

Dakota College at Bottineau

Strategic Planning and Institutional Council for Effectiveness (SPICE)

Annual Summary Report

2025-2026

July 2026

Report Approved by SPICE on July 24, 2026

Committee Members: Dr. Lexi R. Kvasnicka-Gates (Chair), Dr. Linda Burbidge, Kayla O'Toole, Chris Nero, Corey Gorder, Laura Halvorson (Priority 1 Leader), Maggie Backen (Priority 2 Leader), Mike O'Toole (Priority 3 Leader), and Misty Lindgren (Priority 3 Leader)

History of Strategic Planning and Institutional Council for Effectiveness (SPICE) at Dakota College at Bottineau

SPICE came out of what was formally the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee was the result of a Met With Concerns finding in the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Team Report from May 2020 in regards to Criteria for Accreditation sub-component 5.D. The HLC Peer Reviewers requested that DCB:

- Establish a body, representative of faculty, staff and administration, to engage in monthly review of the institutional effectiveness of its operations (page 60).
- Define a minimum of 10 key operations for which performance metrics will be identified, historical performance documented, and performance targets set (page 60).

DCB administrators created the Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) during Fall 2020 whose membership was comprised of the HLC Accreditation Coordinator, the Director of Academic and Co-Curricular Assessment, and the members of the DCB Administrative Council. Duties of the IEC included:

- Ensuring the college's strategic plan is aligned with the college mission
- Supporting ongoing connections between strategic planning, budgeting, and assessment
- Monitoring, evaluating, and documenting progress toward fulfillment of the college's strategic plan goals
- Monitor, evaluate, and document progress toward correcting audit findings
- Providing updates and recommendations to the Campus Dean

At the beginning of the Fall 2023 semester, the IEC and the ad hoc DCB Strategic Planning Committee were combined into one council charged with overseeing, monitoring, and guiding institutional effectiveness and strategic planning at Dakota College. The newly created Strategic Planning and Institutional Council for Effectiveness (SPICE) oversaw seven reporting groups that previously reported to the IEC, as well as the progress and completion of items identified on the college's Implementation Plan. The Implementation plan was created with feedback from faculty, staff, and students, and was organized around DCB's Institutional Priorities (Student Success, Community Commitment, and Institutional Improvement).

The 2023-2024 academic year was the last year of IE forms and reporting. Beginning during the 2024-2025 academic year, SPICE focused solely on items identified on the College's annual implementation plan. Priority Leaders (focused on the College's three priorities) helped SPICE ensure that progress was made on all identified action items for the academic year.

2025-2026 Implementation Plan

Originally, the 2025-2026 Dakota College at Bottineau Implementation Plan included 28 items. These items were the result of an initial survey sent to DCB faculty and staff during early Spring 2025 which requested ideas for Implementation Plan items that fit under the college's Priorities. SPICE took all item suggestions, combining like items and clarifying language, and created a second survey sent to faculty, staff, and students. The second survey asked these groups to identify the importance of each item and also provided the opportunity to add additional items. The most important items to each group were used to create a first draft of the 2025-2026 Implementation Plan (IP). The IP was sent to Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Senate for comment and support. The 2025-2026 Implementation Plan was approved by College Council on May 8, 2025. SPICE identified Item Champions for each Item, and Priority Leaders worked with Item Champions to complete Item Progress Update forms.

Priority One: Student Success	
Goal 1: Guide students on their academic journey	
Item 1.1 Strengthen tutoring services for online and distance students	
Item 1.2 Increase advising strategies centered on transfer and career preparedness	
Goal 2: Invest in the development of the whole student	
Item 1.3 Ensure all students have access to cocurricular experiences	
Item 1.4 Utilize a team approach to support students	
Item 1.5 Develop skills needed outside of the classroom	
Item 1.6 Explore options for expanding food services	
Item 1.7 Continue HLC Student Success Academy participation	
Item 1.8 Develop an evaluation plan for services available to students	
Item 1.9 Address need for mental health and wellness training for campus community	
Priority Two: Community Commitment	
Goal 1: Articulate college identity	
Item 2.1 Continue to update the DCB website for accuracy and compliance	
Item 2.2 Update DCB marketing collateral	
Goal 2: Align and expand community and workforce programs	
Item 2.3 Offer professional development courses for both campus and community	
Item 2.4 Secure permanent home for DCB Nursing in Minot	
Item 2.5 Review academic programs currently provided through third-party relationships	
Goal 3: Enhance community relationships	
Item 2.6 Promote awareness of community resources available to students	
Item 2.7 Develop a plan for community event awareness	
Item 2.8 Organize events that bring the college and local community together	
Priority Three: Institutional Improvement	
Goal 1: Develop a team approach that values a culture of passion	
Item 3.1 Create a framework for salary increases based on further education	
Item 3.2 Explore the framework for salary increases based on promotions	
Item 3.3 Address workload balance	
Item 3.4 Improve faculty submission of required documents	
Item 3.5 Streamline social media presence	
Goal 2: Modify our processes to enhance our services	
Item 3.6 Establish expectations for faculty participation in student recruitment	
Item 3.7 Revamp the internship process	
Item 3.8 Develop and disseminate departmental roles and responsibilities charts	
Item 3.9 Continue developing the program review process	
Item 3.10 Update the DCB Athletic Strategic Plan	
Goal 3: Improve institutional facilities and technology	
Item 3.11 Continue to address residence hall needs	

