5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

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

Argument

5.D.1. In the spirit of openness with the public it serves, ISU documents evidence of its performance in a variety of ways. The Office of Institutional Research Fact Book (www.ir.iastate.edu/factbk.html) provides publicly-available information on a wide range of topics, most with historical trend information. Examples include student and employee demographic information, student retention and graduate rates, student credit hours taught per faculty member, and sponsored funding received. Institutional Research reports data to numerous state/federal agencies and external organizations.

ISU annually reports to the Board on the progress the University is making on Board goals and the University's Strategic Plan.

Within the Division of Academic Affairs, Key Progress Indicators (KPIs) are succinct measures aligned with Board goals, Institutional priorities, and the four priorities of the University's Strategic Plan. Examples of KPIs associated with the strategic plan priority of "Iowa State will be a magnet for attracting outstanding students who seek an education that prepares them to make a difference in the world" include student success outcome goals (e.g. increasing four-year graduation rates, decreasing the gap between minority and non-minority graduation rates, increasing the post-graduation success/employment of graduates) and with improving the academic quality of the institution (e.g. implementing student outcomes based continuous quality improvement plans for all academic programs). Progress on the KPIs is monitored at the college and university level.

ISU uses various student and employee surveys to collect information on its performance, including the University Life Survey, National Survey of Student Engagement, and student surveys of academic advising and student experience. The results of these surveys are publicly available from University websites. ISU uses Class Climate to conduct end-of-semester student course evaluations. An institutional license for Qualtrics allows departments/units across campus to conduct customized surveys to assess performance within their units.

Annual standard reports to the Board provide external accountability of ISU's performance and operations on a wide range of topics. In addition, there are numerous annual reports that highlight the University's performance (e.g. Annual Financial Report, Division of Student Affairs Annual Report, Business and Finance Annual Report).

5.D.2. ISU is committed to continuous improvement. As a public university, ISU is accountable to the state and its citizens to effectively use resources to advance its mission. The Provost summarized recent efficiencies gained within Academic Affairs (such as saving $750,000 per year through the use of virtual data storage and thin clients) in a 2013 memo. Evidence that the University operationalizes

its commitment to institutional effectiveness and improvement is best demonstrated through examples of recent and on-going initiatives across the University.

TIER: The Board's three public universities (ISU, University of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa) have been working with various consultants as part of the *Rising to the Next TIER (a **T**ransparent, **I**nclusive **E**fficiency **R**eview)* program. TIER is a review of academic and administrative areas across the universities, as well as the Regents system as a whole. The goal of TIER is to transform the institutions so that they are sustainable for the long term, and true to their core academic missions of education, research and service as well as learning, discovery and engagement. The review process yielded 12 Administrative Business Cases and four Academic Business Cases. The [Board has approved and implementation work has begun on the Administrative Business Cases](). Due to changes in consultants and the desire to more fully engage the faculty in discussions of the academic business cases, the initial feasibility review of the proposed academic business cases is still in progress. [TIER is a multi-year process to generate efficiencies and cost savings](#)(or revenue generation) across a broad spectrum of institutional operational areas.

University Innovation Alliance

In 2014, ISU joined 10 other large public universities to establish the [University Innovation Alliance]() (UIA). The UIA is bringing together geographically dispersed universities to collaboratively share best practices and work together to increase the number of low-income students graduating with degrees. Each institution brings to the Alliance the knowledge and expertise from their individual efforts to improving student success. UIA will focus its efforts on different strategies for progress; in the first year, the Alliance is focused on implementing and enhancing the use of data analytics to improve student success. Subsequent years will focus on other strategies, such as learning communities. The Alliance provides a unique opportunity for ISU to improve student success institutionally while also assisting other institutions.

Graduate College Lean Project

Processes within the Graduate College have historically been paper-based, with multiple signatures required. In 2012, Boeing, a strong corporate partner, expressed an interest in supporting the University through a sharing of knowledge and expertise. Through discussions between Boeing and the University, it was decided that Boeing would assist the Graduate College in undergoing a Lean process to transform the current paper-based processes of forming a program of study (POS) committee (a major professor and other advisors from the graduate faculty) and developing the POS (a curriculum of graduate courses that satisfies degree requirements) into an efficient electronic process. The [electronic program of study process]() was recently implemented. While the Graduate College is still assessing the full impact of the project, initial estimates were that staff time savings/efficiencies gained would be $325k/year.

Thielen Student Health Center Improvements

In fall 2014 the Division of Student Affairs hired national student health center consultant, Keeling and Associates, to conduct a comprehensive review of the Thielen Student Health Center. The review was commissioned due to concerns about access to services due to increased enrollment and fiscal concerns related to changes in the healthcare industry. The report identified several concerns related to leadership and management, access, quality improvement, fiscal and data management practices, quality of care, availability of mental health services, and facility space.

