

**Assurance Argument**  
**Bethel College - North Newton - KS**

4/11/2019

# 1 - Mission

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

## 1.A - Core Component 1.A

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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

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### *1.A.1*

Since 2014, Bethel College has made several [intentional steps](#) toward improving and clarifying its mission statement.

The current Bethel College mission statement was adopted alongside a revised values set by the [Board of Directors in 2014](#) and was the product of the Futures Committee of the Board of Directors. The revised mission statement was intended for internal use to guide strategic planning and to provide a clear statement of the College's "core business." The revision resulted in a more concise statement than the [previous statement](#), adopted in 1994, but neither the process nor the content enjoyed [broad support of faculty](#) and [community members](#).

To address the need for a more compelling statement of institutional identity, Bethel College contracted with Howerton+White in 2017 to conduct [market research](#) and produce [brand promise and positioning statements](#).

In Spring 2018, newly-arrived President Jonathan Gering critiqued the existing mission statement in the [Spring 2018 board meetings](#), and during an [Assessment Day](#) meeting with all employees. Recognizing the need for a more inclusive process in order to arrive at a more compelling mission, President Gering [invited proposals](#) for revising the mission of the College. Employees of the College submitted six different proposals: ([proposals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6](#)) which were vetted publicly in summer with broad participation ([sessions 1, 2, 3](#) with [break out groups](#)).

President Gering then solicited nominations and appointed a [Mission Proposal Working Group](#) of faculty, staff, students, and members of the the Futures Committee of the Board of Directors. This group was tasked with submitting a recommendation for consideration by the Board of Directors, and completed its work by offering a [set of affirmations](#) of institutional identity, along with a recommendation for further exploration of a ["work college" model](#). President Gering consolidated

this committee's work into a [proposal](#), and [invited faculty and staff to join discussions](#) of it. The [Board of Directors](#) will consider this proposal at its Spring 2019 meeting.

This current process has energized the community (e.g., see number of proposals) and fits Bethel College's model of shared governance ([Faculty Handbook Section 1.6](#)).

The new proposal creates the possibility for the college to pursue a "work college" model, while maintaining continuity with [the current statements of institutional identity](#), which are:

### **Mission Statement**

"Bethel College is an independent institution of higher education. The mission of the college is to prepare students, through active learning and rigorous instruction imbued with the spirit of the liberal arts, to become critical thinkers and engaged global citizens."

### **Values Statement**

"The vision and mission of Bethel College are grounded in the values inherited from its historical relationship with the Christian faith tradition of the Mennonite Church and intrinsic to its institutional character. We believe these values to be fundamental to our work together, as we seek to carry out the mission of the institution.

- **Discipleship:** that prizes a high level of conviction and pursuit of authentic faith
- **Scholarship:** that prizes intellectual curiosity and critical inquiry
- **Service:** that prizes compassion and concern for the powerless
- **Integrity:** that prizes honesty and accountability
- **Community:** that prizes social connectivity and shared endeavor with others
- **Peace and Social Justice:** that prizes commitment to a peaceful and just society
- **Diversity:** that prizes all individuals for their unique combination of heritage, personality and talents"

The values statement connects the College's mission to its religious identity, and roots its academic and institutional life in seven values consistent with a progressive Mennonite identity. Whereas the mission statement is more broad and generic, describing *what* the College does, the values statement describes concrete markers of institutional identity, articulating *how* the college carries out its mission.

### **Vision Statement**

"At Bethel College, we welcome with open hearts, stimulate personal and spiritual discovery, transform through the power of community and inspire the leaders of tomorrow."

The language of welcoming and openness supports the commitments in the mission and values statements to global awareness, diversity, and community; the language about personal and spiritual discovery aligns with the search for authentic faith, and the language about inspiring leaders echoes the mission's commitment to engaged citizenship. The vision statement continues to express the aspirations of the College.

### **Brand Promise/Tagline**

"Connect to Purpose"

This statement is expandable to [various instantiations of purpose](#): faith, community, self, vocation, future, values, etc. It accesses Bethel's value of community and begins to concretize the meaning of "critical thinking" from the mission statement in the ability to make connections. The brand promise highlights the [mentoring role](#) of the College in facilitating the experience of [community amid diversity](#) and personal and spiritual discovery.

### **Positioning Statement**

"As the first Mennonite college founded in North America, Bethel College celebrates a tradition of progressive Christian liberal arts education, diversity within community, and lifelong learning."

The positioning statement is the foundation for public messaging. It concisely connects and expresses the College's particular religious identity and educational foundation. This statement has added clarity and specificity, articulating the College's religious affiliation and expression as a fundamental part of its identity.

#### **1.A.2**

Content provided for 3.B, 3.D, 1.C and Criterion 4 addresses this sub-component as well.

**Academic programs** at Bethel align with its mission, as its offerings of majors, minors, and certificate programs represent both liberal arts and pre-professional (e.g., Athletic Training, Business, Education, Nursing, and Social Work) areas of study. See 3.B.1 for commentary on alignment of the general education program with mission. Following the adoption of the new mission statement in 2014, [faculty worked to clarify the](#) alignment of academic programs with the new statement. ([Elementary Education](#), [Bible and Religion](#), [HPE](#), [Mathematics](#), [Music](#), [Several Departments](#), [Faculty Workshop](#))

**Student support services** align with the mission, as demonstrated in 3.D.

**The enrollment profile** represents a diverse community of learners. As discussed in 1.C., the [diversity of learners](#) at Bethel includes significant racial/ethnic diversity, which has increased substantially in recent years. Bethel also has significant religious diversity in its enrollment profile, while maintaining a substantial Mennonite enrollment. This diverse student population supports the College's mission of preparing students to become critical thinkers and engaged global citizens.

#### **1.A.3**

Bethel College's strategic priorities are closely linked to its mission of educating and preparing students. Prior to President Gering's tenure, the College's strategic priorities were to increase enrollment and balance the budget. To this end, the College made important strides toward improving the student experience on campus. These improvements include:

- 2016-2018: New bleachers for Thresher Gymnasium
- 2016-2017: New terracing, building, and bleachers for the Ward Family Tennis Center
- 2017: Patio for outdoor dining at Schultz Student Center
- 2018: Remodeled and expanded spaces for the new Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and for Beyond, the student graphic design studio
- 2018-2019: Turf replacement for the Joe W. Goering Field at Thresher Stadium

Since President Gering's appointment, the Board has re-articulated these priorities and two

additional, complementary priorities for President Gering and the College: 1) balance the annual budget by June 30, 2021; 2) increase student enrollment; 3) conduct a capital campaign; and 4) strengthen governance and administrative relationships that promote effective leadership.

Recognizing unsuccessful past efforts to balance the budget, President Gering called for a new mission for the College, along with a new strategic plan, leading to "financial clarity, growth and sustainability, national distinction, consistent with Anabaptist/Mennonite history, successful alumni, broad geographic reach, [and] expand[ed] opportunities for partnering." "Deciding the Mission" is the first phase of the process, followed immediately by "Budgeting and Planning for the Mission."

The College is already moving forward with a capital campaign. In a teleconference [meeting in December 2018](#), the Board of Directors approved a \$19.63 million campaign, "[Engage the Future: Strengthening Minds, Bodies, and Communities.](#)" This campaign includes funding for academic program enhancements, technology upgrades, the annual fund, a softball clubhouse, and a major building project: a \$10.38 million student fitness/wellness center.

## Sources

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- Student Life - 2018.10.02 - Retention Committee Meeting Minutes
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## 1.B - Core Component 1.B

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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

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The College's vision, mission, and values statements are clearly articulated publicly, readily available and highlighted in a multitude of Bethel College's public documents used to communicate to prospective students, current students, faculty and staff, alumni and other constituents. The brand promise and positioning statements appear on Bethel College print materials and in news releases.

#### *1.B.1*

**Vision, Values, and Branding.** The College's vision and values statements, together with the brand promise and positioning statements, align with, complement, and gives specificity to the mission statement (see 1.A). The three statements are part of a [mutually-dependent set](#), articulating the identity of the College in its aspiration, core business, and distinctive values, history, and ethics.

**Publication of mission through multiple means.** The mission statement, including values, vision and institutional priorities, is publicized through multiple means:

- The vision, mission, and values statements are accessible to all constituents through our [website](#).
- The [academic catalog](#) lists the mission statement several times, including in its full form with the [vision and values statements](#). This is publicly available online.
- The mission statement figures prominently in [recruitment literature](#) sent to prospective students and their parents, and on [folders](#) they receive when visiting campus.
- The [Student Handbook](#) prominently displays the full mission statement in introductory pages.
- **Statements of institutional identity** appear on [outdoor banners](#) lining the sidewalks of the campus. The vision statement greets all that enter the Cafeteria. The entrance to the Will Academic Center contains the Bethel College seal, along with several values. The Student Center features an [Alumni Spotlight](#) wall to highlight alumni who embody the College's mission and values.
- Engagement with the College's mission is part of the interview, orientation, and evaluation [process](#) for employees.
- Communications staff frequently post **social media** connections to Bethel's mission, vision, and values, such as a [#BCValues](#) challenge [in 2017](#), expressions of local and global service, promotion of social justice and global awareness, peacemaking, and discipleship. (Facebook

post [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#))

- Bethel's alumni magazine, *Context*, and the **Annual Report**, mailed to nearly 10,000 constituents, regularly highlight the mission, vision, and values of the College. The [April 2017](#) and [April 2018](#) *Context* issues featured the ways in which alumni are living out Bethel's core values, with special attention to the connection to the institution's religious identity. The [2017 Annual Report](#) booklet made explicit connections to the mission statement, giving concrete examples of the ways it is embodied at Bethel, and the [2018 Annual Report](#) was entirely structured around the mission statement.

### ***1.B.2***

**Currency.** The current mission and values statements were adopted in October 2014. The vision statement was adopted in October 2011. The branding statements were adopted in Fall 2017. Another revision to the college's mission is entering its final stages.

- The mission statement describes the nature of the education Bethel provides: active learning, rigorous instruction, liberal arts, as well as its aim: engaged global citizenship and critical thinkers. Moreover, the values statement clarifies the ways in which these means and ends find expression at Bethel College, and identifies the College's religious identity. The branding statements add further clarity about the nature and scope of the education provided. Taken together, all of these statements encompass and represent the character of education Bethel College provides to students.

**Scholarship and instruction.** The mission statement calls for "rigorous instruction imbued with the spirit of the liberal arts," and the values statement includes scholarship.

Closely aligned with the liberal arts [general education curriculum](#) distribution requirement is the Common Ground core, [six distinctive elements shared by all students](#) (the first five are part of general education; the sixth is a distinctive feature of majors):

- First-Year Seminar course
- Convocation, an all-school assembly
- Travel and study experiences in Cross-Cultural Learning
- Courses across the curriculum in Peace Justice and Conflict Studies;
- Integration of faith and learning, including the capstone course Basic Issues of Faith and Life
- URICA project in the senior year

**Research, creative works and application of research.** A prominent component of the Common Ground curriculum is URICA (Undergraduate Research Internship and Creative Arts), a culminating active learning experience. Additionally, in 2018-2019, Bethel College partnered with Canadian Mennonite University to launch the [Marpeck Undergraduate Research Journal](#). Through this journal, students have the opportunity to publish quality research for a wider audience.

**Senior seminar research projects.** As part of URICA, many Bethel students participate in a senior seminar course, in which each student works with a faculty member to develop and implement an original research project. Research topics may be related to summer research projects, internships, a culminating art show or performance, or other experiences.

**Summer research awards.** [Study and Research Awards](#) are granted through a competitive process for study and research to be done in the summer following the sophomore or junior year. Students



collaborate with faculty on a topic of potential interest for their senior seminar, or that they might wish to pursue in graduate school.

**URICA Symposium.** The [URICA Symposium](#) was designed as an opportunity to celebrate and showcase many forms of undergraduate research and creative endeavor college-wide. The forum includes senior thesis presentations across the curriculum, along with culminating recitals and art shows, or lecture-performances with digital recordings or images.

**Clinical service.** In addition to traditional liberal arts disciplines, the College has offered majors in accredited professional programs, including athletic training, nursing, social work and teacher education. These accredited programs have specific clinical requirements.

**The athletic training program** requires students to work with at least six different certified athletic trainers and other health-care professionals.

**In the nursing program,** each semester students augment classroom learning with clinical practicums in local health-care facilities with either a rural or urban focus. During their final semester, their clinical practice culminates in a capstone experience, following the schedule of a practicing nurse and working full-time for just over a month under the supervision of a nurse preceptor in a local hospital.

As a junior and senior, students serve internships with **licensed social workers** in settings such as hospitals, mental health facilities, schools, nursing homes and social service agencies. As juniors, students work with a Bethel faculty member and staff from a local agency to conduct a major project as a way to learn research methods.

**All teacher education methods classes** include field experience. Field experience, including student teaching, takes place in settings that range from large urban to small rural public school systems, from Christian and other private schools to multicultural (multiple-language) institutions and one-on-one or small-group tutoring situations. Because hands-on experience is so important for learning how to put concepts and strategies into practice, all Bethel education licensure candidates complete a semester of student teaching.

**Public service.** Bethel “prizes compassion and concern for the powerless,” as well as “social connectivity and shared endeavor with others.”

- Bethel seeks to make the study of **peace, justice and conflict management** a part of every student’s experience, regardless of religious affiliation or philosophical perspective, by requiring coursework in this general education category. These courses provide students the opportunity to engage questions and develop practical skills regarding how to actively pursue peace and justice.
- The **GAP Year Service Learning Program** recognizes the learning experience gained through voluntary service and affirms the Mennonite heritage of concern for one’s neighbor. Students entering an approved voluntary service program or having at least seven months left in a service program may apply for admission to Bethel’s Service Learning Program. Students completing seven months or more of voluntary service may earn up to 14 hours of college credit. An experience of eight weeks to seven months may earn up to four hours of credit.
- The Bethel community fosters and provides regular opportunities for students of all religious backgrounds to practice service on campus, in the community, and around the globe. Annually, classes are cancelled and the entire campus unites to participate in a variety of service projects

- during **Service Day**. ([2016,2017,2018](#)) ([Nursing opportunities, service day](#))
- New students participate in projects during their orientation, such as working with community partner **Mennonite Central Committee** to [provide comforters](#).
  - Students find many ways to serve others and to strengthen their spiritual lives. They may choose to wash windows or pave pathways. They may plan **chapel services** or coordinate a hymn sing. Some students voluntarily **serve throughout the school year with organizations** such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters; [prison ministries like M-2](#), local homes for troubled youth, persons with disabilities or retired folks, and at the local homeless shelter.
  - Some students earn [Service Learning Scholarships](#) to serve the surrounding community as part of their educational experience. Priority goes to first-time freshmen who are not receiving performance awards for athletics or fine arts. Scholarship winners commit to five hours a week working for a local nonprofit agency for both semesters and can renew the scholarship for up to four years.
  - Often coursework meeting cross-cultural learning requirements includes a **voluntary or service component**. After fall 2013 final exams senior nursing students along with one of their professors, spent a week in Haiti at Hôpital Ste. Therese in Hinche, providing basic care for about four hours each day. The Nursing Department has continued to offer travel courses to Haiti, as recently as December 2018.

**Religious or cultural purpose.** Bethel is affiliated with Mennonite Church USA and continues to base its mission on its Anabaptist identity. Through a commitment to encouraging the search for authentic faith, Bethel strives to "stimulate personal and spiritual discovery," and to provide intellectual, cultural, and spiritual leaders for the church and society.

In addition to the aforementioned courses and activities related to peace, justice and conflict studies and service, Bethel's Anabaptist values are emphasized through the Common Ground course requirements, including:

- **Convocation** is a regular assembly of the campus community to engage Bethel's vision, mission, and values through shared experiences and meaningful interaction. Through programming that aims to [broaden understanding of the social and natural world, members of the community critically and civilly explore basic value issues and multiple points of view](#).
- Bethel students engage different cultures through **Cross-Cultural Learning**. CCL Courses often take place during interterm, a four-week period in January when intensive on-campus and travel courses provide students with an alternative approach to learning.
- Bethel requires students to explore the relationship between value structures, basic convictions, and personal and professional life. Bethel's **Integrating Faith and Life** initiative allows students to choose from a wide variety of perspectives, be it through focused biblical study or classes investigating the world's major religions. In the senior year, the course [Basic Issues of Faith and Life](#) brings together students and faculty for a common educational experience before graduation, to study issues of historical and contemporary significance.

### ***1.B.3***

The mission statement identifies a commitment to preparing students (intended constituents) through providing active learning experiences in the spirit of the liberal arts (nature), through rigorous instruction with an aim to critical thinking and engaged global citizenship (scope). The vision and values statements further clarify that the College welcomes a diverse community as its constituency.

**Nature.** The vision statement language on transformation through the power of community reflects the immersive nature of the Bethel experience, which retains a residential focus. The values statement further clarifies the nature of the liberal arts educational programs. Discipleship connects with "Integrating Faith and Learning" in the Common Ground curriculum. Service connects with an active learning emphasis. Peace and Social Justice is reflected in the "Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies" requirement in Common Ground. The positioning statement articulates that Bethel provides a progressive Christian education from a Mennonite perspective.

**Scope.** The vision statement expresses this through language related to stimulating personal discovery and inspiring the leaders of tomorrow. The values statement also indicates the breadth of the education provided.

**Intended constituents.** Bethel College seeks a diverse constituency, and believes this to be consistent with, rather than in tension with, its religious identity as a progressive Mennonite institution.

## Sources

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## 1.C - Core Component 1.C

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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

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#### 1.C.1

**Student body profile includes significant racial/ethnic diversity.** In Fall 2017, 33% of the student body were [students of color](#), an all-time high.

**[Coordinator of Student Activities and Engagement](#).** This Student Life staff member advises several student groups that foster cross-cultural engagement and inclusion on campus.

- **[Diversity Council](#)**, an arm of the Student Government Association, addresses issues related to diversity and inclusion at Bethel College and promotes the interests and accomplishments of minority and marginalized groups. This group has planned events related to Hispanic Heritage, Black History, and LGBTQ inclusion.
- Through the **[Minority Mentoring program](#)**, the Office of Student Life coordinates mentors for students who are part of minority groups.
- **FEMCORE**, a group of students dedicated to women's issues and the promotion of gender equity, and **BeLonGTo** are two burgeoning groups on campus helping to further conversations about identity on campus and bring voice to traditionally underrepresented or marginalized populations.

**Campus Ministries programming fosters multicultural life.** Voluntary Chapel on Wednesdays represent another important expression of values. In [February 2018](#), a service was dedicated to a [celebration of Black History](#). This featured [gospel music](#), the reenactment of sermons from famous Black leaders, and reflections from Black students on contemporary experience. Chapel services also intentionally feature a variety of perspectives that comprise the student body. Every fall, as a new community is forming, members of the community share about what they appreciate from their religious tradition. Sometimes the focus is [music](#) or [denominational traditions](#).

**Cross Cultural Learning (CCL).** Noted in response to 3.B.4, one of the "Common Ground" core general education elements that every Bethel student experiences is the CCL requirement, designed to meet the [following learning objectives](#): 1) I understand that living in a diverse and global environment is complex and challenging; 2) I experienced a culture different from my own; 3) I better understand myself and others, and our relationships to the environment in which we live; and 4) I am prepared to live and work in a global community.

Many students choose CCL travel courses that take them off campus into new cultural environments that provide encounters with new cultures. There are also campus-based courses that integrate field trips that "provide students with structured opportunities to talk directly with people on their own turf

away from campus in two or more different ethnic, cultural, or religious communities."

**Convocation.** One key program for addressing multicultural society is Convocation, a requirement in the general education program for all full-time students. By design, each year the Convocation program includes speakers/topics that address issues of diversity and multiculturalism (see schedules from the current academic year: [2018 Fall](#), [2019 Spring](#)).

**UNICACH Partnership.** In January 2018, Bethel College and Universidad de Ciencias y Artes de Chiapas in Mexico formalized an agreement for student and faculty collaboration, including exchanges. Bethel science students have already had opportunity to study at UNICACH, and Bethel offers UNICACH access to the prairie ecosystem.

### ***1.C.2***

The most fundamental way that Bethel reflects attention to human diversity is to be [responsive](#) to the diversity within its own community.

**Anti-discrimination statements expanded to include additional categories.** Action by the Board of Directors in their April 2014 meetings to revise [Human Rights and Affirmative Action Policies](#) in the Faculty Handbook and Staff Manual demonstrates the College's attention to its role in a multicultural, diverse society. [Recommendations from Faculty Welfare Committee](#) earned support from the Staff Welfare Committee, were approved by faculty vote, and the governing board approved new language that extends anti-discrimination protection to include religion, sexual orientation, parental or marital status, gender identity, gender expression, medical or genetic information, citizenship status, veteran or military status, or disability. While this revision was updated policy language to reflect institutional practice that was already in place, its formal approval demonstrates an institutional culture that is responsive to a multicultural, diverse society.

**[The Office of Diversity and Inclusion.](#)** See 4.C.3.

**[Anti-Oppression Committee.](#)** See 4.C.3.

These institutional clarifications and developments operationalize the values and practices that are part of everyday life at Bethel College that are attentive and responsive to human diversity:

- Sending students to participate in the [2016 Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship](#) "Black Lives Matter: How and Why" at Goshen College
- Multiple vigils and services in response to police brutality and mass shootings
- Hosting the 2017 Intercollegiate [Peace Fellowship: Uniting for Social Change: Intersections of Race, Environment, and LGBTQIA Identities](#)
- Bethel Students winning the [C. Henry Smith Peace Oration](#) contest two years in a row.
- Current organizing to bring bystander intervention training to campus
- [Celebrating Pride Week](#), beginning in Spring 2016
- [SafeZone trainings](#) beginning in 2016
- Strong participation in Roots of Justice Damascus Road Anti-Racism Analysis Trainings hosted by the Newton Community for Racial Justice
- Establishing [anti-racism training](#) for all employees as an institutional goal
- Hosting [Loss of Turtle Island](#) simulations
- Issues of *Menmonite Life* (an annual online journal published by Bethel College) highlighting issues of racial justice and sexual violence

- Hosting the [Mennonites and the Holocaust symposium](#) in 2018
- BIFL common text selections: *Living the Sermon on the Mount* (2015-2016), *The Muslim Next Door* (2016-2017), *Trouble I've Seen: Changing How the Church Views Racism* (2017-2018), *Caleb's Crossing* (2018-2019)
- Curricular offerings on race, gender, class, diversity, and privilege and power, including the PJCS requirement
- [Black Male Forum](#) beginning in Fall 2016
- [FEMCORE](#) organizing, including Denim Day and #MeToo
- [BeLonGTo](#) providing safe and supportive spaces and raising awareness
- Creation of the Diversity Council within the Student Government Association
- Annual [MLK Day Celebration](#)
- [Prison Theater Project](#) class
- M-2 Participation: visiting inmates at Hutchinson Correctional Facility
- [Staley Lectures](#) on Marginalization (Fall 2015), Racism (Spring 2017), Slow Violence (Spring 2018)
- [Bible Lectures](#) on Tyranny and Oppression (Fall 2018)
- Convocation series includes topics like "[A12 Anniversary](#)" (September 17), "Prison Ministries" (September 21), "Fatness, Feminism, and Disney" (September 28), "*More Than a Word (2017)*" (February 17), "Justice: An Indigenous Perspective" (February 18), "(De)humanizing the US/Mexico Border" (April 22)
- Statements clarifying [institutional positions](#) regarding white supremacy, gender equality, protest, and immigration
- Regular discussion of diversity of Board members, Cabinet, faculty, staff, and students, and intentional efforts by the Directors Committee of the Board to ensure the Board becomes more representative and inclusive
- Intentional efforts by the Board of Directors to ensure gender diversity on the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors and in leadership roles within the Board

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- Academic Affairs - Stahley lectures announcement
- Admissions - Fighting injustice through nonviolence
- Board of Directors - 14 Oct 16-17 2014 Board of Directors Minutes - Approved Signed

- Institutional Communications - UNICACH Exchanges
- President - Anti-Oppression Committee
- President - Anti-Racism training letter
- President - Areas of Focus for Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- President - Title IX
- Registrar - 2017 IPEDS Summary
- Student Life - ALICE Training
- Student Life - Bethel College Mail - Celebrating Black History
- Student Life - Bethel-College-Sunday-Mornings
- Student Life - Black History Month
- Student Life - Black History Month Chapel
- Student Life - Black Male Forum
- Student Life - chapel-joined-knitted-together
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- Student Life - Copy of JOB DESCRIPTION - CSAE-2015
- Student Life - Diversity council forum
- Student Life - Minority Mentoring Program Eval Questions
- Student Life - Multicultural Engagement
- Student Life - PRIDE week announcements
- Student Life - Safe Zone training announcement



## 1.D - Core Component 1.D

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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

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A commitment to serve the public through its educational mission is rooted in the origin of Bethel College. A newly formed regional Mennonite body authorized creation of a Bethel College Corporation that included representatives who were not Mennonite.

Signatories to the May 23, 1887, charter of Bethel College included 30 Mennonites but also three non-Mennonite citizens of Newton and Harvey County, Kansas. The first Board of Directors was 67 percent Mennonite. The leaders' first annual report in 1887 stated that the new college sought to "pay the debt of gratitude to other denominations by opening wide the doors of the institution, so that all may have an opportunity to partake of whatsoever advantages may be offered by it."

That commitment is still expressed in our official statements of institutional identity, formalizing Bethel College's commitment to the common good.

#### *1.D.1*

The most fundamental way the institution serves the public is by preparing students in accordance with its mission, as discussed at length for Criterion 3 and 4.

In addition to fulfilling its educational mission for its students, Bethel serves the public in other programming as well.

**Affiliates.** The Bethel College Academy of Performing Arts, Kauffman Museum, The Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (KIPCOR), and the Sand Creek Trail are four affiliates of the College whose missions and service complement the educational program but extend beyond the College's core business in undergraduate education and thereby serve a broader community.

**The Bethel College Academy of Performing Arts.** The mission of [BCAPA](#) is "to enhance the quality of life in Newton and surrounding communities through expert, dedicated education in music, dance and the expressive arts. Catalyzing lifelong learning, BCAPA empowers students of all ages and levels of experience to derive meaning from personal and cooperative artistic expression. BCAPA provides unique performance opportunities in a nurturing, community-focused environment."

The mission of [Kauffman Museum](#) is to create learning experiences rich in artifacts that promote aesthetic appreciation of, critical thinking about and reflection on the people and the natural environment of the central prairies, with emphasis on the story of the Mennonites.

**Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (KIPCOR)**. KIPCOR "endeavors to strengthen conflict resolution and peacebuilding capacities in the communities and institutions it serves. KIPCOR encourages research, education, skill development and dialogue to enhance the understanding and practice of managing conflict, and to prepare individuals and groups to be peacemakers in an evolving, complex and often troubled world."

**The Mennonite Library and Archives (MLA)**. The purpose of the MLA is to help people answer questions about the Mennonite past. To do this, the MLA collects, preserves, and makes available personal papers, documents, periodicals, books and other media related to Mennonite studies. It serves as the official archives of Bethel College, and as a research center promoting the study of Anabaptist and Mennonite history. The MLA adjoins the College Library, both of which are open to the public.

**Sand Creek Trail**. The trail adjoins the Bethel campus provides area residents, students and visitors a three-mile long trail loop that offers a variety of plant, animal and bird life. The trail also connects with a biking-walking trail that connects to the city of Newton. The trail was designated a National Recreation Trail by the U.S. Department of Interior in 2011. Maintenance is overseen by a Sand Creek Trail Committee comprised of Bethel employees and Newton community members.

An independently and locally owned community coffee shop, [Mojo's Coffee Bar](#), is located in the Schultz Student Center. Mojo's attracts many community members who join students, faculty, and staff for learning and socializing.

Bethel hosts the [Life Enrichment Series](#), a program for adults age 60 and over that features speakers, performers, films and a variety of other presentations held on campus each Wednesday morning during the academic year.

The mission of the [Sand Creek Community Garden](#) is to provide peaceful and inviting gardening spaces for the Bethel College community and beyond, with an intergenerational mix of students, families, and other individuals working side by side.

**Expectations of Faculty**. The Faculty Handbook clearly articulates the expectation that all faculty members will provide meaningful service to the College and the community, among other expectations. Section 2.5.3.4.2 of the Faculty Handbook offers various ways in which faculty might consider service to the larger community, including participation in non-profit organizations, offering professional services within a faculty member's area of discipline, or accepting leadership roles in church and community organizations, among others. As set forth in the Faculty Handbook, "[f]aculty evaluation shall include data on teaching and advising effectiveness, professional competence and growth, and service to College and community," underscoring the College's commitment to serving the public good.

**Hesston-Bethel Performing Arts (HBPA)** brings internationally renowned performers to Hesston College and Bethel College campuses, through 4-5 diverse concerts every year. Funding for these concerts is provided through a variety of federal, state and corporate grants, private donors, and the two colleges.