*2025-2026 Implementation Plan approved at College Council May 8, 2025.

When SPICE met during August 2025, a discussion was held regarding the number of items on the current Implementation Plan. SPICE agreed that 28 items was an issue for several reasons. First, some of the items were very simple, one-step fixes (e.g., Item 3.5 Streamline social media presence). Other items were part of current staff or faculty job descriptions (e.g., Item 1.9 Address need for mental health and wellness training for campus community). Still other items were complete by the beginning of Fall 2025 (e.g., Item 1.6 Explore options for expanding food services). SPICE went through the Implementation Plan and reduced the number of items from 28 down to 18, and this revised plan was approved at College Council on September 25, 2025. Monthly progress on IP Items was reported to Priority Leaders, and three SPICE meetings during the 2025-2026 academic year were designated as Progress Update meetings.

Priority One: Student Success	
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Item 1.5 Develop an evaluation plan for services available to students	
Priority Two: Community Commitment	
Goal 1: Articulate college identity	
Item 2.1 Continue to update the DCB website for accuracy and compliance	
Item 2.2 Update DCB marketing collateral	
Goal 2: Align and expand community and workforce programs	
Item 2.3 Secure permanent home for DCB Nursing in Minot	
Item 2.4 Review academic programs currently provided through third-party relationships	
Goal 3: Enhance community relationships	
Item 2.5 Promote awareness of community resources available to students	
Item 2.6 Develop a plan for community event awareness	
Priority Three: Institutional Improvement	
Goal 1: Develop a team approach that values a culture of passion	
Item 3.1 Explore a framework for salary increases	
Item 3.2 Address workload balance	
Item 3.3 Improve faculty submission of required documents	
Goal 2: Modify our processes to enhance our services	
Item 3.4 Revamp the internship process	
Item 3.5 Continue developing the program review process	
Item 3.6 Update the DCB Athletic Strategic Plan	
Goal 3: Improve institutional facilities and technology	
Item 3.7 Continue to address residence hall needs	

*2025-2026 Revised Implementation Plan approved at College Council September 25, 2026.

2025-2026 Implementation Plan Final Summary

Priority One: Student Success			
Item	Item Champion	Green: Complete Yellow: In Progress Red: Not Started	Notes
Item 1.1 Strengthen tutoring services for online and distance students	Melissa Brudwick		During the 2025-2026 academic year, 199 total in person sessions were held. A total of 85.82 hours logged on Net Tutor for year. Additionally, a Minot peer tutor was hired but never utilized. Complete.
Item 1.2 Increase advising strategies centered on transfer and career preparedness	Jake Pommerer and Lynn Bristol		Resume workshops and transfer counseling occurred. Those working under the Director of Student Success will continue to monitor these efforts and will make comparisons from one year to the next. Complete.
Item 1.3 Ensure all students have access to	Melissa Brudwick		Student Senate was active with DCB student body at least once per month. Two new clubs were approved during the 2025-2026 academic year (i.e.,

cocurricular experiences			Gaming Club and The Grove (literary club)). During the 2026-2027 academic year, one member of each co-curricular will be a member of Student Senate. Complete.
Item 1.4 Continue HLC Student Success Academy Participation	Lexi Kvasnicka-Gates		Team participated in a virtual roundtable during Fall 2025 and an in-person roundtable during Spring 2026. Team will submit a final Student Success Plan during Summer 2026 and participate in one final virtual roundtable during September 2026. Complete.
Item 1.5 Develop an Evaluation Plan for services available to students	Hannah Hoffert		Food services, technology, and housing were key services that were evaluated during the 2025-2026 academic year. Students were surveyed again during Spring 2026. The action plan was reported to be complete, but was not in writing with a clear timeline and responsible parties. The Director of Student Success will work with Hannah to ensure this is complete. In Progress.

