



## COVID-19 Planning and Process Changes

### Institutional Response

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Institution: Lake Region State College      City, State: Devils Lake, ND

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Date Submitted: 9/4/2020

Please complete the following questions based on the institution's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The prompts below are intended to help institutions articulate to peer review teams adaptations made in response to COVID-19. Understandably, some prompts may not be relevant to all institutions; in such cases, simply indicate so. By focusing institutional adaptations in this form, institutions can provide information to peer teams about how they are handling the pandemic, while retaining the Assurance Argument's traditional focus on long-term, non-pandemic operations. The COVID-19 Institutional Response should not exceed 10 pages. Upload the form in the Forms tab of the Assurance System prior to the institution's lock date.

### Questions

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**Criterion 1. Mission.** Please answer the following questions describing any changes the institution implemented related to Criterion 1.

- What, if any, program changes has the institution implemented (e.g., program hiatus, closure, launch) this fall? How do these service changes align with the institution's mission?

**Other than the implementation of COVID-19 safe procedures for safety, no changes to our program offerings have taken place. Our mission remains intact.**

- How has the institution's commitment to the public good been maintained during this period? What was the pandemic's impact on its civic engagement/community-based work?

**We continue to serve our community in the best way possible. We have hosted numerous community mass testing events and traditional vaccination clinics by using our facilities that allow for drive through testing. We require visitors to our campus and those using our facilities to adhere to our COVID-19 safe procedures. We still participate in community activities, issue press releases, give interviews and answer requests from the media. The pandemic's impact has only been to change the way we interact (employing technology where we would normally interact in person).**

- Has the institution adjusted its recruitment, enrollment, and support strategies to serve traditionally underserved students? If so, how?

**We continue to recruit and enroll students and our overall headcount should hold at or close to the average of our previous years. As a comprehensive community college, serving traditionally underserved students is what we do. We have robust student support services that work hard to provide appropriate support strategies to this population of learners. Last spring, when we suspended in person classes and residence hall living after spring break, we implemented additional strategies to ensure that our early warning interventions were implemented for the entire second half of the term.**

**Criterion 2. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct.** Please answer the following questions describing how the institution maintained integrity, as outlined in Criterion 2, as it implemented changes to regular campus practices during this period.

- Has the institution altered any existing policies or procedures (e.g., admissions, grading, registration, etc.) in response to the pandemic? If so, please describe them. Will these changes remain in effect, or will they revert to the original policy after the pandemic has subsided?

**Our COVID-19 safe procedures have been given the force of policy (mask wearing, social distancing, etc.). They will remain in effect as long as they are necessary for the protection of faculty, staff, students and guests. Last spring, when students could not take the ACT test that we use for course placement into English and math, we waived the testing requirement and are following up with alternative testing this fall. The ACT test remains waived due to our inability to get scores from students. The Faculty Senate, Registrar, and Chief Academic Officer agreed to allow for a change in grading basis to S/U when students transitioned from face-to-face classroom-based learning to online learning after spring break last spring. That allowance has expired and it is not currently available to students. We changed our spring, summer, and early fall registration day events from a large group activity to an almost daily small group activity. We will continue with “micro” events until it is safe to bring people to campus in groups.**

- Has the institution made changes to any contractual agreements during this period that have a bearing on educational activities? If so, please describe them.

**We have not had to alter any contractual agreements as a result of the pandemic.**

- How did the institution communicate with students, staff and other stakeholders about any relevant operational changes during the pandemic?

**Between March and August, President Darling and Vice President Halvorson sent routine emails to campus members providing updates regarding changes to our operations. These are archived on our website and provide a historical record of all communications with faculty, staff, and students. Many of these emails were forwarded to the members of our community college foundation board by the foundation director. The communications can be found at the following link: <https://www.lrsc.edu/discover-lrsc/lrsc-covid-19-preparedness-response/past-covid-19-updates>.**

- How has the institution's board been involved in monitoring potential disruptions to the institution's enrollment or financial stability?

**We have not experienced disruptions to our enrollment nor our financial stability. We did provide approximately \$200,000 in board plan reimbursements to students last spring, but were allocated funding from the state to recover this expenditure.**

**The State Board of Higher Education has been supportive of all eleven North Dakota University System institutions. They have provided guidance and recommendations through the Smart Restart Task Force.**

**Criterion 3. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support.** Please answer the following questions and describe the institution's ability to provide quality education, teaching and academic support services during this period.

- Which delivery modalities will the institution employ during the 2020-21 academic year? Check all that apply.

- On-site classroom teaching, with social-distancing measures within the classroom

Fall                       Spring                       Summer

- On-site classroom teaching, with fewer students in larger classrooms

Fall                       Spring                       Summer

- Hybrid models, with some learning in a classroom and some learning online

Fall                       Spring                       Summer

- 50% models, with one-half of students in the classroom and one-half present by video conference for each session

Fall                       Spring                       Summer

- Synchronous classes, offered online for all students during the regularly scheduled class time

Fall                       Spring                       Summer

- Fully online classes, offered using an LMS integrated with regular student/teacher contact

Fall                       Spring                       Summer

- Other—Please describe:

**We are prepared for synchronous classes should we have to cease our face-to-face offerings due to COVID-19. Faculty are training students to use the technology to attend class should they need to quarantine, have travel issues, and/or in the event holding classroom-based instruction is no longer safe.**

- What type of training did the institution provide for its faculty members on distance learning/hybrid formats to prepare them for this work? Check all that apply.