**Service Learning Scholarships.** See 1.B.2.

**Service Program for GAP Year Students.** See 1.B.2.

**Special Service Projects.** See 1.B.2.

### ***1.D.2***

Bethel College is an independent, non-profit institution of higher education committed primarily to its educational mission. See 3.A.3 for information regarding contractual or consortial relationships.

### ***1.D.3***

Bethel College engages with its identified external constituencies in various ways.

First, Administrators, faculty, staff, students and alumni are actively connected to the community.

- The college is a member of the **Newton Area Chamber of Commerce**. Staff members and alumni often serve on its board. The college sponsors and staff members participate in chamber breakfasts, banquets and other local business events.
- Every year, the college welcomes thousands of community members as well as alumni and friends of the college to its campus for **Fall Festival**, an annual event organized by the Alumni Office. The broad participation in the festival exemplifies the cooperative spirit between the college and the cities of Newton and North Newton.
- The Alumni Office collaborates with the Newton Area Chamber of Commerce to plan **Taste of Newton**, the annual kick-off to Fall Festival.
- A 12-member **Social Work Advisory Council** includes representatives from professional social work and human services in nearby communities. The council provides advice and support to the Social Work Program.
- A **Nursing Advisory Council** of 12 community members with interest in nursing informs and promotes Bethel's nursing program.
- Through the **Business and Economics Department**, student **interns** interact with companies in the community as they provide helpful services and learn in the job setting.
- Student and faculty **musicians** play alongside community members in the Newton Mid-Kansas Symphony Orchestra, which often performs on the Bethel campus. The Music Department also invites local musicians to join students in instrumental and vocal ensembles and perform in a Masterworks Concert each spring.
- **Admissions Office** staff are attentive to the **educational needs of community members**, even as they promote the college's educational services.
- **Facilities** are used by area constituents as can be accommodated, such as loaning the football field to a local high school in emergency use of the tennis courts by the public, and hosting church conferences on campus, etc.

Second, the college continues to relate to **Mennonite Church USA** (MC USA) and its regional conferences, including the Western District Conference, in which it is located.

- Bethel College operates in consultation with the **Mennonite Educational Agency** (MEA), the umbrella organization of MC USA that serves and promotes Mennonite education, including primary, secondary, undergraduate and graduate programming. The President's Office maintains primary contact with MEA.
- College personnel and students engage with church members and leaders attending **MC USA**

[national conventions](#) and **regional conference sessions**. Faculty and staff give seminars. Personnel listen and share information at a gathering for alumni and friends.

- Administrators, faculty and students also participate in [Mennonite Economic Development Associates](#) (MEDA), an international organization seeking business solutions to poverty. Primary contact is through the President's Office, Advancement Office and Business and Economics Department. The Alumni Office organizes gatherings for alumni and friends at MEDA conferences.
- Bethel College maintains relationships with local congregations by providing Sunday morning speakers and musicians for worship services roughly two-thirds of the [Sundays while classes are in session](#).

Third, Bethel College communicates with its alumni – informing, listening and responding as appropriate.

The [Bethel College Alumni Association](#) includes all former students who earned 24 or more credit hours. The college also engages **donors and friends** in additional groups, inviting them to participate in activities and to support the college as volunteers, in prayer, or financially.

- A 25-member [Alumni Council](#) represents the Alumni Association. The council convenes bi-monthly to advise staff of the Alumni Office or to conduct fundraising projects, host events or serve the college in other ways.
- An [African-American Alumni Association](#) interacts with African-American students, supports a scholarship fund, hosts a booth at Fall Festival, and holds occasional meetings on campus or elsewhere in the United States.
- Members of the **Bethel Deaconess Hospital/Bethel College [Nursing Alumni Association](#)** gather annually at Fall Festival and promote the college's nursing program.
- The president and staff from the Advancement Office interact with the **Board Association**, more than 100 former members of the Board of Directors and their spouses.
- The [Bethel College Women's Association](#) endeavors to “develop, promote and intensify the interest in the well-being of the Bethel College community,” and actively raises funds to benefit the college.
- A **STEM Advisory Council**, consisting of alumni professionals, serves departments related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. The council links Bethel faculty with those who are in graduate school or employed directly in an academic field.
- The [Bethel College Athletic Booster Club](#) nurtures the relationship of former Bethel athletes with their alma mater.
- At the international level, [Friends of Bethel College in Germany](#) (Förderverein der Freunde des Bethel Colleges) includes former German participants in a historic student exchange program with the Bergische-Universität-Gesamthochschule-Wuppertal.

In addition to interaction through more defined entities, Bethel College engages constituents in other ways:

- Personnel from the President's Office and the Advancement Office, which includes Development and Alumni Relations, invite **alumni and friends to support the college financially**. Last year, [donors](#) gave \$3.35 million to the college, including more than \$1.5 million to the Bethel Fund (general fund).
- **Faculty members interact with former students** at departmental reunions at [Fall Festival](#), by phone and email.

- Staff from the President’s Office, Advancement Office and Alumni Office give updates, answer questions and hear concerns at [reunions on campus](#) at Fall Festival and Alumni Weekend.
- Representatives attend gatherings for alumni and friends throughout the U.S. and beyond, organized by the Alumni Office.
- Alumni, students and other volunteers conduct an annual **phonathon**. The project serves not only as a fundraiser but as a person-to-person alumni relations project.
- A group of **volunteers** known as the “Threshing Crew” assists with campus projects such as painting, light maintenance and landscaping. Many are alumni who returned to the community to retire.
- The Student Life Office invites community members to serve as **host families** who provide “a home away from home” to students who request such support.

Bethel College communicates via print and electronic media, including the following:

- [Context magazine](#), produced by Institutional Communications (IC)
- An [annual donor report](#), produced by the Advancement Office and IC
- “Thresher E-View,” a monthly [electronic newsletter](#) produced by the Alumni Office
- The college’s **website**, overseen by Institutional Media Services ([www.bethelks.edu](http://www.bethelks.edu))
- The college’s **news service**, part of IC
- Engagement through [social media](#), overseen by IC

In addition to the programming noted above, the college invites alumni and community members to [lectures, concerts, sports competitions and many other events](#) that may be of interest.

Bethel engages with its external constituencies and communities of interest, former students, the local populace, donors and other friends of the college, all of whom are stakeholders in the institution. Through educational programming, established entities, informal gatherings, campus activities and media outlets, the college responds to their needs while guided by its [vision and mission](#).

## Sources

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- Academic Affairs - Internships
- Academic Affairs - Kauffman Museum
- Academic Affairs - KIPCOR Brochure 2019
- Academic Affairs - Life Enrichment
- Academic Affairs - MEDA
- Academic Affairs - Mennonite Education Agency
- Academic Affairs - Mennonite Library and Archives
- Academic Affairs - Mojos Coffee Bar
- Academic Affairs - Prison Theater Project
- Academic Affairs - Service Learning
- Admissions - Admissions web page
- Admissions - MC USA Convention 2019
- Advancement - 2018 Annual report Context

- Advancement - African American Alumni Association
- Advancement - Alumni and Friends events
- Advancement - Alumni Association
- Advancement - Alumni Council
- Advancement - Alumni Weekend 2019
- Advancement - BCWA
- Advancement - Community Gardens
- Advancement - Donors
- Advancement - Fall Festival
- Advancement - Friends of Bethel College in Germany
- Advancement - MCUSA
- Advancement - Nursing Alumni
- Advancement - Reunions
- Advancement - Sand Creek Trail
- Advancement - Social Media
- Advancement - Thresher eView
- Athletics - Booster Club Membership Form 2018-2019
- Institutional Communications - Context
- Institutional Communications - News and Events
- Institutional Communications - Social Media
- President - Mennonite Education Association Statement Of Arrangement
- President - Who We Are webpage Guiding Principles
- Student Life - Bethel-College-Sunday-Mornings
- Student Life - Host Family Program

## **1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary**

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

### **Summary**

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Bethel College is performing its mission and embodying its values, sustaining its tradition while enacting continuous improvement in achieving its educational purpose. Guided by its mission, the College has focused in recent years on upgrading campus facilities, enhancing the residential student experience, and reinvigorating the curriculum. Consonant with its commitment to be a diverse community of learners, it has grown more diverse and it continues to foster multicultural life in new ways.

The College is now poised for a new mission, rooted in and driven by its historic identity. Nearing the completion of an inclusive and dynamic process, the College is preparing to state what it will be in 2019 and beyond, and its administration, faculty, and staff, are energized to work toward that new vision, ensuring that Bethel sustains its tradition of excellence.

### **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

## 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

### 2.A - Core Component 2.A

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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

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**Governing board.** See 2.C regarding policies and processes of the governing board to ensure that it operates with integrity.

**Financial integrity.** The College demonstrates integrity in its financial functions as evidenced by the unqualified opinions in the Auditor's Reports ([2015](#), [2016](#), [2017](#)).

**Faculty and staff operate with integrity.** College faculty and staff follow ethical policies as prescribed in the [Faculty Handbook](#) and [Staff Handbook](#).

[The Consumer Information](#) page of the web site contains a wide variety of disclosures and policies, including [state law compliance](#), [FERPA](#), other privacy issues, institutional data, costs, accreditation documents, gender and ethnicity statistics, [social media policy](#), financial aid, retention and graduation rates, health and safety, etc.

[Faculty](#) and [students](#) are regularly briefed on [FERPA](#) using both email and paper correspondence.

The college established the [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#) in Fall 2018.

**Student Life expects all students to act with integrity** while enrolled at Bethel College, in accordance with policies outlined in the Student Handbook ([15-25](#)) and ([32-34](#)).

The athletic department participates in the **National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)** Champions of Character program, earning a five-star institution award at the [bronze level in 2016-17](#) and [gold level in 2017-18](#) ([Score Card 2017-18](#)).

**The Institutional Advancement Office** operates its fundraising and other development activities in accordance with ethical policies to ensure the integrity of its work. That office follows standards set by the Association of Fundraising Professionals [AFP Code of Ethical Principles and Standard](#), and The Council for Advancement and Support of Education's [CASE Donor Bill of Rights](#) and [CASE Principles of Practice](#). In addition to those broadly recognized standards of practice, the Advancement Office follows numerous internal policies to ensure integrity of practice, including its [Gift Annuity Policy](#), [Gift Solicitation Acceptance Policy](#), [Auxiliaries Fundraising Policy](#), and [Naming Policy](#).



**The Admissions Office and Financial Aid Office** perform all recruitment and admission activities in accordance with admissions policies as outlined in the [catalog](#). Financial aid policies are outlined in the [Financial Aid Policies and Procedures](#) manual and the [Student Life Handbook](#).

## Sources

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- Academic Affairs - KSDE KBOR Oct 1978 authority to confer degrees
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- Admissions - FINANCIAL AID POLICIES
- Admissions - NACAC Code of Ethics
- Advancement - AFP Code of Ethical Principles
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- Advancement - Gift Annuity Policy
- Advancement - Gift Solicitation Acceptance Policy
- Advancement - Naming Policy
- Athletics - 2016-17 Champions of Character score card
- Athletics - 2017-18 Champions of Character score card 2017-18
- Athletics - NAIA Champions of Character NAIA Five Star Institutions Gold 2017-2018
- Business Affairs - 2015 Financial Audit
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- Business Affairs - Bethel College Tuition and Fees web page
- Business Affairs - Staff Handbook
- Institutional Communications - Social Media Policy 7 Nov 2016
- President - Areas of Focus for Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- President - Bethel College Guiding Principles web page
- President - Mennonite Education Association Statement Of Arrangement
- President - Mission Working Group Members \_ Charge
- Registrar - 2018-19 Academic Catalog
- Registrar - 2018-19 Academic Catalog (page number 9)
- Registrar - 2019 FERPA Brochure
- Registrar - 2019 FERPA MEMO to Faculty and Staff
- Registrar - 2019 FERPA Memo to Students
- Student Life - 2018 - 2019 Student Handbook
- Student Life - 2018 - 2019 Student Handbook (page number 15)
- Student Life - 2018 - 2019 Student Handbook (page number 32)
- Student Life - 2018 - 2019 Student Handbook (page number 38)

## 2.B - Core Component 2.B

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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

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Bethel College provides clear and complete information to students and the public. Typically, multiple offices review and edit publications designed for these audiences to ensure accuracy and integrity. These recruitment and publication development practices guide the dissemination of information relative to the following:

**Programs.** The [Academic Catalog](#) is the primary source for information about Bethel's areas of study. The Office of Academic Affairs is responsible to annually update the academic catalog and [online consumer information](#) in an accurate and timely manner.

**Requirements.** [Academic program requirements](#) are outlined in the Academic Catalog. A brief synopsis of program requirements may be found under "[Areas of Study](#)" in the catalog. Policies regarding [academic](#) good standing, probation, and suspension; [residency](#) and enrollment requirements are found in the Academic Catalog.

**Faculty and Staff.** The Academic Catalog includes [information on year of hire](#) and degrees for all Bethel College faculty and administrators. Students and the public can find the catalog in a number of places on the website. The website includes an electronic online directory that displays brief information about each employee alongside the employee's photograph. Bethel's intranet, ThresherConnect, includes a [campus directory](#) with contact information for employees and students accessible to the internal campus community.

**Costs to Students.** The [annual costs](#) are outlined in the [Academic Catalog](#). Costs are also available to the public on the [website](#).

**Control.** Bethel is clearly defined in its [mission statement](#), found in the catalog and on the [Guiding Principles website](#), as an "independent institution of higher education." A list of the members of the Bethel administrative cabinet and [Board of Directors is on the website](#).

**Accreditation Relationships.** Bethel's accreditation relationships and standings are listed in the Academic Catalog and are also summarized on the website that lists and displays the HLC accreditation as well as the program accreditation for [Athletic Training](#), [Education](#), [Nursing](#), and [Social Work](#). Their respective academic "Areas of Study" sections on the website reference each accrediting body.

### Sources

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- Academic Affairs - Bethel College Accreditation web page
- Academic Affairs - Bethel College Athletic Training web page

- Academic Affairs - Bethel College Nursing web page
- Academic Affairs - Bethel College Social Work web page
- Academic Affairs - Bethel College Teacher Education web page
- Academic Affairs - Campus Directory
- Admissions - Bethel College Consumer Information web page
- Board of Directors - Bethel College Board of Directors Members - March 2019
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## 2.C - Core Component 2.C

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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

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#### 2.C.1

The deliberations of the Board of Directors focus on preservation and enhancement of the institution. A review of the minutes from any meeting of the Board of Directors will reflect on-going discussions related to how best to grow the College while recognizing the realities of current budget constraints.

Since at least March 2011, the priorities the Board has established for the College include [balancing the budget and increasing enrollment](#). Those priorities continue under the leadership of [President Gering](#). These priorities, which the Board views as fundamental to the preservation and enhancement of the College, are part and parcel of all deliberations at the [Board of Directors level](#) reflecting discussion at Financial Affairs Committee and Marketing and Recruitment Committee meetings; and [reflecting discussions](#) reflecting discussions in President's Opening Remarks, Financial Affairs Committee Reports, and Marketing and Recruiting Committee Reports.

Furthermore, Board meeting time is also devoted to Board development topics designed to educate the Board about the following, among other topics:

- The current climate in higher education: "[The Present. The Future. The Bethel Student.](#)"
- Important topics impacting the [financial health](#) of the College
- Matters over which the Board has [fiduciary obligations](#)

(Additional support for this argument is integrated in text below for 2.C.2)

#### 2.C.2

**The Board of Directors follows its [bylaws](#)** to ensure that it fulfills its governing responsibilities to serve the best interests of Bethel College and assure its integrity.

The governing board takes ultimate responsibility to guide institutional purpose: "The Board of Directors shall require and approve a complete current statement of institutional purpose, goals, and objectives which will provide direction for institutional planning and management. (Article I)."

Article I also articulates the board's ultimate duty to organize the administration and structure of the College in order to fulfill its mission: "The institution shall consist of such personnel, departments, and administrative structures as the Board of Directors deems necessary and appropriate to the functioning of an academic program which embraces the liberal arts and sciences and such other studies as the Board may approve, and to confer academic degrees, certificates, and honors as may be approved."

Bethel College identifies by history and by choice with Mennonite Church USA, and is an independent legal corporation governed by the Board of Directors. As documented in Article II of the bylaws, membership in the Bethel College Corporation is widely representative, including delegates from area conferences of Mennonite Church USA, representatives from the Bethel College Alumni Association, Bethel College Women's Association, congregational representatives, and all annual contributors of \$100 or more to the College. The Corporation holds an annual meeting, which typically includes presentations by the board's Chair and the College President to update these stakeholders on the state of the College, including mission, strategic planning goals, fundraising, and other campus developments. This structure ensures that Bethel sustains its relationship with individual constituents, church congregations, and denominational bodies.

The Board of Directors, itself, includes representatives of its interested constituents, including various area conferences of Mennonite Church USA, the Bethel College Alumni Association, the Bethel College Women's Association, the Corporation, the Mennonite Education Agency, and the Board itself.

Article III of the bylaws enumerates for the governing board its: 1) Powers, 2) Membership, 3) Appointments, 4) Meetings, 5) Officers, and 6) Committees.

Bethel College's relationship to the Mennonite Church USA is articulated in a [Statement of Arrangements with the Mennonite Education Agency](#), the denomination's office for educational relationships. The statement makes clear that the relationship is consultative and that Bethel College continues to be independent legal corporation and educational institution.

Discussions remain ongoing with MEA about additional revisions to the Statement of Arrangements which accurately reflects the relationship between them. These discussions reveal the [Board's firm stance](#) that it will continue to maintain its independence.

Despite its autonomous decision-making authority, the Board regularly reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations. The Board devotes time at each of its meetings to hearing from and interacting with students, faculty, staff and administrators. Examples can be seen in the meeting minutes cited herein. Furthermore, the Board endeavors to engage all relevant members of constituent groups in critical decisions related to the institution. For example, members of faculty, staff and the wider community were asked to serve on the recent [Presidential search committee](#). The Strategic Planning Task Force, tasked with developing and recommending to the [Board](#) a strategic plan for the College in 2016, consisted of Board members, Cabinet members, faculty, staff, students, and the President. The more recently formed [Mission Proposal Working Group](#) consists of Board members, faculty, staff, students, and members of the Cabinet.

### 2.C.3

The **Board of Directors** preserves its independence from undue influence when such influence

would not be in the best interest of the institution.

As articulated in its [Conflict of Interest Policy](#), the governing board ensures that: "Members of the Board of Directors work in service to the College for its exclusive benefit and welfare and are expected to fulfill their responsibilities in a manner consistent with this charge. All decisions of each member relating to the College must be made in manner that discharges his or her duty of loyalty and fidelity to the College."

The [Board changed its bylaws in 2013](#) in order to further ensure independence of its members. Prior to 2013, representative constituencies had the ability to appoint members to the Board. In [2013, the Bylaws were amended](#) to give the Board sole authority to appoint its members. The Board retains its representative nature and consults with constituent organizations regarding Board appointments; however, ultimate authority for appointment now rests solely with the Board itself.

**Membership in the Kansas Independent College Association (KICA)** "develops and enhances the competitive standing of its 19 member independent, non-profit, regionally accredited, degree-granting colleges and universities and strives to assure opportunity and choice in higher education for all students." Bethel is a member of this association for advocating independent higher education in the state of Kansas. Through KICA the member colleges teach cooperative courses in teacher education, offer an online course consortia, and have cost sharing agreements in administrative software and health insurance.

In 2018, KICA absorbed the assets and programs of the Associated Colleges of Central Kansas (ACCK) of which Bethel was a founding member in 1966.

#### 2.C.4

The College bylaws **make explicit that the governing board delegates day-to-day management** of the institution to the administration (Article IV), and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters (Article V). For instance, Article IV states: "The President shall be the chief executive officer and administrative head of the college and be responsible to the Board for the management of the college." Article V lists items that fall under faculty oversight, for instance: "The faculty shall have primary responsibility for retention of students, for initiating, developing and implementing the instructional program of the college.."; and, "The faculty shall prescribe admissions and retention standards, courses taught and course requirements, revision or deletion of courses, and requirements for graduation." Complete bylaws regarding appropriate delegation of administrative and academic duties are listed [here](#).

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- Board of Directors - 14 Oct 16-17 2014 Board of Directors Minutes - Approved Signed
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- Board of Directors - 17 March 30-April 1 Board of Directors Spring 2017 Meeting Minutes - Approved and Signed
- Board of Directors - 17 Oct 13 Board of Directors Committee Meeting Minutes - Approved

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- Board of Directors - 2011 March 31-April 2 Board Meeting Minutes
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- Board of Directors - Presidential Search Committee Members
- President - Mennonite Education Association Statement Of Arrangement
- President - Mission Working Group Members \_ Charge

## 2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

### Argument

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Bethel College is committed to freedom of expression, a commitment formalized in several documents.

The [Faculty Handbook Statement on Academic Freedom](#), articulates the college's commitment to freedom of expression. That commitment to freedom of expression is reinforced elsewhere in the *Faculty Handbook*. A [statement](#) regarding the Board of Directors' right to set aside temporarily provisions of the handbook in an institutional emergency, "The Board, in making such changes, shall be mindful of institutional values of academic freedom and fairness in procedures (1.8.6.b)."

An [explanation](#) of probationary contracts notes: "During the probationary period a teacher should have academic freedom just as all other members of the faculty have (2.7.1)." An articulating [philosophy of tenure](#) states that the College recognizes "the value of tenure as promoting...academic freedom (2.2.2)."

The College Library adheres to the position governing censorship and intellectual freedom adopted by the Council of the American Library Association and published in the [Association's Library Bill of Rights](#).

Faculty members are not required to be Mennonite church members or sign a statement of faith. New faculty members are familiarized with the college's Mission, Vision, and Values statements and are asked not to contravene them as a condition of employment. New faculty and staff also attend a presentation about the history of Mennonites and of the college as part of their orientation.

### Sources

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- Academic Affairs - Faculty handbook
- Academic Affairs - Faculty handbook (page number 33)
- Academic Affairs - Faculty handbook (page number 41)
- Academic Affairs - Faculty handbook (page number 60)
- Academic Affairs - Faculty handbook (page number 72)



## 2.E - Core Component 2.E

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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

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#### 2.E.1

Bethel College maintains a practice of an Institutional Review Board to ensure the integrity of research, in particular to deliberate on the ethical considerations of proposed research projects. That process considers possible risks (physical, psychological, social, legal, etc.) to the participants, clarifies possible benefits, and weighs whether benefits exceed the risks. If the proposed research involves human participants, [an informed consent form is required](#). The latest IRB procedures were approved at the faculty meeting of [Dec. 5, 2017](#). Other approved documents include [Informed Consent for Parent](#) and an [IRB Modification Form](#).

#### 2.E.2

Through required courses in the general education program, all Bethel students are provided instruction in the ethical use of information resources. All freshman students take [First-Year Seminar](#) that includes instruction in documentation and writing evaluated with a rubric that requires appropriate documentation. The freshman [composition course](#) required to meet writing competency further reinforces that instruction with additional research writing. Working with the instructors of those required freshman-level courses, the co-director of the library developed an [Information Literacy Rubric](#) that is used in the freshman-level writing courses. The [Library Strategic Plan](#) reports some of that activity.

#### 2.E.3

Bethel College communicates and enforces a policy on academic honesty and integrity. In its annual academic catalog the College communicates academic policies including [Intellectual Honesty and Plagiarism](#). That policy is included on the [Syllabus Template Form](#) used by all faculty for their course syllabi. When that policy is violated, instructors report those cases of plagiarism, and the office of the VP for Academic Affairs maintains a file of those reports.

### Sources

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- Academic Affairs - Bethel College Library Strategic Plan 2018 linked to ACRL Standards\_
- Academic Affairs - Critical Writing Syllabus SP 2018
- Academic Affairs - Faculty Meeting Minutes

- Academic Affairs - First Year Seminar Syllabus FA 18
- Academic Affairs - IRB - Informed Consent for a parent
- Academic Affairs - IRB - New IRB document with informed consent
- Academic Affairs - IRB Modification Form
- Academic Affairs - New information literacy rubric with standards and framework 2017\_
- Academic Affairs - syllabus template form
- Registrar - 2018-19 Academic Catalog
- Registrar - 2018-19 Academic Catalog (page number 37)

## **2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary**

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

### **Summary**

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Bethel College operates with integrity in its primary and auxiliary functions, following professional standards and policies to assure its integrity. Bethel College presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public through its website and print materials. The governing board of Bethel College fulfills its authority and responsibility to protect the best interest of the institution and assure its integrity. Bethel College demonstrates explicit commitment to freedom of expression, and it ensures that knowledge is being acquired and applied responsibly.

### **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

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

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

### 3.A - Core Component 3.A

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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

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#### 3.A.1

The [Academic Program Structure and Purposes](#) in the Academic Catalog articulates the standard requirements and level of performance for programs of study, including majors, concentrations, minors and certificates. A minimum of 124 credit hours is required for each of the bachelor's degrees offered (B.A., B.S., B.S.N.). Specific requirements for individual departmental programs are enumerated in the [Academic Catalog](#).

Currency of the academic program is ensured by annual oversight of the curriculum conducted through faculty governance ([Educational Policies Committee](#), [Common Ground Steering Committee](#), the [Bylaws, Article 1.3 Article V.2.a-b](#) in the Faculty Handbook, and the monthly divisional meetings and bi-monthly faculty meetings). The Educational Policies Committee supervises a five-year cycle of comprehensive academic program review ([4.A.1](#)). Additional, external validation is provided for the pre-professional programs by their respective independent accrediting bodies in [Athletic Training, Education \(Kansas Department of Education\)](#), [Nursing](#), and [Social Work](#). The faculty completed a comprehensive revision of the general education program in 2009-10 with [additional revisions in 2014](#).

In Fall 2018 the Educational Policies Committee, faculty, and Board of Directors approved a new [program in Mechanical Engineering](#) (including [ME Catalog copy](#)) that will begin implementation in Fall 2019 pending HLC approval. Other possible programmatic additions include a Software Development program, Latinx Studies program, and the College's first master's-level program in Nursing. Those latter programs have undergone or are undergoing feasibility studies.

#### 3.A.2

Bethel College articulates and differentiates learning goals for each of the academic programs it

offers. Learning goals for each program appear in the Academic Catalog with each program's description ([pp. 44-128.](#)).

### 3.A.3

With very few exceptions, the Bethel College academic program is delivered on its main campus, so the consistency of program quality and learning goals can be ensured by this singular focus on traditional, undergraduate, primarily residential education.

**Dual credit.** In Spring 2018, Bethel College launched its first dual-credit courses online (see [syllabi](#), including [General Psychology](#)). Courses are designed to meet general education requirements at Bethel and other institutions. While the courses are listed as college credit courses in the Bethel College system, high schools that are targeted for enrollment in these courses have the option to list the courses as dual credit for their high school students. If dual credit is desired, high schools request the syllabus for the online course to submit for school board approval. After approval, the courses can be listed as a dual-credit option.

All instructors for online courses meet faculty qualifications to teach the courses. The student selection process for the dual credit option requires some cooperation between Bethel College and interested high schools, beyond providing the online course syllabus for approval. Currently, students must meet the minimum admissions requirements for Bethel College, although they are not enrolling as full-time students ([Online Education Faculty Handbook](#)).

Area high schools have been targeted to utilize proximity, and Mennonite and Mennonite-affiliated high schools have also been targeted across the U.S., in line with Bethel's historical Mennonite affiliation. The list of locally targeted high schools include: Newton High School, Hesston High School, Halstead High School, Goessel High School, Moundridge High School, and Sedgwick High School.

**Kansas Independent College Association (KICA).** As a member of the KICA, Bethel College and the other member institutions maintain oversight of some shared academic programming, concentrated in a Special Education endorsement program that supplements the on-campus Elementary Education major and the on-campus Secondary Education licensure program. Some secondary methods courses are also taught through KICA and shared by the other KICA colleges' education programs. Assurance of program quality is monitored by the Kansas State Board of Education and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.

**College Consortium (CC).** Bethel is a member of College Consortium, which allows shared access with other institutions to online courses, tuition revenue, and best practices.

**RN-BSN Online:** According to the Kansas Nurse Practice Act (Kansas State Board of Nursing, 2016) Statute 60-2-104, each educational program in the state must have an articulation plan. Given the geographical location of Bethel College and the varying schedules of working nurses, an online articulation program allowed the nursing program to meet the needs of the community as well as address regulatory requirements.

The RN-BSN does not maintain a separate operating budget. The only budget variables are related to faculty salaries. Promotional materials are developed jointly by the Department of Nursing and Institutional Communications. The Department of Nursing provides final review oversight to ensure that all information is correct.

