particularly Outcomes 3 and 6. While co-curricular, its [mission and student learning outcomes](#) are educational, with an emphasis on improving communication skills and students' sense of community with their peers outside of their disciplines.

Even after a year of extensive and intense planning and promotion, we had no idea our first event would create so much interest – [it generated a huge response for presentations](#) (38 presentations involving 81 student presenters) and attendance exceeding 500.

The [second Student Research Symposium](#) was held on April 5, 2013. Its attendance remained at an impressive 500 and presentations jumped to 56 (involving 122 student presenters).

The [third Student Research Symposium](#) was held on April 9, 2014. Total attendance remained high at 497, with 58 presentations by 131 students.

[With presenters from 4% to 7% of our degree-seeking student population](#), close to 20% of our degree-seeking student population either presenting or attending each year, and attendance right at 500 each year, the SRS is now a tradition at NMT.

In essence, for our Quality Initiative, we have added to our workload and our offerings for our students a large, impressive symposium that draws attendees from across the state. High school attendees have come in busloads or van loads, from as far as Farmington and Gallup (257 miles and 192 miles away).

Our [fourth SRS, April 16, 2015](#), will be in a larger campus venue; the keynote speaker is Dr. Frank Etscorn, the first patent holder for the nicotine patch, a discovery he made while a professor at NMT.

This [SRS brief](#) summarizes the importance of the SRS and is being used as a reference throughout the Argument.

In addition to the SRS, NMT offers a variety of co-curricular programs to provide an enriched, all-encompassing life experience for students.

One of these avenues is through [campus clubs](#), including academic clubs, club sports, extracurricular clubs, intramural sports and intercollegiate sports.

All clubs that register annually during the Fall semester receive institutional funding to help stay operational. Each club is required to conduct community service projects and fundraisers, as part of their agreement with NMT to receive funding. All clubs that receive funding must also maintain an open enrollment policy. As two examples, the Society for Women Engineers must allow men to join and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society must allow non-American Indians to join.

Clubs serve to bring students together, form friendships, develop a connection with the institution, grow camaraderie and support academic excellence – thus, enriching the campus experience for students. Each of these affinity groups brings together students from diverse backgrounds who share a common interest.

Students are involved in internships and other practicum experiences on our campus. For example, Macey Center was asked in 2010 by the “Friends of the Good Samaritan Village” to host a Christmas Tree Gala and Auction. To highlight the trees and make them dance with music and light so that they would have that extra special appearance, a Macey Center employee and a Mechanical Engineering student designed a relay switchboard and connected the theater dimming system to it so that the trees were lit in unison to music. The video of the stunning show, presented that night to the community with the ability of one of our students, can be viewed on You Tube: [Christmas Tree Auction Light Show](#).

Also at the Macey Center are shows organized every two weeks by the Performing Arts Series. PAS concerts are free to NMT students and highly subsidized for all attendees. The [PAS Activity Report for academic year 2013-2014](#) states that 1,772 student tickets were provided for PAS performances, for a total of 6,000 attendees that included community members and in-state tourists.

PAS performances enhance all aspects of intellectual pursuits, broadening the horizons of our students with exposure to the cultures of the world, improving their overall ability to function in a highly diverse world.

The [Music performance program](#) through the CLASS Department and the Community Education Program includes instrumental and choral ensembles and group voice, vocal performance, and chamber music courses. Participants in the music performance program develop and practice skills in listening and performance, incorporate historical and aesthetic concepts into an artistic decision-making process, and perform musical works for the NMT community and in other venues in New Mexico.

Commitment

NMT offers numerous co-curricular opportunities that provide students with additional chances to showcase their research or design and to expand their engagement in STEM. In addition, we offer a variety of co-curricular programs to provide an enriched, all-encompassing life experience for students.

We continuously explore and support new avenues of learning outside of the classroom as part of the Tech experience.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

NMT's curriculum builds from preparatory courses (for those students who need them) and from General Education Core courses, then through the levels of major courses. Through learning outcomes for these levels and through assessment by the departments and institution and review by advisory boards, we maintain the rigor expected of a respected institution of higher education.

Faculty mentor our students in solving problems and creating knowledge at NMT. We build our reputation on this. Freshmen have opportunities for research; virtually all undergraduate and graduate students engage in original research and design and learn to communicate this knowledge to a variety of audiences.

NMT has continued an impressive student-to-faculty ratio and consistent numbers of faculty and staff, even during the economic downturn. Professional development for faculty and staff is an expected part of the annual review process and is supported by the institution.

We guide and support our students in efficient course scheduling through innovative academic support and in quality of life through our co-curricular programs and student affairs services and our technology and building infrastructure. NMT offers numerous co-curricular opportunities that provide students with additional chances to showcase their research or design and to expand their engagement in STEM. In addition, we offer a variety of co-curricular programs to provide an enriched, all-encompassing life experience for students.

We continuously explore and support new avenues of learning outside of the classroom as part of the Tech experience.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

Argument

As is evidenced throughout this report, student learning assessment and regular program reviews are an integral aspect of NMT's commitment to providing the most effective and up-to-date education possible in STEM.

For a more integrated system, Academic departments and non-academic/co-curricular offices are reporting program reviews to the [Integrated Planning Workspace](#) in the following two ways:

1. [Student Learning Assessment Reports](#), discussed in 4.B.
2. [Activity Reports](#), which concisely report the productivity, mostly numerically, of one year, with a past year comparison and a look to possibilities of growth.

(An [assessment discussion points for meetings memo](#) outlines ways for the two types of assessment to be addressed.)

Our long-established reviews with plans for incorporating the above are outlined as follows:

- Academic departments have had a formalized activity review in place since 2004 through the Department Activity Reports (DAR), required of and submitted annually by March 1 by the academic departments, as specified in the [Merit Pay Policy](#), a Board of Regents Policy, 2004.
- Academic departments have established a decades-long practice of submitting assessment reports of student learning to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, a process that has been expanded and improved, as discussed further in 4.B.
- However, co-curricular, non-academic offices and departments have not had a formalized, written Activity Report for program review other than the [introductory personnel evaluations](#) and [annual personnel reviews](#) required by the Human Resources Office. Each office has been reporting their activity to their Vice President or Division Director in writing or verbally, but, as of 2013, discussions began at the Institutional Student Learning Team meetings on how each office or department under each Vice President should report their activity for an institutional view and for institutional planning. The discussion of how we would implement these and the request to all offices and departments to begin gathering data to submit in their reports culminated in a comprehensive submission of program activity reports in 2014.
- Thus, co-curricular and non-academic departments and offices have joined in submitting concise, mostly numeric with brief text [Activity Reports](#) to an Integrated Planning Workspace. All offices and departments, including academic departments, are using a standardized form for reporting activity for the fiscal year (non-academic departments) and the academic year (academic departments), which is essentially the same 12 months of information – either July 1 to June 30 (fiscal year) or mid-August to mid-August (academic year). All reports are due to the Integrated Planning Workspace by September 1. For now, this is a second Activity Report for the academic departments, but the reporting cycle and format for the DAR is currently being discussed, meaning that the two reports may become one that is due September 1.
- With a focus on institutional integrated planning, in 2013, all academic, non-academic, curricular and co-curricular offices and departments designated a Student Learning Coordinator to be a member of the newly-formed Institutional Student Learning Team. This team meets twice a year to share ideas about student learning outcomes for all offices and departments, assessment methods, and other program review data and ideas, as is stated in [its mission](#).

Academic Majors

Academic departments have long engaged and continue to engage in continuous academic program improvement and redesign based on evolving needs of the ever-changing industry and on advanced-degree requirements. This process works as follows:

- Faculty in each academic department discuss curriculum and pertinent changes.
 - Ten of our sixteen academic departments have [corporate or industry advisory boards](#) that also review their programs.
- The department votes on any changes.
- If approved by the department, the Chair brings proposed undergraduate curricular changes to the Council of Chairs and proposed graduate curricular changes to the Graduate Council.
- After discussion and voting in the appropriate council, the proposed changes go to the Faculty Senate for vote.
- If approved, the changes are effective with the next academic catalog.
 - For example, both the Technical Communication (TC) faculty and the Writing faculty meet regularly to review the courses offered for the TC degrees and for the English

sequence, as follows:

- TC review – The faculty meets annually with the TC Advisory Board, as shown by agendas for [2011](#), [2012](#), and [2013](#), to review the degree program and classes. These annual reviews with industry representatives ensure that courses and objectives keep the TC program at NMT at the cutting edge of the field.
- Writing Program review – The Writing faculty meets twice every semester to discuss the English sequence and to norm grading, since sections are taught by different faculty members. One device to norm grading is a "[norming essay](#)" that the faculty grade individually and then compare.

Evaluation of Credit and Transfer Credit.

The Registrar's Office calculates grade point average and evaluates credit that it transcripts. A detailed description of credit and program length and the *Worksheet for the Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours* are provided in the Federal Compliance report.

The [transfer policy for undergraduate students](#) is found in the Undergraduate Catalog. Information is also found on the [Office of the Registrar Transfer Credit webpage](#) and the [Admission Office Transfer Admission webpage](#).

NMT accepts academic credits from accredited institutions of higher education. Transfer students must complete the Application for Admission & Scholarships and provide official college transcript(s) from all institutions attended.

All credits are [evaluated by the Registrar](#) and the pertinent Academic department and are transferred on a course-by-course basis. Credit earned at any institution while a student is on academic or disciplinary suspension are not accepted at NMT. Students with fewer than 30 hours of transfer credit must follow Entering Freshmen requirements.

In accordance with policies established by the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED), designated General Education core courses successfully completed at any regionally accredited public institution of higher education in New Mexico are guaranteed to transfer to any New Mexico public institution. Tribal colleges participate on a voluntary basis.

[Statewide articulation assures the quality of credits that are transferred within New Mexico.](#) A common course numbering system has been devised by New Mexico colleges and universities in compliance with the New Mexico Post-Secondary Education Articulation Act. The purpose of the system is to assist New Mexico students who are transferring between institutions within the state. [Articulation agreements](#) provide a guarantee that transfer credits will be accepted within a student's major; i.e., Amarillo College, San Antonio College and Central New Mexico Community College have signed agreements with NMT.

[NMT purchased Ellucian's Transfer Evaluation Software](#) for use with the Banner Student Information System. The software organizes and systematizes the process of evaluating the transfer credit of incoming students, resulting in faster and more consistent transfer credit evaluations.

The policy for transfer of credits for graduate students, which [limits credits and requires advisory committee and department approval](#), is documented in the Graduate Catalog. [The process for transferring credits](#) is documented in the Graduate Handbook. [The form for approval of graduate](#)

[student transfer credits](#) provides the mechanism for review of appropriateness.