ISU had proactively implemented several changes prior to the consultant's report, including increasing

hours for part-time providers, extending hours around exam periods, and hiring of a nurse for triage phone services. ISU is implementing recommendations and tracking progress on a weekly basis. A major reorganization resulted in the hiring of several key leadership positions, including a new Quality Improvement Officer to lead efforts for the upcoming re-accreditation with the American Association for Ambulatory Health Care. In addition to administrative staff, several new clinical staff members were added, including Certified Medical Assistants for the reception area, mental health providers, general nurse practitioners and providers. New revenue models and the process for space renovation and expansion are under development.

Sustainability: *Live Green!,* ISU's campus-wide sustainability initiative, encourages all students, faculty, and staff to be fully committed to and engaged in making the campus, its operations, and initiatives as "green" as possible. ISU created a *Live Green! Revolving Loan Fund* to provide interest-free loans for campus projects that promote energy conservation and sustainability. Sustainability efforts are summarized in an annual report to the Board. Below are a few highlights of ISU's on-going commitment to sustainability:

- A goal was established for all new construction and major renovation projects to achieve LEED Gold Certification. Projects that have achieved LEED certification include:
    - LEED Silver: Morrill Hall (2007), Bergstrom (2014)
    - LEED Gold: Hach Chemistry Building (2011), Biorenewables Research Laboratory (2011), Curtiss Hall (2012), Veterinary Medicine Small Animal Clinic (2013)
    - LEED Platinum: King Pavilion (2010), State Gym (2012)
- A number of energy efficiency initiatives have been put into action to reduce ISU's collective energy demand. These initiatives, ranging from the installation of energy saving devices (occupancy sensors, timers, and vending machine misers), to building competitions focused on behavioral change, and winter break building shutdown have resulted in a reduction of campus energy consumption by nearly 15% since FY08.
- Through the use of cogeneration technology, ISU power plant efficiencies are 13-20% higher than conventional power plants. The cogeneration process reduces coal consumption by 15,000 tons per year, carbon emissions by 37,000 tons per year and saves ISU approximately $1.5 million per year.
- ISU is converting a portion of its plant from coal to natural gas, replacing 3 stoker coal boilers with new natural gas boilers. When completed, ISU's capacity will be 40% coal and 60% gas and will choose the primary fuel source based on economics. Benefits from the project include reducing coal consumption by at least 33%, which in turn will reduce power plant emissions by about 75%. Carbon dioxide emissions will be reduced by about 15%. ISU expects a 3-4% improvement in power plant efficiency once the new equipment is operational. Construction started in summer 2013 and will be completed by early 2016.
- Campus-wide recycling for white paper, newspaper, and cardboard is offered on an ongoing basis to all students, faculty, and staff in campus buildings. ISU recycles an average of 400 tons of paper waste annually.
- ISU Dining has taken a multi-faceted approach to waste reduction. In 2009, ISU Dining introduced trayless dining in the newly renovated Seasons residential dining facility. Within a few months, the trayless facility was reducing food waste by 50%. All residential dining facilities made the switch to trayless in 2010.

Administrative System Projects

Several years ago, ISU made a strategic decision to implement Kuali Financials, Kuali Coeus (research administration), and Kuali Rice (a workflow tool) to address system sustainability, expand paperless processing, and replace legacy systems. Kuali software was initially developed by a

community of colleges and universities and released as open source with no license fees; thereby providing lower cost options than commercially-available software. Implementation occurred on July 1, 2013. The process leading to implementation involved input from a cross-section of campus users who assisted in system testing and review, and provide input into the training plan and materials. Throughout the process, campus updates and communications occurred by direct contact with project managers, subscribing to Kuali News, using the Kuali website, emailing kuali@iastate.edu, or using a feedback submission process.

Due to the recent corporate changes with Kuali and new opportunities in the evolving IT marketplace, ISU is embarking on a significant project to meet the technology needs of the University and transition all enterprise systems (including Financial, Human Resource, Student Records, etc.) from the various existing platforms into an integrated, cloud-based, enterprise system. The University is early in the project timeline, currently working with a consultant to identify system requirements for a Request for Proposal. However, the University is setting an aggressive timeline to identify the preferred option and move forward with the implementation of a new integrated system.

Sources

- 2013-14 Student Affairs Overview
- Annual Financial Report Year End June 30 2014
- Board of Regents Minutes November 14 2015
- BOR Strategic Plan - University Progress Reports - 10-8-2014
- BOR Sustainability Report June 2015
- Governance Report Schedule Calendar Year 2015
- Graduate College Lean Project Overview
- Health Center Recommendations Update 9-18-15
- Key Progress Indicators - Academic Affairs
- KPI_SP Data by College All_April 2015
- Provost Efficiency Improvement Memo Sept 2013
- SEEC Survey Results 2013
- Student Survey of Advising Spring 2012
- SVPBF Annual Report - 2014
- TIER Press Release 6-16-14
- UIA-Vision-Prospectus
- University Life Survey 2011 Final Report