[RN-BSN curricula](#) has been developed by long-term nursing faculty, reviewed by the entire nursing faculty, approved by the Social Sciences and Human Services Division, Educational Policies Committee, and reviewed and approved by the full faculty of Bethel College. Faculty have virtual office hours and are exploring the possibility of using Zoom for student tutoring (course [syllabi](#) and [End of Course Evaluations](#)).

**Wuppertal Exchange Program.** The Department of Languages at Bethel sponsors a student exchange program with the Bergische Universität in Wuppertal, Germany. Each year one or two Bethel students [exchange for students from Wuppertal](#), who spend a year on the Bethel campus. Bethel has also had numerous students participate in a variety of other [study abroad programs](#) over the years.

**UNICACH.** In January 2018, Bethel's VP for Academic Affairs and the Rector of the Universidad de Ciencias y Artes de Chiapas (University of Sciences and Arts of Chiapas) (UNICACH) signed a memorandum of understanding that formalizes academic cooperation between the two institutions. This new initiative has already [fostered campus visits](#) by faculty and students.

**Brethren Colleges Abroad.** Bethel has a long relationship with [several study abroad programs](#), such as Council on International Educational Exchange and International Partners for Service Learning. Its closest relationship is with the Brethren Colleges Abroad program, which offers undergraduates a summer semester, or year of study in numerous international locations.

**Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (KIPCOR).** Located on the Bethel College campus, KIPCOR offers a variety of resources in conflict resolution and peace-building, as well as an extensive networking system for consulting and intervention. KIPCOR is an integral part of Bethel's PJCS courses, which are part of the college's [Common Ground GE Curriculum](#).

## Sources

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- Academic Affairs - 11a Study\_Abroad\_guidelines
- Academic Affairs - 11aa UNICACH
- Academic Affairs - 11ab UNICACH Exchanges
- Academic Affairs - 2010 Social Work Reaffirmation Letter
- Academic Affairs - 2011 0212 CSWE Progress Report Review
- Academic Affairs - 2011 NCATE Approval of Accrediation Teacher Ed 2011-11-10
- Academic Affairs - 2012 0112 Office of the Commissioner
- Academic Affairs - Appointment Rank revisions to faculty handbook 2013
- Academic Affairs - AT Program Review
- Academic Affairs - AT Program Review Rubric
- Academic Affairs - Bethel College Study Abroad Participants
- Academic Affairs - Bethel Wuppertal Exchange Students List
- Academic Affairs - Bible and religion Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Bible and Religion Program Review Rubric
- Academic Affairs - Biology Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Business Program Review
- Academic Affairs - CAATE Letter of Accreditation
- Academic Affairs - CAATE Letter of Accreditation
- Academic Affairs - Chemistry and Physics Program Review

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- Academic Affairs - Communication Arts Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Communication Arts Program Review Rubric
- Academic Affairs - Definition of Faculty Faculty Rank and Faculty Titles
- Academic Affairs - English Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Enhanced Evaluation Development Procedures for 1st and 2nd Year Faculty
- Academic Affairs - Faculty Clinical Instructor Record
- Academic Affairs - Faculty Degree Plan
- Academic Affairs - Faculty handbook
- Academic Affairs - Faculty handbook (page number 7)
- Academic Affairs - Faculty handbook (page number 27)
- Academic Affairs - Faculty handbook (page number 29)
- Academic Affairs - Faculty Hire Exception Form
- Academic Affairs - General Education Objectives Updated June 2014
- Academic Affairs - History and CS Program Review
- Academic Affairs - HPE Program Review
- Academic Affairs - HPE Program Review Rubric
- Academic Affairs - KIPCOR Program Review
- Academic Affairs - KIPCOR Program Review Rubric
- Academic Affairs - Languages Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Languages Program Review Rubric
- Academic Affairs - Mathematical Sciences Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Mechanical Engineering Catalog Copy version 5
- Academic Affairs - Music Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Music Program Review Rubric
- Academic Affairs - Natural Science Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Natural Sciences Program Review Rubric
- Academic Affairs - New Mechanical Engineering Program Proposal Form including all Course Proposals Mechanical Engineering
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- Academic Affairs - Nursing Certificate of Accreditation
- Academic Affairs - Nursing Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Online Course Syllabi
- Academic Affairs - Online Education Faculty Handbook SU 18
- Academic Affairs - Online General Psychology
- Academic Affairs - Philosophy Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Philosophy Program Review Rubric
- Academic Affairs - Program Review Rubric
- Academic Affairs - Program Review Schedule and Instructions 2018
- Academic Affairs - Psychology Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Psychology Program Review Rubric
- Academic Affairs - RN-BSN Curriculum
- Academic Affairs - RN-BSN Curriculum
- Academic Affairs - RN-BSN End of Course Eval Example
- Academic Affairs - RN-BSN Student Handbook 2018-2019
- Academic Affairs - Social Work Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Teacher Education Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Teacher Education Program Review Rubric

- Academic Affairs - Visual Arts Program Review
- Academic Affairs - Visual Arts Program Review Rubric
- Advancement - Engage the Future\_ Strengthening Minds Bodies and Communities
- Registrar - 2018-19 Academic Catalog
- Registrar - 2018-19 Academic Catalog (page number 22)
- Registrar - 2018-19 Academic Catalog (page number 44)
- Registrar - 2018-19 Academic Catalog (page number 90)



## 3.B - Core Component 3.B

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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

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#### 3.B

The exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to the educational programs at Bethel College.

#### 3.B.1

(Integrated in text below for 3.B.2)

#### 3.B.2

The general education program reflects the College's mission and values statements, its commitment to liberal arts and career preparation, and its church affiliation. The general education goals as stated in the [Academic Catalog](#) are:

In alignment with the Bethel College Mission Statement, students will endeavor to achieve the following:

In order to become critical thinkers, students will develop effective communication skills. Conveying ideas cogently, fostering interpersonal relationships and cultivating collaboration are essential to professional success and to meaningful participation in community.

In order to become critical thinkers, students will develop the ability to gather, interpret and evaluate information from a wide range of sources and to integrate knowledge from various disciplines. Responsible decision-making and effective problem-solving are possible only after understanding the

complexity of problems and the interrelatedness of systems.

In order to become engaged global citizens, students will acquire a broad understanding of the social and natural world. A foundational engagement in the liberal arts and sciences, characterized by scholarly inquiry, creativity and methodological diversity, prepares students for in-depth study in their chosen major, and for active engagement in the world beyond the classroom.

In order to become engaged global citizens, students will acquire experience in cross-cultural learning and an understanding of the global nature of human community. Cross-cultural sensitivity and a global perspective are critical to working and living productively in diverse communities.

In order to become both critical thinkers and engaged global citizens, students will acquire experience in examining basic questions of faith and life. Within an academic community that values personal faith development, peace-making, social justice and service—as reflected in both Christianity (e.g., the Mennonite faith) and other faith traditions—students learn to consider the moral and ethical ramifications of the personal and professional decisions they will make throughout life, and within the different communities they find themselves.

The general education curriculum is structured into three components – competencies, core, and distribution requirements. Because Bethel only confers baccalaureate degrees, this general education program is required of all graduates. The only difference in general education requirements between B.A. and B.S./B.S.N. degrees is the foreign language competency required for the B.A.

**Competencies.** In order to graduate students, must demonstrate the following competencies: fundamentals of reading and study skills, fundamental English, writing, oral communication, and mathematics. As mentioned previously, B.A. degree-seekers must also meet foreign language competency prior to graduation. Competencies as found on pages 26-27 in the Academic Catalog can be met through a variety of methods outlined in the Academic Catalog: high-school transcript analysis, ACT or SAT scores, placement exams, and college courses. These foundational competencies enable further academic achievement in the core and distribution components of the [GE program](#) and in major program study.

**Core.** The five "core" [general education requirements](#) reflect Bethel's distinctive approach to liberal arts education. These requirements, described in the [Academic Catalog](#), explore questions of value and meaning beyond the classroom, and foster personal and community growth.

- [First-Year Seminar](#), a seminar for all first-time freshmen entering fall semester, improves writing and oral communication skills and acclimates new students to the college community.
- [Convocation](#), a twice weekly, all-school assembly designed to help build community, broaden horizons and explore basic value issues, is required for eight semesters for graduation. Accommodations are available for students whose off-campus courses (e.g. internships) prevent them from attending. The faculty reaffirmed its commitment to Convocation in Spring 2018 after a [task force](#) was appointed to study Convocation's goals and role in the core curriculum.
- Integrating Faith and Learning, is accomplished through Bible and Religion (BRL) [courses](#) which foster objectivity in understanding and interpreting religious perspectives, and empower students to develop their own worldviews and ethical orientations by integrating knowledge from academic disciplines and professional fields with theological and ethical reflection. To graduate, all students must take [Basic Issues of Faith and Life](#); the second class can be any three credit hour Bible and Religion course.
- Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies (PJCS) [courses](#) reflect the [College's mission](#) and its

(Mennonite) peace church tradition. The PJCS requirement is designed to generate critical understanding of structures of power and violence, foster engagement on issues of social justice from different perspectives, and develop skills across disciplines for managing conflict and practicing peace-making. To achieve these learning outcomes, students select one course from an [approved list of courses](#) offered by numerous departments.

- Cross-Cultural Learning ([CCL](#)) [courses](#) prepare students for working and living in a diverse and global community by exposing them to a cross-cultural experience in a culture significantly different from their own. As with the PJCS core requirement, a variety of courses across the curriculum meet this requirement. Some courses are primarily on-campus with 15 or more hours of immersion activities in the local area. These courses combine field experiences with readings, discussion, films, etc. to explore and increase understanding of cultures. Other courses involve travel and extended stays, primarily during Bethel's January interterm. January 2017 travel courses included Tropical Biology Field Trip to Costa Rica, Jerusalem Seminar, School and Community with a week-long trip to Chicago, Seminar in Cross Cultural Learning: Immersion in the Culture of South America, and Social Development and Social Justice with a trip to Mexico. Interterm 2018 featured travel courses to Mexico, Hutchinson Correctional Facility, East Central Europe, and European Choir Tour. The 2018-2019 schedule includes courses to Italy and Hutchinson Correctional Facility.

**Distribution.** As a liberal arts institution, Bethel prepares graduates to become critical thinkers and engaged global citizens through study in the arts and humanities, sciences and mathematics, and social sciences. The distribution requirement specifies that students complete a minimum of six credit hours from two or more disciplines in each of the three academic divisions. A set of courses (primarily introductory classes) is identified by faculty in each of the divisions as designed for meeting [GE outcomes](#).

In addition to being explained in the catalog, the general education program is articulated to students in other ways. Students learn about the College's liberal arts philosophy and general education program during their recruitment process. For example, most campus visits on Mondays and Fridays include attendance at Convocation. At enrollment, first-time freshmen are given a copy of the [GE Requirements](#) and the Liberal Education Advisers (freshmen advisers) use that as a guide during the enrollment process. Transfer students are also made aware of the general education requirements in their orientation sessions and enrollment process.

Courses that meet various general education requirements are identified in the [course schedule](#) and the course description section of the Academic Catalog (Ex: see the course description for [Introduction to Literature](#) on pg. 75 of the catalog). Faculty advisers in majors also monitor students' progress toward meeting general education requirements, particularly during enrollment advising meetings. The degree checks conducted by the Registrar's office also report progress on general education requirements. The [syllabus template](#) distributed to faculty includes a placeholder for the general education learning objectives, and these objectives also are included on the end of semester course evaluations completed by students.

The general education program – competencies, core, and distribution – is consistent with Bethel's mission and provides a comprehensive foundation for extended study in a major. The five goals/outcomes of the general education program are assessed regularly through course evaluations, rubrics applied to student work, exam questions, and surveys. Details of the general education assessment process and results are provided under Criterion 4.

### **3.B.3**

All majors at Bethel College require a senior-level project that engages students in at least one of the following areas: 1) collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; 2) mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; 3) developing skills adaptable to changing environments. In most degree programs other than the fine arts and pre-professional programs, this senior-level project is an extensive research paper and public presentation (see examples of the [senior seminar syllabus](#), [student seminar presentations](#), and [rubric](#) from the History Department).

All senior [seminars submitted to the College library are cataloged](#) and accessible through the College library catalog. In the arts, music seniors perform a solo recital and art seniors exhibit an extensive collection of their own artwork. In pre-professional programs, the culminating project is a semester-long internship or practicum experience. Many of these senior projects are highlighted at the annual URICA Symposium ([2018](#), [2018a](#), [2017](#)).

Underclass students also are involved in these types of activities, including the opportunity to present at the annual **URICA Symposium**. Each year, the campus art gallery has an exhibit of artwork produced by non-senior Visual Art and Design and Graphic Design majors. Music ensembles, consisting of students from all grade levels and many majors, perform concerts each semester. Sophomore/junior music majors and seniors not majoring in music often perform [recitals](#). Several majors have junior-level internships. Education licensure candidates begin developing their skills in 100- and 200-level courses through micro-teachings and field placements. The sciences encourage freshmen, sophomores and juniors to work with seniors and faculty on research projects through the STEM Learning Community. Junior nursing students present research posters at a noon-hour session open to the campus community. Most courses (all levels) require some research and writing.

### **3.B.4**

As detailed above under 1.C, according to its mission and values statements found in the [Academic Catalog](#), Bethel College values diversity and multiculturalism, and recognizes the importance of providing an education that prepares students to live and work in a diverse world.

**Office of Diversity and Inclusion.** See 4.C.3.

**UNICACH.** See 3.A.3.

**Cross-Cultural Learning.** Bethel's commitment to human and cultural diversity is made explicit in the general education goal that prepares "students for working and living in a diverse and global community by exposing them to a cross-cultural experience in a culture significantly different from their own. The Cross-Cultural Learning requirements a college-level, guided, reflective experience in which students meet the people of another culture within their social and physical environmental context." As one of the five "core" Common Ground requirements, Cross-Cultural Learning (CCL) highlights that commitment. Learning objectives for CCL courses are: 1) I understand that living in a diverse and global environment is challenging; 2) I experienced a culture different from my own; 3) I better understand my own culture, comparing and contrasting it to the culture of others; and 4) I am prepared to live and work in a global community (see [GE Objectives](#)).

Faculty continue to develop [new courses](#) that meet the CCL requirement. For example, in Spring 2016 the faculty approved IDS333: Seminar in Cross-Cultural Learning: Immersion in the Culture of South America, and in Spring 2017 the faculty approved BIO303: Biological and Cultural Richness of Mexico for CCL credit. In Spring 2018 the [faculty approved lower-level foreign language courses](#)

for CCL credit. Each year, the Faculty Welfare Committee awards professional development grants and instructional development grants, and supports the use of these funds for the development of CCL courses.

Topics related to human and cultural diversity are common in other areas of the core Common Ground curriculum. In each of the last six [spring semesters](#), [Convocation](#) has featured presentations by the students in [Seminar on Diversity](#). This programming applies what students have learned about power and privilege, and thus reflects and recommends improvements for engaging diversity in our community. Another example of such integration between core general education and promotion of diversity is in the freshman-seminar course, [First-Year Seminar](#), where faculty have intentionally selected texts such as *Outcasts United*, *In the Country We Love: My Family Divided*, and *The Hate U Give* as common texts, in part because of their emphasis on issues of diversity.

### **3.B.5**

Bethel faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate for an undergraduate, liberal arts college.

**URICA.** The College awards [URICA grants](#) each year to five to ten students. [These students conduct research](#) with a faculty mentor and present their findings at convocation in the fall and at the URICA Symposium in the spring. In addition to the URICA grant winners, students from a variety of majors present papers/research projects, reflect on internships/field placements, and showcase art/drama at the [URICA Symposium](#) in late April. The faculty URICA committee also provides some monetary support for [student participation](#) in conferences, poster presentations, etc.

**RICHE Initiative.** [RICHE](#) stands for "Research, Internships, and Careers in Health and the Environment." It was originally designed to provide support to students and faculty in two broad interdisciplinary areas of science, but it has evolved into a program to support all STEM areas at Bethel. The rationale was to defray partially students' pursuit of non- or minimally-paying internships so that participation in an internship did not come at the expense of earning money for college. This program is funded through a combination of yield from an endowment and some additional designated donations, including a recent gift of \$100,000.

Since 2013, the program has [supported 28 students](#) as well as several Bethel science faculty, mostly in the summer. Most of the money has gone to support internships, including job shadowing, by students, but there was also support over three summers for students and a faculty member working together on a research project. All students who receive RICHE support report on their activities to the STEM Learning Community (a group of 50-60 first year through senior science students) during the fall semester.

**Rich Endowment.** The Rich Endowment was given to the college "to be used for full-time students, either a junior or senior, as stipends to help defray expenses for special research projects." Although the most common use of funds from the endowment is for STEM students to attend research conferences, the funds are available for students in all academic disciplines.

**YAWP!** In 2014 the college's literary magazine was reinvigorated and developed into a course [Literary Magazine Production](#). This course offers students hands-on experience producing Bethel's undergraduate literary magazine *YAWP!* ([Spring 2017](#), [2018](#), [Spring 2015](#), [2016](#)). Coursework includes applied training in all stages of production. Students also have the opportunity to interview [nationally published writers](#) who come to Bethel as part of the [Literary](#)

[Studies Department's Visiting Writers Series.](#)

***The Collegian.*** *The Collegian* is the Bethel College student-run newspaper whose mission is to inform readers about campus events, personalities and issues; to motivate readers to participate actively in campus life; and to help shape a positive campus environment. Published 6 times per semester (bi-weekly), it is circulated to all faculty, staff, and students, and to nearly 200 subscribers. It is operated and staffed by nearly 25 Bethel College students and a faculty advisor. The newspaper is funded through student fees and advertising dollars. Some students choose the option to receive academic credit for their journalism participation, developing skills in one or more areas of journalism-related responsibility: reporting, photography, editing, or managing.

**C. Henry Smith Oratorical Contest.** Students in all programs are invited to submit peace-related lectures to the [C. Henry Smith Oratorical Contest](#), an event open to anyone enrolled in Mennonite- or Brethren in Christ-related colleges. Contestants submit their lectures both in written form and in DVD recordings. Winners receive cash prizes and scholarships to attend peace-related conferences and seminars. In both [2017 and 2018 the winner of the bi-national contest](#) has been a Bethel student.

**Forensics.** Bethel has a long and excellent tradition in forensics. Bethel is one of only six colleges and universities in the nation to compete every year at the American Forensic Association National Individual Events Tournament (AFA-NIET) since it began in 1978. In 2015-2018, Bethel has qualified every member of the team for the AFA-NIET. In 2017, one student was named to the American Forensic Association All-American Team.

**Fine Arts.** The departments of Communication Arts, Music, and Visual Arts and Design actively contribute to the enrichment of students' education at Bethel. Student performances, [recitals](#), and exhibitions are presented on a regular basis (Arts and Humanities Division reports to the board in [April 2013](#), [October 2013](#), [April 2015](#), [April 2016](#), [March 2017](#), [April 2018](#)).

**STEM Symposium.** The [annual STEM Symposium](#) in October is a two-day program that brings speakers, alumni, STEM faculty and STEM students together to highlight scholarship, creative activity and the discovery of knowledge in one of the STEM programs. Each year the symposium highlights a different STEM theme, such as "Computer Science and Engineering" ([2015](#)), "Public Health and Inter-professional Collaboration" ([2016](#)), "Computing in Science and Health Care" ([2017](#)), and "Women in Science and Mathematics" ([2018](#)). Presenters are all Bethel alumni who are working in STEM fields.

**[Concussion Research Project.](#)** Launched in Fall 2014, faculty in the Psychology and Athletic Training programs collaborate to investigate behavioral, cognitive, and neural effects of concussions in athletes at Bethel. The goal is to gather more detailed information about these effects so as to help guide prevention and treatment decisions for Bethel athletes in the future. The project is engaging psychology, athletic training, neuroscience, and pre-health professions students as student researchers, thereby providing them research opportunities that are closely related to the careers to which they aspire.

**Marpeck Undergraduate Research Journal (MURJ).** MURJ is a multidisciplinary journal in its pilot year, and incorporates students from Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas. It entertains submissions from students in all academic departments of both institutions.

**Faculty Scholarship and Creative Work.** Faculty model scholarship, creative work, and the

discovery of knowledge. They publish books, present at conferences, perform recitals, etc. as evidenced by activity reported in the alumni magazine, submitted as part of annual faculty reports. (Faculty activities [2016-17](#), faculty activities [2017-18](#)) According to the [Faculty Handbook 2.5.1](#), “Faculty members at Bethel College are expected to be effective teachers, to be practicing scholars, and to provide meaningful service to the College and community.” Regular faculty evaluation (Three-Year Reviews, Promotion and/or Tenure Reviews, and Post-Tenure Reviews, as discussed in 3.C.3 below) encourage scholarship and creative work. For example, in 2013 our campus and faculty hosted a "[Mothering Mennonite Symposium](#)" (see also [News article](#)). Every other year Bethel faculty have organized and participated in the "[Worship and the Arts](#)" symposium on campus, most recently in November 2017 with the theme "Seasons of the Soul: Enacting the Mystery of Faith." In March 2018 Bethel faculty organized and hosted a conference of international scholars entitled "[Mennonites and the Holocaust](#)."

Another opportunity for faculty development is the Mennonite Higher Education Faculty Conference that takes place every other spring. Funding is provided for new and veteran faculty members to present research and network with colleagues from other Mennonite institutions in the United States and Canada.

[Mennonite Life](#) journal often features [articles by Bethel faculty](#), and faculty have often served as editors of the journal. Faculty are often invited to give a presentation at the Bethel College Women’s Association Annual Meeting. ([June 2014](#)) Further examples of scholarly activities from the Arts and Humanities faculty may be found in their reports to the Board of Directors. ([2013](#), [Fall 2013](#), [2015](#), [2016](#), [2017](#), [2018](#)). While scholarship is an expectation of the faculty, exceptional scholarship on the part of a faculty member may be recognized through a [Distinguished Scholar Award](#).

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## 3.C - Core Component 3.C

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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

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#### 3.C.1

As listed in the [Faculty FTE 2000-2019](#) full-time equivalent document, in the current academic year there are 42 faculty in ranked, full-time positions (0.50 FTE or greater). Supplementing those 42 full-time faculty were 30 adjuncts, totaling 47.63 FTE.

The size of the Bethel College faculty (FTE) and the ratio of students to faculty have been stable, as shown by the [Student to Faculty Ratio](#) document. Since 2000, the total FTE has ranged from 41 to 47, and the student to faculty ratio has been in the 9:1 to 11:1 range, with one exception when it dipped as low as 8:1.

As the [Faculty Degrees, Rank, & Tenure](#) document shows, the Bethel faculty has the appropriate credentials and sufficient continuity to carry out its educational mission ([Academic Catalog](#)). Of the 42 full-time, ranked faculty, 26 (62%) have terminal degrees, and an additional three are in doctoral programs, for a total of 29 (69%) holding terminal degrees and/or working to complete terminal degrees. 19 (45%) are tenured, with an additional 12 on tenure tracks, for a total of 31 (74%) either tenured or on tenure track lines. By choice, Bethel elects to retain strong faculty who do not have terminal degrees or were not hired on tenure track lines, using the [Renewable Three-Year Appointment](#) as articulated in Section 2.2.4 of the Faculty Handbook. Thus, the nine faculty on non-tenure track are still core faculty. They remain eligible for renewable appointment and promotion at least to the Associate Professor rank.

An overhaul of the faculty's committee structure in 2012 reduced the number of faculty committees from 21 to eight, thereby reducing committee workloads while also clarifying faculty authority and accountability in shared governance. First recommended by the VP for Academic Affairs, this

concept was carried forward by the Faculty Welfare Committee, which presented its proposed changes to the faculty in March and April 2012, culminating in approval by the full faculty on May 1, 2012.

### 3.C.2

Bethel College articulates policies and procedures for ensuring the appropriate credentials for instructional staff. In Section 2.1, the Faculty Handbook [provides a definition of faculty, faculty rank and faculty titles](#). Revisions to the handbook in the recent past have made substantive improvements to those policies and procedures, designed to enhance the College's ability to recruit and retain the best qualified instructors possible.

[Revisions ratified in Spring 2013 added language](#) to guide judgments regarding credentials that might be considered equivalent to master's or doctoral degree programs. New language in the Faculty Handbook reads: "In the criteria for rank articulated below, a doctoral or terminal degree is upheld as the aspirant standard for full-time College teaching faculty, but the College recognizes that some disciplines have special degrees and programs of advanced study that might be considered equivalent to master's or doctoral degree programs. For example, in some fine arts, the MFA may be regarded as a terminal degree. Similarly, in some pre-professional programs and applied disciplines, significant professional achievement or notable performance might be considered as comparable preparation for advanced rank. Due consideration is given to such patterns of equivalent preparation (2.1.2)." This new language provides guidance to the VP for Academic Affairs and the Faculty Welfare Committee regarding initial appointment and eligibility for promotion.

All faculty appointed to full-time teaching positions meet the minimum requirements articulated in the Faculty Handbook for appointment to the lowest rank as [Instructor](#), which requires "possession of a master's degree from a graduate institution of recognized standing or equivalent experience and professional recognition as determined pursuant to Section 2.1.2." [Exceptions](#) to the master's degree minimum requirement have occurred only in the [nursing program](#), whose accreditation bodies ([Kansas State Board of Nursing and CCNE](#)) expressly permit instructors with a B.S.N. degree as long as those instructors are [progressing in a plan](#) of study toward completion of the M.S.N.

Online faculty are also vetted and follow the same process for hiring as other college faculty. They submit a CV, visit campus for an interview with the department chair and other faculty, and interview with the VP for Academic Affairs and the President of the College.

Since the last HLC visit, [considerable work has been](#) done in regard to [faculty qualifications](#). A substantial [faculty-qualifications policy](#) addition was made to the Faculty Handbook (Section 2.3.6) by vote of the [faculty on April 18, 2017](#) and the College Board of Directors on [October 13, 2017](#). This policy included text explaining the policy as well as a sample [academic credentials chart](#), a [review documentation form](#), and a [professional development plan form](#).

An explanation of how to comply with the new policy addition was conducted at the fall faculty workshop on [August 16, 2017](#). All the relevant documents were sent to the faculty on [August 18, 2017](#). This correspondence was followed up by explanations on how to use the credentials chart on [August 24 and 25, 2017](#) (see [Academic Credentials](#)).

Academic credentials charts have been received, and review documentation forms and professional development plan forms have been filled out and approved (see [Faculty Qualification Review](#)).

All adjunct instructors meet qualification criteria either through credentialing or through tested experience. In the 2018-19 academic year, adjunct faculty who lacked a degree at least one level above that being taught (i.e., a Master's), but all were qualified through equivalent and/or tested experience (see [Adjunct Qualification Review](#)).

### 3.C.3

Instructors at Bethel College are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures. The Faculty Handbook (Sections 2.5, 2.6, and 2.7) articulates those institutional policies and procedures for [faculty evaluation, promotion, and tenure](#). Since the last comprehensive re-accreditation visit in 2009, the College has substantively improved evaluation policies and procedures. Bethel has enhanced the process for first- and second-year faculty reviews, added an instructional development team for all full-time faculty in their third semester, revised tenure and promotion criteria, and added a post-tenure review process.

In coordination with the Faculty Welfare Committee, the VP for Academic Affairs developed the [Enhanced Evaluation & Development Procedures for First and Second-Year Faculty](#) in 2009-10. That decision by the VP for Academic Affairs to create formal review processes in year one and two was consistent with the handbook's stipulation that the VP "has the discretionary power to specify the nature and frequency of evaluation of specific faculty" in addition to the three-year reviews and promotion and tenure reviews conducted by the faculty peer committee. Those enhanced procedures for first- and second-year faculty reviews were implemented in 2010.

In addition to the preceding evaluation policies, individual departments may have additional faculty evaluations (see [Evaluation of Nursing Faculty Policy](#)).

### 3.C.4

Bethel College provides professional development to all new full-time faculty through a [New Faculty Handbook and Orientation](#) at the beginning of their first year of service. As discussed in that orientation, new faculty participate in a first- and second-year evaluation process that has a strong developmental component. That includes participation (in the third semester of employment) in an Instructional Development Team that pairs the new faculty member with his/her department chair and another colleague outside of the department for a process of mutual class observations and pedagogical collaboration (see [Faculty Handbook 2.5.2.b](#)).

A [Faculty Mentor Program](#) has been established to help new faculty acclimate to Bethel culture and their new positions. In this annual development program new faculty are paired with returning faculty who assist them in meeting people and feeling welcome, especially at August Prologue Days and beginning-of-school activities. They are encouraged to share lunch or coffee breaks together occasionally throughout the first year to see how things are going. Mentors also serve as confidants, with whom new faculty can feel free to speak openly about matters in relation to the college and their experience at Bethel.