Dual Credit

Two pieces of legislation in 2007 expanded college options for New Mexico high school students: Dual High School and Postsecondary Credits and the Cyber Academy Act. The dual credit act requires the New Mexico Higher Education Department (HED), New Mexico Public Education Department (PED), school districts, charter schools, and public postsecondary institutions to create a statewide dual credit agreement. As discussed on page 6 and 7 of the [IDEAL-NM Annual Report of 2010-2011](#), the Cyber Academy began in 2008 to address the needs of New Mexico schools to prepare students for the 21st century and to develop a common distance education tool for collaboration. These laws complement previous legislation that requires ninth graders beginning in the 2009-2010 school year to earn at least one credit as an advanced placement, honors, dual credit, or distance learning course, as noted on page 37 of the [HED 2007 Annual Report](#).

The NMT Office of Admission follows state-mandated rules and guidelines in offering dual credit classes and enrolls students who qualify for admittance to the program each semester. Currently, the [Office of Admission is responsible for Dual Credit Programs](#) with Socorro Consolidated Schools, the Magdalena School District and the Southwest Secondary Learning Center. The primary purpose of the [Dual Credit Program at NMT](#) is to increase the educational opportunities and options for high school students and increase the overall quality of instruction and learning available through secondary schools. Students must also have a minimum 3.0 GPA (on a 4.0 scale) and an ACT composite score of 21 or an equivalent SAT critical reading and Math score. Students who have not taken the ACT or SAT may submit PSAT scores for review of eligibility. All students must have approval from the school district and the high school counselor prior to registration.

The Dual Credit Program allows students to earn credit at the secondary and the postsecondary levels simultaneously and provide students an early glimpse of college life and college-level studies.

Dual credit classes are classified as college-level classes, as evidenced by the [Dual Credit Application](#).

NMT does not offer separate course sections for dual credit students; [these students enroll in the same sections as college students](#), assuring that the dual credit students are held to equivalent learning outcomes and levels of achievement as their college-level colleagues.

Pre-requisites and Co-requisites

Some NMT courses have prerequisites a student must successfully complete before enrolling in that course or co-requisites that must be taken the same semester as the course. The Registrar's Office overrides a [pre-requisite or co-requisite requirement](#) only with the approval of the course instructor and the student's advisor, as is evidenced by the [Pre-requisite/Co-requisite Waiver Form](#). Pre-requisites and co-requisites are determined by the catalog in effect at the time the course is offered.

Students who enroll in a course in which they do not have the pre-requisites may be dis-enrolled and [are notified by the Registrar's Office](#).

Specialized Accreditation

The Chemical, Civil, Electrical, Environmental, Materials and Metallurgical, Mechanical, Mineral and Petroleum Engineering undergraduate programs are accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, 111 Market Place, Suite 1050, Baltimore, MD 21202-4012 - Telephone: (410) 347-7700.

The Bachelor of Science Program in Computer Science is accredited by the Computing Accreditation Commission (CAC) of ABET, 111 Market Place, Suite 1050, Baltimore, MD 21202-4012 - Telephone: (410) 347-7700.

This is reported in our [Catalogs](#) and on the [President's webpage](#) and will be reported on public brochures and recruiting materials, along with the HLC Mark of Affiliation and accreditation information, as discussed in the Federal Compliance Report.

Success of Graduates

- NMT conducts a survey of the graduating seniors through Career Connect, our job placement program. The survey is open for 6 months, from April 1 through September 30, for the May/Summer grads and again from October 1 to March 30 for the December grads. Our response rate is high. For example, 50% of our graduates responded to the [August 2011-May 2012 Post-Graduate Survey](#) and [60% to the most recent survey](#).
- To measure the success of our graduates in industry preparation and advanced study preparation, we look at indicators such as internships and admission into graduate schools, and we look at Payscale.com for insight into current salaries.

In addition, academic departments track their graduates through a variety of means. Discussions are ongoing in Council of Chairs meetings and in the Institutional Student Learning Team meetings about effective methods for tracking graduates.

The following are some reports by academic departments:

- In 2013, the Physics Department compiled [a list of the jobs](#) of the 53 students who have graduated with a Ph.D. since 1985. Findings reveal that almost all – 48 – are employed using their Ph.D. in Physics (two are deceased, one is retired, and only two were unknown).
- [The Biology Department tracks their graduates each year. Data compiled by the Biology Department shows that of the 14 students receiving their B.S. degrees in Spring 2010:](#)
 - One accepted to a Ph.D. program in pharmacology
 - One accepted into a wildlife studies program
 - One accepted to veterinary technician school
 - Two accepted to medical schools
 - One accepted to optometry school
 - One hired for NMT MST program
 - One applied to medical school
 - One applied to veterinary school
 - One employed as a lab technician
 - Two attending graduate school
 - No data on two others
- The Math Department Chair reports, “The Department of Mathematics [monitors the careers](#) and the success of its graduate students whenever possible.”

- The Chemical Engineering Department Chair reports, “The Chemical Engineering Department conducts an alumni survey 6-12 months after graduation of each graduating class. The survey allows recent alumni to evaluate the program and serves as a platform to collect job placement/graduate school placement information about our graduates. [The results](#) are reported annually.”

Commitment

NMT conducts meaningful program reviews by academic departments and by co-curricular offices and programs. We continue to improve these reviews and have made them transparent and accessible for the sharing of information and for best practices and integrated planning.

Sources

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- Accreditation Webpage Screenshot [DC]
- Activity Report for Program.Office Template
- Admissions Office Dual Credit Webpage Screenshot
- Advisory Boards
- Annual Report 2007
- Articulation Agreements Webpage Screenshot [DC]
- Assessment Points for Meetings and Discussion

- Institutional Student Learning Team Agendas and Mission
- Integrated Planning Workspace Homepage Screenshot [DC]
- Merit Pay Policy
- Physics_PhD_Recipients
- Post Grad Survey Data August 2011
- Post-Graduation Information Screen Shot
- Student Learning Assessment Report Template
- Transfer Admission Screenshot [DC]

4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Argument

From Institutional Research to the Classroom to Program Assessment to Alumni

Our student learning assessment methods and data are comprehensive and meaningful.

NMT has a culture of academic department student learning assessment, as shown by the [assessment calendar used by Computer Science and Engineering](#).

We employ a number of methods, and we review data and methods for continuous plans for improvement and student success, including:

- Institutional Research office data, such as retention, time to completion rates and other data referred to throughout our Assurance Argument
- Academic department assessment of General Education Core courses. Some examples of reports are:
 - CLASS Area 1 Communications
 - [ENGL 111](#)
 - [ENGL 112](#)
 - [ENGL 341](#)
 - [CLASS Area 4 Social Sciences](#)
 - [CLASS Area 4 Social Sciences additional](#)
 - [MGMT Area 4 Social Sciences/ECON](#)
 - [CLASS Area 5 Humanities](#)
 - MATH Area 2 Mathematics
 - [MATH 103](#)
 - [MATH 104](#)
 - [MATH 131](#)
 - [MATH 132](#)
 - [CHEM Area 3 Laboratory Science](#)
 - [PHYS Area 3 Laboratory Science](#)
 - [PHYS 121 & 121L](#)
 - [PHYS 122 & 122L](#)
- Office of Student Learning assessment of students tutored in [General Education Core courses for Area 2 Mathematics \(HED Area II Mathematics\)](#)

- Writing and Oral Presentation Center is planning to initiate assessment of students tutored in General Education Core course for Area 1 Communications (HED Area I)
- Academic department assessment and reporting of undergraduate student programs. Examples evidenced in the first column are reports within the last few years and in the second column are more recent reports:
 - [BIOL](#)
 - [CHEM](#)
 - [CLASS/TC](#)
 - [E & ES](#)
 - [MATH](#)
 - [PHYS](#)
 - [PSY](#)
 - [ChE](#)
 - [CE](#)
 - [CSE](#)
 - [EE](#)
 - [ENVE](#)
 - [MATE](#)
 - [MENG](#)
 - [ME](#)
 - [PETR](#)
 - [BIOL](#)
 - [CLASS/TC](#)
 - [E & ES](#)
 - [MGT](#)
 - [MATH](#)
 - [PHYS](#)
 - [PSY](#)
 - [ChE](#)
 - [CE](#)
 - [CSE](#)
 - [EE](#)
 - [ENVE](#)
 - [MATE](#)
 - [MENG](#)
 - [ME](#)
 - [PETR](#)
- Academic department assessment of graduate student programs. Some examples of reports are:
 - [BIOL](#)
 - [EE](#)
 - [E&ES](#)
 - [MATH -- MS](#)
 - [MATH -- PhD](#)
 - [MENG](#)
 - [PHYS](#)
- The Math Department, which provides Math requirements for other majors beyond the General Education Core courses, assesses for these [Math service courses](#).
- (NOTE: Academic Departments report every year; only a few reports are shown here.)
- Co-curricular programs are beginning to assess and report student learning
 - [SRS](#)

- Directors of the Department of Education grants assessment of their objectives, which relate directly to course improvement, student success, retention and completion; some examples of reports are:
 - [PPOHA Report](#)
 - [SES Report](#)
 - [HSI-STEM Report](#)

We assess according to student learning outcomes – stated on websites and in the Student Learning Assessment reports – that align with our [Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes](#):

- The [student learning outcomes of our General Education Core Curriculum are the HED Core Competencies](#) that were agreed upon in 2005 by an state-wide Assessment Task Force with members from all state institutions and approved by the HED.
- The student learning outcomes for undergraduate programs and graduate programs are defined by each academic department, such as the examples from the websites of the Departments of [Petroleum Engineering](#), [Mechanical Engineering](#), [Mathematics](#), and [Communication, Liberal Arts, and Social Sciences](#). Engineering departments assess undergraduate programs according to student learning outcomes required by ABET, stated in the examples from Petroleum Engineering and from Mechanical Engineering.

In addition, several co-curricular programs assess their activity and are in the process of identifying and assessing student learning outcomes. Our Assessment webpages – [Assessment/Student Learning Evaluation](#), [Creating an Assessment Method](#), [Assessment Report Submission Process](#), [Assessment Reports Posted](#) – and our Institutional Student Learning Team meetings provide information and guidelines for faculty and staff.