Priority Two- Community Commitment

Item	Item Champion	Green: Complete Yellow: In Progress Red: Not Started	Notes
Item 2.1 Continue to update DCB website for accuracy and compliance	Kendra Metcalfe		Help ticket for website updates added to IT ticket choices. Training to take place 5/12/26. Annually website updating will be added to checklist for faculty during in-service and during staff training. Complete.
Item 2.2 Update marketing collateral	Kendra Metcalfe		DCB continues to work with third party for marketing campaigns. Brand guidelines updated and include going through Marketing Committee for items that will be made for public viewing. Complete.
Item 2.3 Secure a permanent home for DCB Nursing in Minot	Maggie Backen		Nursing location (Health Center West) is operating on short term rental agreement with current owners of building. When new ownership (Minot State University) is completed, new lease/rental agreement will be made into a long-term agreement. Purchase agreement is signed. Walkthrough with MSU to happen. In Progress.
Item 2.4 Review academic programs currently provided through third-party relationship	Kayla O'Toole		Currently only one program (Diagnostic Medical Sonography) remains that is provided via 3 rd party relationship. They are in process of seeking accreditation. The program will be reviewed through Academic Program Review. In Progress.
Item 2.5 Promote awareness of community resources	Bridget Gustafson/ Maggie Backen		Bulletin boards up at off-campus locations to allow for information to be displayed. Minot Area Resources bulletin is complete and posted at locations. Complete.

Item 2.6 Develop a plan for community event awareness	Tina Webb/Jennifer Cote (<i>both resigned</i>)		Ideas gathered and discussion lead to agreement that one central location/calendar for events. This came to fruition during Summer 2026 on the DCB Website. The DCB Weekly Log (i.e., memo sent via email to DCB community) will continue to communicate events. Complete.
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Priority Three: Institutional Improvement			
Item	Item Champion	Green: Complete Yellow: In Progress Red: Not Started	Notes
Item 3.1 Explore framework for salary increases	Keri Keith/Misty Lindgren		Faculty: The Faculty Salary Committee met and put together a proposal for monetary raises when earning an advanced degree or moving up in Promotion. The proposal was presented to Kayla O'Toole. Kayla indicated that the proposal seems realistic and appropriate. At the time we were still interviewing for a new Campus Dean. We were told that once the new Dean is put in place and the new budget comes out there will be a response. Staff: A staff Salary Exploration Committee was formed to review potential approaches for staff salary increases, with a focus on recognizing years of service. The committee researched years of service among DCB Staff, practices at other NDUS Institutions, potential strategies to recognize staff longevity and developed a framework for consideration. The framework included various scenarios based on stipend and award recognition. Of the scenarios, two options were presented to Staff Senate. Staff Senate voted on the award-based recognition options. Misty Lindgren and Mike O'Toole presented the committee's findings and recommendations to the leadership council. Complete.
Item 3.2 Assess workload balance	Associate Deans		Annual workload surveys were distributed to all faculty and staff in November 2025. The surveys were updated to include additional questions related to remote work, flexible scheduling, and overall work-life balance. Survey results were analyzed in January 2026 and compared to baseline data from the 2024–2025 academic year to identify trends, areas of improvement, and ongoing concerns. Key findings were compiled into a summary document titled <i>Key Findings from the FY 24–25 and 25–26 Work-Life Balance Surveys</i> , which was shared with leadership and departments.

			Flexible work initiatives continue to be supported. Supervisors worked individually with staff to allow flexibility in work hours during academic breaks, based on operational needs. Remote work opportunities were considered for eligible positions, with expectations discussed between supervisors and employees. Faculty workload balance was supported through ongoing collaboration and structured processes. Teaching schedules were distributed to faculty each semester via email for review and confirmation, allowing faculty to provide input on course load, scheduling, and potential overload assignments. Adjustments were made when appropriate to better align workload with faculty capacity. In addition, a review and update of staff and faculty position descriptions is currently underway to clarify job responsibilities, workload expectations, and flexibility options. Updated descriptions are being discussed with employees during annual evaluations to ensure alignment and provide an opportunity for feedback. Complete
Item 3.3 Improve faculty submission of required documents	Misty Lindgren		A master checklist of all required faculty documents (with due dates) was created and used during 2025-2026. Simple Syllabus was also implemented during Spring 2026 and is now in use for syllabus management. Complete.
Item 3.4 Revamp the internship process	Misty Lindgren		A significant portion of this work had already been completed during the spring semester preceding the development of the Implementation Plan. During that time, the Internship Packet underwent a comprehensive review and revision process led by faculty members who oversee internship experiences within their respective programs. This collaborative effort ensured that the packet more accurately reflected program expectations, learning outcomes, and procedural requirements for students participating in internships. Throughout the review process, some inconsistencies were identified, particularly in the alignment and wording of course descriptions associated with internship experiences. These discrepancies were carefully examined, and necessary revisions were made to ensure consistency, clarity, and alignment across programs. As a result, course descriptions were standardized and updated to better reflect the intended academic and experiential components of the internships, thereby improving both internal coherence and external communication of program requirements. Complete.