Bethel College supports the professional development of its instructors with several funding sources that sustain faculty's active engagement in their profession. Much of that professional development support is described in the [Faculty Handbook \(Section 2.10\)](#). That includes:

- The [sabbatical leave policy](#) articulated in Section 2.10.1 has been sustained. In the last ten years, [27 sabbatical leaves have been granted](#) by the governing board.

- Annual funds available to all faculty at 0.75 FTE or higher are described in Sections 2.10.4 and 2.10.5. That funding provides \$100 each year toward professional membership fees and \$500 each year toward attendance at professional meetings.
- In addition, instructors also can apply for Faculty Development Grants administered by the Faculty Welfare Committee, as described in Section 2.10.6. The College currently budgets \$3000 for those additional grants, and since 2009, 34 grants have been awarded to faculty.

Another significant funding source for faculty development is a restricted endowment that supports a number of monetary awards yearly, the amount of which varies depending on the number of applicants and revenue earned by the endowment. The [Franz Endowment](#) supports Teaching Development Grants and Awards to support work by a faculty member to improve or upgrade teaching skills or to develop or upgrade a course, and a Community Service Grant to reward broader faculty activities such as advising, program development or recruiting that go beyond classroom teaching or scholarship. Since 2010, 13 Teaching Development Awards and 34 [Teaching Development Grants](#) have been awarded, and one [Community Service Grant](#) has been awarded.

Yet another form of faculty development is the [Graduate Loan Forgiveness Program](#), which appears in the Faculty Handbook section on Administrative Policies (Section 3.0), but is in fact an important form of faculty development. Originally designed to help recruit and retain faculty who had “incurred student loan debt in pursuit of a terminal degree and have completed the terminal degree,” the policy has been adapted to support current faculty who are pursuing advanced degrees. Six current Bethel instructors have received a total of \$52,500 in additional professional development support through this program.

An award that is prized by the Bethel faculty is the [Distinguished Teaching Award](#). This endowed award recognizes a [Bethel College faculty who has made an outstanding contribution](#) to teaching. The \$1,000 award is presented at commencement as a way of affirming the importance that Bethel places on excellent teaching by the faculty and learning by the students.

One recent example of the College's commitment to enhancing teaching effectiveness among faculty took place in Fall 2017 when the Vice President for Academic Affairs led the faculty in a study and discussion of *Small Teaching* by James M. Lang. These discussions resulted in fruitful conversations and practical pedagogical ideas for the participants.

### 3.C.5

In accordance with Section 2.11.1 of the [Faculty Handbook](#), all instructors are expected to be accessible for regular student inquiry. The section reads: "A full-time faculty member shall be regularly available to students, and is expected to post and keep eight (8) office hours per week. A part-time faculty member shall be available to students, and post and keep office hours, in proportion to the percentage of time for which he or she is employed. Part-time per course faculty are expected to be available at least 1-1/2 hours per week for each course taught to advise students regarding their coursework."

**Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI).** In [2014](#), [2016](#), and [2018](#) (the last three times the SSI has been administered), the Noel-Levitz report interpreting Bethel students' satisfaction levels identified numerous “Strengths” in those results that attest to the quality and accessibility of faculty. See data [here](#).

Each April on [Assessment Day](#) the faculty work on assessment practices and initiatives, and included

in that work is a workshop to address the consistency of level and quality of instruction. In [2014, the faculty developed](#) a comprehensive assessment plan with common objectives for all General Education courses. In 2015, the Communication Arts faculty developed an Oral Communication Rubric and led the faculty in a norming exercise. In 2016, English faculty worked on thesis-driven writing and assessment across the curriculum in order to ensure that the college writing rubric is being used consistently by all faculty. In 2017, the faculty had a workshop on expectations and outcomes for library and research skills in first-year, mid-stream, and senior-level writing assignments. In 2018, the faculty had a workshop on 100- and 200-level writing courses and expectations for researched writing. Further information on assessment practices is found in Criterion 4.

### 3.C.6

**Office of Student Life.** Five of the [six professional staff members](#) have a bachelor's degree, and the sixth staff person is working on a bachelor's degree. Three staff members have a master's degree. Experience and/or transferable experience with programs related to the appropriate position have been desired qualifications for hiring. The Campus Pastor currently serves as a faculty member in addition to his responsibilities in Student Life, and the Student Life Office Coordinator also serves as the College's Title IX Coordinator. Applicants for positions in Student Life are reviewed by the Vice President for Student Life and other search committee members.

[Student staff members](#) include the Community Assistants (Resident Assistants at many institutions) aligned through Residence Life and the Student Chaplains connected to the Office of Student Life via Campus Ministries. These positions are selected by the staff member primarily responsible for their development/supervision.

Training and professional development are integral to the goals of the Office of Student Life. Internal training sessions occur each year. That internal training allows for revision of content and procedure, and using feedback for future iterations of the training schedule.

Staff members are encouraged to look for professional development opportunities in an effort to improve their skills and job satisfaction. All staff members are encouraged to seek membership in appropriate state and national professional organizations and to attend one to three professional development opportunities each year including national and regional conferences and webinars.

**Tutoring Services.** See Section 3.D.1.

**Academic Coaching.** See Section 3.D.2.

**Personal Counseling.** See Section 3.D.1. The Director of Student Wellness, a licensed counselor and social worker, was hired in 2014. The Director works in cooperation with other local therapists and a local mental health center, Prairie View.

**Financial Aid Advising.** Financial aid advising under the direction of the Director of Financial Aid meets all Department of Education and audit requirements for training. That includes annual attendance at the Kansas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators conference, webinars, and daily updates provided by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. In addition to one-on-one counseling, the Director of Financial Aid has also initiated seminars for students to keep them informed about FAFSA, financial aid practices, and deadlines ([Visit Day](#), [Early Enrollment Day](#), [Networking](#)).

**Academic Advising.** See Section 3.D.3.

**Coaching.** Coaches for all intercollegiate athletic teams are [appropriately qualified](#) through minimum education standards (at least a Bachelor's degree) and relevant professional experience in their respective sport. Coaches are encouraged to seek opportunities for professional development.

**International students.** Students are supported in part by the College's Registrar, who serves as the Primary Designated School Official (PDSO) and works in coordination with the Student and Exchange Visitor of U.S. Immigration and Customs to assist students who seek to earn their F-1 status and obtain a Form I-20 in order to enter the United States. In addition to maintaining appropriate certification through the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System, the Bethel PDSO has attended the NAFSA: Association of International Educators conference for professional development in all areas of international education.

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## 3.D - Core Component 3.D

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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

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### 3.D

Bethel College is committed to helping its students become successful in the classroom with an integrated program that provides and oversees academic support services, ADA accessibility, freshman and transfer seminars, and academic advising. While Bethel has a long history of commitment to student academic success, the College is continually looking for ways to strengthen these services.

### 3.D.1

**Center for Academic Development (CAD).** One of the ways that Bethel [provides support](#) for its students is through the [CAD](#). CAD offers academic support and a wide range of services free-of-charge to all students. The director of CAD gives oversight to the academic support services, which are coordinated to enhance the teaching programs of the college. In 2012, the CAD was strategically moved to the renovated Will Family Academic Center to provide convenient access to students and to demonstrate its importance in the academic life of the students. Since its move to its current location, the CAD has averaged over 10,000 people passing through its doors each academic year, and even more students are served in other locations around campus (CAD Office Count [2016-2017](#), [2017-2018](#)). Student evaluations of CAD services have been extremely positive.

In addition to being a comfortable and convenient setting for individual study, small study groups and private tutoring, CAD offers computer access and free printing. During the academic year, [CAD is staffed](#) Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm, and Monday-Thursday, 7pm-9pm. Students may come to the CAD office for help during the tutors' scheduled hours or call student tutors directly to request an appointment. Student tutors are available for all disciplines, and all tutors are upper-level majors recommended by their department chair. In an effort to make tutors more accessible to students who may be hesitant to ask for help, CAD began stationing its evening tutors both in the CAD office and in the freshman residence hall starting in 2013-14. This has been very successful.

Student feedback has suggested that minority and first-generation students may be hesitant at times to seek academic assistance from both their professors and their peers. In an attempt to address this situation, the director of CAD has been intentional to ensure that students of color and first-generation students are well represented on the CAD staff. For the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 academic years, 32% of the students on the CAD staff were students of color (Black, Hispanic, Asian) and/or first-generation students.

While CAD has been an important resource for athletic teams over the years, in the past year CAD has worked more intentionally with the football team and men's basketball team. Tutors are now hired from within the ranks of the teams to be present at team study halls and on call for team members.

Students are invited to consult the director of CAD about study skills and strategies such as test-taking, test anxiety, and time management. Printed materials are also available to check-out. The director of CAD is also available for consultation and help with preparation for the GRE, PPST, and TOEFL exams.

**Writing Center.** CAD serves as [Bethel's Writing Center](#), which plays an integral role in several courses, including Fundamentals of Reading Study Skills, Introduction to College Writing, First-Year Seminar, and Critical Writing. CAD writing tutors are Literary Studies majors and other students who have been trained by the Chair of the Literary Studies Department to tutor writing. The lead writing tutor is the [CAD "writing consultant,"](#) an English major who has been awarded a fellowship for demonstrated excellence in writing. The writing consultant is available to work with all students, but is also integrated into the curriculum by serving as the assistant for Introduction to College Writing. In addition to their weekly classroom activities with the instructor, students in Introduction to College Writing meet regularly with the CAD writing consultant for one-on-one tutorials. During these tutorials, students review assignments, readings, and papers assigned in First-Year Seminar (which is taught concurrently) and/or other courses in which the students are enrolled.

**Americans with Disabilities Act.** Bethel College is committed to providing equal educational access for individuals with disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1998, and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008. Bethel will make reasonable modifications to its policies, practices, and procedures unless doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity, or pose an undue administrative or financial burden. CAD provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with physical or learning disabilities (upon request). The director of CAD serves as the [ADA Service Provider](#) and coordinates accommodations for students with both permanent and temporary disabilities, [keeping records of their documentation](#) and serving as the liaison between students and faculty.

**The Student Wellness Office** provides students with wellness resources using a holistic model of health focusing on mental/emotional wellness and physical wellness predominantly. The office oversees the Thresher Health Center in concert with the Nursing department to provide physical health services to students or to connect them with the appropriate community referral. Individual counseling is provided from this office, as well as stress management resources shared via classroom presentations or the resource page on the Bethel website.

**Student Fitness/Wellness Center.** As part of the [Engage the Future: Strengthening Minds, Bodies, and Communities capital campaign](#), Bethel College will construct a student fitness/wellness center. This 43,000 square foot center will include two basketball courts, a weight room, and a cardio room.

A multi-lane, elevated walking track will encompass the gymnasium space. In addition to these spaces, the center will include a lobby and open space for informal gatherings and receptions. The open space will feature a rock climbing wall. A large, dividable multi-purpose room will be available for a variety of activities, such as yoga and aerobics, or easily converted to a classroom or conference space. A small kitchen, bathroom/shower/locker room, office and a small meeting room will round out the center.

**Host Families.** In Fall 2018, 43 students and 30 families participated in the Host Family Program. Student Life is actively involved in recruiting local families to offer a home-away-from-home to students who come to Bethel from a distance.

**Mentoring.** The Minority Mentor Program is a recent innovation from Student life that attempts to provide new students of color with support to help them feel connected to campus, encourage them to get involved, and help them feel like they belong. The pilot program began in Fall 2016, and the current program is offered to all first-year students of color who desire to be mentored by returning students of color. The Vice President for Student Life [is currently developing a Peer Mentor Program](#) and Living-Learning Communities for first-year students that will be piloted in the future.

**Career Services.** The [Office of Career Services](#) is located in the central offices of the Administration Building and includes Career Development, Teacher Placement, Student Employment, and Service Learning Placement. Students are offered personalized service along with the opportunity to prepare for post-graduation success. By using a wide variety of career-related resources, tools, and web-based links, students can actively participate in the career development process. Assistance is available in self-assessment and career exploration, career plan development, resume or cover letter writing, conducting a job search, preparing for an interview, seeking internships or graduate schools, and preparing teaching credential files. Workshops, career fairs and employment opportunities, both on and off campus, are coordinated and/or advertised through this office.

**Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) Data.** Based on the most recent student satisfaction data from [2014](#), [2016](#), and [2018](#), our students report a high level of satisfaction with academic advising and support services (see [data](#)).

While the figures in regard to *Campus Support Services* are strong, the Assessment Committee's report on these data concluded that when compared to National 4-Year Privates, *Academic Advising* (+.31, statistically significant at the .05 level) the Bethel figure is significantly higher.

### 3.D.2

The director of CAD serves as the instructor for [Fundamentals of Reading and Study Skills](#). This course is required of first-time freshmen whose ACT composite score and high-school GPA product is less than 50 and were admitted to college by committee approval. The course also is open to all students who desire assistance in reading and study skills.

In Summer/Fall of 2013 the Fundamentals of Reading and Study Skills course was restructured in an effort to help at-risk students be more successful. Since 2013 the course has cooperated with a professor and student assistants in the Psychology Department to cooperate in [experiments with lumosity.com](#) and growth mindset. These projects have resulted in significantly higher flexibility scores among the students.

Additional initiatives in the course since Fall 2014 include dividing the course into two sections to

allow for more individualized instruction and implementing the "[Reading Plus](#)" program to assess and improve students' reading skills.

In response to the increasing need for additional writing instruction for underprepared students, in 2014 the college began offering **Introduction to College Writing** (syllabi [1](#), [2](#)). This course is designed to help students master the foundational skills in critical reading and writing that they will need so they can successfully meet university expectations for academic writing success. This course is required of all first-time freshmen whose ACT English score (or its SAT equivalent) is less than 17.

**Academic Coaching.** In December 2016, an Academic Coaching position was established as an initiative of the college's Retention Committee ([Academic Coach Entrepreneurial Grant Application](#)). In Spring 2017, the Academic Coach started meeting with students identified by the Retention Committee who were on probation and needed "reactive" coaching. In addition, the coach began meeting with students for "proactive" coaching. [The Academic Coach](#) meets regularly with all students who are on academic probation and teaches the Thresher Transition course for transfer students in order to help transfers prepare for the academic rigors of college.

**First-Year Seminar.** Upon admittance to the college, each freshman is assigned to a Liberal Education Advisor (LEA). Each LEA is assigned 12-15 diverse students, who thus comprise an advising group and a section of the freshman seminar course, [First-Year Seminar](#), for which the advisor also serves as instructor. LEAs are chosen from the faculty across disciplines, and typically half of the LEAs are senior faculty. They receive training at an LEA Workshop each August and meet bi-weekly to discuss pedagogies and advising strategies ([2018 Agenda](#), [Workshop PowerPoint](#)).

As stated in the course description, First-Year Seminar is a 3 credit hour course required of all first-time freshmen at Bethel College. It is designed to help new students adjust academically and socially to Bethel College, and to enhance the skills of liberal education: to think critically and cogently, and to communicate in writing and speech with grace and precision.

In Summer 2013, Bethel awarded a teaching development grant to the director of CAD to fund a [summer workshop](#) for four instructors of First-Year Seminar with the goal of enhancing student support for students whose high-school scores and ACT/SAT scores indicate that they are academically at-risk. The pedagogic strategies developed for and during this workshop were implemented in [a coordinated approach to advising and teaching First-Year Seminar](#), Introduction to College Writing, and Public Speaking to form a kind of learning community for students who are academically at-risk.

**Thresher Transition.** While Bethel has actively incorporated best practices in first-year experiences over the years, it is increasingly evident that many transfer students also benefit from programming suited to their specific needs. In addition to programming through Student Life, a curricular initiative began in Fall 2014, a one-credit course entitled [Thresher Transition](#), to help transfer students adjust to their new academic and social environment. Preliminary data suggest that this course is effective in helping students persist at Bethel with an average increased [transfer retention rate](#) from 68% to 78%.

**Early Alert System.** The [SPACeR](#) early alert system is used by faculty and staff to identify students who are experiencing difficulty. Online alert forms are used to indicate areas of concern (academic or non-academic) for individual students. These alerts go to the VP of Student Life, who forwards the concerns as appropriate to key individuals such as the academic advisor, coach (if applicable) and the

CAD director. The academic advisor is asked to make contact with the student within 24 hours to assess the problem and implement appropriate measures to alleviate the situation. The CAD director also contacts the student within 24 hours to offer academic assistance, including the contact information for an appropriate tutor. The Retention Committee meets bi-weekly to assess trends and determine whether other means are necessary to intervene in a given situation.

**Early Graded Experiences.** Within the first 15 days of the fall semester, instructors of courses in which freshmen are enrolled give a graded assignment (quiz, essay, project, etc.) that is significant enough to be considered in the determination of the final course grade. These 15th-day grades are reported to the LEAs, who then meet with each of their freshman advisees to discuss the grades, determine any problem areas, and develop strategies for improvement, if necessary ([2018 Retention Committee Research and Action Initiatives](#)).

**Mid-Term Grades.** Mid-term grades are given to all students enrolled in courses at Bethel College. Instructors are encouraged to incorporate a *significant* graded experience (exam, paper, major project, etc.) in all courses at a mid-semester date determined each semester by the Registrar. These grades should constitute at least 25% of the calculation of the final course grade and are reported to the Registrar's Office. The Registrar then sends mid-term grades to both the students and their advisors. All freshman advisors (LEAs) meet with their advisees to discuss the midterm grades, determine any problem areas, and develop strategies for improvement, if necessary. The CAD director is notified of all students who receive lower than a C- in any course, and in turn contacts the students offering academic support. The development of such strategies is crucial for student success, since Bethel research has shown a correlation of 0.8 between students' mid-term grades and their eventual semester course grade ([2018 Retention Committee Research and Action Initiatives](#)).

### 3.D.3

Bethel College values a developmental approach to academic advising that both encourages and challenges students in their educational experience. All students are assigned a faculty advisor not only to help them achieve academic goals through selection of courses appropriate to their individual goals, skills and interests, but also to assist them in achieving personal goals through frequent interaction and personal concern. Bethel views the academic advisor as a primary figure in helping students in their efforts to make their academic experience as successful as possible.

National studies of undergraduate institutions have found that 50% to 75% of freshmen have undeclared majors or change their majors within the first two years of their undergraduate experience. In response to such studies, Bethel has developed a comprehensive advising program that is designed to give freshmen a supportive and challenging experience in and out of the classroom.

**Freshman Advising.** Upon admission, freshmen are assigned to [Liberal Education Advisors \(LEAs\)](#) (see 3.D.2).

Freshmen who are relatively sure about their major will also be assigned to a Major Exploration Advisor (MEA) in their major field. In these cases, the LEA serves as the student's primary advisor but works cooperatively with the MEA to provide the best possible advising for their students.

Since 1999, Bethel has used the "College Student Inventory" (CSI) by Noel-Levitz. The CSI is currently administered to all first-time freshmen during orientation, and the results of this instrument are discussed in private advising sessions in conjunction with a review of each student's 15th-day grades. The reports generated by Noel-Levitz include a variety of motivational assessments

(academic, social, coping, and receptivity to support services), which help advisors identify at-risk students early in the semester and determine students' strengths and challenges.

**Major Advising.** At the point (after at least one semester) when a student is ready to declare a major, the [MEA or other major advisor](#) (if a different major is chosen) becomes the student's primary advisor. Students and advisor work together closely in a mentoring relationship in an effort to equip students to realize academic, personal, and career goals.

Numerous studies have shown that students who are satisfied with the quality of their advising tend to be satisfied with college as a whole. Bethel has devoted many institutional resources into developing an advising system that has many unique features, especially in relation to the first-year experience. The result is a developmental advising model that is effective and appealing to students.

Student satisfaction with advising has been corroborated by the results of the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) by Noel Levitz, which was most recently administered in Spring 2018 ([2014](#), [2016](#), [2018](#)). In the report, satisfaction with Academic Advising exceeded the national private by the largest gap of the twelve areas and with high statistical significance. Indeed, Academic Advising at Bethel has compared favorably to private college peers each of the last four times the SSI has been administered, as shown below. See data [here](#).

**Student Fellowship Program.** After gauging faculty interest in Spring 2014 regarding a [Student Fellowship Program Proposal](#), the VP for Academic Affairs arranged for a Bethel alumnus, who guided such a program as Dean of Advising at Dickinson College, to meet with a group of interested faculty in September 2014 to explore the creation of a Student Fellowship Program to identify and nurture promising Bethel students for prestigious fellowship programs. After this meeting a Student Fellowship Advising Committee was formed by three faculty members. Since that time, four Bethel students have [applied](#) for competitive awards. Three applied for Truman Scholarships, and one applied for a Goldwater Scholarship.

### **3.D.4**

**Adequacy of Physical Facilities.** [Bethel campus buildings](#) total 497,089 square feet of space designed for a variety of purposes, including administrative offices, student residence halls, classrooms and laboratories, athletic facilities, performing arts spaces, maintenance shops, storage, and auxiliary space ([Buildings/Grounds Description](#)). The Administration Building, the oldest structure on campus, celebrated its 125th anniversary at Fall Fest 2013. The most recent addition in 2012 is the James A. Will Family Academic Center, a \$5 million renovation with an addition to the former Science Hall. It contains faculty offices and classrooms for Bible and religion, business, history, social work and teacher education; a floor in the addition dedicated to nursing education, with faculty offices, classrooms and state-of-the-art simulation labs; student and faculty lounges; the Center for Academic Development; Student Wellness office; and Mac and PC labs for student use.

Bethel's buildings provide excess capacity for the current student enrollment. There are 25 lecture classrooms, four music ensemble rooms, three fine arts labs, one athletic training lab, eight STEM labs, three nursing simulation rooms, two social work interview rooms, and two computer labs. Of the 25 classrooms, 21 are "smart classrooms" with fully integrated, up-to-date classroom technology. These rooms include projection capabilities and audio from an installed workstation, connections for laptops, AirPlay devices, document camera and DVD/Blu-ray players. Control systems are integrated into the instructor's position for intuitive manipulation of classroom technology equipment. There are also two computer labs with similar configurations designed for instructional use. One classroom has

been upgraded to provide for video capture and online publishing of lecture and presentation content.

Residence halls have a capacity to house 469 students: Voth Hall (91), Haury Hall (180), and Warkentin Court (198). In Fall 2018, 340 residential students lived on campus.

Each spring, faculty and staff are invited to take an Employee Satisfaction Survey which includes questions about infrastructure and resources. The survey asks employees to rank the following statement on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree): "My work environment is physically accommodating." Over the years 2014-2017, the average score has been a 4.4 out of 5, or stated differently, 80% of employees agreed or strongly agreed with that statement. While this would suggest that generally faculty and staff are satisfied with their work facilities, the College is aware of areas in which continued improvements are necessary. Another question on the survey asks: "What improvements in tools would improve your work performance?" Since 2014, the area that is most commonly cited (approximately 12% of those responding) has to do with technology, both improvements in hardware and tech support ([Question 11](#), [Question 14](#)).

**The Bethel College Library** [provides resources](#) that enable students to use information effectively to support their learning. The Library, along with the Mennonite Library & Archives, offers more than 180,000 print volumes, 155,000 electronic books, as well as archival resources and material in other formats. The Library provides [LibGuides](#) and subscribes to electronic databases that, together with print volumes, connect students, faculty and staff to more than 110,500 journals. Interlibrary loan allows for quick access to a variety of materials. The Library continues with a daily courier service that connects it with libraries in Kansas, Colorado, Texas, Wyoming, and more.

In addition, the Library has 11 computers for student use and wireless Internet access throughout the building. Recognizing that students need not only virtual resources but also areas in which to study, do collaborative work, and even relax, the Library furnishes spaces that allow students to learn in a supportive environment. Recent improvements include adding additional study tables for individual and small group work. The Library employs a [number of assessment strategies](#) to gauge the quality of its services and support of student learning, including surveys, informal conversation, statistics, and comparison with peer institutions. Additionally, the Library updated its [strategic plan](#) in 2018.

**Kauffman Museum** is an award-winning museum that has been a vital part of the Bethel campus for many years. With richly varied collections, professional staff, and dedicated volunteers, the Museum has provided award-winning educational and visual-didactic services to generations of college students, scientists, media workers, environmentalists, and diverse civic constituencies.

Past and present fields of skills-based entrepreneurial praxis offered to accommodate student internships include office management, customer service, business administration, marketing, graphic design, information technology, nonprofit organization, facility maintenance, and museum operation.

**Fine Arts Center.** In 2012-2014 renovations were made to the Fine Arts Center, which serves not only as a hub for fine arts performances and exhibitions on campus, but also for many campus gatherings and events including Convocation. The electrical and mechanical systems were upgraded at a cost of approximately \$400,000. Structural improvements included: new entry doors, hall lighting, hall carpet, new hall ceilings, asbestos removal on the ceilings, new graphics, painting of hallways, new furniture in the lounge areas, art gallery renovation and naming, a renovated entry plaza, and retaining walls at a cost of \$600,000.

**Graphic Design Lab.** In Summer 2017 the college remodeled a classroom to serve as a dedicated Graphic Design lab to better serve the needs of students in our growing Graphic Design major. It was expanded in 2018 to accommodate increased enrollment. With new machines and a dedicated color printer, the smart classroom offers students more opportunities to workshop ideas and to develop projects for classes and for community clients. Students now meet regularly in the space with on-campus and off-campus clients, allowing for a dynamic merger of classroom and experiential learning.

**Athletic Facilities.** In 2013 the College air conditioned Thresher Gymnasium and Memorial Hall at a cost of \$450,000. In 2015 and 2017 the bleachers in Thresher Gymnasium were replaced at a cost of \$160,000. In 2018 the College replaced the artificial turf and replaced the scoreboard in the football stadium. A refurbishing of the track is next on the agenda. The turf field and track are heavily used for football practices and games, soccer practices and games for women and men, track meets for college and high school, classes, intramural sports, and fitness for students and the public. The cost of these replacements will total around one million dollars. In 2018 a new tennis building was completed next to the tennis courts. In addition to its use at tennis meets, practices and team meetings, the facility also includes restrooms and office space.

**Sand Creek Trail.** See 1.D.1.

**Discovery Adventure Course.** Facilitators use the [Discovery Adventure Course](#) as a key feature of the Thresher Days orientation activities for all new freshman students. The course is also used by some of the sports teams as well as some classes to work on team building. In 2017, the College contracted with Leahy & Associates (Boulder, CO) to have Bethel's low ropes/adventure course inspected and re-certified, and to provide training to certify or re-certify faculty and staff members as educational facilitators on the course. Leahy & Associates conducts its inspection and training in accordance with standards set by the Association for Challenge Course Technology.

### **3.D.5**

Throughout their academic career, Bethel College students can receive support and guidance in their use of research and information resources. The College Library provides a variety of instructional and informational services, including:

**Formal Library Instruction.** Library staff offer instruction either in professors' classrooms or in the library. This instruction ranges from basic understanding of how information resources work to advanced strategies for senior students working on senior seminar and capstone assignments. Instructors are also invaluable in providing students with discipline-specific research instruction.

**Reference Instruction.** Library staff are readily available to answer students' questions, either in person or virtually through email or the Library's "Ask a Librarian" webpage link. Students in need of more extensive advice or consultation may also schedule appointments with Library staff for one-on-one instruction.

**Institutional Review Board (IRB).** In Fall 2017 the faculty completed a major review of all of its IRB policies to ensure that they are compliant with federal standards for both faculty and students. Faculty advisors work closely with students engaged in human and animal research to ensure that the highest standards of ethics, integrity, and safety are followed ([New IRB](#), [IRB Modification](#)).



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## 3.E - Core Component 3.E

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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

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#### 3.E

The Office of Student Life has refocused itself to ensure that the institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment. The first step in this process was forging departmental mission and values statements that align with the College's statements. [Assessments to measure the effectiveness of efforts](#) are in development. Additionally, programmatic efforts in the Residence Life program reflect the mission of the institution and provide for a balanced educational experience. The Campus Ministry area has embraced an approach that allows all students from all religious backgrounds to feel welcome and explore their own faith development through a variety of programmatic initiatives. Outreach continues into the Newton/North Newton community for employment and internship opportunities, and numerous student clubs and organizations under the umbrella of Student Life allow students to give back via service opportunities and to experience personal growth and development through interaction with others. The Office of Student Life continues to develop as staff changes are made and new initiatives take hold.

#### 3.E.1

**Residence Life Student Staff (CAs).** CAs play an important role in the holistic development of Bethel College students. CAs are full-time Bethel College students selected and trained by the Coordinator of Residence Life to help all students living on campus by serving as a resource within the community. CAs help roommates and peers in the residence halls maintain a safe, caring, and responsive community that supports each student's academic success at Bethel College. CAs present opportunities for community building, serving as liaisons for student concerns, and communicating and supporting the Community Standards, policies and regulations. CAs further assist select students approved to have an Emotional Support/Companion Animal in the residence halls.