The following is an example of one process in which we assessed and continue to assess the effectiveness of our gateway Math courses to make changes to increase our retention rate:

- We review data from our Institutional Research office, such as retention rates, and the completion/pass rates in our Freshman gateway or preparatory courses, such as College Algebra (MATH 101), Pre-Calculus (MATH 103), and Trigonometry (MATH 104).
- Based on data, we initiate changes in the teaching of pilot sections of these gateway courses, then gather the pass rates for these pilots as compared to previous data for those courses and with control sections.
 - For example, preparatory courses Pre-Calculus and Trigonometry have both been redesigned by engaging students in learning to help incoming Freshman develop the math skills necessary to pass Calculus.
 - As reported on page 4 of the [HSI-STEM Year 3 Evaluation Report](#), before the redesign, the baseline pass rate for Pre-Calculus was 57% (average for 2007-2010).
 - In Fall 2013, the pass rate increased to 77%.
 - Before the redesign, the baseline pass rate for Trigonometry was 64% (average for 2007-2010).
 - In Spring 2014, the pass rate increased to 73%.
- We create Living Learning Communities that support this redesign, as some LLC students are enrolled in some sections of Pre-Calculus or Trigonometry.
 - In Fall 2011, the pass rate for LLC students in Pre-Calculus was 69% compared to 60% from baseline data of 2007-2009.
 - In Spring 2012, the pass rate for LLC students in Trigonometry was 82% compared to 61% from baseline data of 2007-2009. (As reported in Table 2 of the [SES Year 2 Technical Report](#).)

We follow a similar process for reviewing our General Education Core courses, using Institutional Research data and findings from the relevant academic department Student Learning Assessment Reports.

The following is how we assess our undergraduate and graduate programs:

- We build our undergraduate and graduate programs and make any changes on degree-relevant and industry-relevant learning; in other words, what our students should know and be able to perform upon completion of their degree to continue their studies in graduate school or to enter the work force in their discipline.
 - We assess the numbers, usually as percentage, of students who are competent in these outcomes, with competency percentage decided on by the academic departments, and report this on the Student Learning Assessment Reports.
 - [Industry or corporate advisory boards](#) review these learning outcomes and graduation numbers.
- Our Student Services, Alumni Relations Office, and academic departments track our graduates for the percentage who are working in their disciplines or who are continuing their work in graduate school; some results are discussed in 4.A.
- Curricular and program changes made by academic departments from student learning assessment are listed on each department's Student Learning Assessment Reports.
- [Examples of curricular changes based on academic department assessment are outlined here](#) and [here](#); they are also found on the [Assessment Reports Posted](#) webpage.

Growth of Mechanical Engineering

One example of a program change that has had exceptional results was implemented by Mechanical Engineering.

In 2005, Mechanical Engineering, through assessing the effectiveness of the Senior Design Clinic, changed its curriculum to a unique design clinic program in which Junior and Senior students work together on actual design projects for industrial corporations and research centers. Seniors mentor Juniors and any Sophomores or Freshmen who chose to volunteer, so that projects can be long term and be large in scope. This teaches the students valuable Engineering skills and is a great recruiting tool when prospective students and their parents visit the department.

Students showcase their projects at their annual end-of-the-year departmental Student Design Conference – [one example is the Sounding Rocket Design Team 2013 video](#) – in which approximately 100 students present and advisory board members and families attend, for a total attendance of approximately 250 people per year.

Previously, Juniors and Seniors worked on separate projects. When Juniors and Seniors began working together on significant "real world" projects and learning the critical skills necessary to succeed when they enter the workforce or graduate school, Mechanical Engineering began to see a significant increase in their number of majors.

As reported in 1.A., the growth of the major from [2001 to 2013 was 1400% in comparison to 51% growth nationwide](#); this data supports that the Junior and Senior Design Clinic reconfiguration was a strong curricular change.

[As noted at the August 2014 meeting of the NMT Board of Regents:](#)

There followed a discussion on reasons for the success of New Mexico Tech's Mechanical Engineering program. Among the reasons cited was the opportunity for students to work on design projects during both their junior and senior years; team projects, active recruitment, and faculty involvement. Also cited was the effect of MythBusters in attracting students to explosives research.

Other Engineering departments have taken notice of the success of the Mechanical Engineering Student Design Conference. Electrical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Petroleum Engineering, Materials Engineering and Mineral Engineering all have Design Conferences open to the public that showcase their students' design projects. Some Engineering Departments are discussing incorporating a Junior and Senior Design Clinic similar to that of Mechanical Engineering; assessment methods, such as growth of the departments, will be established.

Select academic departments and their assessment methods, as provided by Department Chairs, follow:

[Computer Science and Engineering \(CSE\)](#)

Our assessment instruments are both *direct* (numerical scores from selected learning outcomes in selected courses) and *indirect* (e.g., student input in departmental Student Forum meetings, exit survey data). Based on these results the CSE Department implemented changes according to the results of strategic initiatives culled over a three-semester period (Spring 2009, Fall 2010 and Fall 2012). CSE organized its assessment according to specific Student Outcomes and developed curricular or teaching changes based on their results. [Alumni surveys](#) help to track graduates and their industry-relevant or degree-relevant preparedness.

Electrical Engineering

The Department of Electrical Engineering's processes reflect good practice as they incorporate feedback from an [active and diverse external advisory board](#) and broad involvement of members of the faculty and staff. In addition, a Professor of Electrical Engineering is active in ABET as a team chair and commissioner and provides valuable guidance to the department's methodologies and processes.

Goals for student learning and the processes to assess them are in effect for both the undergraduate and graduate program. The undergraduate goals and process can be found in the relevant pages of [2010 ABET self-study report](#), which has all confidential information either not included or marked out.

Continuous improvement of the undergraduate and graduate Electrical Engineering programs is undertaken through assessment of the respective goals.

[Graduate goals and processes](#) are similar to those at the undergraduate level with the exception of the final presentation and report for the independent study or thesis being key points of evaluation.

Chemical Engineering

The Chemical Engineering Department evaluates 12 outcomes, which include the a-k specified by ABET as well as an additional outcome related to process safety. There are two primary modes of assessment:

- The [first mode](#) includes surveys given to faculty, alumni, and advisory board members at the senior design reviews. The questions ask if a particular outcome has been addressed exceptionally, adequately, or not adequately. The department has set an 80% adequate or better standard.
- The second mode includes surveys given to alumni 6-12 months after graduation where they are asked to evaluate their skills related to these outcomes. The goal is an 80% adequate or better rating. [Results from 2011](#) indicate that none of the outcomes fell below the 80% threshold set by the department.

Additionally, the Chemical Engineering Department holds biannual advisory board meetings. The first meeting coincides with the 49ers weekend in the Fall and the second coincides with the Junior and Senior Design presentation event. The Spring meeting includes a discussion of the design presentations with respect to ABET outcomes, as evidenced by [the minutes for the Spring 2013 meeting](#). Select attendees, including alumni, advisory board members, and faculty, also fill out surveys that probe the ability of students to meet the department's learning outcomes. All faculty are invited to both meetings and normally attendance is 100%.

Integrated Planning Based on Assessment of Student Learning: An Effective Process Made More Effective

For years, as detailed on a [former Assessment webpage](#), the reporting of academic assessment followed a process that has recently been improved.

This process was and continues as follows:

- Reports are completed on a [template](#) by the Academic Departments and reviewed by the Assessment Coordinator, the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (currently the same person), the Faculty Senate Assessment Committee (now called Student Learning Committee), and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- The Faculty Senate Student Learning Committee gives annual reports to the Faculty Senate concerning the activity of the committee and review of the departmental assessment reports.
- The AVPAA meets with Department Chairs or Student Learning Coordinators to discuss assessment methods, results, trend tracking and plans for changes based on the results.
- The General Education Core assessment reports that assess the Core Competencies required by the NMHED for all state institutions are also posted on the Academic Affairs [Assessment Reports Posted webpage](#) for public access.

However, this process has been improved due to the following:

- As of Fall 2014, Student Learning Assessment Reports are found within NMT's [Integrated Planning Workspace](#). Information about this is on the updated [Assessment Report Submission webpage](#).

- The Student Learning Assessment Reports (and Program/Office Activity Reports) are transparent and accessible for review by the Faculty Senate Student Learning Committee and by any constituent involved with strategic planning and the advancement of the institution.
- Each Vice President, with information based on the reports, can apprise the President before he leaves for the legislative session in February of each year.
- The Vice President and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Deans, and the Faculty Senate Student Learning Committee, after reviewing the reports, notify the academic department if any Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcome is not being assessed.
- The Workspace provides the campus community with a data repository that will help in administrative decisions and budget planning, as is discussed in 5.C.
- The General Education Core assessment reports that assess the Core Competencies required by the HED for all state institutions continue to be posted on the Academic Affairs [Assessment Reports Posted webpage](#) for public access.
- The Strategic Planning Committee has an Student Success Task Force that outlines further steps for assessment across the campus and assessment workshops for faculty and staff development.
- An Assessment Task Force of members of the committee formed at the HLC Academy for Assessment for Student Learning Results Forum in 2014 are creating an Assessment Strategic Plan that includes tasks needed to advance faculty training in, involvement with, and commitment to student learning assessment as well as sustainability of our Quality Initiative, the Student Research Symposium, as an assessment method.

Faculty Involvement and Faculty Senate Committee

Faculty are involved in assessment on many levels:

- [Instructors assess their courses](#) according to the student learning outcomes for their program or for the general education core courses, which align with the Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes.
- Each academic department has a faculty member who serves as the [Student Learning \(Assessment\) Coordinator for their department](#) by working with the department on assessment, collaborating with the Department Chair on the assessment reports, and by working with the entire institution (including non-academic offices) as part of the Institutional Student Learning Team.
- The Faculty Senate Student Learning (Assessment) Committee is composed of faculty with administration and staff ex-officio members. It tasks itself with various duties and is tasked with various duties through the Institutional Student Learning Team and the new Strategic Plan.
- The Chair of the Faculty Senate Student Learning Committee and other faculty members attended the HLC Conference in 2014 and the Assessment Academy Results Forum in 2014.
- The Assessment Task Force, chaired by a faculty member, was created during the Assessment Academy Results Forum in 2014.

Co-Curricular Student Research Symposium and the Results Forum

The Student Research Symposium resulted from our participation in the HLC Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning as an initiative to improve student communication skills and sense of

community, to increase student learning and assessment awareness on our campus, and to contribute to curriculum assessment, as detailed on the [Student Research Symposium brief](#). Assessment methods, changes we made based on our assessment data, and results from those changes are detailed in the [Impact Report](#). NMT was invited to present our Quality Initiative and its results in the [Showcase Session of the Results Forum](#).

Effect of Quality Initiative on Institutional Commitment to the Assessment of Student Learning

NMT has a broader understanding of student learning and how to assess it since our work with the Academy for Assessment of Student Learning; conclusions include:

- Co-curricular events contribute to curricular student learning;
- Co-curricular events should have Student Learning Outcomes that are measurable;
- Co-curricular events can support the curriculum;
- Technology, such as i>Clickers and iPads, can be used for assessment;
- The SRS is training future faculty on assessment because graduate students serve as reviewers;
- The SRS is training students on assessment, as undergraduate students help create assessment methods, help compile data and are involved in all assessment activities for the SRS;
- The SRS contributes to training non-academic departments in thinking of student learning outcomes and methods for assessment;
- Discussions about assessment methods happen in the Institutional Student Learning Team meetings;
- The Assessment Task Force of the Faculty Senate Student Learning Committee, one of our most valuable results of our final work with the Academy, is creating an Assessment Strategic Plan that will include how to use the SRS for interdisciplinary presentations and assessment as well as assessment of student learning in areas other than communication.

