



## **MEETING THE ASSUMED PRACTICES**

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**Report to the Higher Learning Commission**  
**May 2016**

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## **Part 1**

### **Introduction**

Western Dakota Tech appreciates the opportunity to present to the Higher Learning Commission the college's plan to demonstrate it meets the Assumed Practices identified as issues. In addition to showing the college's plan, this report will demonstrate the college's earnest momentum in meeting and exceeding the Assumed Practices.

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) notified Western Dakota Tech (WDT) in an action letter dated March 3, 2016, the college was being placed on Probation for several reasons related to assessment of student learning, attention to retention and graduation rates, and institutional effectiveness. Those issues led the HLC Board of Trustees to find WDT was out of compliance with Core Components 4.B, 4.C, and 5.D. In addition, the Board found WDT was out of compliance with Assumed Practices C.6 and D.4.

WDT has taken the sanction of Probation seriously, and the college is using the opportunity to make serious improvements. The college has felt it was in compliance with the Assumed Practices because faculty have been assessing student outcomes, and the college uses data to inform decision-making. This report demonstrates earnest momentum toward strengthening the processes already in place and significantly improving our ability to document that work. Our current efforts and the college's plan for the future will ensure improvements continue and become part of the WDT culture. While this report shows the college meets Assumed Practices C.6 and D.4, the college feels strongly the evidence demonstrates WDT is also nearing compliance with the Core Components in question. It must be noted that the May 2015 visiting team members failed to incorporate the large majority of the errors of fact the college submitted in response to the team report.

WDT's progress is the result of work from each and every faculty and staff member on campus. From the moment the HLC sanction was announced, faculty and staff pitched in to do the work needed to make improvements and to create a culture where assessment of student learning, continuous improvement, and, most importantly, documentation of those efforts, are part of the fabric of the college. The college will ensure the work being done is not merely a flurry of activity. Instead, processes being created and implemented will make these activities part of everyone's daily work and result in quality improvements across campus.

## Part 2 Assumed Practice C.6

Western Dakota Tech has made tremendous progress toward ensuring college data on assessment of student learning are accurate and address the full range of students who enroll.

Immediately upon learning of the probation sanction, Western Dakota Tech looked deeply at its assessment processes. Two issues became clear. First, although WDT faculty were well-versed in assessing learning outcomes, they needed support to take their assessment efforts to the next level. Thus, WDT created and filled two Assessment Coordinator positions in spring 2016. The college created a [job description](#) for these full-time faculty-level positions to provide all faculty members with consistent peer support for all assessment activities. During the spring 2016 semester, the Assessment Coordinators supported faculty through multiple events, including coaching sessions to review and revise program learning outcomes, group training seminars to assist faculty with shifting to assessment of program learning outcomes, small group and one-on-one meetings with faculty to answer specific questions and concerns, and reviewing draft assessment work and providing feedback. The plan is to continue the two Assessment Coordinator positions through at least the next five years.

Second, the college came to understand the bulk of the college's assessment of student learning efforts had occurred at the course level, and while the college believes that work was effective and led to improvements in student learning, it did not meet the Higher Learning Commission's expectations. That discovery prompted the college to shift its assessment of student learning focus to program learning outcomes. Those outcomes have been in place since 2010, but faculty had not made a practice of assessing them because the college focused on course-level outcomes. The college's HLC liaison affirmed the need for this shift during a campus visit in May 2016 when she confirmed that when the Commission talks about assessment, it is referring to program-level assessment. The Commission assumes assessment is taking place at the course level, and WDT has had processes in place for that type of assessment.

To prepare for the shift of focus to program-level assessment, the WDT President and the Dean of Academics began working with the Assessment Committee and all faculty in March 2016 to review the program learning outcomes in place. Staff and faculty worked together to update the outcomes; make them unique to their program; link outcomes to national standards and/or program competencies; link the revised outcomes to courses through course maps; and identify each course as being taught at the introductory, developed, or mastered level. Staff and faculty worked to view programs as a sequence of courses that develop program learning outcomes that could be assessed at various levels of learning. As faculty made changes, they began collecting evidence to assess the outcomes. Faculty submitted their assessment results at the end of the spring semester.