The Office of Student Life believes one of the most tangible and productive methods to develop community and promote growth is through programming. Students and staff are encouraged to develop new programming with intent and purpose focused on one or more of Bethel's seven values: discipleship, scholarship, service, integrity, community, peace & social justice, and diversity. New student orientation focuses programming and educational sessions around academics and building institutional connections that aid new students in their first year transition into life at college. Programming takes a holistic approach and focuses primarily around academic success, social and community involvement, and physical/mental health.

As mentioned in 3.D.1, Student Life is in the process of developing a [Peer Mentor Program and Living-Learning Communities](#) for first-year students that will be piloted in the future (Retention Committee Minutes: [9-4-2018](#), [9-18-2018](#), [10-2-2018](#) and Retention Committee Supporting Research Documents: [Committee Admits](#), [First Generation Table](#)).

For the last five years, Student Life has designated one staff person to meet bi-weekly with and serve as a liaison to the instructors of the First-Year Seminar in order to aid in programming and retention efforts.

**Student Chaplains.** To increase student ownership in Bethel College's spiritual life, [Student Chaplains](#) are appointed by the Campus Pastor. These student leaders assist in chapel planning, plan seasonal and special events, take leadership in Bible studies and small groups, and provide other types of religious support to peers. These students work closely with the Campus Pastor and other student leaders to foster a dynamic spiritual life experience that supports and leads the Bethel College community.

**Student Activities.** The Bethel College community supports and promotes personal growth within and outside the classroom, and allows students to realize a full and rich college experience. Student Activities provide opportunities for student involvement, service, and leadership. Students may choose to join any of a variety of clubs and campus organizations as well as attend or participate in athletics, music, drama, and dance. The primary resource for information on student activities is the Coordinator of Student Activities and Engagement. Activity calendars: [2016-2017](#), [2017-2018](#), [2018-2019](#).

**Student Government Association (SGA).** [SGA](#) has been in existence at Bethel College since 1933. In recent years SGA has played an increasingly active and effective role on campus as a prominent voice for Bethel students. A list of recent activities over which SGA has given oversight is found in the following calendars: [2016-2017](#), [2017-2018](#), [2018-2019](#).

**Hesston-Bethel Performing Arts Series (HBPA).** HBPA brings internationally renowned performers to the Hesston College and Bethel College campuses. HBPA arranges four to five diverse concerts every year. Funding for these concerts is provided through a variety of federal, state and corporate grants, private donors, and the two colleges.

**Staley Lecture Series.** The College has benefited for many years from the Staley Distinguished Scholar series of the Thomas F. Staley Foundation. Funding from this foundation has allowed the College to bring many distinguished Christian scholars to campus.

**Menno Simons Lectures.** The Menno Simons Lectureship Endowment funds public lectures on the Bethel College campus by recognized scholars relating to Anabaptist-Mennonite history, thought, life and culture, both past and present. In addition to the annual lecture series, the fund also supports research on Anabaptist studies.

### **3.E.2**

**Undergraduate Research, Internships & Creative Activity ([URICA](#)) Symposium.** See 3.B.3.

**Annual Service Day.** Service Day is an annual co-curricular event that demonstrates the mission's ethic of service in action. Each year the College cancels classes for a day and organizes [a range of service activities](#) that join faculty, staff, and students in side-by-side service to the community.

Service Day participation has been high. For the last four years the [student participation rate](#) has been 67%, and the [student participation rate](#) in 2018 was 84%. Such high participation rates provide a tangible example of the College's commitment to service, as expressed in its mission.

**Service Learning Scholarship.** This renewable scholarship opportunity places recipients to work and learn with a local non-profit agency. The Director of Career Services collaborates with partners on and off-campus to evaluate the recipient's career interests and abilities, make the agency contacts, set up the interview process, and match the scholarship recipient with an organization that will provide a valuable learning experience and service to the organization.

**Spiritual Life.** The spiritual life of Bethel College contributes to and reflects Bethel's vibrant and diverse community life. It is formed as much in the classroom or lunchroom as in chapel or campus ministries. Students' faith is routinely challenged in and out of the classroom in ways to promote growth and understanding. Bethel students are trained to think through and articulate their faith even as they are invited to practice it [in service and mission to the world](#).

**Clubs and Organizations.** Activities outside the classroom add to the student experience. This involvement allows for deeper immersion or study in an area of interest and/or the opportunity to explore new opportunities. Traditionally, clubs accept anyone interested. The primary advisor is the Coordinator of Student Activities and Engagement.

**Athletics.** The Champions of Character Program in the Athletic Department promotes educational values and outcomes suited to the College mission. As the [Champions of Character institutional scorecard](#) demonstrates through this program Bethel College student-athletes are provided additional training in core values, outreach experiences that [provide community engagement, and servant-leadership projects](#) that align with the College mission's service ethic. National acknowledgment of the College's commitment to high academic and ethical standards of its athletes came when the men's golf team achieved a 3.808 GPA and was honored by the NAIA as recipient of the Buffalo Funds [Five-Star Champions of Character Team Award](#) in 2018.

The Athletic Department's goal to have a cumulative grade point average (GPA) by all student-athletes of 3.0 or higher also encourages educational integrity. In 2017-2018 eleven out of seventeen athletic teams achieved their goal, and in Fall 2017 the cumulative GPA of all student athletes was 2.90, in spring 2018 it was 2.962, and in Fall 2018 it was 3.064 ([FA 2015](#), [SP 2016](#), [FA 2016](#), [SP 2017](#), [FA 2017](#), [SP 2018](#), [FA 2018](#), [Team GPA 2017-18](#)).

Since 2017, faculty and coaches have met over lunch once a month to foster relationships as well as bring unity to the college's recruitment and retention efforts. Another new program is [Faculty Athletic Mentors \(FAM\)](#). Faculty have served as mentors to the softball and volleyball teams since 2014. Some faculty have even attended practices and games and were available as a non-coaching, non-teaching mentors.

[Academic award recognition](#) at the national level and at the athletic conference level also supports integration of academic, learning outcomes with athletic, co-curricular development. One recent highlight was in 2017 when a Bethel student received the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics' A.O. Duer Scholarship Award.

**Annual Student Awards Ceremonies in Convocation.** Bethel College hosts public awards ceremonies near the end of the spring semester to recognize students' academic achievement, athletic performance, and service activities. Academic and athletic ceremonies have been integrated into two

awards convocations that now provide the culminating sessions in the convocation course required of all full-time students. This integration celebrates the “common ground” and the educational mission that all members of the Bethel community share and to signal that the College celebrates excellence in the classroom, excellence on the competitive field, and excellence in modeling values of service and character ([2017a](#), [2017b](#), [2018](#)).

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- Student Life - Service Day 2015 thru 2018
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- Student Life - Volunteer Hours
- Student Life - Volunteer Opportunities

## **3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary**

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

### **Summary**

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Bethel College has continued to emphasize its traditional, undergraduate, primarily residential character, delivering its education almost entirely on its main campus, by a highly qualified faculty. The general education program, revised by the faculty most recently in 2010, has a coherent design of three components (competencies, plus core and distribution requirements) and a clear set of learning outcomes that direct effective teaching and learning. One prominent illustration of the high quality of a Bethel education is the annual URICA Symposium, which showcases a wide range of students' undergraduate research, internships, and creative activity. Similarly, students in every major complete an advanced senior-level project (research seminar, advanced clinical practicum, or recital/exhibit) that demonstrates a high level of achievement. Data from student satisfaction surveys corroborate claims for the strength of faculty instruction, advising, major content, intellectual growth, and commitment to academic scholarship. A full range of campus support services undergirds excellent classroom instruction, providing additional support for student learning.

### **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

## 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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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

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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

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#### 4.A.1

Bethel College maintains a practice of regular academic program reviews through a five-year cycle launched in 2012. The faculty's curriculum committee has successfully executed that timetable and performed reviews that have in turn been linked meaningfully to budgeting, and resulted in curricular additions that demonstrate continuous improvement.

In Spring 2012 the faculty's Educational Policies Committee (EPC) revised earlier EPC documents for academic program review and presented at a faculty meeting on April 3 its final [Program Review Rubric](#) format and timetable for a new five-year cycle to include every academic program. That process and timeline began a comprehensive cycle of program reviews. The listing below details which programs were reviewed in which years, with links to sample feedback from EPC.

Reviews in 2012-13: [Biology](#), [Pre-Med Pre-Allied Health](#), [Business](#), [Literary Studies](#) (EPC feedback



samples: [Biology Program Review Feedback](#) and [Literary Studies Program Review Feedback](#)).

Reviews in 2013-14: [History](#), [Mathematical Sciences](#), [Nursing](#), [Visual Arts](#) (EPC feedback samples: [History Review Feedback](#) and [Mathematical Sciences Review Feedback](#)).

Reviews in 2014-15: [Chemistry and Physics](#), [Health and Physical Education](#), [Languages](#), [Teacher Education](#) (EPC feedback samples: [Chemistry and Physics Feedback](#) and [Health and Physical Education Feedback](#)).

Reviews in 2015-16: [Bible and Religion](#), [KIPCOR](#), [Philosophy](#), [Psychology](#) (EPC feedback samples: [Bible and Religion Feedback](#) and [Psychology Feedback](#)).

Reviews in 2016-17: [Athletic Training](#), [Communication Arts](#), [Music](#), and [Natural Science](#), completing the 5-year cycle of reviews (EPC feedback samples: [Communication Arts Feedback](#) and [Music Feedback](#)).

Reviews in 2017-18: [Biology](#), [Business](#), [English](#), [Social Work](#) (granted a 1-year extension) (EPC feedback samples: [Biology Review Feedback](#) and [English Review Feedback](#)).

2018-19 program reviews are in progress for [History and Conflict Studies](#), [Nursing](#) (which will include a review of the new online RN-BSN program), [Mathematical Sciences](#), and Visual Arts and Design (Example: [History and Conflict Studies Feedback](#)). This cycle of regular program reviews has allowed us to better evaluate our current offerings and has led to a number of program changes across the curriculum:

**Accounting Track.** The Business review illustrates how the academic review process links to budgeting and continuous improvement. The "Opportunity Analysis" section of the Business program review report linked assessment data and environmental scanning to a budget proposal that went before the President's Cabinet to hire an additional faculty line and add an Accounting/Finance concentration in the Business major.

That budget proposal was accepted in 2013 and implemented in 2014. [Faculty approved](#) the new Accounting track and the hire was made.

**Interprofessional Health Studies Certificate.** The addition in Fall 2014 term of a new Interprofessional Health Studies Certificate provides another example of how the academic program review process is prompting continuous improvement. When the Pre-Medical and Pre-Allied Health Program report was submitted, EPC affirmed the report's integration of assessment data to drive its recommendations, which included the launching of a new certificate program. Largely due to that report, in Fall 2013 the College offered a Healthcare Ethics elective course as a pilot project, then in Spring 2014 the faculty approved the [Interprofessional Health Studies Certificate](#).

**English Department & Writing and Publishing Certificate.** Endorsed by the EPC and [approved by the faculty](#) in Fall 2016, the Literary Studies Department revised its major and restored its former "English" department designation, the revised English program went into effect beginning in Fall 2017. The revision to the program was motivated primarily by the Program Review criteria: 1) to better serve the Bethel College mission; 2) to enhance quality by better aligning faculty strengths and improving program design; 3) to improve sustainability; and, 4) to seize an opportunity to make the English program more distinctive. Major changes include adding an introductory, multi-genre literature course; returning the upper-level survey courses to more conventional national and period

coverage; and the creation of a new Writing and Publishing Certificate program, including an additional creative writing course.

**History Department & History and Political Science Major.** The History department's 2013 program review noted a high level of instability in the department's staffing from 2010 to 2013 due to budget cuts. Some History faculty either worked part-time or combined a part-time History position with a part-time position teaching Peace Studies in the Social Science department. Faculty turnover was high and classes were dropped or scheduled irregularly. At one point, students in U.S. History had a different advisor during each of their four years. In 2014, after program review, the department addressed instability [through a merger](#) of the History and Social Science departments. The department was renamed History and Conflict Studies, two part-time jobs became one full-time job, and all of the department's survey courses were substantially revised to fit Bethel's Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies (PJCS) general education requirement. At the same time, the PJCS minor was transferred from the Bible and Religion department to the History and Conflict Studies department, and two new upper-level classes (History of U.S. Foreign Policy and History of American Capitalism) created a bridge between the PJCS minor and the History major. The 2013 program review also proposed adding a Political Science minor. In 2017, upon further reflection of the review, the department launched a History and Political Science major, as reported in their [latest program review](#).

#### 4.A.2

- Transfer students must send official transcripts in order for course work to be evaluated and recorded. The Bethel College Registrar does all transcript analysis ([first-time freshman](#), [new transfers with GE waiver](#), [new transfers no GE waiver](#)). A cumulative grade point average (GPA) and the number of hours accepted in transfer are determined. GE hours are calculated and a GE GPA is determined to provide valuable information to Admissions in determining whether an applicant is admissible.
- Academic work done by incoming students at a regionally accredited institution will be accepted as transfer credit.
- Academic work that does not transfer to Bethel College includes the following: courses considered to be developmental (e.g., orientation, time management, library skills), remedial (e.g., those in English, mathematics, and reading), and vocational.
- TES (Transfer Evaluation System) by CollegeSource is used to research courses with similar titles or numbering to determine whether that course can fulfill a particular Bethel College general education or major requirement. Faculty may be consulted in making this determination. The transfer course description and syllabus may be required for faculty and registrar's office review.
- Credit is awarded for a performance at the level of four or five on AP examinations offered in high schools under the College Entrance Examination Board, unless otherwise noted in the [AP Credit Policy](#), updated in 2017-18. Credit is accepted by most, but not all, departments at Bethel.
- As presented to the Kansas Board of Regents, Bethel departments accept [CLEP scores](#) of 50 or higher.
- The registrar evaluates and transcripts credit for domestic and international study centers with whom we have articulation agreements: [Brethren Colleges Abroad](#), [International Partnership for Service-Learning and Leadership](#), Bergische University in [Wuppertal](#), Germany, [Chicago Center for Urban Life and Culture](#), and the [Washington \(D.C.\) Community Scholars' Center](#).
- Bethel College recognizes the [International Baccalaureate Program](#) under the following

conditions: "General education credit will be granted for courses in appropriate areas of study provided the student has scored five or higher on the Higher Level exam. Credit earned will be recorded as CR." For specific course areas, refer to the Bethel College Academic Catalog, Credit Policies, Credit by Examination, [International Baccalaureate Courses](#).

- The "[GAP Year](#)" program encourages students to spend the year after high school in a voluntary service position. Since this must be planned in advance, a Bethel College faculty member mentors and evaluates the student's work throughout that year-long experience.
- Students who present appropriate documentation can receive up to 15 hours of credit for educational experiences in the armed services. Assessment is done by the Registrar, using the recommendations of the American Council on Education.
- An internship is a supervised practical experience in a chosen profession or career. Students must propose an internship with specific learning objectives, keep a journal or other written record during the course of the internship, work at least 40 hours for each credit hour earned, maintain regular contact with faculty advisors, complete a self-evaluation, and receive an employer evaluation at the end of the experience. Internships are available for credit in every department or program at Bethel College. Students must consult with the faculty contact person in the department or with the Registrar to make appropriate arrangements for receiving credit before fulfilling the internship. No retroactive credit is given ([Internship Handbook](#)).
- A maximum of 15 hours of experience-based credit is applicable toward the 124 total hours required for the baccalaureate degree. Experience-based credits include those earned in departmental internships, service learning, and other learning experiences where the student is not under the direct and constant supervision of an instructor or a professional who is acting for the instructor.

Procedures and policies for evaluating all academic credits through the Registrar's Office are reviewed and updated annually when the college catalog is revised.

#### 4.A.3

[Credit policies](#) are detailed in the Bethel College Academic Catalog, Credit Policies, Transfer of Academic Credit.

#### 4.A.4

- Prerequisites for courses are listed in the Bethel College Academic Catalog in the "[Course Description](#)" section for each academic major or program.
- Major Student Learning Goals are listed in the Bethel College Academic Catalog for each academic major. Each course has a syllabus that provides more detailed expectations for student learning in the course ([2D Design](#), [Intro to Literature](#), [Public Speaking](#)).
- All students are provided access to learning resources as addressed in section 3.D.
- The qualifications of faculty for all programs are listed in the Bethel College Academic Catalog, see [Directories Faculty and Administration 2018-2019](#). See also [Bylaws, Article V, Section I](#) on faculty appointments. For faculty qualifications see 3.C.2.
- Bethel launched its first dual-credit courses online in Spring 2018. (See 3.A.3, example [syllabi, Pre-College Student Enrollment form](#)).
- In Fall 2016 the Bethel Department of Nursing re-initiated the online RN-BSN program. The [RN-BSN curriculum](#) was developed by the Department of Nursing faculty, approved by the Department of Nursing Curriculum Committee, [approved by the EPC](#) and the full faculty in faculty meetings on [March 1, 2016](#) and [March 15, 2016](#). Admission requirements for the RN-BSN program include completion of an Associate's degree in nursing, an unencumbered

nursing license, and a 2.5 GPA. In order to academically progress through the RN-BSN coursework, students must maintain a 77% (C) average in the course. Academic [progression requirements](#) are the same as the traditional BSN program offered at Bethel College. Students complete end-of-course evaluations, which are then utilized within the annual course review for course improvements. Faculty teaching RN-BSN courses are licensed nurses in the state of Kansas. To aid in the student on-boarding process, the Department of Nursing developed several [video tutorials](#) that were made available to students prior to the start of the first course. Students were provided with links to campus resources, such as the library database for educational research, as well as the contact information for librarians for additional assistance. The teaching faculty hold [virtual office hours and respond to emails](#) within 24 business hours.

#### 4.A.5

In addition to the institutional accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission, the following academic programs are also accredited by specific organizations: ([web addresses](#) to all accrediting bodies).

- **Athletic Training:** Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education
- **Education:** Kansas State Board of Education and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (now called Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation)
- **Nursing:** Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education and Kansas State Board of Nursing
- **Social Work:** Council on Social Work Education

#### 4.A.6

The Bethel College Vision, Mission, and Values Statements each reflect that we strive to integrate academic rigor and scholarship with values of service, discipleship, and community. We encourage our graduates to pursue intellectual, cultural, and spiritual leadership, in church and society. Therefore, Bethel gathers information on the success of its graduates in three key areas (employment, advanced study, and voluntary service) through a variety of means.

Bethel College receives accolades for the rate at which its graduates earn advanced degrees. According to a 2002 survey based on data compiled between 1991 and 2000 by David Davis-Van Atta of the Carleton College Office of Institutional Research, over 6% of Bethel graduates go on to earn the Ph.D. degree, placing Bethel 92nd of 1447 colleges and universities across the nation. Bethel's high per capita Ph.D. is a key reason for its high rank among all baccalaureate colleges by the *Washington Monthly Magazine*, which in both 2013 and 2014 ranked Bethel the #3 baccalaureate college in the nation, and for its criterion of "Bachelor's to Ph.D rank," *Washington Monthly* ranked Bethel the #2 baccalaureate college in the nation in each of those years, as well as in 2016. In 2017 and 2018, Bethel was the only private Kansas college included in *Washington Monthly's* Best [National Liberal Arts Colleges category](#). In 1996, 2003, 2007 and 2011 the Howard [Hughes Medical Institute \(HHMI\)](#) recognized Bethel College for the high number of its science majors who go on to earn M.D. degrees and/or Ph.D. degrees in the sciences ([article from The Mennonite](#)).

**Comprehensive.** Each spring, the Office of Academic Affairs asks seniors to complete an [exit questionnaire](#). The questionnaire gathers information about employment, application for/admission to advanced study, and participation in voluntary service, a long-standing Bethel tradition. Information is compiled and then shared during the commencement ceremony. The data for 2012-2018 is listed here: [2012](#), [2013](#), [2014](#), [2015](#), [2016](#), [2017](#), [2018](#) and summarized [here](#).

As this questionnaire data indicate, plans for advanced study dipped in 2014-15 but are rising again. Medical, health, social service, business, and education positions continue to attract many of our graduates. While voluntary service numbers immediately post-graduation have dipped in recent years, we know that some graduates pursue church and other service positions later in life as well, and we may attempt to track those numbers through Alumni Relations.

Due to the manner of self-reporting, it is often unclear whether graduates have employment already lined up or just plan to apply for work following graduation. For this reason, our efforts to track success post-graduation, detailed below, are even more important.

In an effort to supplement self-reporting from graduates, a periodic [survey of faculty](#) gathers graduate, after-college plans per area of study. Due to changes in staffing, this survey was implemented in 2014 but not administered in 2015-16. Reimplementation of this faculty survey in [2017](#) and [2018](#), along with efforts by a new hire in Career Services to track graduates through [1-year and 5-year post-graduation surveys \(2016, 2017\)](#), is helping us progress in this difficult task. Faculty-reported information on 2017 graduates indicates that 60% are employed (including 100% of Nursing graduates), 12% are pursuing further education, 3% are in church or military service, with another 25% whose plans are unknown. The 2018 faculty survey indicates that 61% are employed, 9% are pursuing further education, none who have entered church or military service, and 30% whose plans are unknown.

**Department-Level.** Departmental assessment annual reports submitted in fall include information on employment, advanced study or service rates for graduates in each discipline for the previous academic year.

To attempt to streamline our data collection processes, the Assessment Committee worked in Fall 2018 with [Institutional Research](#) to comb through past data reporting to more accurately quantify graduate success in Employment, Advanced Study, and Service, building on what was [reported prior to our 2014](#) site visit. Our 2017-18 data indicates a 73% success rate for graduates (reported as either "employed," "pursuing advanced study," or "in service"), but for the three years prior, [data is much more inconsistent](#) and so success rates for 2014-17 fall between 47% and 61%.

Because of varied patterns of reporting or uses of language across departments, reports from recent years yield much "unknown" data. While only 20% of 2018 graduates fell into the "unknown" category, 37% of 2017 graduates and 36% of 2016 graduates' paths were declared "unknown," but not necessarily because their paths were unknown. Some graduates had to be declared "unknown" when a department chair did not disaggregate data and instead reported that all graduates were either employed or pursuing advanced study. Our programs with outside accreditation may report this information to their accrediting bodies but have not previously reported such information to the Assessment Committee, even though we know from faculty reporting that our Nursing, Social Work, and Teacher Education graduates, in particular, have very high rates of employment success. Institutional Research and Assessment Committee have now developed a more [unified set of definitions](#) for post-graduate success, to be included in annual assessment report instructions for all programs (Report Form [1](#), [2](#)). Beginning with the 2018-19 cycle, all department chairs will complete the following table as part of their annual reports, which will allow us to more accurately track the relative success of our graduates from year to year:

#of Graduates	Employed	Advanced Study	Service	None of these	Unknown
Total:					

## Sources

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- Academic Affairs - HPE Program Review Rubric w feedback
- Academic Affairs - Visual Arts Program Review 2013 Narrative
- Academic Affairs - 2012 Senior Exit Questionnaire Tally
- Academic Affairs - 2013 Senior Exit Questionnaire Tally
- Academic Affairs - 2014 Faculty Survey of Graduate Plans Summary
- Academic Affairs - 2014 Graduates Plans
- Academic Affairs - 2014 Program Review Languages Revised
- Academic Affairs - 2014 Senior Exit Questionnaire Tally
- Academic Affairs - 2014-11-18 Faculty Meeting Agenda
- Academic Affairs - 2015 Senior Exit Questionnaire Tally
- Academic Affairs - 2016 Senior Exit Questionnaire Tally
- Academic Affairs - 2017 Senior Exit Questionnaire Tally
- Academic Affairs - 2018 2D Design syllabus
- Academic Affairs - 2018 Intro to Literature Syllabus
- Academic Affairs - 2018 Program Review of Nursing Department
- Academic Affairs - 2018 Public Speaking Syllabus
- Academic Affairs - 2018 Senior Exit Questionnaire Tally
- Academic Affairs - 2018 Senior Exit Survey
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- Academic Affairs - Accounting track approval 2013-11-19 Faculty meeting minutes
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- Academic Affairs - Biology Program Review 2012 Feedback
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- Academic Affairs - Biology Program Review narrative 2012
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- Academic Affairs - EPC minutes 2.24.16
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- Academic Affairs - Music Program Review Rubric Feedback
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- Academic Affairs - Philosophy Department - 5 Year Review - Final - Revised
- Academic Affairs - Pre med pre allied health Program Review 2012 narrative
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- Academic Affairs - Program Review Rubric
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- Academic Affairs - Psychology rubric and feedback
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- Academic Affairs - RN-BSN You Tube tutorials
- Academic Affairs - Social Work Program Review Narrative 2017
- Academic Affairs - Success of Graduates
- Academic Affairs - Summary of Senior Exit Interview data
- Academic Affairs - Teacher Ed Program Review Narrative
- Assessment - 2017 Graduate Outcomes Survey
- Assessment - Accredited Program Assess Form 1819
- Assessment - Aggregate Graduate Success
- Assessment - Aggregate Graduate Success working document
- Assessment - Career Services Outcomes Survey for 20XX BC Graduates Template
- Assessment - Departmental Assessment Annual Report Form 1819
- Assessment - Faculty Reporting on Postgrad Success of 2017 Graduates
- Assessment - Faculty Reporting on Postgrad Success of 2018 Graduates
- Assessment - Institutional Research data collection email thread
- Assessment - Outcomes Survey for 2016 BC Graduates
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- Registrar - 2018-19 Academic Catalog (page number 22)
- Registrar - 2018-19 Academic Catalog (page number 31)

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- Registrar - Advanced Placement Credit Policy
- Registrar - Chicago Urban Studies Center
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- Registrar - Precollege student enrollment form
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- Registrar - Study Abroad ISPL
- Registrar - Study Abroad Wuppertal Germany Exchange Program
- Registrar - Transfer Analysis for first-time freshman with precollege work
- Registrar - Transfer Analysis for new transfer that earned the GE Waiver
- Registrar - Transfer Analysis from new transfer student - did not earn GE Waiver
- Registrar - Washington Community Scholars Center \_ EMU



## 4.B - Core Component 4.B

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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

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#### 4.B

Bethel College is committed to educational achievement and improvement. To fulfill this commitment, Bethel assesses student learning in a variety of ways.

#### 4.B.1

Bethel has clearly stated goals for student learning and has processes for assessing these goals. Goals are identified and assessed for general education (GE), majors, and some co-curricular programs.

The GE program is based on [five goals](#) for student learning. These goals were identified early in a GE review process by faculty in 2007-08. The GE course requirements were revised in 2009-10 as part of a comprehensive curriculum revision, but the learning goals remained the same. Following the revisions, faculty rewrote where necessary specific objectives for each of the GE requirements. These [GE objectives](#) were approved through the Educational Policies Committee and Assessment Committee in early 2011, and are articulated to students via course syllabi. The five GE learning goals were revised again to emphasize critical thinking and engaged global citizenship following the adoption of a new mission statement in Fall 2014. Possible revisions were discussed by full faculty at Assessment Days in Spring [2015](#) and [2016](#), and revisions were finalized and implemented by the Common Ground branch of the Educational Policies Committee in [Spring 2016](#). The five GE learning goals and related objectives form the basis for the assessment of the GE program as outlined in the [comprehensive assessment plan](#). Assessment of GE is coordinated by the Assessment Committee, which includes four faculty members, staff members from Student Life and Athletics, and one student representative. The full faculty across all departments perform assessment.

Each academic department has broad-based goals for student learning in its major(s). Student learning goals for each major were updated/revised in Fall 2012 in response to the HLC 2012 Focused Visit recommendation. At that point the major learning goals were added to the [annual department assessment report form](#). The learning goals for each major are now listed in the academic catalog as well. Departments are asked to assess one objective per goal; prior to 2012 departments assessed objectives related to knowledge, professional skills and integrative abilities (departments were operating under learning goals in these three areas and many continue to use this model). Since

2014, nearly all departments have added a layer of early assessment to their majors. Most departments now measure some of their goals in more than one way, as detailed in 4.B.3.

Academic departments are responsible for determining the objectives to be assessed, selecting assessment tools, collecting assessment data, and analyzing the outcomes. Consequently, assessment processes vary from one department to another. An annual departmental report summarizing the assessment process from the previous academic year and outlining assessment plans for the current academic year is submitted to the Assessment Committee for review each October. Independently accredited programs (Athletic Training, Nursing, Teacher Education, and Social Work) submit a [modified annual report form](#) to the Assessment Committee because these programs fulfill additional reporting/oversight demands to satisfy their respective accrediting bodies.

In addition to majors, Bethel offers a limited number of [certificate programs and stand-alone minors](#). Bethel's certificate programs are not industry-approved or industry-recognized certificates, but rather series of courses that provide "broad and deep interdisciplinary support for the major area of interest." The certificate program learning goals were reviewed by the Assessment Committee and included in catalog copy beginning in 2014-15. No formal assessment of these programs is required at this time. Similarly, no formal assessment of stand-alone minors (minors that are not a subset of courses required for a major) is required, but faculty in these areas have developed learning goals that are printed in the catalog. The Assessment Committee has discussed, but not set a timetable for, assessment of certificate programs and stand-alone minors. We welcome recommendations from the HLC visit team on how much energy to devote to this.