Other Co-curricular Assessment

While curricular programs have been assessing student learning outcomes and making necessary adjustments to improve student competency in the outcomes for decades, the co-curricular programs are now also identifying student learning outcomes and creating methodology to assess those, through engagement with the Institutional Student Learning Team.

Discussions in the Institutional Student Learning Team Meetings and meetings about the launch of the Integrated Planning Workspace are facilitating the move of these offices to assess for Student Learning Outcomes.

Currently, many offices are reporting an increase in services by students as well as student suggestions via surveys. While these might better be reported in 4.A. as Program Review, [they are attached as evidence here](#) to show that, while student support offices are in the midst of creating Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment methods to measure those, they have been proactive in gathering student input and making improvements based on student needs.

Strategic Planning

The [Student Success Task Force for the new Strategic Plan outlined several goals](#) that relate this 4.B.

Commitment

Assessing for continuous improvement is similar to the scientific method; NMT embraces and enjoys the gathering of data, evaluating the data for improvements, piloting changes, and gathering data based on the improvements. Our steps to have assessment conversations and share best practices through our Institutional Student Learning Team meetings, our Assessment Task Force and our Integrated Planning Workspace as well as continued work for the Student Research Symposium to assess our curriculum are just some ways that we prioritize assessment and its value to student learning at NMT.

Sources

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

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

Argument

Emphasizing research opportunities and the strengthening of Math skills in the Freshman year, we now (for Fall 2014) report our highest retention rate (79%), which we expect to see have a positive impact on our IPEDS graduation rate beginning with the cohorts of First Time Freshmen who entered in 2011.

NMT expects the 2016 Freshman cohort to have an 83% retention rate.

Our plans for retention improvement over the next three years were [reported to the NMHED in Fall 2014](#) and are outlined in [The Tech Experience: Retention, Persistence and Completion Initiatives brief](#).

Retention Analysis, Initiatives and Success

For the last ten years, the NMT President has made improved retention one of his performance goals to the Board of Regents. A five-year longitudinal study into retention and completion began in 2003 that included surveys, focus groups, institutional data and comparisons of attrition and graduation rates with peer institutions. We continue to use a variety of analysis methods, such as Institutional Research retention data for [First Time Freshmen](#) and for [Transfer students](#).

A Retention Task Force was formed in 2005. [Retention and completion are the first items of the 2006-2011 Strategic Plan](#), stated on page 8, with a first year retention goal of 80 percent.

About this same time, the economic downturn occurred. Piloting the planned academic initiatives required funding, so when NMT became eligible for applying for funding through the Department of Education as a Hispanic-Serving Institution, the Office of Academic Affairs led the institution in obtaining funding to pilot retention initiatives.

In 2009, members of the Retention Task Force, which included Academic Affairs, faculty, student success staff, and institutional research staff, functioned as the Title V Planning Team to design the A Model for Student Engagement and Success (SES) grant proposal, which has retention as its focus.

[The SES grant](#), awarded in 2010, initiated the following to increase student engagement: Living Learning Communities (LLCs) with a research/design component, Learning Coaches/Tutors, faculty teaching resources through the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL), eleven smart classrooms, and four learning labs in the residence halls. With the research/design component for Freshmen, students no longer have to wait until Junior year to become involved in research or design.

The LLCs, also called First Year Research and First Year Design, are [showing great results that are contributing to retention](#): the retention of Freshmen involved in the first LLC cohort (2011-2012) was 82%. Results from the last completed cohort – which is approximately a quarter of the incoming Freshman in 2013-2014 – reveals that the retention rate has climbed to 84%.

The institutionalization of this grant is the [Office for Student Learning](#); this academic student support office and its initiatives are discussed in 3.D.

Because success in Math is critical to success at NMT, our retention study suggested that not progressing to Calculus as quickly as possible could contribute to not retaining students; the lower the level of Math students begin at NMT, the greater their chances for not staying until Sophomore year or, if they do persist, the longer it will take for these students to graduate. As is stated in several other places in this report, supporting students in gaining competency in the Math courses prior to Calculus, specifically Pre-Calculus and Trigonometry, so that they can pass quickly into Calculus, is the basis for success at NMT.

Thus, Academic Affairs led the creation of the HSI-STEM: Entryway to Engineering proposal submitted to the Department of Education and awarded in 2011. The [HSI-STEM grant](#) focuses on student success in Pre-Calculus and Trigonometry as well as on increasing the attainment of Engineering degrees by Hispanic and low-income students in New Mexico, whether Freshman or transfer.

Through this grant, we have redesigned our Pre-Calculus (MATH 103) and Trigonometry (MATH 104) courses to include interactive computer-based instruction and engaging math instruction to help Freshmen pass Calculus (which is a requirement for all degrees). As stated earlier and [reported on page 4 of the HSI-STEM Year 3 Evaluation Report](#), before the redesign, the baseline pass rate for Pre-Calculus was 57% (average for 2007-2010). In Fall 2013, the pass rate increased 20%, from the baseline to 77%. Before the redesign the baseline pass rate for Trigonometry was 64% (average for 2007-2010). In Spring 2014, the pass rate increased 9%, from the baseline to 73%.

Also, with Engineering being nearly three-quarters of our enrollment, to keep students engaged upon entering NMT, we have redesigned our [Introduction to Engineering course](#), which uses the new [Engineering Lab, through funding by the HIS-STEM grant](#).

The Alcohol Safety Awareness Program (ASAP), a program run by undergraduate student co-leaders with the direction of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and with the Behavioral Intervention Team as its advisory committee, began at NMT in Fall 2012. Funded by the New Mexico Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Services Division (BHSD) Office of Substance Abuse Prevention (OSAP) via a federal (SAMHSA) Substance Abuse, Prevention and Treatment Block Grant, the program is designed to increase student retention, persistence and completion by educating students on positive behaviors and the risks of binge and illegal drinking. While we cannot

assess if the program has contributed directly to student retention, studies suggest that drinking does contribute to students leaving college and that awareness programs can help in keeping students focused on being successful in college. The six-college consortium of which ASAP is a part conducts an annual survey that reveals that in a five-year period, [from 2008 to 2013, risky drinking has decreased among these college students in New Mexico.](#)

After just 6.5 months of the presence of the ASAP on campus, 24.2% of students surveyed stated that the campus ASAP information has been helpful and/or informative ([from the New Mexico Tech Student Lifestyle Survey 2013, n=348](#)).

Resulting from these retention efforts, NMT's IPEDS retention rate increased steadily from 69% in Fall 2008 to our Fall 2014 retention of 79%. Thus, we are moving steadily to our goal of 80%.

Persistence and Completion Analysis and Initiatives

Because our majors require from 130 to 136 credit hours, with Math courses before Calculus I often not counting in this required number of hours, and due to a very rigorous curriculum to produce scientists and engineers upon whom society depends, as is discussed in 1.A., expecting the majority of our majors to graduate in four to six years is realistic.

However, we also expect to see an increase in our graduation rate of six years or less due to the increase of students passing into Calculus I, as discussed above in our retention initiatives. The IPEDS percentage is most likely showing the percentage of students that left NMT before Junior year rather than the number who are graduating in greater than six years.

Concerning graduation rates, IPEDS only tells us how long it took for a percentage of a cohort of students entering in the same year to graduate in 6 years or less. Thus, to discover the contributing factors to student retention, persistence and completion, Academic Affairs collects [data about the students who graduated in one year, for example the 2012-2013 academic year](#), such as student preparedness upon entering NMT based on: dual credit, AP credit, Math placement, and transfer credit. Then, we look at completion rates, whether the student is a science or engineering student, and student GPAs upon graduation. [We collect the same data by major.](#)

From this study, our data reveals, for the students who graduated in 2012-2013:

- Average graduation for FTF in Engineering is 4.85 yr.
- Average graduation for FTF in the Sciences is 4.94 yr.
- Average graduation for FTF & Transfer in Engineering is 4.48 yr.
- Average graduation for FTF & Transfer in Sciences is 4.68 yr.
- 87.6% total students (FTF & Transfer) graduated in 6.0 years or less.
- 53.4% of these students placed in Calculus I or higher when they enrolled at NMT.

Persistence initiatives include discussions about piloting Sophomore research or design opportunities, similar to the First Year Research/Design and the Student Research Symposium, which engages students in sharing knowledge about their research and design projects and, thus, building community.

New Strategic Plan and Retention, Persistence and Completion

The Faculty Senate Retention Committee investigates issues of retention, persistence, and completion at NMT and provides reports and makes recommendations to the full senate. In recent years, members of the committee have been involved in planning for the SES and HSI-STEM grants.

Ensuring sound practice in our methods of data collection and analysis, our Registrar and Institutional Research office follow the [New Mexico Higher Education Reporting Manual](#). NMT collects and reports its data in a manner that assures the institution passes the legal standards for auditing enrollment numbers set by the [New Mexico Administrative Code](#).

The [Growth Task Force](#) of the new Strategic Plan reports:

The strategic plan calls for increased activity in this area [of collection and analysis of data for retention, persistence and completion.] We will begin analyzing new metrics at the undergraduate and graduate levels and will be implementing new software packages to assist with identifying areas that obstruct student retention, persistence, and completion.

The [Student Success Task Force of the new Strategic Plan outlined several goals](#) that relate to 4.C.

Commitment

Through assessment, NMT discovered roadblocks to increased retention and overcame them through strategic planning and initiatives, most of which have been funded by our Department of Education grants. We have seen a 10% increase in retention to 79% and expect to see improved IPEDS six-year graduation rate. We are committed to continuing the initiatives that are showing this success.

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4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

Summary

Through assessment, NMT discovered roadblocks to increased retention and overcame them through strategic planning and initiatives, most of which have been funded by our Department of Education grants. We have seen a 10% increase in retention to 79% and expect to see improved IPEDS six-year graduation rate. We are committed to continuing the initiatives that are showing this success.

Assessing for continuous improvement is similar to the scientific method; NMT embraces and enjoys the gathering of data, evaluating data for improvements, piloting changes, and gathering data based on the improvements. Our steps to have assessment conversations and share best practices through our Institutional Student Learning Team meetings, our Assessment Task Force and our Integrated Planning Workspace as well as continued work for the Student Research Symposium to assess our curriculum are just some ways that we prioritize assessment and its value to student learning at NMT.

NMT conducts meaningful program reviews by academic departments and by co-curricular offices and programs. We continue to improve these reviews and have made them transparent and accessible for the sharing of information and for best practices and integrated planning.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Argument

New Mexico Tech is a student-centered institution that is completely mission-focused. Our faculty, students and staff are selected based on our mission: specifically, through creative approaches, NMT solves technical and scientific problems and communicates that knowledge. Our fiscal, human and physical and technological resources support this focus.