- Training for all faculty, delivered virtually
- Individual training with IT professional on the campus
- Access to online training on distance delivery offered by an outside provider to all faculty
- Individual training/coaching offered by experienced online faculty members on campus
- Department-level, department-specific training by subject area
- Recorded or live webinars/resources offered by outside providers
- Recorded or live webinars/resources offered by the LMS provider
- Other—please describe:

**Lake Region State College is a veteran of online learning with most faculty having taught online using our learning management system, Blackboard. Ramping up to do this is not a significant challenge for us. We have the technology and the resources to do this at a moment's notice.**

**Criterion 4. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement.** Please describe how the institution maintained the evaluation and improvement, as outlined in Criterion 4, as it implemented changes to regular campus practices during this period.

- How has the institution's ongoing student assessment changed since the COVID-19 disruption? If the institution altered the regular assessment program or processes, what has the institution implemented instead to assess student outcomes during this period?

**The most significant change last spring occurred in our nursing program. With many healthcare facilities unable to accept students for clinical experiences, we had to deploy more labs, hands-on simulations and virtual simulations to assess learning. Our simulation technology program also used web-based learning labs to assess learning virtually. The requirement to assess learning has not been relaxed as a result of COVID-19.**

- How has the current disruption affected the institution's or individual departments' ability to integrate assessment data into ongoing program improvement? Note successes, as well as gaps.

**I am not aware of any gaps in our ability to utilize assessment data into ongoing program improvement. We completed the program review process as scheduled in 2019 for all programs and made changes based on that review, pre-COVID-19.**

- How have the institution's retention, persistence and completion initiatives been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic?

**We do not see a negative affect from the pandemic on retention, persistence, or completion. Our IPEDS Fall 2018 to Fall 2019 retention rate was 64.29%. Our current IPEDS Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 retention rate is 60.61%, based on data from August 7, 2020. The official number will be calculated after enrollment census date on September 21, 2020. We expect to come very close to the 2018-2019 numbers. Our Spring 2020 course completion**

rate was 79%. This is on par with Spring 2017 and one percent higher than both Spring 2018 and Spring 2019. Course completion rate at Lake Region State College is defined as the percentage of students enrolled in a course who do not drop or withdraw and who complete the course with a grade of D or higher.

**Criterion 5. Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning.** Please describe how the institution maintained effectiveness, resources and planning, as outlined in Criterion 5, as it implemented changes to regular campus practices during this period.

- How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected enrollments? For each term in the upcoming academic year, please indicate an approximate percent increase or decrease.

○ Fall 2020

Increase                       Decrease                       No change

Percent change:

Less than 5%                       5% to 10%                       More than 10%

○ Spring 2021

Increase                       Decrease                       No change

Percent change:

Less than 5%                       5% to 10%                       More than 10%

○ Summer 2021

Increase                       Decrease                       No change

Percent change:

Less than 5%                       5% to 10%                       More than 10%

○ Other: Please describe any other COVID-19 enrollment impacts:

**At this time, we are tracking to have a headcount consistent with the average of recent fall semesters. Credit production appears to be down approximately 8% for this fall compared to last fall. Enrollment (headcount and credit production) fluctuates slightly for many reasons and with headcount holding steady, we could not clearly define this as a pandemic consequence.**

- What is the likelihood that funding sources other than tuition will be unable to provide the funds budgeted? If likely, how much of a budget cut does the institution expect?

**If this question is related to COVID-19, we do not expect a cut in funds for this fiscal year. We have been cautioned by the governor to plan for a 10% drop in our per credit funding**

formula for next biennium, but that is due to the drop in sales tax collections, the drop in oil production tax revenue, and a relatively flat ag economy (all made worse by the pandemic). We have known about the likelihood of a drop in our state appropriation for many months and are planning for that should it become a reality.

- What measures is the institution taking to address any budgetary issues for the current fiscal year?

**Other than our commitment to fiscal responsibility, the current fiscal year's budget is sufficient and without significant challenges. Last fiscal year, when housing and food service closed at spring break and our facilities closed to the public due to COVID-19, we did fully or partially furloughed approximately 20 employees whose work could be suspended for most of the summer as a way to generate some savings within our budget.**

- What interim steps has the institution taken to deal with temporary financial shortfalls?

**We do not expect any temporary financial shortfalls this fiscal year. We would have to expect that if the reductions recommended by the governor become a reality they will be permanent until the oil and ag economies recover. We have a history of being very financially responsible and have managed more significant cuts in appropriated funding in the past. We will do so again should the need arise.**

- What emergency policies or procedures, if any, has the institution invoked because of the COVID-19 pandemic?

**Other than our COVID-19 safe protocol implemented so we could have face-to-face instruction this fall, our suspension of testing as a requirement for course placement, and our decision to allow for an S/U grading basis last spring, none.**

- How have these changes affected institutional budgets for educational programs, support services and cocurricular activities?

**The educational program budgets have not changed, nor have our student support services or co-curricular activities. The following has changed:**

- **Our information technology department budget has been enhanced significantly to provide for the technology needs of our classrooms, staff, and faculty.**
- **We have committed more resources for our physical plant department for cleaning supplies, air purifiers, touchless faucets, and other COVID-19 safe items.**
- **We expect less travel to professional development conferences, but will still provide the faculty's professional development funds to the account. When the pandemic is over and travel resumes, there will be a reserve of funds available for the faculty. We are encouraging faculty to attend professional development utilizing technology.**

- What type of pandemic-related planning is the institution doing for Academic Year 2021–22?

**We are working to train our faculty, staff, and students every day on this new COVID safe reality. Ramping up for a COVID-19 safe fall semester, that is today fully underway, has been learning experience for all. We are currently pandemic planning for the uncertainty that Spring 2021 will present. If we are able to stay fully open and provide traditional education and residential living for the entire 2020-2021 academic year in a safe manner, we will repeat that in 2021-2022. It is our hope that the only thing different next year from this year is a widely available vaccine and the expected reduction in state appropriations.**