In 2018-19 we implemented a review cycle for our Common Ground curriculum, some of which provides an additional layer of assessment for coursework that meets GE goals. A [review form](#) approved by the [Common Ground Steering Committee](#) in Fall 2018 lays the groundwork for reviewing each course of the Common Ground curriculum. This review, which will be performed annually, first checks all Common Ground syllabi to ensure that they express goals using the same wording, and then reviews how each course addresses Common Ground outcomes and aligns content with learning objectives.

Student learning is the primary focus of our academic programs, yet we recognize that significant student learning occurs in other aspects of campus life. Identifying goals for student learning in co-curricular areas and assessing these goals languished for a few years, in large part because of the [2012 HLC Focused Visit](#) and [report](#). The HLC team's [response to the 2008 Self-Study](#) identified co-curricular and library assessment as areas in need of improvement; in response, the Assessment Committee initiated considerable work in assessing student learning within athletics, student life, and the library (as described in the [2012 Self-Study update](#)). However, in 2012 the HLC site visitors' counsel to the Assessment Committee downplayed the importance of co-curricular assessment, and in response the Assessment Committee's priorities shifted back to the academic programs. Our [2014 peer reviewers](#) counseled us to return to co-curricular assessment, so since that time we have begun again to assess learning in all areas of campus and, in that way, find areas for improvement.

The College Library evaluates student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement. Librarians in 2017 updated a [rubric](#), for the evaluation of information literacy, to reflect the 2016 Association for College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education. That rubric measures [student learning outcomes](#) starting in the freshman year and ending with [senior research](#). [Analysis of this data](#) is shared with the Assessment Committee, department chairs, and the [faculty](#). Additionally, the library conducts an annual user survey and it utilizes other assessment data (including statistics, comparison with other institutions,

etc.) as suggested by the 2018 revised ACRL Standards for Libraries in Higher Education. This evidence informs the [Library's strategic plan](#).

Frequent staffing changes in Student Life over the past few years have impeded consistent co-curricular assessment in this area. Student Life staff developed Vision and Mission statements specific to their department in 2013. Between 2013 and 2016, Student Life developed a series of goals, objectives, and initiatives to begin measuring their work. These goals, which are directly connected to the Bethel College Values Statement, were [presented](#) along with specific objectives and initiatives to faculty and staff at meetings in Spring 2017. Student Life staff collected and reported their assessment data through an annual report in [Spring 2017](#), using the data to guide changes for the following year. Following staff turnover in Spring 2018, new staff developed assessments on student activities and engagement programs, such as Thresher Days and the Student Government Association, as these are two areas that new staff wish to assess.

Co-curricular assessment in the area of Athletics has been a challenge for us. A previous Athletic Director began some preliminary co-curricular assessment in [2009-2012](#). Given change in staffing and counsel from 2012 HLC site visitors, however, that assessment fell by the wayside. In 2017, a staff member from Athletics joined the Assessment Committee, and in 2017-18, staff from Athletics worked with the Assessment Committee to [develop a plan](#) for assessing co-curricular student learning that happens on and off the field. Much like the Student Life plan, the goals and objectives in Athletics are directly connected to the Bethel College Values Statement.

Both [Student Life](#) and [Athletics](#) have begun reporting and reflecting on their data in a new standardized [co-curricular assessment report](#) form, developed by the Assessment Committee in 2018. We are just beginning to collect data consistently in these two areas, and we welcome input from peer reviewers in the early stages of this process.

More generalized co-curricular assessment occurs regularly through the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI). This instrument does not specifically measure student learning, but does provide insight into many of the campus factors that contribute to student learning. We administer the SSI in the spring of even-numbered years. We disseminate results across campus constituencies and use them to inform decisions in Academic Affairs, Student Life, Marketing and Communications, Admissions, Athletics, and Business Affairs. In Spring 2017, the President's Administrative Cabinet compiled a list of [campus-wide initiatives](#) to respond directly to concerns raised by students in the [2016](#) SSI. We most recently conducted the SSI in Spring 2018 and shared data across campus constituencies ([Cabinet](#), [Faculty](#), Staff, and Student Government, [September [Assessment minutes](#), October [Assessment minutes](#)]) in Fall [2018](#). In Spring 2019, Cabinet Members will spearhead initiatives to respond to concerns raised by students, and these initiatives will be shared transparently across campus. In addition, the Assessment Coordinator and the Director of the Office for Diversity and Inclusion facilitated an [all-student convocation](#) in Spring 2019 to gather more data through student-led discussion groups; this offered us more clarity on specific challenges raised in the SSI and will inform our further responses and initiatives.

#### **4.B.2**

Our methods of assessment continue to evolve as we search for better ways to determine impact on student learning.

**GE Goal 1: In order to become critical thinkers, students will develop effective communication skills. Conveying ideas cogently, fostering interpersonal relationships and cultivating**

**collaboration are essential to professional success and to meaningful participation in community.** Bethel College assesses written and oral communication skills. Student writing has been formally assessed five times in the past 14 years. When the comprehensive assessment plan was compiled, formal assessment of student writing was scheduled for every three years. The most recent formal [assessment of student writing](#) occurred on Assessment Day in April 2016. English faculty led a norming exercise on how to assess the strength of a thesis statement. Papers from Basic Issues of Faith and Life, a required course for all seniors, were then scored by faculty readers using the [Bethel College Writing Rubric](#). The same rubric was used for the March 2011 and April 2013 assessments, but in 2013 the rubric categories were [explicitly defined](#). The definitions were completed by English faculty and presented to the full faculty in 2013 by the Assessment Committee.

In the April 2016 formal assessment, each faculty member scored two papers, and each student paper was scored by two readers. Mean scores for four of the rubric competencies were close to the target set by the Assessment Committee and English faculty, while mean scores for the other three rubric competencies [were well below the target](#). Results of the assessment were shared with [the faculty](#), and the Assessment Committee continues to encourage faculty to use the writing rubric across the curriculum as a cohesive approach to improving student writing.

Since 2013, faculty have shared the rubric with students and used it to grade course assignments. For example, instructors of First-Year Seminar use the rubric to evaluate first-semester freshman writing, and English professors use it in Critical Writing, the second semester freshman writing course (both of which are requirements in general education). The rubric, in whole or part, is used across the academic divisions to assess writing in lower- and upper-level courses.

In Spring 2013, the Communication Arts faculty presented a rubric to the faculty for use in evaluating oral communication skills. As with the writing rubric, the intent is for faculty to use the [Oral Communication Rubric](#), in whole or part, to evaluate presentations and speeches across the curriculum. Communication Arts faculty used the rubric in 2013-14 to assess the final speech in the two lower level courses that meet the competency requirement. The data, submitted to and compiled by the Assessment Coordinator, showed that all targets were exceeded. In 2014-15, the [oral communication assessment data](#) was analyzed and the rubric categories were defined and presented to faculty, based on experience using the rubric the previous year. Formal assessment of oral communication skills now takes place in odd-even academic years. Data from 2015-16, the first year of assessment with the defined rubric, show that mean scores for each of the rubric competencies met the target. While staffing changes disrupted how the rubric was used in 2017-18, comparison data will be collected every two years and will allow us to begin looking for trends and areas for improvement.

So far, the data collected for Goal 1 indicates that our students are more effective communicators when presenting ideas verbally than in writing. We are addressing this disparity in multiple ways. By implementing an Introduction to College Writing class for underprepared students in 2016, continuing to emphasize writing in First-Year Seminar and Critical Writing, and encouraging the use of the defined Writing Rubric across the curriculum, we expect to see some improvement in the next cycle of Writing Assessment, scheduled for mid-May 2019.

**GE Goal 2: In order to become critical thinkers, students will develop the ability to gather, interpret, and evaluate information from a wide range of sources and to integrate knowledge from various disciplines. Responsible decision-making and effective problem-solving are possible only after understanding the complexity of problems and the interrelatedness of**

**systems.** An assessment undertaken by the Library as part of its strategic plan is now used to measure student learning related to information literacy. First piloted in Spring 2012, the librarians evaluated Critical Writing papers from one class using the [Library Skills Assessment rubric](#). The process expanded in 2013 to include all spring semester Critical Writing classes, and has continued every year since. [Rubric data](#) indicated that beginning writers score, on average, in the weak (2) to adequate (3) range, with particular challenges seen in how to evaluate information and then synthesize it to support a thesis. In an effort to determine if students' information literacy skills improve during college, Library staff began applying the rubric to [senior seminar papers](#) in Spring 2014, evaluating 38 papers voluntarily submitted by students. In 2015, [librarians evaluated](#) 54 seminar papers from across the curriculum, then 64 [seminar papers in 2016](#). In [2017, librarians evaluated](#) 52 seminar papers from across the curriculum, and an additional eight papers in Music History, to evaluate student writing in a major that does not require a seminar paper. In [2018, librarians evaluated](#) 45 seminar papers from across the curriculum.

Data from both the first-year and senior Library Skills assessments are reviewed each fall. While data from senior seminars indicate that students' ability to gather, interpret, and evaluate information and to integrate knowledge from various disciplines improves during their college careers, mean scores sometimes (as in 2016) but do not always meet the target of 4.0 out of 5 on each rubric competency. To address this ongoing challenge, librarians and faculty from Assessment Committee regularly share data, observations, and suggestions at full faculty meetings. During [November](#) and [December](#) 2017 meetings, faculty shared specific examples of ways that they have restructured deadlines and expectations for the senior seminar, as a way to ensure that students are better able to locate, evaluate, and synthesize library sources into their writing. During a November 2018 faculty meeting, a librarian and a faculty member presented the data and [invited faculty to submit research](#) assignments to the librarian so that she could better evaluate how we are scaffolding research skills across the curriculum. Due to changing ACRL Standards for Libraries in Higher Education, our librarians [revised the Library Skills Rubric](#) in 2016-17. We will begin anew in collecting comparison data across the next several years.

**GE Goal 3: In order to become engaged global citizens, students will acquire a broad understanding of the social and natural world. A foundational engagement in the liberal arts and sciences, characterized by scholarly inquiry, creativity, and methodological diversity, prepares students for in-depth study in their chosen major and for active engagement in the world beyond the classroom.** This goal aligns the curriculum with a liberal arts philosophy. Revisions to the GE program in 2009-10 grouped required courses into three categories, aligned with the three academic divisions: Arts & Humanities, Sciences and Mathematics, and Social Sciences and Human Services. This structure provides more flexibility in scheduling, but also creates variation in the courses that meet this learning goal, which can be a challenge for assessment.

Between 2009 and 2011, the Assessment Committee used only student perception data from course evaluations to measure this goal. In 2012-13, Assessment Committee used student perception data from a senior exit survey to measure this goal. In 2013-14, in an effort to move toward more reliable data (since the vast majority of students *believed* that they had a broad understanding of the social and natural world), the Assessment Committee and faculty divisions discussed how to more meaningfully assess this GE goal and identify tools applicable to the variety of ways students can meet the objectives set by each division. The Sciences and Mathematics division decided to embed questions related to each of their objectives into exams, and these data have been collected and analyzed since Fall 2014; faculty turnover, however, led to gaps in data collection. A recently added Assessment Committee representative from the Science and Math faculty is committed to regular

data collection and feedback loop discussions to [improve the use of data collected](#). In 2014, the [Arts & Humanities](#) and [Social Sciences](#) divisions each developed a common rubric to evaluate a specific assignment in divisional GE courses. Data are collected for all courses, every Fall, Interterm, and Spring. Assessment Committee regularly reviews this data and shares the results with faculty in division meetings.

This change in assessment process provides better information regarding students' "broad understanding of the social and natural world" but we continue to work toward improving our ways of meeting and assessing this goal. During [Assessment Day 2017](#), faculty met in divisions to discuss, and to consider [revising, each division's list of courses](#) that currently meet this GE goal. Some changes resulted from that meeting, including the addition of Introduction to Theater and Introduction to Literature courses to meet the Arts and Humanities distribution requirement. In Fall 2017, the Assessment Committee chair met with the core [Music department faculty](#) to discuss the challenges of assessing music ensembles within the GE requirement. Music faculty shared ideas and experiences of successful strategies for assessing individual students within a larger ensemble. Mean scores from 2014-17 indicate that students taking [Arts and Humanities](#) and [Social Science](#) division GE courses usually meet or are very close to the target in rubric competencies. Scores at Interterm, when students focus on only one class, tend to be higher than during Fall or Spring semesters.

**GE Goal 4: In order to become engaged global citizens, students will acquire experience in cross-cultural learning and an understanding of the global nature of humanity. Cross-cultural sensitivity and a global perspective are critical to working and living productively in diverse communities.** The 2009 HLC Comprehensive Visit Report cited assessment of cross-cultural learning as an area needing improvement. At that time, student perception data from course evaluations was the only measure. A first attempt to address that concern was to create an instructor survey to measure this general education requirement, but we judged that inadequate. In 2012-13, the Common Ground Steering Committee (CGSC) and Assessment Committee worked together to identify an external tool to assess student learning in this area. After reviewing a number of instruments and their alignment with Bethel's cross-cultural objectives, the [CQ Self-Assessment](#) from the Cultural Intelligence Center was selected. This survey was first administered in Fall 2013 to freshmen and in Spring 2014 to seniors, and continues to be administered each year as per the comprehensive assessment plan. This survey can be used as a pre- and post-test for a class; the Assessment Committee has chosen to give it to a sample of incoming freshmen and outgoing seniors to measure the impact the entire Bethel experience has on cultural intelligence.

The Assessment Committee annually reviews the CQ data and discusses it with stakeholders who teach Cross-Cultural Learning classes, comparing freshmen to senior scores as well as to worldwide norms. Several years of data would seem to indicate that our initial year of testing, after which time we set a benchmark goal, yielded an anomalous sample, such that none of our scores in the years since have come close to scores from the first year of testing. However, our averages are consistently on par with worldwide norms in the survey. Overall, the CQ Survey results indicate significant growth in the four categories of cultural intelligence - Drive, Knowledge, Strategy, and Action - from first year to senior year. After completing a full four-year cycle, stakeholders convened in Spring 2018 to evaluate the data and set new goals. [Stakeholders gathered](#) again in September 2018 to discuss the broader challenges of both offering and [assessing cross-cultural learning](#) in an on-campus setting, since we increasingly find that our students cannot afford domestic or international travel experiences. We also find that instructors have been inconsistent in which goals they include in their syllabi; while we use the CQ to measure learning over 4 years rather than in individual courses, we are nonetheless working to remedy this inconsistency. Before the end of Spring 2019, CGSC will

take on the task of revising goals and language related to this GE goal, and looking at new assessment tools, [in conversation with the Assessment Committee](#). For the current year, at least, we will continue using the CQ survey as a measure for samples of first-year and senior students.

**GE Goal 5: In order to become both critical thinkers and engaged global citizens, students will acquire experience in examining basic questions of faith and life. Within an academic community that values personal faith development, peace-making, social justice and service - as reflected in both Christianity (e.g., the Mennonite faith) and other faith traditions - students learn to consider the moral and ethical ramifications of the personal and professional decisions they will make throughout life, and within the different communities they find themselves.** The comprehensive assessment plan identifies two separate measures for this GE goal. The first assessment tool is the Basic Issues of Faith and Life (BIFL) [Oral Exam Rubric](#). The second tool, a rubric to measure student learning of [Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies](#) (PJCS) objectives, was developed in 2014 and [expanded in 2017-18](#).

Basic Issues of Faith and Life (BIFL) is the capstone general education course for Bethel seniors. The oral exam, a conversation between two students and two faculty members and moderated by the course instructor, provides an opportunity for students to express how their personal faith or value positions are manifested in decisions they make and actions they take. For several years, scores on the “making connections” component of the rubric were used to evaluate this general education goal. In Fall 2013, all categories on the BIFL Oral Exam rubric were defined and put into use. Assessment Committee and CGSC [annually review aggregate data](#) from the previous year and share feedback with BIFL instructors, which has resulted in revised objectives in 2014-15 and in Spring 2017. Most recently, because data show that the “critical thinking” rubric competency has been the biggest challenge for students, and because critical thinking is specifically emphasized in our Mission statement, the “critical thinking” and “making connections” competencies are now both areas of focus for instruction and assessment, as of Spring 2017. Our data from the first year of collection indicate that student mean scores for “critical thinking” were higher in some classes than for other categories, and moved closer to the mean scores for “making connections” than in previous years. We will continue to [review and collect data](#).

The Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies (PJCS) requirement was approved as a "core" general education requirement in 2010, but no comprehensive assessment of PJCS was implemented at that time. As with all general education requirements, student perception data was gathered. In 2012, an instructor survey was proposed as an interim assessment strategy until a direct assessment of student PJCS learning could be developed. A team of three faculty attended the Kroc Summer Peace Institute in Summer 2013 and initiated a process upon returning to campus that culminated in completing that task in Spring 2014. The assessment process began in Fall 2014 with instructor evaluations of student work using the [PJCS rubric](#). While the initial rubric evaluated only one of the three goals, the PJCS task force’s recommendation was to expand the rubric in the coming years. In December 2017, PJCS stakeholders met to draft and approve the use of an [expanded rubric](#) to assess two of the goals, and to discuss progress toward assessment of the third goal. PJCS faculty took the Spring 2018 semester to revise courses and assignments as needed; data collection for the expanded rubric began in Fall 2018. As outlined in the comprehensive assessment plan, PJCS data is collected each semester and analyzed annually by the Assessment Committee and CGSC, then shared and discussed with PJCS stakeholders. We have often, but not always, met our PJCS goals these first few years, and we expect some growing pains as we determine how best to instruct and [assess the content of the new goal](#).

**Assessment of Majors.** Academic departments assess the learning goals for their majors on a regular basis. Decisions about assessment are made by departmental faculty, who submit annual [departmental assessment reports](#) with results from the previous academic year, as well as reflections and plans for improvement, to the Assessment Committee each October for review. The Assessment Committee received reports from each department for academic years 2010-11, [2011-12](#), [2012-13](#), [2013-14](#), [2014-15](#), [2015-16](#), [2016-17](#), and 2017-18 ([Arts](#), [Nursing](#)). Since the 2008 Self-Study, all departments have greatly developed their assessment cycles and most engage in multiple levels of assessment, expanded to include early-career students (sophomores and juniors) as well as seniors.

Student learning in the major programs is detailed in all of the departmental and four accredited programs [assessment reports](#) (Athletic Training, Nursing, Social Work, Teacher Education). Beginning in Fall 2012, the Teacher Education department was asked to submit separate reports for the Elementary Education major and the Teacher Education Licensure program. Beginning in 2016, the Visual Arts and Design department submitted separate reports for the Art major and the Graphic Design major. Art Education students are included within the Art major report. In 2018, the History and Conflict Studies department submitted separate reports for their two majors - History and History and Political Science. The English department offers an English Teaching major and an English major; both majors are included in the English department assessment report. Students who major in Natural Sciences are assessed in their "primary" department, so there is no separate assessment report for this major. Bethel also offers an individualized major that requires a primary discipline; as with the Natural Sciences major, students in individualized majors are assessed within their primary discipline. With those practices, all student learning for all majors is assessed through the regular cycles in place.

A "snapshot" of the assessment reports from the programs without independent accreditation reveals the following:

- Six departments use a [standardized test](#) as one measure of student learning. Even though the test content may not align fully with the curriculum, for these six majors, faculty value the external indicator of student learning. A seventh department uses an internally developed "[exit exam](#)" as one assessment tool for its senior majors.
- Nearly all majors assess student learning early in the major as well as in the final senior seminar. Because Bethel students often declare majors at the end of sophomore year, some of this "early" assessment occurs in 300-level courses. To illustrate department practice, the Chemistry department includes scores from American Chemical Society exams in 100- and 200-level courses as part of its assessment of chemistry content knowledge. Beginning in 2013-14, both [Visual Arts](#) and [Music](#) began collecting data through sophomore portfolio reviews and juries.
- All departments use senior seminar/recital/exhibit/internship evaluations to assess learning outcomes. This is appropriate for culminating projects. The rubrics and scales used in these evaluations have been developed by each department and vary in sophistication.

Four pre-professional programs maintain extensive assessment plans in accordance with their respective accrediting agencies. Therefore, these programs submit a summary of their ongoing assessment, in particular assessment related to student learning outcomes, for review by the Assessment Committee each October. All four programs have high pass rates on licensure exams and are in good standing with their accrediting organizations. Of the four, the Nursing Department earned the most recent re-accreditation in Spring 2014. The site visit team indicated in its exit



interview that [all standards and sub-standards were met](#) and formal notification in November 2014 extended accreditation until 2024. Social Work had a re-accreditation site visit in [Fall 2018](#) and its accreditation has been extended eight years. Due to new state standards and changes in leadership, the Education Department accreditation was delayed by a year, and occurred in Spring 2019. The current NCATE accreditation has been extended until that time.

The online RN-BSN program is assessed based on the same outcomes as the on-campus program. Nursing faculty use standardized departmental rubrics consistently across programs, use the Bethel College Writing Rubric for all writing assignments, and report on both programs in their annual accredited program report.

Annual department assessment reports demonstrate that learning goals claimed for major programs are assessed regularly. Annual reports ensure that each department reflects on its current processes and challenge areas and strives for continuous improvement through changes in pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment tools.

**Assessment of Co-Curricular Programs.** Expansion of our co-curricular assessment is well underway (see 4.B.1). The library assesses annually with the Library Skills Rubric, a patron survey, and usage statistics ([Library Strategic Plan](#)).

The Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) is administered every two years. In Fall [2012](#), Fall [2014](#), Fall [2016](#), and Fall [2018](#), the SSI Summary reports were shared widely on campus, and highlights of the data, both strengths and challenges, were discussed by Staff Welfare Committee, Faculty Executive Committee, Retention Committee, President's Cabinet, Student Government Association, and Assessment Committee. As an institution, we draft initiatives specifically in response to concerns raised by students in the SSI. For example, in February 2013, the President's Cabinet and Assessment Committee met together to discuss the [impact of the SSI](#) on campus decisions. New initiatives for freshmen and transfer students in Fall 2013 developed, in part, from SSI discussions. Improvements to facilities on campus also were a response to SSI data. In Spring 2017, the President's Cabinet compiled a list of [campus-wide initiatives](#) to respond directly to concerns raised by students in the [2016](#) SSI. In Spring 2018, a member of the Assessment Committee attended an [SSI conference](#) put on by Noel-Levitz to gain insights for how better to use our data and improve the feedback loop. The data from the 2018 SSI was presented to all [on-campus constituencies](#) in Fall 2018. Initiatives are currently being developed by Cabinet and will be across campus.

Student Life has been working toward co-curricular assessment since 2013 (see 4.B.1). Many of their initiatives respond to student responses on the SSI, and changes initiated by Student Life, such as the hiring of a full-time counselor, have resulted in [dramatic improvements](#) in some areas of the SSI, seen particularly in the [2016](#) SSI data soon after the hire. Student Life goals were presented along with specific objectives and initiatives to faculty and staff at meetings in [Spring 2017](#). Student Life staff collect and report their assessment data through an annual report, as begun in [Spring 2017](#), and use the data to guide changes for the following year. Because of major changes in staffing during 2017-18, Student Life is now revisiting its goals and assessments, to bring them into better alignment with the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). One change currently being reviewed is the structure of the Student Activities Council. CAS states that the mission of Student Activities is to provide programs that pertain to leadership, governance, community service, healthy lifestyles, and organizational development. Early [data collection](#) indicates that Student Activities is hitting some, but not all, of these marks.

Co-curricular assessment in the area of Athletics is currently in re-development after some earlier

attempts (see 4.B.1). In 2017, a staff member from Athletics joined Assessment Committee, and in 2017-18, staff from Athletics worked with Assessment Committee to develop a [plan for assessing co-curricular](#) student learning that happens on and off the field. Much like the Student Life plan, the goals and objectives in Athletics are directly connected to the Bethel College Values Statement. The Athletic department's first official [co-curricular report](#), for 2017-18, describes multiple ways, incorporating service, academics, retention, behavior, and lived values, in which they measure the goals of "purpose-driven athletes" and "living as a Thresher." They draw in part on the [NAIA Academy program](#) where students participate in webinars on such topics as time management, sleep deprivation, and drug use, all with the goal of promoting student success. The [Athletic Director and Assessment Committee](#) members have already identified ways to improve goals, outcomes, and assessment processes for the current year.

We received mixed messages about the relative importance of co-curricular assessment from site visit teams in 2009, 2012, and 2014, and so our co-curricular assessment plans and data collection are not as comprehensive as for our curricular programs. We recognize the need for more consistency in assessing student learning in co-curricular areas and we are open to suggestions for continued improvement as we proceed.

### **4.B.3**

The information gained from assessment is used to improve student learning at Bethel College. Faculty adjust pedagogy mid-class based on observations of student body language, responses to questions, and other informal formative assessments. Summative assessment results lead to reorganization of course content, development of new assignments, and changes of emphases in lectures. These uses of information gained from assessment occur daily, and all aim at improving student learning. It would be irresponsible not to acknowledge the importance of these routine actions in this discussion. That said, assessment of broader program goals has certainly prompted improvements to student learning, as illustrated by the following examples.

As part of Assessment Day 2018 activities, departments reviewed their assessment reports from the past five years and [noted their most significant changes](#). Many departments noted **changes in pedagogy, new or revised assignments, and new or revised assessment instruments**, all aimed to improve student learning in specific areas. For example,

- Using [assessment data from student feedback](#), Kaplan scoring, and student performance on departmental tests and NCLEX, the Nursing department removed Pharmacology as a prerequisite course and made it a part of the nursing curriculum.
- The History department noticed poor performance in bibliographic work done by their seniors and added a new bibliography assignment and [assessment to their History Seminar](#).
- Biology faculty advisors have increased their supervision of student research during the junior and senior years, including setting clearer and more frequent milestones and deadlines in the [research and writing process](#).
- Bible and Religion faculty, responding to senior students underprepared for seminar research, increased pedagogy on exegesis and introduced additional research components in lower-level classes.
- Visual Arts and Design faculty moved Art Seminar from the spring to the fall semester and added several assignments and deadlines to [help students be more successful](#) in completing their culminating body of work.
- In Psychology, faculty noticed some seniors encountering challenges in the analysis and

presentation of data in the senior seminar and now incorporate [more practice of data analysis methods](#) in their laboratories.

- In Communication Arts, faculty [developed assignments and rubrics for upper-level courses](#) that require students to practice making connections among communication processes in all forms of research.

In an improvement since the 2014 Focused Visit, departments now conduct **early assessments** in order to gather comparison data, which has led to changes in pedagogy to improve student learning. Such early assessments, identified in the 2018 Assessment Day reports linked above, include:

- Observation that more frequent consultation with Biology faculty resulted in stronger projects led them to implement greater supervision of student research during both the junior and senior years, [beginning in 2017](#).
- Early assessment in the Music department, in the form of a sophomore jury instituted in 2015-16, affords students an opportunity for a formal performance review before the senior recital, with input in specific areas including Technical Proficiency and Stylistic Understanding, an area also measured at the [senior recital](#).
- A mid-stream writing [evaluation tool](#), instituted by the English department in Fall 2016, provided data to confirm that students master "Skills" and "Understanding" more readily than "Integrative Abilities." This led to curricular changes, specifically a new required Introduction to Literature course, which is designed to improve student learning in all three areas.

**GE Objective Improvements.** Assessment data has also been used to improve student learning of some general education objectives.

- For evaluating information (Goal 2), results from the library skills assessment are used by library staff to inform instruction in whole class and one-on-one settings, and are also used by English faculty in instructional planning for the first-year composition classes. Librarians annually [share with full faculty](#) their assessments of how seniors gather and evaluate sources, which has resulted in such changes as earlier and more frequent deadlines in seminar classes to break down the process into smaller steps and encourage [more rigorous research](#).
- For cross-cultural learning (Goal 4), aggregate average data from the CQ surveys, administered since [2013-14](#), consistently demonstrate that our students improve across four areas of cross-cultural learning between their freshman and senior years. While we are working to revise our own goals and expectations for students on this survey, we are pleased that our seniors consistently meet or exceed worldwide norms in each of the four areas.
- For the examination of basic issues of faith and life (Goal 5), new category descriptions for the BIFL Oral Exam provide meaning to the numbers that have been recorded for a number of years and make explicit the expectations for students. Aggregate averages for the emphasized "making connections" competency have consistently met the goal since the rubric was defined. Since 2017, we have now added emphasis to the "critical thinking" competency, with the goal of improving this skill among our student body. [Early data shows](#) some improvement, though not yet consistently.