As stated in the introduction by our President, our sound planning has resulted in clean audits for twenty years, stable faculty and staff employment and no layoffs or furloughs even during the economic downturn, citations and patents that advance the scientific and technology community (and thus the world), and, in the last four years, our highest student enrollment in our history. As stated in 4.C., emphasizing research opportunities and the strengthening of Math skills in the Freshman year, we now (for Fall 2014) report our highest retention rate (79%), which we expect to see have a positive impact on our IPEDS graduation rate beginning with the cohorts of First Time Freshmen who entered in 2011.

Maintaining our consistent solvency and adherence to our mission, NMT prepares its graduates for high-paying positions within STEM and for graduate studies (as is described in 1.A.), and it remains one of the largest employers of the city of Socorro and employs internationally-renowned researchers.

Resource Allocation Process and Integrated Planning

NMT's sources of revenue are grants and contracts, tuition, the state general fund appropriations, and

discretionary funds that come from overhead, and capital funding from the state. These are discussed in the Fiscal Resources section. In addition, we receive grants and contracts research funding from federal, state and private sources.

Due to our priority of combining student learning with knowledge we create through research and design, we provide students with actual experience in research and design that contributes to our grants and contracts funding.

Supporting our educational mission, instruction and its support is NMT's primary business; thus, the [instruction and support budget, totaling approximately \\$19 million per year, is the largest amount allocated within the Instruction and General \(I & G\) fund.](#)

Our integrated planning involves informal, direct communication; formalized meetings; and formalized, written reporting, including a monthly expenditure report that tracks expenditures with budget guidelines.

NMT is an enviable size for direct communication. The President and all Vice Presidents are located on the same floor in Brown Hall; thus, all they need do is walk to each other's offices for direct face-to-face conversation about the status, needs and interrelationship of each division.

In addition, without layers of administrators and protocol, faculty, staff and students can speak with a Vice President and even the President with just a request, or, because all offices have an open-door policy, when they walk through the door to the office. Considering the situation, anyone can meet with two or more Vice Presidents at the same time.

In addition, formalized meetings are held on a regular basis and can be called at a moment's notice, if need be. The President's Cabinet – the President, the four Vice Presidents, and the three Research Division Directors – meet to discuss overreaching topics and to plan integratively. The Council of Chairs – Academic Department Chairs and Academic Division Office Directors – meet with the Vice President for Academic Affairs each month.

Additionally, the Deans Council – the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Dean of Engineering, and the Dean of Arts and Sciences – meets with the Vice President for Academic Affairs each month. The Graduate Council – Academic Department Chairs – meet with the Graduate Dean each month. The Faculty Senate also meets monthly; the President attends these meetings and provides updates to the faculty on matters of institutional interest.

Further, in a recent move toward more available data for integrated planning, all offices and departments are submitting an Activity Report, due September 1 of each year, to the [Integrated Planning Workspace](#). This workspace, on Canvas, allows any member of the NMT community to review the Activity Report of all offices and departments. With this information readily available and transparent, the President, Vice Presidents, Deans, Division Directors, faculty and staff can see the productivity of all areas of the university for informed conversation and planning. The same workspace also holds the Student Learning Assessment Reports submitted by academic departments and relevant co-curricular offices.

Fiscal Resources

NMT is sound in its fiscal resources and operations, as outlined in the annual President's Report and

verified by the annual audit report, a clean report for twenty years. The budgeted figures in the four following tables that follow are from the [Operating Budget for FY 2013-2014](#).

NMT's budgeted sources of funds for fiscal years 2013-2014 are the following:

Source of Funding	Amount	%
Grants and Contracts	\$76,366,649	46%
State Appropriations	\$38,882,315	23%
Capital Appropriations	\$25,035,000	15%
Sales and Services	\$11,521,139	7%
Tuition and Fees	\$9,092,323	5%
Other	\$5,377,500	3%
Land & Permanent Fund	\$1,250,000	1%
Private Gifts	\$837,000	0%
Total	\$168,361,926	

NMT's budgeted uses of funds for fiscal years 2013-2014 are the following:

Use of Funds	Amount	%
Research/Public Service	\$81,178,577	50%
Instruction and General	\$34,455,763	21%
Capital	\$28,285,000	17%
Student Aid	\$10,285,000	6%
Auxiliary/Athletics	\$5,710,481	3%
Other	\$4,208,390	3%
Net Transfers	238,049	0%
Total	\$168,885,377	

NMT's budgeted sources of Instruction and General Funds for fiscal years 2013-2014 are the following:

Source of Instruction and General Funds	Amount	%
State Appropriation	\$26,670,400	67%
Tuition and Fees	\$8,197,224	20%
Overhead Recovery	\$4,168,000	10%

Land & Permanent Fund	\$1,168,000	3%
Endowment Interest	\$200,000	0%
Other	\$59,500	0%
Total	\$40,345,124	

NMT's budgeted uses of Instruction Funds for fiscal years 2013-2014 are the following:

Use of Instruction Funds	Amount	%
Instruction	\$16,421,226	48%
Instructional Support	\$7,610,080	22%
Facilities Management	\$5,096,425	15%
Academic Support	\$3,093,096	9%
Student Services	\$2,179,771	6%
Total	\$34,455,763	

Keeping tuition affordable has been a NMT commitment; thus, our tuition is among the lowest in the nation for a university with a STEM mission. In fact, NMT is ranked 20th in [Kiplinger's Personal Finance's list](#) of 100 best values in public colleges for 2015. The ranking cites four-year schools that combine outstanding academics with affordable cost.

Tuition increases have typically been about 5% and are endorsed by the Student Government Association (SGA). The President always confers with the SGA about tuition increase; the SGA has always concurred.

At the height of federal research funding, NMT secured more than \$100 million annually for various research projects. Since the elimination of earmarks by Congress, that figure has fallen, but NMT consistently brings in around \$80 million in research funds.

NMT has also been extremely successful in [acquiring federal Department of Education grants](#). In three consecutive years, NMT received grants, each in excess of \$3 million. Totaling \$10.4 million, these three grants have allowed NMT to modernize many classrooms, provide faculty training and curriculum upgrades, and launch an innovative Freshman learning/research program.

In 2012, NMT initiated a fundraising plan for increasing alumni donations to the NMT scholarship funds and endowments, which is discussed further in 5.C.

The [Research and Economic Development Division \(R&ED\)](#) encourages research throughout NMT by encouraging interdisciplinary and collaborative work among faculty, students, and other universities and research entities. R&ED provides financial support, professional and technical expertise, and special services and facilities to assist researchers at New Mexico Tech. R&ED contributes to New Mexico's growth in the area of technology by cooperating with industry and governmental agencies to move new ideas and discoveries from the academic laboratory into the

marketplace.

Further, R&ED funds two months of salary for new tenure-track faculty, providing that they sign a second year agreement to continue their employment at the University. The funding is intended to support their effort to start up their research activity. The budget for this effort approximates \$100,000 each year.

The research divisions also provide employment opportunities for NMT students, often in their chosen field of study, which is one of the hallmarks of an NMT education. For example, in [FY14, a total of 449 students were employed on campus using research funds; combined salaries totaled \\$2,920,209.53.](#)

Human Resources

Number of Employees and Required Qualifications

Human Resources [analyzes the workforce](#) and provides [organizational employee and salary listings by department](#).

[Human Resources provided the following data for October 2014](#) (page 2).

NMT employees totaled 844 people, a stable number over the years. The Employees by Job Group are as follows:

Employees by Job Group:

Job Group	Number of Employees
Faculty	184
Professional Non-Faculty	177
Officials, Administrators and Managers	151
Technical and Para-Professional	137
Service	87
Skilled and Semi-Skilled	57
Secretarial and Clerical	51

Of these, 670 are Regular Full Time; 13 are Regular Part-Time; 89 are Temporary; and 72 are Emergency hires.

Our full-time faculty numbers remain consistent, as follows: 121 in [Fall 2006](#); 119 in [Fall 2007](#); 125 in [Fall 2008](#); 124 in [Fall 2009](#); 121 in [Fall 2010](#); 123 in [Fall 2011](#); 124 in [Fall 2012](#); and 124 in [Fall 2013](#).

Part-time faculty range in number from 26 in [Fall 2006](#), [Fall 2007](#) and [Fall 2008](#) to 55 in [Fall 2011](#). In [Fall 2013](#), NMT employed 47 part-time faculty.

Nearly all of NMT's full-time faculty are tenured or tenure-track and, thus, hold a Doctorate degree.

In fact, for Fall 2012, [the number of faculty with a Doctorate degree is 99%](#), a consistent percentage.

The remaining instructors must hold a Master's or Doctorate degree in the discipline or related discipline being taught, or in certain fields, have industry experience equivalent to a Master's degree or higher.

During the 2013-2014 academic year, 82 graduate student TAs served as instructors for some introductory course labs, recitations, or lectures. Occasionally, TAs teach more advanced courses directly related to their research and advanced education. For some courses, TAs might provide professor support by leading help sessions, holding office hours, and grading. Graduate student TAs have a bachelor's degree and are in a graduate degree program. [TAs receive training](#) and are supervised by faculty in the discipline of the course they TA. In 2013-2014, there were approximately 25 TAs who were upperclass undergraduate students who assisted faculty by instructing lab sections. They have to meet rigorous requirements for being hired in this position and are trained and supervised by faculty.

NMT employs approximately 35 part-time [Community Education instructors each semester](#); these professionals can be faculty members also teaching in the Community Education Program, or they are members of the surrounding community. The [qualifications required to apply to be a Community Education instructor](#) and the [qualifications of current Community Education instructors](#) are posted on the Community Education Program website.

The requirements for each NMT hire are individual and specified by a [Position Description Questionnaire](#). Tenure-track faculty position descriptions include teaching, research, and service.

Continued Training and Professional Development for Staff

As is stated on page 5 of the [Employee Handbook](#):

Education and training are essential components of staff development and, therefore, the Institute is willing to support any such training within the limits of the organization's financial and material resources and operating objectives. Tech tries to provide all employees with the opportunity to match their skills, experience, and capabilities to the needs of the organization.

[Human Resources offers training each month](#) with internal and external workshop leaders on a variety of professional and personal growth topics including but not limited to: [staff supervision; customer service; and software applications such as Word, Excel, Access](#).

Offices and departments also offer trainings that are relevant to a significant number of staff, such as the training by the Property Department in its [Property Department Regulations/Procedures](#).

Training and continued professional development of faculty and other instructional staff and of academic support staff is addressed in 3.C.

Physical and Technological Infrastructure

NMT capital projects are based on a [Five-Year Facilities Plan](#) that is updated annually and submitted to the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) for approval. All requests for state

capital funding must have approval from several state agencies including NMHED and the Legislative Finance Committee. As these funds are limited, New Mexico universities often seek brick-and-mortar funds through a General Obligation bond issue that must be approved by the voting public.