The program-level work is encouraging because it shows the college is capable of meeting the Commission's expectations. In addition, the work shows faculty are closing the loop by using what they learn through their assessment efforts to improve student learning. Examples:

- The Business program assessed the program learning outcome of “Critique themselves and others when working collaboratively on a business task” by setting a goal of 80 percent of students scoring a four out of five on teamwork evaluations. After completing the teamwork rubric, faculty found 90 percent of students achieved the benchmark. However, the rubrics showed students were weak in several areas, including sharing information in a timely manner, attending meetings, and attending meetings on time. The faculty plan to provide additional teamwork opportunities in a variety of classes during the 2016-2017 academic year to help students further develop their ability to work collaboratively. To show improvements, the program will assess the same learning outcome during the 2016-2017 academic year to see if adding additional teamwork opportunities result in improved learning. This example demonstrates the college is developing the foundation for a continuous cycle of program outcome assessment. The Business program's [spring 2016 assessment results](#) show other examples of the program's efforts.
- The Paramedic program assessed multiple program learning outcomes through a simulation activity repeated multiple times during the spring 2016 semester. The first time students completed the activity, they made several critical mistakes, including failing to properly diagnose the patient's problem, not checking blood sugar, and providing inappropriate interventions. The instructor noted the errors and provided additional instruction to help students see how the patient should have been treated. The students engaged in the same simulation multiple times and never repeated the same mistakes. In addition, four of the students involved in the simulations reported asking nurses in clinical rotations about checking blood sugar levels in real patients. In one case, the nurse at the clinical site checked the patient's blood sugar after being asked by a WDT student and delivered medication that brought the patient back from unconsciousness. This example shows faculty are applying assessment results to their instructional efforts to make improvements in student learning. The Paramedic program's [spring 2016 assessment results](#) show other examples of the program's efforts.
- The HVAC/R program assessed the program learning outcome of “Convey professional verbal and written communication skills across settings, technology, purposes, and audiences” by requiring students to troubleshoot a forced-air furnace, write a service ticket, present the ticket to a customer, and explain the work that needed to be done. The instructor found 83.33 percent of the students scored 17 points or more out of 20 possible points with just one student scoring below 17 points. The instructor plans to increase the difficulty of the assignment in the 2016-2017 academic year by creating a cost sheet and asking students to develop prices and communicate them to the customer. In addition, the instructor will include more instruction about properly

completing service tickets because of weaknesses noticed during the assignment. The instructor will complete the same assessment in the 2016-2017 academic year to see how the changes impact student learning. The HVAC/R program's [spring 2016 assessment results](#) show other examples of the program's efforts.

- The Surgical Technology program assessed the program learning outcome of “Exhibit personal accountability and professionalism as a surgical technologist” using the evaluation tool clinical preceptors complete during student clinical rotations. The program director set an objective of 85 percent of the clinical cohort would earn a 90 percent or higher average score on the Professional Development portion of the Clinical Evaluation Summary. An analysis of the scores showed 73 percent of students achieved the desired benchmark. The program director will address this issue during the 2016-2017 academic year by bringing an operating room manager to campus to speak to students about professionalism before the next clinical rotations begin in the fall 2016 semester. The program director will then complete the same assessment to measure the difference in student performance. This is an excellent example of assessment of co-curricular learning.
- The Surgical Technology program also assessed the program learning outcome of “Apply theoretical knowledge of aseptic technique and a surgical conscience” during observations performed by the program director while students were in clinical rotations. The program director set a goal of 100 percent of students scoring at least a three out of four on the activity's rubric. The results showed 100 percent of the students achieved the desired benchmark. The program director did note two students violated sterile technique best practices even though that particular facility allowed that particular practice. The program director plans to continue reiterating the importance of sterile technique in every lab class and include additional hands-on activities to help students understand what to do when a contamination occurs in the operating room. The program director believes this change will build on the sterile technique skills of students and reinforce their critical thinking ability. Since sterile technique is so important, the program director will assess this program learning outcome again in the 2016-2017 academic year and retain the 100 percent goal. The Surgical Technology program's [spring 2016 assessment results](#) show other examples of the program's efforts.
- The General Education unit created [General Education Outcomes](#) (GEO's) during the spring 2016 semester to allow for better assessment of general education skills across all programs and in individual General Education courses. To measure General Education Outcomes across all programs, General Education faculty evaluated multiple options, and chose to administer the [National Career Readiness Certificate](#) (NCRC) exam to graduating students. In addition, the faculty partnered with the Career Services office to complete an [alumni survey](#) and an [employer survey](#) to assess general education skills. The results included the following:

<b>General Education Outcome</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Result</b>
Communicate Effectively	All students will score a three or more on the NCRC in the area of Reading for Information	Goal met
Think Critically	All students will score a three or more on the NCRC in the area of Applied Mathematics	Goal met
Understand Behavior and Interactions	80 percent of employers will report satisfactory or higher on questions 2A through 2M of the employer survey.	Goal not met for one question—"leading others." The benchmark was achieved in all other areas
Understand Behavior and Interactions	80 percent of alumni will report satisfactory or higher on questions 5E through 5G of the alumni survey.	The goal was not met for the following areas—"teamwork techniques" and "employability"

The General Education faculty plan to address the outcome of "Understand Behavior and Interactions" by using the data collected in the spring 2016 semester as a baseline. Faculty will partner with appropriate offices on campus to evaluate the employer and graduate surveys and send them again to gather comparable data. In addition, faculty plan to discuss strategies to increase the response rate. Faculty do not plan curricular changes for the 2016-2017 academic year because they believe the sample size may not be representative of the population being studied.

General Education faculty also assessed student learning of the General Education outcomes at the individual course level. General Education faculty included specific learning goals that were tied to the college's core abilities, the General Education outcomes, and program competencies. For example:

- PSYC 101 faculty assessed the core ability of Communication Skills; the General Education Outcome of "Communicate Effectively;" and the General Education competency of "Synthesize and analyze texts, issues, or problems." Instructors used the score on a final project rubric in PSYC 101 to determine if 10 randomly selected final project research posters/presentations met the goal of 80 percent scoring 75 percent or better on the rubric's communication section. The results shows 50 percent of students achieved the benchmark. Instructor notes on the project rubric provide insight into where students and/or instruction fell short. Although most groups provided the required content in the presentations, the organization and articulation of the information led to a loss of points. Many groups failed to introduce themselves and read word-for-word from the PowerPoint slides. Many of the slides contained too many words and were light on graphics. Some groups were disorganized in that they did not know the order in which members were to present, and some had difficulty with the

technology they used to present. In an effort to improve student performance and close the loop, faculty will present the purpose of the project differently by telling students they will be the instructor for that portion of the course. In addition, specific instruction will be given on what makes a good presentation and how much content should be included on slides. The instructor will develop a checklist of the steps students can use while planning the presentation. The instructor also will develop a lesson on what an infographic is and provide information on how to design an appealing infographic. The entire [assessment results document for PSYC 101](#) shows additional examples of faculty work in both online and face-to-face classes.

An analysis of the spring 2016 assessment work completed by faculty shows the college is making significant strides in shifting to an assessment system focused on program-level outcomes. A significant portion of the work completed by faculty was done at a high level, evidenced by the setting of goals, measuring attainment of those goals, analyzing the results, and applying the results to future instructional plans. It also is clear more work is needed so all faculty complete assessment work that clearly shows how assessment is used to measure and improve student learning. The college’s assessment coordinators will work closely with faculty to ensure assessment plans for the 2016-2017 academic year are used properly so appropriate data is gathered, analyzed, and applied. In addition, the college is developing a timeline to ensure when resource needs are identified, the college will be able to align those results with the college budget cycle.

Through spring 2016, the college’s assessment system continued to be paper-based. This led to faculty using multiple formats, which were collected in three-ring binders. This made it more difficult than necessary to go through the assessment work. This issue will be resolved starting in the summer of 2016 through the adoption of Strategic Planning Online (SPOL), a software system that includes modules for assessment, accreditation, planning, budgeting, and credentialing. The template-based system will bring much-needed consistency to the college’s assessment efforts. A team of faculty and staff is being trained to implement the system, and college faculty will receive training during the summer. Starting in fall 2016, all assessment goal-setting, tracking, and analysis will take place within Strategic Planning Online. The system’s reporting capabilities will allow the college to quickly and easily see the assessment work completed across campus. This also will help the college develop a culture of documentation.