**Assessment Instruments.** Several instruments used to assess general education learning goals have been revised or defined within the last few years. This illustrates a commitment to continuous improvement, for when faculty have learned that assessment processes or data are not useful, they have turned to new methods. Student perception data from course evaluations provided quantifiable results, but did not provide any information that could be used to improve student learning. Instructor

surveys of cross-cultural learning courses yielded information about the mechanics of the classes, but student learning data was limited to faculty perceptions of the class's progress on a 1 to 5 scale. These instructor surveys were not consistently completed, further limiting the usefulness of the data. Consequently, since 2014, new methods of GE assessment have been written into the [comprehensive assessment plan](#) with the hope that data collected will not only provide useful information about what students currently know, but also will lend itself to designing ways to improve student learning in the future.

**Upgrade PJCS Assessment.** Assessment data (or at least the *quest* to design an assessment tool that could yield meaningful data) was the driving force behind a process in Spring 2014 to re-envision the Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies requirement. The faculty group asked to identify an assessment tool for PJCS struggled because the "objectives" were not consistent across the courses that met the requirement, since courses were required to meet two out of four criteria, and could meet the two criteria in any way. In an effort to get assessment ideas, three faculty attended The Kroc Summer Peace Institute at Notre Dame in Summer 2013. Following that, the Common Ground Steering Committee appointed a task force to re-envision and define PJCS at Bethel. The important first step to effective assessment was deciding what PJCS at Bethel means. Once that decision was made, then objectives were written and an initial [assessment rubric](#) was designed. Since that time, PJCS stakeholders have met annually to review the data, which is also reviewed by the Assessment and Common Ground committees, and to discuss the use of the rubric. At the end of 2017, stakeholders expanded the [PJCS rubric](#) and agreed to revise pedagogy and assignments, with the new rubric implemented in Fall 2018.

**Workshop and Additional Staffing.** A [faculty workshop](#) in August 2013 illustrates how Bethel College uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning. As has been noted for 1.C, the College has taken numerous steps in recent years to address Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) results that indicate a challenge in what the SSI report labels "Responsiveness to Diverse Populations." While other parts of this report (1.C and 3.B, D) document other efforts, it is appropriate to emphasize here how the August 2013 workshop illustrates how the College synthesized information in order to address this challenge in a new way.

The VP for Academic Affairs linked the need for the workshop in his [introduction](#) to SSI data, and shared with faculty that when he had presented this same data to his Seminar on Diversity class in Spring 2013, students of color in that class had linked their sense of dissatisfaction with their sense of needing academic support and their desire to have faculty who adapted their teaching methods to their learning needs. In April 2013, the Faculty Executive Committee asked whether this topic could be addressed in the fall faculty workshop. In a May 7, 2013 memorandum to the Administrative Cabinet, the [Assessment Committee](#) highlighted the "need for more academic support services for students who are not fully prepared for the college coursework they encounter here at Bethel." Acting on that input, the VP for Academic Affairs and faculty agreed to devote an intensive half-day before the fall semester began to provide additional training to faculty for teaching underprepared students. Sessions included input from select faculty and staff who focused on "[Pedagogy for Culturally Diverse Students.](#)"

In the years following, the institution has continued to devote time and resources to academic support for the needs of increasingly underprepared students. The Center for Academic Development continues to offer peer tutoring, both within the Center and in the [residence halls](#). In December 2016 an [Academic Coaching position](#) was established as an initiative of the college's Retention Committee (see 3.D.2.). The Athletic Director has also encouraged student-driven initiatives, such as the 2018

creation of the Student-Athlete Leadership Team (SALT): two early initiatives spearheaded by these student-leaders were to compile documents of CAD tutoring by subject and hours available, and of [faculty members' office hours](#), to share with both students and coaches as a way of encouraging the success of their peers.

**Anti-Racism Trainings.** As noted above, professors must adapt their teaching styles to reach students of many and diverse populations. In an effort to combat the effects of institutionalized racism that may unwittingly appear through classroom dynamics, 24% of full-time faculty have already participated in anti-racism trainings during the past three years, along with 57% of the [President's Cabinet members](#). Administration has agreed to devote faculty development funds to cover the costs of these trainings, and ten faculty and staff members participated in a second, [more advanced form of anti-racism training](#) in January 2019. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion and the [Bethel College Anti-Racism Coalition](#) are making [plans for anti-racism training](#) for all faculty, staff, administrators, and students.

#### **4.B.4**

Bethel College strives to follow "[good practice](#)" in its assessment processes. A brief analysis of its practices using [Committing to Quality: Guidelines for Assessment and Accountability in Higher Education](#), published in 2012 by the New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability, reveals aspects at Bethel College that closely align with the principles and aspects at Bethel College where the assessment practices still fall short.

It is important for the institution to continue practices that align with the guidelines, and it is equally important to work deliberately to address the shortcomings in practices.

**Substantial Faculty Participation.** Faculty participation is illustrated by the annual [Assessment Day](#), a weekday in spring when classes are cancelled and all full-time faculty gather for assessment activities. This also provides an example of a "best practice." Faculty members meet together in the morning, then use the afternoon for departmental assessment work. Assessment Day requires full participation by faculty and provides a regular forum for sharing evidence, introducing new instruments, and discussing methods for improving student learning. As co-curricular areas engage in more structured assessment, the scope of this day has expanded. Another practice that facilitates internal sharing of evidence and recognizes the importance of co-curricular learning is the expansion of the Assessment Committee to include staff members from Student Life and from the Athletics department.

**2012 Focused Visit Concerns.** The [2012 HLC Focused Visit Report](#) identified aspects of Bethel's assessment system not conforming with best practices. In response, the College can report significant progress that addresses those concerns:

- Explicit goals for each program were updated in 2012 and are included in the academic catalog.
- Non-accredited program majors added early measures to their assessment plans and assessed prior to the senior year in 2016-17. The four accredited programs also assess at multiple points ([Art](#), [Business](#), [Communication Arts](#), [HPE](#), [Social Work](#), [Teacher Education](#)).
- Since 2012, GE rubrics for [evaluating writing](#) and the [BIFL oral exam](#) have been defined. The [oral communication rubric](#) was used in 2013-14 without definitions, and was defined in 2014-15. New [Social Sciences distribution](#), [Arts/Humanities distribution](#), and [PJCS](#) defined rubrics have been in use since Fall 2014; the [PJCS rubric was expanded](#) in Fall 2017.

Academic departments without professional accreditation continue to work to define their rubrics and scales. Seven of twelve departments now use defined rubrics/scales ([Art](#), [Math](#), [Chemistry](#), [Psychology](#), [Biology](#), [Music](#), [History](#)).

- Limited use of grades as an assessment of student learning. The [Health and Physical Education](#) (HPE) department uses course grades for two goals. The HPE program is designed to meet the Kansas Department of Education (KSDE) health and physical education standards, and their assessment plan conforms to KSDE program review requirements. KSDE allows limited use of course grades. The Business department has moved from course grades (GPA in major) to grades on specific assignments that align with program goals.
- Student self-evaluation data is no longer used for assessment of any GE goals. Replacement instruments were developed and new assessments were implemented in Fall 2014 (Rubrics: [Written](#), [Oral Communication](#), [PJCS](#), [Library Skills](#), [Division GE Rubrics](#), [CQ Survey](#)).
- The assessment coordinator gets a course load release and merit pay. While this may not be considered "sufficient" administrative time, it is consistent with other faculty leadership compensation packages. At Bethel, assessment is a distributed responsibility with substantial involvement of all faculty and some staff members.
- The program review process developed and implemented by the Educational Policies Committee (see 4.A.1) links assessment with planning and budgetary processes. The addition of an Accounting track in the Business major (approved in 2013) and the Interprofessional Health Studies Certificate program (approved in 2014), and the 2017 revisions and expansions to the History and English department majors and curricula grew out of assessment data cited in the program review process. Supporting evidence is required for budget proposals; assessment data would be appropriate evidence for academic department budget requests.
- We have made significant strides in "closing the loop" with [assessment data](#). The Assessment Committee offers [annual feedback to all departments](#) based on their reporting of data and relevant curricular and pedagogical changes. Senior seminar papers are assessed by librarians and the data shared with the Assessment Committee and at a [faculty meeting](#). Since 2016, specific senior seminar data has also been [shared with department chairs](#), and several departments have initiated changes to their senior seminar practices, as noted in 4.B.3. In GE assessment, data is reviewed annually by the [Assessment Committee](#) and then analyzed at division, faculty, and relevant stakeholders' meetings, at which times possible changes and/or improvements are discussed and initiated.

## Sources

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## 4.C - Core Component 4.C

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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

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All content provided for 3.D applies here as well.

Data concerning retention, persistence, and completion are regularly reported to the Board of Directors and discussed by Board committees. See, for example, [September 2017 Student Life report](#) to the board, minutes of the [Spring 2017 Board meeting](#), and [March 2017 Student Life report](#) to the Board.

#### 4.C.1

In an effort to address the recommendations by the HLC peer review team in 2014 for enhanced centralized planning and studies of retention data for various cohorts of the college's student body, Bethel College Retention Committee has worked on the following research and action initiatives over the past four years. These [initiatives](#), which include goals and the strategies to achieve them, were officially revised and adopted by the Retention Committee in Fall 2018. Retention Committee includes members who represent many perspectives on student retention and persistence: Student Life, Athletics, Registrar, Financial Aid, Center for Academic Development Director, Academic Coach/Transfer Advisor, and Faculty Athletic Representative.

**Early Alert System (SPACeRS).** The Early Alert System was assessed and updated during the 2017-2018 academic year. Retention Committee has encouraged faculty and staff usage of the system, and continue to look into the system's effectiveness as well as other software programs that might enhance the effectiveness of campus efforts to proactively address students at risk or students in crisis (see 3.D.2).

**Committee Admits.** A study was done in Spring 2018 to determine the persistence patterns of students who are [admitted by committee](#) in order to be proactive in our commitment to their success and to track their Progress.

**First-Generation Students.** In Spring 2018, Retention Committee analyzed the persistence patterns of [first-generation students](#) at Bethel. It was observed that Bethel's retention rate of 33% percent to graduation is significantly higher than the national average of 27%. However, Retention Committee also discovered that within this cohort, male students of color are retained at a significantly lower rate. Bethel College is committed to the success of *all* our students, and the Retention Committee is currently developing programs to address this disparity.

**Transfer Students.** In Spring 2018, Retention Committee studied the [retention of transfer students](#). It became evident that since the course Thresher Transition was implemented in Fall 2014, transfer retention has increased. A spring section was subsequently implemented in an effort to continue to retain spring transfer students more effectively. Retention Committee will continue to monitor these data in order to be proactive in our commitment to transfer student success and to track their progress.

**Exit Interviews.** Retention Committee revised the [exit interview document](#) in the 2016-2017 academic year. Student Life staff monitors, records, and tabulates the reasons why students leave, and the [Retention Committee](#) analyzes the data to develop strategies.

**Retention and Graduation Goals.** In 2018 the following goals were established by the [Retention Committee](#):

- Fall to Fall Retention Goal for First-Time Freshmen: 65% by 2023; 70% by 2028
- Fall to Fall Retention Goal for All Students: 75%
- 6-Year Graduation Rate: 56%

Retention Committee will continue to examine these and other data and programs. It is committed to encouraging the continuation of existing, successful retention programs and the implementation of innovative curricular and co-curricular programs that will result in increased student satisfaction, success, and, thus, retention.

### **Recent and In-Process Retention Programs, Initiatives, and Indicators**

Curricular:

- [Academic Coach](#) (new hire in Spring 2017)
- [Center for Academic Development](#)
- [Fundamentals of Reading and Study Skills](#) (revised in Fall 2016)
- [First Year Seminar](#) (renamed in Fall 2015)
- [Introduction to College Writing](#) (new in Fall 2015)
- [Establishment of Coordinated Learning Communities for at-risk students](#) (Fall 2015)
- [First-semester success courses](#) for at-risk students: ([IDS100](#), [IDS102](#), [ENG101-01](#), [ENG101-02](#), [COA101](#))
- [Thresher Transition](#) Thresher Transition (new in Fall 2014)
- [Basic Algebra](#) (new in Fall 2018)
- [Diversity Seminar](#)
- [Early Alert System \(SPACeR\)](#)
- [Early Graded Experiences](#)
- [Midterm Grades](#)

Co-Curricular:

- [Director of Student Wellness](#) (new hire in 2014)
- [Faculty Athletic Mentors](#)
- [Host Family program](#) for out-of-state students
- [FAFSA Workshops](#) for students
- Minority Mentors ([program](#), [mentors](#), [job description](#))

#### 4.C.2

The Registrar's Office and the Retention Committee coordinate their efforts to collect and analyze data on student retention, persistence, and completion. The initiatives spearheaded by the Retention Committee and described in 4.C.1 include some of this analysis. The most recent report (2017) from the [Kansas Independent Colleges Association](#) (KICA) showed that Bethel ranks second of 19 schools for freshman to sophomore retention, exceeding the median and average percentages by over 20 percentage points, and also exceeding the most recently [reported national first-year retention rates](#), both for four-year private schools and for all institutions combined. Since 1976, our [first-year retention rates](#) have varied between 59.8% and 82.6%. Our retention rates dipped in 2018, and in the 2017 KICA report we ranked seventh for four-year graduation rate and eighth for six-year graduation rate. All of these data indicate the ongoing challenges of working toward student retention, persistence, and completion.

**Sustaining retention and graduation rates: gathering data and meeting challenges.** The 2018 [National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Report](#) put out by Ruffalo Noel-Levitz underscores the challenge of retaining students at an institution like Bethel College. According to their data, students enrolled at four-year private colleges and universities rated their overall satisfaction at only 56%, tied for the lowest ranking with students at four-year public institutions and coming in significantly below students at community college (64% satisfaction) and online learners (73% satisfaction). In addition, students at four-year private colleges are the least likely group to re-enroll at their institution (57%), compared to students at four-year publics (61%), community colleges (71%), and online learners (75%). A third reported factor of relevance for our demographic is that at four-year private institutions, Caucasian students report a 60% satisfaction level but African-American students report only a 46% satisfaction level.

As is the case for other private colleges in Kansas, a key challenge to sustaining retention and graduation rates at Bethel is the disproportionately high percentage of the total enrollment composed of male, football student-athletes, a group that at both the national and state level is a low-retention group (as confirmed by the Austen Group when it conducted sports indexing analysis for the Kansas Independent Colleges Association in 2011 and 2012). [IPEDS data](#) for Bethel illustrate that graduation rates for male athletes as a group are (in every year but one over a 24-year period) significantly below rates for female athletes, and that graduation rates for football players consistently rank far below other sports.

In the past, our football recruiting relied heavily on transfer athletes, some of whom had attended multiple community colleges and had not made strong progress toward degree requirements in a major. We recognize that many students transfer during their college years (with recent studies indicating that over one-third of college students transfer) and that, according to a [2016 report](#), transfer students coming from community colleges are less likely to succeed at four-year colleges and universities than transfer students moving within such institutions. Given these concerns, we have now increased and coordinated our efforts to retain transfer students and help them persist to completion. The College has begun tracking retention of non-nursing transfer students, a group

composed mostly of transfer student-athletes. Since 2015, transfer students enroll in [Thresher Transition](#), a one-hour course designed to introduce them to the school and to faculty expectations at Bethel as well as to ease their transfer experience. Other initiatives targeted to retain transfer students are detailed in 4.C.3.

In a more coordinated effort to recruit student-athletes who will persist to graduation, a 2017 administrative restructuring put the VP of Admissions in charge of overseeing all [athletic and other recruiting](#). In the previous structure, the Athletic Director (AD) oversaw all athletic recruiting, independent of the Admissions department. The new structure offers much greater coordination between the AD, coaches, and admissions staff, with the goal of [attracting and retaining](#) more persistent students. Under the new guidelines, scholarship increases can only happen when students in need are in good standing academically and with Student Life; the schedule change in when coaches can make offers to prospective students increases our ability to recruit high-achieving student-athletes; and forcing a “primary-sport” designation both reduces the number of dual-sport athletes on campus and increases their focus on academics.

In addition to the work done by the institution as a whole, the Bethel College Nursing department tracks the persistence and completion of both their on-campus and online RN-BSN students. Their [Fall 2018 program review](#) includes evidence of their monitoring of persistence and completion, along with curricular and pedagogical steps implemented to help improve their student success rates.

**Washington Monthly Rankings.** *Washington Monthly Magazine* ranked Bethel College as the 3rd best baccalaureate college in both its 2013 and 2014 rankings. In [2017](#) and [2018](#), Bethel was the only Kansas private college included in the Best National Liberal Arts College category.

#### 4.C.3

Tinto (Seidman, 2005) suggests that there are five institutional conditions for increasing student success: 1) commitment to increasing student success; 2) high expectations for student success; 3) academic, social and financial support; 4) frequent feedback about performance, and 5) academic and social involvement or engagement. Tinto proposes “A Model for Institutional Action” that incorporates these five conditions. The model also suggests what can be done to support student retention and persistence. Bethel College has made an institutional commitment to provide **Support**, **Feedback**, and to provide opportunities for **Involvement**. While these are implicit in the retention efforts outlined in Section 4.C.1, several targeted efforts are highlighted here.

**Bethel Bridge and Expanded Orientation Activities.** Largely in response to data showing that the fall to fall retention rate in both 2012 and 2013 had fallen short of the College's 5-year average, the Retention Committee recommended, and the President's Cabinet approved, the creation of a new Bethel Bridge program in 2014. The primary goal for this new program, as announced by the VP for Academic Affairs when soliciting input from the academic divisions, was "to better prepare new freshman students and new transfer students to persist and to be successful at Bethel College, including in [our] academic programs."

While first-year students have for many years been the focus of orientation activities, the Bethel Bridge added improved orientation for transfer students, including a required orientation session (previously optional, and thus not well attended), followed by a luncheon with the President at his residence. As demonstrated by the [Bethel Bridge Schedule](#), the full participation by all full-time faculty and many other staff in this event enabled the College to offer a range of programs designed to serve the primary goal of preparing new first-time freshman and transfer students to be successful

and persist.

In efforts at continuous improvement, the Bethel Bridge program transitioned in 2016 to Thresher Days ([mail piece](#) and [website](#)), a robust new student orientation program that is more defined and targeted at first-year and transfer students. The Thresher Days orientation program is designed to help these new students, as well as their parents and families, navigate the transition to Bethel College, both academically and socially. During Thresher Days, new students interact with other new students and get to know faculty and staff members outside of the typical office or classroom setting and engage in various aspects of Bethel student experience. Thresher Days offers specific small-group sessions and programs that meet the varied needs of students and their parents/families. Upperclass students serve as Orientation Leaders who help students and their families transition smoothly throughout the weekend. The Orientation Leaders also work one week beyond the Thresher Days schedule, serving as resources to make sure new students have everything they need to be successful at Bethel.

**First-Year Seminar.** Bethel's commitment to fostering student success is seen in its unique, long-standing freshman seminar program. First-Year Seminar is incorporated into the freshman advising system and is a cornerstone of its student success and retention efforts. See 3.D.2 for a fuller description.

**Transfer Transcript Evaluation Changes.** One of the steps initiated by the Registrar to improve academic advising for transfer students and promote their progress toward graduation was to revise [how transfer students' transcripts are evaluated](#). The Registrar developed the proposed changes in consultation with the VP for Academic Affairs; together they met with the VP for Admissions and Associate Director of Admissions and all head coaches (since the majority of non-nursing major transfers are student-athletes), and the proposed transfer transcript evaluation changes were then approved by the Admissions, Scholarships and Financial Aid Committee.

Previously, when evaluating a transcript that included many apparently similar courses (for example, many football credits from a community college), the Registrar had made evaluative judgments not to "count" such apparent repetition when calculating the incoming grade point average. While that policy had merit, since it was a way to factor academic integrity into that calculation, it could be difficult to explain to transfer students. More importantly, that former procedure did not focus sharply on the key issue of a transfer student's completion of sufficient general education courses, or progress toward completing a major. Under the changed procedure, the Registrar now counts all credit at face value (except for remedial, developmental or orientation courses) for the GPA calculation. But, in addition, the Registrar evaluates the transcript for: 1) a minimum of three general education (GE) hours earned for each full-time semester; and, 2) a minimum GE GPA of 2.25. If a student has an actual repeat based on course prefix and number, that will be entered as a repeat on the Bethel College transcript. The Registrar limits transfer community college varsity sport credit to two hours so the transfer student may earn 2 hours of upper level varsity sport credit while at Bethel to help them meet the 38 upper level hours required to graduate.

This new procedure provides much better information to both the College *and* the incoming transfer student regarding the student's progress toward graduation. If a prospective transfer student does not meet these minimum general education standards, that decision has to go to the Admissions Committee for a special "committee admit," and the letter of admittance will indicate that the student has not met the GE criteria for admission, will have to meet GE and competencies in addition to major requirements for graduation, and that could extend the time to complete a degree.

**Transfer Student Retention.** Bethel College is focused on the retention of all incoming students. Transfer students often have already attended more than one school before coming to Bethel College. In order to help to adapt them the culture and academic expectations at Bethel College, the Registrar has:

- 1) Generated a list of new transfer students each semester, and [distributed that list](#) to faculty so they know what students are not only new to their class but to the campus community.
- 2) [Tracked data](#) on each of these students to determine educational progress. These data have been tracked since the last HLC visit. The reporting of first-generation status is voluntary so it has been more difficult to track, but we recognize its potential importance for retention of transfer students. The academic coach is collecting all of this information but has just begun tracking first-generation students separately to compare retention numbers with other [transfer students](#). (First-Year Seminar students take the [Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory](#), through which they discuss first-generation challenges with advisors, in an early attempt to prevent possible attrition.)
- 3) Created a class for transfer students to be offered in their first semester. Since 2014, [Thresher Transition](#) has been offered every semester and covers issues of particular relevance to transfer students, from academic rigor and professors' expectations to campus culture and community expectations. Guest experts mentor transfer students in learning about billing and financial aid responsibilities, Title IX policies, career and internship guidance, plagiarism and library research, and many more topics. Thresher Transition was taught as a half-semester class from Fall 2014 through Spring 2018. Beginning in Fall 2018, it is being taught as a semester-long course in order to maintain longer contact with transfer students. Prior to the initiation of the Thresher Transition class, our transfer retention numbers had been steadily decreasing, bottoming out at 60% in 2012. Since the launch of Thresher Transition, our [retention rates have been at or above 75% every year](#).

**Faculty-Athletic Support.** Bethel College strives to educate the whole person, and athletics play an integral role in the educational experience of many students. As such, over the past five years, a number of programs have been initiated seeking to improve support of our student-athletes and improve communication between faculty and coaches. A Faculty Athletic Mentor Program was launched in Fall 2013 in coordination between the Athletic Director and the VP for Academic Affairs in order to provide additional support and a more integrated learning experience for student athletes. Three faculty have been serving as Athletic Mentors in the 2013-14 academic year; faculty and staff continue to support teams by attending practices and games and offering [stress-reducing activities](#) to the teams. Beginning in 2017 and continuing up to the present, a new Athletic Director initiated monthly [faculty-coach lunches](#) to try to improve communication and benefit our student-athletes. The Student-Athlete Leadership Team, formed in 2018, now compiles a spreadsheet of [faculty members' office hours](#) so that athletes and their coaches can more quickly and easily reach out for assistance.

**Office of Diversity and Inclusion.** In an effort to improve retention, persistence, and completion rates, as well as campus-wide student experiences, for our students of color, in Summer 2018 Bethel's president launched the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI). As stated in the [president's message](#) to the community, "The ODI Director leads campus efforts to promote and celebrate human diversity, educate the campus community on the benefits of human diversity, and ensure equity at Bethel College. The Director is expected to [coordinate services and activities](#), advise other offices of best practices, and assist other offices in their efforts to bring awareness to human diversity. Some of the primary responsibilities of the ODI Director include leading campus-wide efforts to eliminate forms of privilege; deploying and managing employee training programs (e.g., Safe Zone Training)



that emphasize diversity and inclusion; promoting diversity aesthetics and norms across campus and the external environment by means of promotional materials, social media, activities, speakers, and events; developing relationships with a variety of associations and agencies to develop and promote Bethel's capacity for diversity and inclusion; and leading campus-wide processes to promote equity and community-building activities." The ODI Director is facilitating anti-racism training for all faculty and staff, as discussed in 4.B.3, leads an [anti-oppression task force](#), and participates in the recently formed [Bethel College Anti-Racism Coalition](#). In addition, Student Life coordinates the Minority Mentoring program referenced above and supports student-led groups that [discuss issues of racial diversity](#) and sexual diversity ([Safe Zone](#), [Registered Organizations](#)), all of which can improve retention, persistence, and completion rates.

**Improvements to Facilities.** We should not overlook how facilities improvements can affect retention, persistence, and completion rates among our students. For many years on the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), our students raised conditions in the residence halls and amenities in the cafeteria as challenges that negatively affected their satisfaction rates. In the past five years, significant efforts have been put toward deferred maintenance and facilities improvements on campus. Perhaps as a result of that, for the first time ever since we began administering the SSI, in 2018 our students did not list these items as challenges. Students in this same survey also much more highly rated "Campus Appearance" in their decision to enroll at Bethel than did their peers in the [2016 survey \(comparison data\)](#). A new [Student Wellness Center](#), part of the current [Capital Campaign](#) and slated for construction in 2020, will be a key facility improvement that addresses student satisfaction.

#### 4.C.4

Bethel College follows [IPEDS definitions](#) in its reporting of graduation rates. IPEDS official retention is calculated for full time, degree seeking students. Some key features of that process for calculating retention include:

- [20<sup>th</sup> day](#): The official reporting census date is required for all post secondary institutions. Bethel College uses 20th day of the fall and [spring semesters](#). Data collected on this day are used for all government reports and other surveys.
- For IPEDS retention reports, students in the freshman cohort are tracked from one semester to a subsequent semester. The student is considered a retention candidate if he/she is enrolled on the official census date on the 20<sup>th</sup> day. For example, a student enrolled on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of fall semester is a candidate and will be included in the count provided he/she is enrolled at the census date of the [subsequent semester](#). For internal and budgeting purposes, the College tracks retention of all students (beyond just the freshman cohort), applying the same 20th day methodology.
- Excluded from the count are those who graduate, complete licensure requirements or student teaching and have no reason to return.

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- Student Life - Registered Student Organizations and Clubs Directory - 2018-2019
- Student Life - Retention Committee 2017.01.10 - Minutes
- Student Life - Retention\_FFFT
- Student Life - Safe Zone Program Information
- Student Life - SnapshotReport on 2018 Student Retention National Student Clearinghouse Research Center
- Student Life - SPACeR Protocol
- Student Life - SPACeR sharing at 10.23.18 Faculty Meeting Minutes
- Student Life - Spring 2019 Professor office hours working doc from Student Athlete Leadership Team
- Student Life - Thresher Days Schedule For Mailings - FALL 2018 SCHEDULE
- Student Life - Thresher Days webpage screenshot
- Student Life - Thresher Transition - Self Identify First Generation College Student
- Student Life - Transfer Retention data compiled
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- Student Life - Transfer Retention Rates Combined since 2005
- Student Life - Director of student wellness

## **4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary**

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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**

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Bethel College has sustained the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services. Its commitment to continuous improvement is evident in the significant progress it has made in assessment since the last HLC Comprehensive Visit in 2009. It has directly responded to the recommendations made in the 2012 Focused Visit Report regarding assessment of student learning and program review: 1) Learning outcomes are fully articulated and included in the academic catalog (see 4.B.1); 2) Academic programs are being reviewed regularly, and that form of assessment is shaping curriculum and broader planning (see 4.A.1); and 3) All academic programs, including general education, show evidence of meaningful assessment (as presented throughout all of 4, especially 4.B). Beyond making significant progress on those items, further evidence of the College's commitment to continuous improvement is demonstrated by the willingness of the Assessment Committee and faculty to change instruments in assessing general education in order to gather more meaningful information to improve student learning.

### **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

## 5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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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

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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

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#### 5.A.1

Following its last site visit in November 2014, Bethel College met the five Criteria for Accreditation with concerns as demonstrated by the materials submitted in the Assurance Argument and the information collected during the team's campus visit. The team had a concern with Core Component 5.A. The team felt that many years of large supplemental draws from the endowment to balance the operating budget had put Bethel College's long-term sustainability at risk. The team recommended that the college submit two monitoring reports. During a phone interview on November 2, 2016, our HLC Staff Liaison, Karen Solomon, informed us that there had been a change and that an interim report on finances would be a part of our next Comprehensive Evaluation, scheduled for May 6-7, 2019.

**Fiscal Resources.** As stated in the [August 8, 2018](#) letter from HLC, the Commission has been concerned that our [Composite Financial Index](#) (CFI) score has been running "Below the Zone." The "Below the Zone" Composite Financial Index has been driven by low scores in the Primary Reserve Ratio and the Net Income Ratio which comprise 60% of the CFI score history.