Smaller renovation or construction projects are handled in-house through [Facilities Management](#). Facilities Management is responsible for physical infrastructure support on campus; i.e., building maintenance, repair and renovation; electrical and utility services; and grounds maintenance and landscaping for over one million square feet of campus. Facilities Management also oversees safety and risk management to prevent workplace injuries.

[The Information Technology Center \(ITC\)](#) provides technical support to the University. The ITC provides the campus with Internet access and several national backbones from department offices and wireless access nodes throughout campus. These connections are protected from the outside with firewalls and monitoring services and are supported with on-site support staff.

Local onsite support is available for all NMT-owned equipment. Other service areas include the Residential Computing Network, wireless networking, telephones, Management Information Services, software licensing and hosting services. In addition, the Defensive Driving Course (DDC) is offered through a partnership with the National Safety Council's Online Training to students, staff and off-campus personnel.

Over the last five years, NMT has expanded the technology in the classrooms and labs that is essential for a quality education in STEM. [As of December 2014, 71% of our classrooms are "smart" classrooms.](#) Our [Engineering Design Lab](#) features state-of-the-art instruction technology, including interactive computing surface with projection computers, wireless "airplay" display of video from iPads, and a 3D printer for fast prototyping of student designed projects.

The Academic Center for Technology (ACT) provides support for the "smart" classrooms, distance education, online learning portals, and [training for faculty and students in the use of these technologies.](#)

Budgeting and Monitoring Expense

The mission of the Office of Budget & Analysis is to be responsible for fiscal accountability, financial planning, the management of state and federal funds, Banner system financial user support, and federal compliance.

The Office of Budget & Analysis produces monthly reports that assist in tracking expenditures and ensure that departments are staying within the limits of the budgets issued to them and prepares the annual budget for approval by NMT administrators and the Board of Regents, as well as monitors and analyzes budgetary financial activities throughout the year.

NMT adheres to regulations mandated at the state and federal levels, including quarterly financial reports that follow Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) standards. [Monthly reports](#) are submitted to the Board of Regents for approval. [Quarterly financial reports](#) are submitted to the Board of Regents for review and approval before they are provided to the state as part of the Fiscal Watch Policy.

Procedures for budgeting expenses are mandated by state law. The University has several layers of

oversight by the State of New Mexico, inclusive of the Institutional Finance and Capital Projects Division of the New Mexico High Education Department (NMHED), the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) and the Legislative Finance Committee. Our purchasing procedures follow the State Purchasing Act. The Budget Division of the state Department of Finance and Administration also monitors and oversees expenditures by state agencies during the fiscal year, which runs from July 1 to June 30 each year. [Chapter 6, Article 3, Sections 1 through 25](#) of the New Mexico Statutes Annotated 1978 governs the division. Further, NMT adheres to the general accounting principles, state and federal regulations and standards mandated by the National Association of College and University Business Officers.

Future Planning

The Strategic Planning Committee reports that the Strategic Plan includes evaluation of the resources needed to meet the strategic goals and setting timelines and expectations accordingly with plans for meeting new needs.

[The Growth Task Force of the Strategic Planning Committee](#) reports that the Strategic Plan includes goals to extensively assess what resources will be needed in each academic and administrative department in order to support effective instruction, advising, student services, and research experience, both for current capacity and projected growth.

[The Funding and Revenue Task Force of the Strategic Planning Committee](#) is developing a strategy to increase NMT's revenue base in order to support the fiscal resources and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure.

Commitment

NMT maintains its solvency and support of its constituencies, employees and its community during national economic shifts. Even during economically difficult years, our dedication to student success has resulted in our highest retention rate (79%), which we expect to see have a positive impact on our IPEDS graduation rate beginning with the cohorts of First Time Freshmen who entered in 2011.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Argument

New Mexico Tech ensures numerous ways for constituent involvement in communication, decision-making and leadership, with shared governances as our foundation. Our decisions and the fulfillment of our Mission and goals are driven by faculty and student input and involvement; all processes are collaborative.

Board of Regents

As discussed in 2.C., five board members are appointed by the Governor, but each appointee must be confirmed by the state Senate. In keeping with our commitment to being student-centered, one of the Regents is an undergraduate student who carries a full vote and must be confirmed by the New Mexico State Senate under Constitutional law.

The focus of all responsibilities of the Board of Regents is to oversee the interests of our internal and external constituents in keeping with our NMT Mission. The Board reviews and accepts monthly, quarterly and annual financial reports.

The [law provides for delegation of authority by the Board \(11.B.6. § 21-1-10\)](#), which the [NMT Board of Regents has done and continues to do when appropriate](#) to allow for the President to oversee effective daily functioning of the university.

For example, under our [Degree Conferral Policy](#), students are conferred degrees all months of the year; this enables students to have a diploma in hand when their graduation requirements are complete, recommended by approval by the Faculty Senate, and approved by the President. Thus, students do not have to wait for an August, December or May degree conferral, which is of particular importance to jobs within the public sector, as many STEM positions are. [The Board of Regents delegated our President with the authority to confer the degrees](#) after the recommendation by the Faculty Senate in March 2010.

The Board of Regents delegates most policies concerning day-to-day operations to [administration – \(administrative policies and procedures\) – and academic policies to the faculty](#).

Board of Regents meetings include the attendance of the Faculty Senate President as well as the four Vice Presidents and the three Division Directors and another director as needed for the agenda items covered.

President and Administrative Structure

Effective leadership includes collaboration with other institutions statewide. NMT excels in this capacity, as [President Lopez chairs the Council of University Presidents \(CUP\)](#), which [“... supports New Mexico’s seven public universities through information sharing, collaboration, strategic planning, policy development, and community outreach.”](#)

In recent years, the topic of priority for CUP discussion is the new state formula funding.

The President leads the CUP in working with the HED in establishing performance and funding formula goals that are mission-driven, in looking at funding from the point of view of the state, and in giving periodic testimony before the legislature.

[The President regularly reports to the Regents and the Faculty Senate about CUP’s](#) efforts to revitalize the state’s funding formula for higher education in between Legislative sessions.

The [President hosts a golf tournament](#) each September to raise funding for the Student Scholarship Fund, which provides some support for students who have no other sources of funding.

The institution has a clearly-defined organizational structure, as is shown in the [institutional organizational chart](#) and the organization charts of each division under the President: [Academic Affairs](#), [Administration and Finance](#), [Research and Economic Development](#), [Student and University Relations](#), [New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources \(Bureau\)](#), [Energetic Materials Research and Testing Center \(EMRTC\)](#), and [Petroleum Recovery Resource Center \(PRRC\)](#).

Each of the seven divisions is headed by a Vice President (four divisions) or a Research Division Director (three divisions). The President and the Vice Presidents and Research Division Directors, all administrators, compose the President’s Cabinet. The Vice President for Academic Affairs chairs the Council of Chairs, which is composed of both faculty and staff – the Academic Department Chairs and the Directors of the Academic Division. The Dean of Graduate Studies chairs the Graduate Council, which is composed of faculty – the Academic Department Chairs. Three Vice Presidents are supported by Associate Vice Presidents. One Vice President and the three Research Division Directors are supported by Directors. The Academic Division also includes Academic Deans, Academic support office Directors, and Academic Department Chairs.

In decision making for academic requirements, the President, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, who work with the HLC and the HED and other regulating organizations, inform the faculty of the legal requirements and best practices for institutions of higher education in maintaining academic standards and fairness to students.

Students

Together, NMT faculty and students solve problems and create, then communicate, knowledge. All

NMT students have an opportunity to be involved in actual research and design projects; many co-author research papers with their research advisors. Freshmen have research or design opportunities through the [First Year Research and Design program of the Living Learning Communities](#). All students have the chance each April to showcase their research or design and communicate its significance to a broad audience at the annual [Student Research Symposium](#).

The President meets with students each semester in the [Student Forums](#) and welcomes them to visit him in his office. In addition, the President formally welcomes all new students during orientation. The Vice President for Student and University Relations [invites all incoming students](#) to meet with her during the Fall semester.

In addition to the participation of our student Regent in guiding NMT, all students are allowed input to help to establish University policy through the [Student Forums](#) with the President, through the [undergraduate Student Government Association \(SGA\)](#), and through the [Graduate Student Association \(GSA\)](#).

Both student government bodies have a student representative in the Faculty Senate. As well, the following [Faculty Senate committees](#) include student representatives: Student Discipline Committee, Computing on Campus Committee, Student Learning (Assessment) Committee, Retention Committee, Financial Aid and Scholarship Committee, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Committee, and Space Utilization and Campus Planning.

Undergraduate student issues are brought up at the bi-weekly SGA meetings. If the issue has institutional impact, the SGA President presents the issue to the Faculty Senate. Any student can get themselves on the agenda. For example, clubs can come to the meetings and request partial or full funding of conference costs from the SGA.

As stated on the [Graduate Student Association \(GSA\) website](#):

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is an organization made up of all graduate students at New Mexico Tech. The GSA represents graduate students on policy-making committees, including Faculty Council, Graduate Council, Institute Senate, and the Student Association. We work with the administration to address issues relating to student life at Tech. We award travel grants for graduate students to present research at professional meetings. We participate in the Associated Students of New Mexico, an organization which represents the interests of students in higher education in New Mexico. We also provide some social activities for graduate students and their families.

An example of the effectiveness of student governance on our campus is [an email dialogue](#) among the Student Government Association President, faculty members, and the Chair of the Academic Standards and Admission Committee that documents the debate concerning a change to the University's grading scale to include A+. Student input was the deciding factor in the decision not to go forward with the proposal.

Further, our Policy Development, Amendment and Rescindment Policy requires [Campus Community Review](#). Students, faculty, staff, and Regents are sent an [email from the Public Information Officer notifying them of any proposed policy or policy change and allows them comment](#) before the policy receives final approval by the President or Board of Regents.

NMT is home to student-led and student-focused leadership-building [clubs and organizations](#) ranging from the professional to sports like. [Residential Life involves student RAs in leadership training](#).

Faculty and Staff

Faculty are involved in setting academic requirements, leadership and shared governance through a number of avenues, the foremost being the Faculty Senate. Faculty Senate meetings are held every month during the Fall and Spring semesters.

The [Faculty Senate Standing Rules](#) on the NMT Faculty Senate website state the membership of the Faculty Senate, which includes largely faculty with some staff, administration and student representation. The Standing Rules also define the purpose of the Faculty Senate, which is the NMT Faculty Senate “exists to set policy relating to academic matters, including admissions, academic standards, curricula and graduation requirements for both the undergraduate and graduate programs, and to recommend the conferral of earned degrees to the President. An additional role of the Faculty Senate is to promote communication among teaching faculty, researchers, and administrators.”