Item 3.5 Continue developing the program review process	Kayla O'Toole		During the 2025–2026 academic year, continued progress was made toward developing a comprehensive and sustainable program review process. While the full process has not yet been finalized, significant work has occurred to refine the framework, develop supporting tools, and begin implementation planning. Work focused on reviewing prior research and aligning the program review framework with accreditation expectations, institutional goals, and best practices identified through the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Draft criteria, processes, and reporting structures were revisited and refined. Efforts were also directed toward refining and enhancing standardized tools and templates, building on previous program review formats. This included updates to program snapshot reports, data collection structures, and draft reporting formats. These tools are intended to improve consistency in program evaluation and streamline the overall review process. In addition, initial steps were taken to pilot elements of the process through an “emergency program health analysis.” This included gathering and reviewing data related to program enrollment, completion rates, and delivery modalities over a three-year period. This work supported early identification of programs for potential revision, consolidation, rebranding, or discontinuation. Efforts are ongoing to address legacy program data and improve accuracy within the NDUS system. This work includes identifying inactive programs and initiating the cleanup and formal removal process, with additional updates still in progress. Collaborative meetings were held to review the current process, discuss proposed updates, and address structural considerations such as program categorization, subplans, and program management responsibilities. Planning also began for the development of a Program Review (APR) Committee to support evaluation and recommendations moving forward. Complete.
Item 3.6 DCB Athletic Strategic Plan	Casey Pierson		Plan was brought to College Council during April 2026 for comment. Changes and questions were sent to the Athletic Director. A revised plan was voted on and approved by College Council on May 14, 2026. Complete.
Item 3.7 Continue to address residence hall needs	Chris Nero		Milligan Hall improvements included taking care of the abatement, faulty sewer main, electrical, and updating room layouts with proper sheet rocked walls. Mead Hall improvements included two large

			heat circulation pumps. The focus now moves to Gross Hall with the remainder of the funding (approximately \$370,000 of the original \$500,000). Complete.
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2025-2026 DCB Implementation Plan Conclusions

A total of 18 items were identified on the revised 2025-2026 DCB Implementation Plan. As of July 2026, 15 were Complete (83%) and 3 (17%) were identified as In Progress. In Progress Items are:

- Item 1.5 Develop an evaluation plan for services available to students
- Item 2.3 Secure a permanent home DCB Nursing in Minot
- Item 2.4 Review academic programs currently provided through third-party relationship

Item 1.5 is anticipated to be Complete by the end of August 2026 and will continue to be tracked by the Director of Student Success in collaboration with the Mental Health Counselor. Item 2.3 should be Complete once a long-term agreement with Minot State University is drafted and signed by current leadership. Finally, Item 2.4 will be addressed through the revamped Academic Program Review process. This new process will consist of reviewing all DCB's academic programs between Fall 2026 and Spring 2028.

Future Considerations

During Spring 2026, SPICE discussed the effectiveness of the current Implementation Plan process. Although DCB has experienced success with the process, the college strives to continuously improve. Concerns with the current, one-year Implementation Plan centered around the plan being very short-sighted. Although the Implementation Plan process was originally meant to take incremental steps (i.e., one year at a time) toward larger goals, this has not occurred. This leaves DCB making small improvements, but, at times, means that the college is not looking 5- to 10-years into the future.

Keeping this in mind, SPICE held focus groups and lead discussions during Campus Conversations, analyzed DCB community concerns and opportunities for improvement, and developed a longer serving Implementation Plan. This plan identified three main areas: dual credit, academic program review, and Minot programming. These three items were supported by both Faculty and Staff Senate and approved as initiatives aligned with DCB's current strategic plan, *Strategies for Success*. Moving forward, SPICE will help to ensure these initiatives are achieved by Spring 2030.