The financial component with the greatest impact to the CFI low score has been the Expendable Net Assets, which has seen a significant drop from 2013 to 2018. The institution has experienced over a two-million dollar reduction in Unrestricted and Temporarily Restricted Net Assets from 2013 to

2018 and also a reduction in Long Term Debt. At the same time, Total Unrestricted Expenses have risen by \$1.2 million dollars. The Net Income Ratio has also negatively impacted the institution's CFI score. The Net Income Ratio weighted average dropped from 0.60 in 2013 to -0.03 in 2018 due to negative changes in Unrestricted Net Assets and a decrease in Total Unrestricted Revenue. The decrease in Total Unrestricted Revenues and increase in Total Unrestricted Expenses has resulted in supplemental draws from the [endowment](#) to balance the budget. The institution has a policy of transferring endowment funds to its operating fund at a rate of 5% of the average endowment balance for the last three years. The Commission's Focused Visit of April 23-24, 2012, reported however that the "5% cap on endowment spending has been exceeded every year since 1999" due to supplemental transfers. Unfortunately, with the fluctuating enrollment over the last six years, the College has been unable to cease the supplemental transfers from the endowment.

As a result of the low Composite Financial Indicator scores for fiscal years 2015-2018, the Department of Education has placed Bethel College on HCM-1, and has requested a Letter of Credit following each of those years in the amount of 10% of our federal financial aid funds. The Letter of Credit dates and amounts are as follows:

<a href="#">05/04/2016</a>	\$464,353
<a href="#">05/04/2017</a>	\$526,970
<a href="#">03/14/2018</a>	\$456,134
<a href="#">03/14/2019</a>	\$473,564

The Board of Directors of the institution recognizes the seriousness of the situation, and has given President Gering a goal to create a plan to secure the College's financial health. One of his first tasks has been the revision and reshaping of Bethel's mission, vision, and values. The purpose of this process is to give Bethel College a more cohesive sense of identity that will hopefully attract and retain engaged students and faculty. The revised [mission, vision, and values statements](#) should be approved at the April 2019 board meeting. A major implication in the new mission, vision, and values statements is to move Bethel College toward a federal designation of a work college. The Work College approach utilizes a comprehensive work-learning-service model with a combination of on-campus employment, corporate relations, and revenue-generating enterprises. As a college with a Christian mission and Anabaptist values, the work college model allows us to address the core challenges of economic disparity and imbalances of power in our society.

President Gering has boldly led the way in developing a three-year financial recovery plan to achieve a balanced budget. The plan will significantly improve the CFI score. It is significant to note that he has already cut expenses in the current FY19 budget by \$388,000. Specific goals in the new three-year plan for continued improvement are highlighted here: [Three-Year Plan Goals](#). The Bethel College [Three-Year Operating Budget](#) shows that, if we achieve these goals, we will have a balanced budget by June 30, 2022.

The revenue components that have the greatest impact on the institution's financial health are: 1) student tuition revenue based on enrollment; 2) tuition discounts; 3) contributions to the annual fund; and 4) the endowment fund ([Enrollment-Discount-Contribution History](#)).

**Enrollment.** Student tuition revenue is based on enrollment. Enrollment (as of the 20<sup>th</sup> day in the fall semester) has been up and down the last six years from a high in Fall 2015 at 525 to a low of 444

in the Fall 2018, with 152 new traditional students in Fall 2018. Trends that are driving enrollment down include shifting demographics and family salaries. See section 5.C.5 for more information on demographic shifts.

Our VP for Admissions reports the following strategies for Admissions to increase enrollment in the three-year strategic plan:

- Continue student calling teams to call prospective students
- Increase presence on all social media platforms
- Expand use of Capture Higher Ed software which tracks visits to pages on our website
- Expand digital marketing to prospective students
- Focus on Hispanic and LGBTQ markets
- Increase counselor goals for visits
- Utilize a new SLATE CRM system for managing prospective students
- Increase the number of student athletes, along with a redesign of financial aid
- Train athletic coaches in recruiting
- Work with the Loan Repayment Assistance Program to provide help to eligible students

The goal in the strategic plan for Fall 2019 is 190 new students. Currently, we are on track to hit that goal. We had 43 students sign up for Scholarship Day in March which was a record (last year we had 20). We are also on track with deposits. Current data indicates are that we will hit our goal of 190 new students for Fall 2019.

Another positive sign for Fall 2019 enrollment is our retention rate. The five-year average retention rate for first-time freshman from fall to spring is 83%. Our actual retention rate from Fall 2018 to Spring 2019 for first-time freshman was 90%, 7% above the five year average. For all students the five-year average retention rate is 90%. Our actual retention rate from Fall 2018 to Spring 2019 for all students was 92%, 2% above the five year average ([Spring 2019 Enrollment Report](#)).

Our VP for Academic Affairs reports the following strategies for academic programs to help the institution meet the enrollment goals in the strategic plan:

- Continue the RN-BSN on-line program
- Increase the seats in our traditional nursing program
- Add a mechanical engineering undergraduate program
- Expand the resources for the newly created Center for Teaching and Learning in order to manage online course development and delivery
- Add additional undergraduate online courses
- Secure and build upon an agreement of collaboration with Universidad de Ciencias y Artes de Chiapas (UNICACH) in Chiapas, Mexico
- Develop an undergraduate program of Latin American studies
- Expand the graphic design program
- Develop an undergraduate program in software development
- Add an online Masters of Science in Nursing

In addition, Athletics plans to add two new sports over the next two years: competitive dance and swimming. This should help draw in new students.

**Discount Rate.** The recent history of the discount rate is:

- 2014: 52.1%
- 2015: 53.5%
- 2016: 51.0%
- 2017: 52.5%
- 2018: 54.5%

With decreased funding from the State of Kansas for state tuition grants, and the elimination of the Perkins Loan Program, we have seen our discount rate creeping upward. With the current political climate at both the state level and in Washington D.C., this is an area that the College is monitoring closely.

**Contributions to the Annual Fund** (see [Enrollment-Discount-Contribution History](#)). One of the revenue components that has a significant impact to the College is contributions to the annual fund. For FY17 and FY18, the Advancement Department had a goal of raising \$1,400,000 for annual fund contributions. The department exceeded that goal by \$114,000 in FY17 and by \$36,000 in FY18. The Advancement Department has set a new goal of \$1,700,000 for FY19 in the strategic plan. In addition to securing gifts for the annual fund, the Advancement Office is working on completing \$378,000 in funding for the Mennonite Library and Archives endowment, and raising \$120,000 to finalize funding for the Research, Internships, and Careers in Health and the Environment (RICHE) initiative. The institution has also announced a new \$19,630,000 Capital Campaign, *Engage the Future: Strengthening Minds, Bodies, and Communities*, which includes dollars for the following:

• Academic Program Enhancements	\$ 1,880,000
• Technology Upgrades On Campus	\$ 1,100,000
• Bethel College Fund (3 years at \$1.7M per year)	\$ 5,100,000
• Student Fitness/Wellness Center	\$ 11,250,000
• Other Campus Improvements	\$ 300,000
• <b>Campaign Total</b>	<b>\$ 19,630,000</b>

This is Bethel's first capital campaign in seven years and the College is excited about the opportunities for growth.

**New VP for Institutional Advancement.** On February 26, 2019, Brad Kohlman was promoted to VP for Institutional Advancement. Brad served as Director of Alumni Relations and Director of Alumni Development at Bethel before becoming VPIA. He has completed 41 continuing education hours toward becoming a Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE) and comes to the VPIA position with experience in Planned Giving, Major Gift Development, and Marketing. He is highly qualified for his new position and to achieve success with the *Engage the Future* Capital Campaign. An outside consultant has also been hired to help with the capital campaign and annual fund. Plans are to reconfigure the Advancement Office with changed roles and an emphasis on large gifts. It is important to note that the Advancement Office raised the dollars for the Bethel fund despite staff changes.

**Endowment Fund.** The endowment fund has increased \$1,643,127 from FY2014 through FY2018 due to support from a loyal constituency and excellent market returns. Bethel College has a policy of transferring endowment funds to its operating fund at a rate of 5% of the average endowment balance for the previous three years. The Commission's Focused Visit of April 23-24, 2012, reported however that "the 5% cap on endowment spending has been exceeded every year since 1999" due to supplemental transfers. With the fluctuating enrollment over the last six years, the College has been unable to cease the supplemental transfers from the [endowment](#). The College and the Board of



Directors realize the importance of eliminating the supplemental transfers from the unrestricted Endowment to the Operating Fund. As mentioned previously, President Gering is focused on balancing the budget which will eliminate the need for supplemental transfers from the endowment.

**Additional Financial Data.** [Interim financial statements for February 2019](#) are included with this report along with audited financial statements for the last three years (2016, 2017, 2018). We are proud to report that we have received unqualified opinions from our auditors every year. Audit government standards letters are also included. (2016, 2017, 2018) along with the single audit reports on financial aid (2016, 2017, 2018).

**Human Resources.** The expense component that has the greatest impact on Bethel's financial health is wages and benefits. Over 60% of the expense in the operating fund at Bethel College is wages and benefits. Bethel College enjoys the presence of dedicated faculty and staff. A 1.5% wage increase was given in FY2015, 2.5% in FY2016, and a 2% increase in FY2017, FY2018, and FY2019. The Board of Directors is cognizant of the need to offer competitive salaries in order to attract and retain high quality faculty, while at the same time being mindful of budget constraints. In our financial recovery plan, we plan no increase for FY2020 to aid in our recovery, and then 2% increases per year after that. Employer contributions to employee retirement funds have only been 1% for the last three fiscal years and we do not plan to increase it in our strategic plan.

The College demonstrates that it values a life of learning for faculty and staff by offering a tuition-remission program for employees seeking degrees and courses for their ongoing staff development. Over fifty staff members in the last ten years (2004-2018) have taken courses at 100% [tuition remission](#) under this program.

**Physical and Technological Infrastructure.** With the completion of the Will Academic Center in Summer 2012, the institution has excess capacity for its current educational programs. All of the classrooms in the Will Academic Center are "smart classrooms," with projectors, internet access, DVD players, and telephones for conference calls. Bethel College has spent over \$1.6 million on [major capital projects](#) in the last three years. In addition, the College has announced the new \$19,630,000 Capital Campaign *Engage the Future: Strengthening Minds, Bodies, and Communities*, which includes \$1,100,000 for technology upgrades (see 5.C.5), \$11,250,000 for a Student Fitness/Wellness Center, and \$300,000 for other campus improvements. Bethel has also put the infrastructure in place for the RN-BSN online learning program. These additions are designed to ensure that Bethel College has the ability for sustaining educational programs and strengthening their quality in the future (see 3.D.4 for additional information).

#### 5.A.2

The financial budgeting process ensures that resources are distributed fairly and equitably (see the budget process in 5.A.5). The institution does not disburse revenue to a superordinate entity.

#### 5.A.3

As reported throughout much of this Assurance Argument, the achievement of Bethel College's educational mission demonstrates that its goals have been realistic. Content provided for 1.A, 1.C, and 1.D demonstrates how the mission continues to be performed. Sections 3 and 4 demonstrate how the College's organization and resources have been directed to support that educational mission and achieve its outcomes.

#### 5.A.4

3.C.2 and 3.C.6 address faculty and staff qualifications.

Bethel's employees have the appropriate levels of education, skills, and experience to perform their jobs. Each school year begins with an all-employee meeting called Prologue Days. Important policies and procedures and significant issues in the life of the College are covered at this [all-employee event](#). Continuous training occurs throughout the year. Examples of training given to employees this last year include:

- "ALICE" training from the VP for Student Life
- Title IX training given to all employees at Prologue Days and at a fall convocation
- Jenzabar training for Advancement Office personnel and Registrar's Office
- Cognos report writing training
- Jenzabar payroll training for Business Office personnel
- Slate (CRM software) training for Admissions and Marketing personnel
- Title IX training for Title IX Coordinator and committee members
- Champion of Character training for athletic coaches
- Anti-racism training through the new Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- Student Life training for staff and students in that office
- Financial Aid Office training

Admissions Office and Registrar's Office personnel attend the Kansas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (KACRAO) each year, and the Bethel Registrar's Office hosted the event in 2015. The VP for Business Affairs and Controller annually attend the Kansas Independent College Association's Business Affairs and Operations Conference. This continued training ensures that the institution's staff are appropriately qualified and trained to support the mission of the College.

#### 5.A.5

Our VP for Business Affairs has led the College in taking significant strides in managing its resources through short-term and long-term financial planning. In addition, the College has greatly improved its [budget process](#). This process allows for:

- Greater participation in the financial planning process by faculty and staff
- Better communication to the Cabinet, President Gering, faculty and staff of some of the projects needed on campus
- Equitable distribution of resources

During the year, monthly financial statements are prepared to monitor financial conditions. The monthly financial statements are presented in cabinet meetings and sent to the Board of Directors. Each cabinet member also receives a monitoring report monthly detailing departmental expenses compared to the budget. In addition, twice each year, the VP for Business Affairs makes a [budget presentation](#) to a joint meeting of faculty and staff covering the year-to-date financial results and forecast. This presentation communicates to faculty and staff the current financial position, future projections, and allows them to ask questions and provide feedback. VP for Business Affairs also makes himself available once each semester for any employee to come [ask questions of him one-on-one](#). This entire budget and monitoring process ensures that communication is taking place to all employees, and that the College has the information and resources available to sustain the

educational programs and facilities on campus.

## Sources

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- Admissions - Enrollment-Discount-Contribution History
- Business Affairs - 2016 Financial Audit Report
- Business Affairs - 2016 Governance Letter
- Business Affairs - 2016 Single Audit Report
- Business Affairs - 2017 Financial Audit Report
- Business Affairs - 2017 Governance Letter
- Business Affairs - 2017 Single Audit Report
- Business Affairs - 2018 Financial Audit Report
- Business Affairs - 2018 Governance Letter
- Business Affairs - 2018 Single Audit Report
- Business Affairs - Bethel College Budget Process
- Business Affairs - Bethel College Endowment
- Business Affairs - Budget Presentation email announcement
- Business Affairs - Budget Presentation Meeting Power Point Slides
- Business Affairs - Composite Financial Index (CFI) History
- Business Affairs - Interim Financial Statements for February 2019
- Business Affairs - Letter of Credit 03142018
- Business Affairs - Letter of Credit 03142019
- Business Affairs - Letter of Credit 05042017
- Business Affairs - Letter of Credit 5-4-2016
- Business Affairs - Major CAPEX Projects and Cost
- Business Affairs - Three Year Operating Budget
- Business Affairs - Three Year Plan Goals
- Business Affairs - Tuition Discount for Staff 2004-2018
- President - Dept of Ed Letter 01072019
- President - HLC Letter 08-08-2018
- President - Prologue Days Agenda
- President - Proposed Bethel College Mission Vision Values for Board Approval April 6 2019.pdf
- Registrar - SP19 Enrollment Report

## 5.B - Core Component 5.B

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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

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#### 5.B.1

Financial results and policies are reviewed by the Board of Directors (2.C discusses governance and performance of the Board of Directors). See also Board Meeting minutes for the last three years ([Apr. 2016](#), [Sept. 2016](#), [Apr. 2017](#), [Oct. 2017](#), [Apr. 2018](#), [Aug. 2018](#), [Oct. 2018](#)). See [Financial Affairs Committee minutes](#) for the same time period.

#### 5.B.2

- The Board of Directors holds regular meetings each fall and spring, which engage internal constituencies in Bethel College's governance.
- Board meetings include general sessions, which senior administrators and faculty and staff representatives attend.
- Each of the bi-annual meetings includes administrative reports by members of the President's Cabinet.
- Each year students, faculty, and staff provide a report at a general session (students typically in fall, faculty and staff in spring).
- In addition, administrators, faculty, and students have representation on the following Board Committees: Financial Affairs, Academic Affairs, Marketing and Recruitment, and Development.
- In addition to these formal procedures by which the Board of Directors engages other constituencies, each bi-annual session typically includes a luncheon at which board members, faculty, staff, and students sit together to converse informally.

In both its structure and its practice, the College administration engages internal constituencies in the institution's governance.

- The [Bethel College Organization Chart](#) represents the administrative structure whereby the administration engages faculty and staff in governance.
- Prologue Days (see 5.A.4) occurs at the beginning of each academic year. Planned by the President and administrative cabinet, it engages all faculty and staff with shared training and

reporting.

- Committee structures provide many links in governance. For example, the VP for Business Affairs sits on the Staff Welfare Committee. The VP for Academic Affairs sits on several major faculty committees: Educational Policies Committee, Common Ground Steering Committee, Faculty Welfare Committee, and Faculty Executive Committee. Sitting on these committees ensures open communication with faculty in governance positions.
- The President, VP for Academic Affairs, VP for Business Affairs, and VP for Student Life all regularly attend the two faculty meetings held each month. When appropriate, that faculty agenda includes administrative reports.
- Staff Welfare Committee hosts monthly Thursday morning breaks for staff at which cabinet members provide administrative updates.
- Each semester, the VP for Business Affairs holds a budget presentation meeting to which all faculty and staff are invited (see 5.A.5).

### **5.B.3**

The Faculty Handbook (Section 1.6, [Internal Governance](#)) articulates the structure by which administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved appropriately in shared governance and communication regarding the academic program and campus life.

The Faculty Handbook (Section 1.7, [Committees of Bethel College](#)) articulates membership of committees, which assigns Student Government Association (SGA) the right to appoint a student representative to serve on the Assessment Committee, the Educational Policies Committee, and the Common Ground (General Education) Steering Committee. The Teacher Education Committee appoints a student representative each year. Students participate more broadly in campus life through a range of SGA activities. SGA leadership meets regularly with the VP for Student Life and the President of the College. SGA also has an office in the Student Life Department.

## **Sources**

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- Academic Affairs - Faculty Handbook Section 1.6
- Academic Affairs - Faculty Handbook Section 1.7
- Board of Directors - 17 March 30-April 1 Board of Directors Spring 2017 Meeting Minutes - Approved and Signed
- Board of Directors - 2018 Apr 5-7 Board of Directors Spring Meeting Minutes
- Board of Directors - 2018 Aug 21 Board of Directors Teleconference Minutes
- Board of Directors - 2018 October 3-5 Board of Directors Fall 2018 Meeting Minutes
- Board of Directors - Bethel College Board of Directors Committees - March 2019
- Board of Directors - Board of Directors Committees list
- Board of Directors - Financial Affairs Committee minutes for last 3 years
- Board of Directors -16 April 1-2 Board of Directors Spring 2016 Minutes
- Board of Directors -16 Sept 28-30 Board of Directors Fall 2016 Minutes
- Board of Directors -17 October 11-13 Board of Directors Fall 2017 Meeting Minutes
- Business Affairs - Bethel College Organization Chart March 2019 2
- President - President Gerings Remarks at the October 2018 Board Meeting

## 5.C - Core Component 5.C

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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

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In the past, we engaged CREDO with long-term strategic planning. Although some initiatives were met, the process was not well accepted by employees. With new mission, vision, and values statements on the horizon, we are currently working on a new strategic plan. Administrative cabinet has been considering new academic programs, new athletic teams, budgeting, and the confluence of each with the new mission statement. We already have mapped out the new capital campaign, and approved new academic programs such as undergraduate degrees in Mechanical Engineering and Software Development. We have just completed a financial recovery plan to move to a balanced budget (see 5.A.1). Once the new mission, vision, and values are approved at the April board meeting, we will finalize a formal strategic plan encompassing these elements and present it to the Board.

#### 5.C.1

1.A.3 also addresses this sub-component.

Bethel College's mission statement is the foundation for planning at all levels of the institution. Therefore, faculty, staff, board, students, and administrators all engage in planning with the mission as their guide. Evidence that the mission directs Bethel's overall planning is found in [President Gering's opening remarks](#) at the October 2018 board meeting.

#### 5.C.2

For a discussion of how evaluation of Student Satisfaction Inventory data has shaped institutional planning, see 1.C.2 and 4.B.1.

For a discussion of how Academic Program Review has connected assessment, planning and budgeting, see 4.A.1.

The discussion in 4.A.1 cites a budget proposal process whereby faculty who made discoveries in their program review were able then to propose program additions through the budget proposal

process. The [Budget Proposal Form](#) used for that process requests input regarding “Adherence to Bethel College Mission (The proposal should demonstrate a connection to the missions and goals of Bethel College.)” and “Learning Outcome (The proposal should demonstrate how the new program contributes to academic achievement.)” The [Budget Proposal Worksheet](#) made available helps faculty and staff who are making budget requests integrate that proposal with budgeting. Faculty and staff made 27 budget presentations to the administrative cabinet for the 2018-2019 fiscal budget and 14 were either partially or fully funded ([2018-19 Budget Presentation](#)).

As discussed in 4.C.3, Bethel has an orientation program for all new students in August called "Thresher Days" which requires careful integration in planning and budgeting:

- Academic Affairs engages faculty and staff to assist with registration and enrollment
- Athletics coordinate fall sports practices to enable full participation by all new students
- Business Affairs coordinates food service, maintenance/custodians, and technology for new students on campus for two extra days
- Student Life coordinates arrival, move-in, and orientation activities, as well as engages all Student Life staff in additional programming

As explained in 4.C.3, Thresher Days was created in response to institutional evaluation of retention patterns, which prompted this coordinated planning and budgeting to address this challenge and strive for improvement.

### 5.C.3

1.D.3, 2.C.2, and 5.B.2 address how internal and external constituent groups are engaged in governance, which includes planning.

The Office of Institutional Advancement fosters and sustains relationships with both internal and external constituencies, and develops strategies to involve them in the College community. These offices develop strategies to secure funds from these groups to continue the mission of the institution. Some of the constituency groups are:

- Alumni Council is made up of alumni who provide support and advice to the institution
- Athletic Booster Club provides input and funds to athletics
- Career Services Mentoring program is made up of alumni who mentor students
- Bethel College Women’s Association provides funds for projects on campus
- Parents Council provides input to Student Life and holds activities for students throughout the year

### 5.C.4

The institution plans for fluctuations in its sources of revenue, such as enrollment, changes in the economy, and state support. Discussions within various groups at the institution anticipate the impact of fluctuations in the sources of revenue and plan accordingly. The institution relies on the Kansas Independent College Association for information on government funding and regulations. Admissions works with NACAC to get updated information. The Registrar is an active member of the Kansas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (KACRAO).

### 5.C.5

**Technology.** In an age of rapid technological change, Bethel has responded with continual

improvements in campus technology. All of the classrooms in the Will Academic Center are “smart classrooms. Digital screens have been added in most campus buildings and residence halls for announcements and security alerts. The cafeteria was renovated in 2012, and the menus above the serving lines are now on digital screens. The campus is on the Jenzabar Student Information System and Learning Management System. The Advancement Office has upgraded from CX to JX in the Jenzabar Advancement module. Bethel has implemented a text alert system that can notify students, parents, and employees of a campus emergency. Social feeds and Facebook pages have been added to our website and digital screens on campus. The institution realizes that continual improvements to technology are needed and thus has made technology improvements part of the new capital campaign. The institution plans to replace old computers, projectors, and other equipment around campus to [improve technology](#). The institution has responded to changes in technology and is continually improving the campus, which is positively supporting internal operations, teaching, student learning, and ultimately, Bethel’s mission.

**Demographic Shifts.** The institution is aware that demographic shifts are occurring. At the Spring 2017 board meeting, the VP for Admissions, VP for Student Life, one Board member [made a presentation](#) regarding these shifts. Data shows that the number of high school graduates in the area is flat and the number of Mennonite students from Mennonite high schools is declining. We also are seeing a decline in Caucasian, middle class students, but a rise in Hispanic students. Because of this, Bethel College has joined the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities in an effort to attract more Hispanic students. We have also opened an Office of Diversity and Inclusion on campus.

**Globalization.** The College is committed to cross-cultural learning and to explore global connections beyond its traditional recruitment base. We reported in 2014 that our VP for Academics had signed an exchange agreement with Zengcheng College (Guangzhou) in China, and that we were supporting the chair of the Chemistry Department on a two-year teaching leave in China (2014-2016). We were unsuccessful, however, in recruiting many Chinese nationals to come to Bethel.

In January 2018, we signed an agreement with the Universidad de Ciencias y Artes de Chiapas (UNICACH), Mexico, for the purpose of collaborating in a number of ways. A group led by the Rector of UNICACH visited the Bethel campus later that year to discuss the agreement. In January 2019, President Gering and a group of Bethel alumni visited UNICACH. Discussions are continuing, and two students from Bethel will fulfill their internships at UNICACH in Summer 2019. The January 2020 Biological and Cultural Richness class interterm trip will travel to Mexico. We hope that we can soon begin faculty exchanges. As mentioned in 5.A.1, the VP for Academic Affairs will propose a Latin American Studies major that will involve UNICACH. We are excited about these possibilities.

Bethel offers study abroad programs. For example, we have an exchange program with Wuppertal University in Germany. We are hosting two students from their campus here at Bethel this year, and we currently have one student at Wuppertal. We also have one student on a semester abroad program in England.

This year we also have had students at Bethel from England and Sweden. These exchanges offer a rich cultural experience for our students.

## Sources

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- Board of Directors - Andy Johnson Lori Schmidt Aaron Austin board presentation spring 2017



- Business Affairs - Budget Proposal Worksheet
- Business Affairs - Budget Presentations for 2018-19
- Business Affairs - Budget Proposal Form
- Business Affairs - Technology Plan
- President - President Gerings Remarks at the October 2018 Board Meeting

## 5.D - Core Component 5.D

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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

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#### 5.D.1

Mentioned in 5.A.5, Bethel College documents its financial performance with monthly financial statements. These statements are submitted to the Board of Directors and to administrative cabinet members. Actual performance is measured against the budget. In addition, the VP for Business Affairs holds a semi-annual budget presentation meeting open to all faculty and staff to present the year-to-date financial results and forecast. The VP for Business Affairs also holds a session each semester where employees can meet with him one-on-one to discuss the financial results of the institution.

The institution has clear goals for assessing student learning and has an effective process of assessment (see Criterion 3 and 4).

The institution has defined goals for retention and completion, and measures performance of operations against those goals (see 4.C.).

Bethel College maintains a practice of regular program reviews (see 4.A.1).

The Student Satisfaction Inventory is administered to students every other year ([2014](#), [2016](#), [2018](#)). The Assessment Committee attends to those results, and engages faculty, staff, and administration in follow-up evaluation and action (see 1.C.2 and 4.B.1).

An [Employee Satisfaction Survey](#) is conducted with all employees each year in the spring. Survey results are reviewed by the administrative cabinet, Faculty Welfare Committee, and Staff Welfare Committee. The VP for Academic Affairs presents results of that survey at a fall semester faculty meeting. From the ensuing deliberations, suggestions for how to improve campus services and campus life can be made to administrators and included in ongoing planning and budgeting.

#### 5.D.2

After the 2012 HLC Focused Site Visit on Governance, Institutional Planning, and Assessment of Student learning, several improvements were made. For example, information gained from assessment has been used to improve student learning (see 4.B.3).

Section 4.C. documents a variety of efforts that show how information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs has prompted initiatives for continuous improvement. One of these initiatives, the Thresher Days program, was created to improve orientation for new students. In addition, one of the residence halls has been designated exclusively as a freshman hall in order to

address retention concerns. Several new programmatic steps have been taken to improve retention and persistence for transfer students, including a [Thresher Transitions course](#).

On the financial planning side, the College records its budget procedures as suggested by the 2012 Focused Visit team (see 5.A.5). The budget process provides for full transparency to all employees. There is a shared understanding of the budget and how it is prepared. Finally, the procedures allow for shared responsibility and ownership of the budget. Bethel is now in the process of building its next comprehensive strategic plan.

## Sources

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- Assessment - SSI summary 2018
- Assessment - SSI summary 2014
- Assessment - SSI summary 2016
- Athletics - 2018 FA IDS230 Thresher Transition Syllabus Kelsay Rychener
- President - Employee Satisfaction Survey

## **5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary**

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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**

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The resources, structures, and processes of Bethel College are sufficient to fulfill its mission, to continue to improve the quality of its educational offerings, and to manage present and future challenges and opportunities. The endowment fund has grown in 2018 due to excellent support from the constituency and strong market returns. The endowment has grown despite the College having to make supplemental endowment transfers, a practice it is striving to eliminate. The institution is working on a new mission statement that will guide the operations of the College. A strong and stable faculty and staff are in place. The College has a solid budgeting process.

While celebrating its achievements, the College is actively working to meet its challenges and to plan for the future. The College is now poised to launch its next strategic planning initiative, which will build on the foundation of a renewed College mission statement. The new mission, vision, values process was started in Spring 2018 and will likely be approved by board action at their Spring 2019 meeting. Guided by the governing board and a renewed institutional mission, that strategic planning process will direct the College's priorities moving forward, ensuring that it sustains its tradition of excellence.

### **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*