The Faculty Senate may approve as policy curricular changes that do not have institutional impact. For example, in 2009, the Academic Standards and Admission Committee (ASAC), a sub-committee of the Faculty Senate, made a recommendation to implement the [Academic Warning Program](#). The new program was approved by the Faculty Senate and implemented shortly thereafter.

The Faculty Senate may recommend action to the President on any other academic issue that does have institutional impact by following the Policy Development, Amendment and Rescindment Policy. If the President or the Board of Regents deem that the policy requires Board of Regents approval, this approval and adoption by the Board of Regents must occur before the policy is recorded in the Undergraduate Catalog or the Graduate Catalog. For example, the Faculty Senate approved the Academic Standards and Admission Committee recommendation that the [admission requirements for transfer students](#) include Math placement being Pre-Calculus or higher. The President determined that this required Board of Regents approval, which they granted in 2013. Other recent examples of Faculty Senate involvement and approval of academic policy includes changes in the [Incomplete Grading policy](#) and the [Readmission Deadline policy](#).

As potential institutional areas of attention are brought to the attention of Faculty Senate, committees can be formed and disbanded as necessary. For long term projects and corresponding long term committees, two-year terms for committee members are required to prevent stagnation. Faculty Senate Committees are listed in the [Standing Rules](#).

Staff members – such as the Registrar, Director of the Office for Student Learning, Director of the Academic Center for Technology, the Library Director, Director of Community Education and Outreach, Associate Dean for Student Success – are involved in shared governance by serving as members of the Council of Chairs, of the Faculty Senate, and as ex-officio members of Faculty Senate committees. For example, [the Registrar is involved](#) in setting academic requirements, policy and processes by serving as a voting member of the Faculty Senate and Council of Chairs; ex-officio member of the Graduate Council; and ex-officio member of the multiple Faculty Senate Committees. The Associate Vice President also serves as an ex-official member of several Faculty Senate committees. While Faculty Senate committees are composed of largely faculty, current discussions between the Faculty Senate and the Vice Presidents are to expand the membership of Faculty Senate committees to include the staff whose positions relate to the task of the committees, thus ensuring shared governance and more effective committees. Students are also part of some Faculty Senate committees, as stated earlier in this section.

In addition, faculty and staff members can meet with the Vice Presidents or the President, often at a moment's notice. There are socials for faculty and staff held throughout the year, some at the President's home.

Strategic Planning Committee Membership

Of great importance for shared governance is the [membership of the Strategic Planning Committee](#), which includes strong faculty representation (10 members). In addition, there are two student members (one undergraduate student and one graduate student), eight administrative staff members, three research members, and three alumni/community members.

Commitment

In practices, processes and policies, NMT promotes strong leadership in appropriate capacities from its Board, President, administrators, faculty, staff and students. Students, faculty and staff have a variety of avenues to contribute to the functioning of the institute according to its Mission.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Argument

As a student-centered and mission-focused university, NMT places instruction and its support – with research and design opportunities for all students – as our priority. On a departmental level, changes are made in courses or program curriculum to improve student learning. On an institutional level, budgets are built around academic services and support services for students. The [total expenditures for the Instruction and General \(I & G\) fund](#) is \$34,455,763, of which 57% is dedicated to instruction and academic support.

Mission-based Allocation

NMT achieves mission-based measures outlined by our Strategic Plan; in addition, the funding NMT receives from the state through formula funding is based primarily on the following three performance measures:

1. Production of STEM grads
2. Completion of courses
3. Closing the achievement gap

As a STEM and HSI institution that, as our Mission states, “serves the diverse population of New Mexico” and with our highest retention rate, our highest enrollment, and our largest percentage of Hispanic students in our history, NMT delivers on our commitment to these three primary formula-funding performance measures.

Anticipation of and Responsiveness to Possible Fluctuations in Revenue

NMT responded quickly to the economic downturn in 2008, instituting a hiring freeze and wage freeze, both of which lasted for two years. NMT also curtailed discretionary spending, including professional travel during that period. As a result of these austere measures, NMT was able to avoid

the sort of lay-offs and furloughs that universities across the nation were forced to enact. During this time, NMT's enrollment increased, resulting in increased funding from tuition.

The Registrar works to anticipate funding fluctuations by analyzing the changes in the state's funding calculation. For example, [enrollment documents were used](#) to analyze the impact of a recent change in the state's funding calculation.

Enrollment is reviewed each semester by Academic Affairs and the Registrar to ensure sufficient course offerings for incoming Freshmen and transfer students, as evidenced by an email from [2012](#) and one a memo from [2013](#). In addition, NMT has a thorough space allocation process that oversees the allocation of classroom resources on campus each semester. The NMT Registrar's office oversees the process, which allows all internal constituents (mainly faculty members) to [schedule classes and reserve learning spaces in an efficient manner](#).

[NMT closely monitors residential life resources \(dormitory spaces\)](#) on an ongoing basis. NMT experienced a significant increase in students annually from 2004 to the present, which lead to a housing crunch beginning in 2010. With dormitories at maximum capacity for two years, NMT secured more than \$7 million in 2010 to begin construction of a new [150-bed dormitory](#), which was completed in time for the Fall 2013 semester.

Planning Processes Encompass the Institution as a Whole and Link Assessment of Student Learning, Evaluation of Operations, Planning, and Budgeting

The Board of Regents, in discussion with the President, oversees planning.

For example, the Board placed an emphasis on building our private funding. Thus, NMT responded with a fundraising initiative for increasing alumni donations to the NMT scholarship funds and endowments. The [NMT Office for Advancement hired a consultant in 2012](#) to conduct a six-month assessment and provide recommendations. NMT embarked on a five-year plan that began with building relationships with alumni across the nation and is culminating with a strong major gifts program. The Office for Advancement hired two staff members in 2014 who will focus on these fundraising efforts. The Office for Advancement is also collaborating with Academic Affairs to bring the consultant back in early [February 2015 to lead a day-long retreat](#) for faculty and other research departments. The focus of this retreat will be alumni relations and how to build relationships that will lead to major donations from individuals and from industry. Ultimately, the goal is to increase donations from alumni and other private entities to \$2 million per year. The Institute will begin planning a capital campaign within the next several years.

In addition, the NMT Board of Regents, acting as the Employee Benefit Trust, oversees the health insurance plans offered to employees. As a result of continuously rising costs, NMT has increased rates and the institutional share on a periodic basis to assure that the Trust stays solvent. To the extent possible, NMT makes effort to limit the rate of employee contribution increases by simultaneously increasing the institution's contribution.

There are eight Regents Meetings each year, which include the President, the four Vice Presidents, three Research Division Directors, the Faculty Senate Chair, and other office directions as needed.

Further, each Vice President and Division Director contributes to discussions for improving student success with the President and each other in Cabinet meetings.

Other collaborative interdivision meetings include New Student Experience meetings, Leadership meetings, meetings among Vice Presidents, and Faculty Senate committee meetings. Further, additional meetings for all offices and academic departments of the institution are called when a topic needs to be discussed. For example, during Fall 2012 and Spring 2013, all Department Chairs and all Directors of offices were invited to a series of meetings to discuss the HLC Criteria for Accreditation and the process for contributing to these for the Assurance Report.

An ongoing review process of the linking of our processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting planning was initiated in Fall 2014 – the [Integrated Planning Workspace](#), an electronic data repository and workspace that houses Activity Reports and Assessment Reports.

- Activity Reports, such as these examples from [Biology](#), [Math](#), [Property Control Office](#), and [Performing Art Series](#), detail productivity for all offices and departments, which provide data and include information about initiatives to aid in retention, persistence and completion.
- Assessment Reports, which are evidenced in 4.B., detail the achievement of Student Learning Outcomes for Programs – both academic and co-curricular – and plans for continuous improvement.

Reports in the two workspaces are reviewed by administration, faculty and staff to guide financial and other planning decisions.

The NMT Budget and Analysis Office maintains day-to-day monitoring of the revenue and expenditures and reports monthly, quarterly and annually to the Board of Regents. These reports are also submitted to the state Higher Education Department and the state Department of Finance and Administration. NMT has had clean audits for more than 20 years and has consistently kept expenditures within budgeted approved limits. The Budget and Analysis Office works closely with all business units on campus to ensure that NMT maintains a healthy cash flow and cash balances at all times.

Each department on campus submits a budget proposal annually in the late spring, which is finalized by the Budget Office by the end of the fiscal year, June 30. Each department – academic departments, research divisions, and staff offices – works collaboratively with the Budget Office to ensure that budgets reflect a reasonable level of spending.

Our Research Divisions contribute to NMT's fiscal planning and student support. For example, EMRTC contributes significantly to the operations of the university. [Over the past five years, an average of 51% of the university's total overhead revenue](#) collected and used toward University operations was generated by EMRTC activities.

As stated in a [memo by the EMRTC Director](#), "During FY14, EMRTC achieved 80% of its goal of \$42M in contract activity, which is outstanding, given that we experienced a government shutdown and a significant economic downturn, which resulted in an even more competitive environment for sponsored funding." The Director's memo provides information on student research activities, awards and processes for students in obtaining this support. The memo continues, "Currently EMRTC-supported student employees include one (1) graduate student and forty-six (46) undergraduate students. These students have access to our labs, facilities, staff and other resources that allow them to gain considerable practical experience in solving real-world problems. EMRTC also actively supports (both financially and in-kind) NMT outreach activities."

In Fiscal Year 2013, as reported on page 6 of the [Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources Annual](#)

[Report to the Association of American State Geologists July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013](#), employees of the Bureau generated \$230,604 in formula funds by serving as instructors for 115 400-level credits and 120 500-level credits. The Annual Report states that Bureau employees:

...collaborate with faculty and students from academic departments on campus in research and in acquiring research dollars for student and faculty research projects. We provide direct financial support to 10-12 graduate students each year, and we employ approximately 30 undergraduates in various capacities. Many of our student employees work in skilled positions (including the Mineral Museum and our laboratory facilities) that enhance their education and experience. Our laboratory facilities support research across campus and provide research funding and opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable on campus. ... This past Fall we hosted 250 attendees from all over the nation at the annual Mineral Symposium on campus.

In addition to being one of the nation's leading petroleum research centers, PRRC further supports the university's educational and research mission, as evidenced in an [annual report to the President and response to the meeting core components of the HLC Criteria for Accreditation](#).

The institutional Strategic Plan functions as our guidelines for future planning. For example, Academic Division proposals submitted to the Department of Education were planned specifically to target several of the goals in our last Strategic Plan. [All three were awarded](#), and we have stellar results from these grants as discussed throughout this report.

Further, NMT was eligible to submit proposals for these grants because we are a Hispanic-Serving Institution. NMT wrote the grants in anticipation of emerging factors; thus, they provided NMT with millions of dollars of state-of-the-art classroom and laboratory technology for a global society. The grants are based on NMT providing these resources and a STEM education that will increase the success of underrepresented students, which are increasing in the demographics of our enrollment.

Thus, due to sound planning, in spite of the economic downturn, NMT has met almost all of the goals specified in our last Strategic Plan. We have carried those goals into 2014 as the new Strategic Plan is being developed.

NMT began the process to develop the new Strategic Plan in November 2013 to help guide the university's near future. A series of open forums on campus in September and October of 2013 helped guide for the initial committee meeting. A second series of open forums ([Town Hall Meetings](#)) the following Fall (2014) allowed constituents to offer input for the planning document drafts.

As stated in 1.A., the [Strategic Planning Committee](#) includes representation from academic departments, research divisions, students, staff offices, an alumna and community leaders. [The committee](#) is drafting a new Vision statement, Mission statement and strategic priorities that will guide the university over the next five years. The new plan focuses efforts in seven areas: Quality Growth, Transdisciplinary Education and Research, Communication and Processes, Funding, Community of Scholars, Technology, Student Success (formerly called Assessment), and Accreditation. The Accreditation Task Force is composed of the Chairs of the other seven Task Forces and was created to ensure that the Strategic Plan is consistent with the Higher Learning Commission's Criteria for Accreditation.

[The Growth Task Force reports](#) that the Strategic Plan includes goals to extensively assess what resources will be needed in each academic and administrative department and in order to support effective instruction, advising, student services, and research experience, both for current capacity and projected growth. In addition, it calls for an extensive capacity study to determine actual maximum

capacity in all aspects of instruction, advising, research, technology, and student life.

[The Funding Task Force reports](#) that, in anticipation of possible impacts of fluctuation of revenue and state funding, it is seeking to develop strategies to boost The College endowment and funding base.

[The Communication and Processes/Policy Task Force](#) reports a task that each academic department will develop a five-year plan in consultation with the VP/Deans. These will be used to set hiring priorities and as a basis for annual department evaluation.

The [Student Success Task Force](#) reports continued support for the sharing of methods and best practices of the assessment of student learning through the Institutional Student Learning Team and the Integrated Planning Workspace.

In February 2011, the Higher Learning Commission tasked NMT – a Pathways Pioneer, Cohort 2 – to pilot, collect data, make changes and report on an Improvement Project as the Quality Initiative requirement. The NMT team conceived the [Student Research Symposium](#), a result of planning based on the major strength of NMT: students doing significant research and design projects. This is actual experience they can take to their employers or graduate programs; employers often claim that NMT graduates are ready to work on real projects since they have had that experience while at NMT.

NMT's participation at the November 2014 HLC Assessment Academy Results Forum resulted in the strategic planning of continuous improvement through the assessment of student learning.

Attending the Results Forum are the Chair of the Faculty Senate Student Learning (Assessment) Committee, a member of the Faculty Senate Student Learning (Assessment) Committee, the Director of the Office for Student Learning, and the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, who, along with the Vice President for Academic Affairs, oversees student learning initiatives and the assessment of these. This group is now the [Assessment Task Force](#).

Commitment

NMT employs several methods for formal and informal discussions and planning, with student learning being the basis for each of these. We continue to refine these methods so that data documentation and planning discussions are focused and effective.

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5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

Argument

New Mexico Tech produces several documents for reporting to our Regents, our constituents, and the public our effectiveness in achieving our Mission and as evidence of the successful performance of our operations. These also serve to document our improvements in our operations.

Financial Planning and Reporting

[Financial planning and reporting](#) is performed monthly, quarterly and annually. Budgeting is overseen by the Office of Budget and Analysis. Each department runs a monthly financial report that contains a certification whereby the department head or grant principal investigator certifies that the financial activity is correct. An institutional [monthly financial report](#) is submitted to the Board of Regents. An institutional [quarterly financial report](#) is provided to the state for approval. The institutional financial annual report is the Audit Report.

Quarterly Financial Reporting: Fiscal Watch

The Institute adheres to certification procedures mandated by the State of New Mexico in part through the [Fiscal Watch](#) policy. Fiscal Watch was established by the New Mexico Higher Education Department to provide oversight for the financial status of institutions of higher learning. Fiscal Watch requires colleges and universities to provide quarterly financial reports to the HED and Department of Finance and Administration comprised of a:

- Statement of Net Position
- Statement of cash flows
- Comparison of operating and plant funds for two fiscal years
- Statement of cash flows
- Summary of operating and plant funds

Annual Audit Report

The annual audit report is provided to the Board of Regents and is available electronically on the [Administration and Finance webpage](#) for review by any interested party.

The [2012 Audit](#) and the [2013 Audit](#) was performed by Atkinson CPA. This firm is performing audits for a period of three years, after which NMT will solicit bids for another three-year contract for the 2015-2017 period. No external auditing firm is permitted to stay under contract with NMT for longer than six consecutive years.

NMT audits have all been Unqualified, meaning the financial statements presented in the report are true and accurate to the best knowledge of the auditors. Readers of the financial system can trust that the information in the audit report is true and accurate.

Performance Effectiveness Report

The Council of University Presidents, led by NMT President Lopez, requires of each member university an annual Performance Effectiveness Report of data provided in 17 tables that address the following: Effective and Efficient Use of Resources; Accessible and Affordable University Education; Student Progress and Student Success; Academic Quality and a Quality Learning Environment. Data for NMT can be found on pages 1-6 of the [2013 Performance Effectiveness Report](#). This report is distributed to the legislature, the HED, the DFA, and anyone upon request. The Albuquerque Journal bases articles on the information from this report.

The President's Report

[The President's Annual Report](#) highlights the specific achievements of every division on campus, from research and academics to meeting budget deadlines and other performance goals. A printed copy is sent to the NMT Board of Regents members, all New Mexico legislators, and other state universities. It is available in the waiting areas of all offices on campus and online on the [President's Office School Facts webpage](#).

President's Status Report to the Board of Regents

The NMT President is required by contract to submit to the Board of Regents a [Status Report, called the President's Status Report to the New Mexico Tech Board of Regents](#), outlining a list of agreed-upon goals and objectives for each calendar year and highlighting any accomplishments accrued in meeting these goals and objectives. The Status Report is in two sections: Part I provides the quantitative data which demonstrate to what degree a goal was met or failed to be met. Part II details a fairly comprehensive inventory of activities and accomplishments for all the major divisions at NMT. The Status Report differs from the President's Report in being an internal document with select distribution rather than a report prepared for a wide audience.

Examples of performance reports under Research and Economic Development are the [Homeland Security Performance Report](#) and the [National Cave and Karst Research Institute Performance Report](#).

Public Access

NMT adheres to regulations outlined in the [Open Meetings Act](#), one of New Mexico's "good

government” laws. The Act provides for public access to the proceedings and decision-making processes of governmental boards, agencies and commissions. As such, the Institution is required to post legal advertisements announcing Board of Regents meetings in a newspaper of general circulation.

Board of Regents meetings include NMT performance reporting that is open to the public and occurs eight times a year. The performance reporting, as shown on a [meeting agenda](#), includes: Enrollment Updates, Financial Analysis and Property Items Resolution.

Public Access to information about NMT performance is available via the website for the following:

- [Audited Financial Reports](#)
- [Board of Regents Minutes](#)
- [President's Annual Report](#)
- [Faculty Senate Minutes and Meeting Reports](#)
- [Employee Titles and Salaries](#) (Organizational Listing of New Mexico Tech Employees)

The Public Information Office regularly reports the achievements of both faculty and students, as evidence of meeting performance standards.

Academic Policies Effectiveness

A number of methods are used to analyze the effectiveness of academic policies. For example, in addition to the tracking student complaints by the Office of Academic Affairs, as discussed in the Federal Compliance report, the Registrar tracks [the academic standing of students at-risk](#), used to analyze the effectiveness of our Academic Warning Program, and [tracks the success of students readmitted after academic suspension](#), used to analyze the effectiveness of our suspension and readmission policies. In addition, a [student satisfaction survey](#) administered by the Registrar's Office is given to students who choose to take it upon graduation with results used in the Performance Effectiveness Report.

Integrated Planning Workspace

[The Integrated Planning Workspace](#) makes office and department performance (activity) reports and student learning (assessment) reports available to the campus community for campus-wide planning on financial decisions and improvements by offices and departments.

Performance Shown By Sharing What We Do

We demonstrate our performance by how we realize our Mission, Vision, Values and Institute-Wide Student Learning Outcomes through our achievements for and with our constituents, as evidenced throughout this Assurance Argument, and by sharing these practices with the public and other universities.

A further example of publicly documenting our performance in 2014 was [The Tech Experience: Research, Design and Student Success](#), our presentation and panel discussion, which included our

President, about our student learning initiatives and success at the [Student Success Summit](#) hosted by University of New Mexico for the three New Mexico research universities. NMT initiatives and results received recognition by the [Albuquerque Journal in a September 4, 2014 article](#).

As is outlined in other areas of this report, NMT's presentation shared several student learning initiatives that have had a remarkable impact on student success and are resulting in the highest enrollment and retention rate in our history.

Some of these are: the establishment of the Office for Student Learning, the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, and the Living Learning Communities with First Year Research and Design; the redesign of Pre-calculus and Trigonometry; the launch of the Introduction to Engineering course with the new Engineering Lab; the creation of the Student Research Symposium; and the addition to the curriculum Junior Design that works collaboratively with Senior Design that has resulted in remarkable growth in Mechanical Engineering, now our largest major.

Commitment

NMT documents its performance in various reports to guide us in tracking trends; identifying areas for improvement; archiving our successes, activity and productivity; and reporting to our constituents and public.

Sources

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- Administration and Finance Screenshot
- Board of Regents Meeting Minutes Webpage
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- Facts about NMT (Annual Pres Report) PDF
- Faculty Senate Webpage Screenshot
- Integrated Planning Workspace Homepage Screenshot [DC]
- May 31 2014 Regents' Quarterly Report
- Monthly Financial Analysis June FY 14
- NMHED Fiscal Watch Policy [DC]
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5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Summary

NMT maintains its solvency and support of its constituencies, employees and its community during national economic shifts. Even during economically difficult years, our dedication to student success has resulted in our highest retention rate (79%), which we expect to see have a positive impact on our IPEDS graduation rate beginning with the cohorts of First Time Freshmen who entered in 2011.

NMT documents its performance in various reports to guide us in tracking trends; identifying areas for improvement; archiving our successes, activity and productivity; and reporting to our constituents and public.

NMT employs several methods for formal and informal discussions and planning, with student learning being the basis for each of these. We continue to refine these methods so that data documentation and planning discussions are focused and effective.

In practices, processes and policies, NMT promotes strong leadership in appropriate capacities from its Board, President, administrators, faculty and students. Students and faculty have a variety of avenues to contribute to the functioning of the institute according to its Mission.

Sources

There are no sources.