Plans are already in place to ensure assessment of student learning activities continue through the 2016-2017 academic year. The following schedule demonstrates those planning efforts:

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Activity</b>
February – June, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) customization and setup</li> <li>• SPOL training materials/in-service development</li> <li>• SPOL training with Library and Surgical Tech program directors</li> </ul>
July 13, 19, 28, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPOL training for all faculty</li> </ul>
August 15-19, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final SPOL data input</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final review of Spring 2016 PLO assessments</li> <li>• Fall 2016 PLO assessment begins</li> </ul>
October 11, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment/Planning work day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assessment showcase</li> <li>○ SPOL data check-up</li> <li>○ PLO assessment data update</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
November 23, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment/Planning work day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SPOL data check-up</li> <li>○ PLO assessment data update</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
January 3-6, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty Development Days: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fall 2016 PLO assessment results and Spring 2017 PLO assessment plans due</li> <li>○ Peer review of Fall 2016 PLO assessments/Spring 2017 PLO assessment plans</li> <li>○ Approval of Spring 2017 PLO assessment plans</li> <li>○ Spring 2017 PLO assessment begins</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
February 21, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment/Planning Work Day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assessment showcase</li> <li>○ SPOL data check-up</li> <li>○ PLO assessment data update</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
April 13, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment/Planning Work Day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SPOL data check-up</li> <li>○ PLO assessment data update</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
May 15-17, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty Development Days: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Spring 2017 PLO assessment results and Fall 2017 PLO assessment plans due</li> <li>○ Peer review of Spring 2017 PLO assessments/Fall 2017 PLO assessment plans</li> <li>○ Approval of Fall 2017 PLO assessment plans</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

In addition to the college calendar above, to ensure faculty have the time needed to complete the documentation of assessment, the new WDT negotiated agreement for full-time faculty includes an additional half-hour of paid work time per day and specifies three hours per week be spent on assessment activities.

The evidence and plans for continued improvement presented in this report demonstrate college data on assessment of student learning are accurate and address the full range of students who enroll. The evidence shows assessment of student learning is occurring at the program level and that the results are being analyzed and applied to future improvement plans. The evidence also shows WDT has enhanced its system for assessing student learning by creating two Assessment Coordinator positions and implementing Strategic Planning Online. The college believes these efforts will amplify its culture of documentation and of meaningful and impactful assessment of student learning that improves programs, not just courses.

### Part 3 Assumed Practice D.4

Western Dakota Tech has made tremendous progress toward developing effective systems for collecting, analyzing, and using institutional information.

In an effort to promote continuous improvement and strategic thinking and action, Western Dakota Tech launched a collaborative and deliberate strategic planning process in the fall of 2015 to replace the plan that expired that year. The process began with visioning sessions attended by faculty, staff, administration, students, community members, employers, Board members, industry representatives, and other constituents. During the visioning sessions, the more than 75 participants brainstormed and presented ideas about what Western Dakota Tech could and should look like in the future. The college captured the results through a “cover story” activity that asked participants to imagine the stories a magazine would publish about Western Dakota Tech in the year 2021. Teams in each session used large posters to gather their ideas before each team presented its findings.

College staff grouped the visioning session results together to show common themes. The college Cabinet then created a Strategic Planning Task Force that met regularly to discuss the themes and what they meant. The task force determined it was clear the themes all connected to the idea that WDT serves various groups of constituents. As a result, the task force proposed calling the strategic plan, “We serve ...,” and Cabinet agreed. The task force then developed three priorities from the themes and developed strategic targets under each priority. The priorities are Students, Faculty and Staff, and Community. The task force developed each priority’s targets with a sound understanding of the college’s current capacity. For example, a first-to-second year retention target of 60 percent was set after reviewing the retention rate’s trends during the past several years and with the understanding the college was adding four Student Success Coaches in 2016.

The task force shared and discussed the draft targets with Cabinet, all faculty and staff, students, and the Board. The task force used the feedback to make changes by adding, deleting, and clarifying targets. After additional sharing, the college finalized the plan and presented it to the governing board for final approval, which was received March 29, 2016, board meeting as shown in the [meeting minutes](#).

The strategic plan represents a list of specific performance targets the college and planning units—defined as individual academic programs and operational and student support offices—will work to accomplish. Examples of the targets include:

- Teamwork and quality drive growth to full-time equivalent enrollment of 1,500 as measured by tuition collected
- Recruitment, retention, instructional efforts, and teamwork lead to first-year to second-year retention rate of 60% as measured by IPEDS

- Recruitment, retention, instructional efforts, and teamwork increase the 150% graduation rate to 55% as measured by IPEDS
- Partnerships and program quality increase career placement in field of study to 90%
- Emergency fund of \$100,000 supports students in need
- Stackable credentials/certificates in 100% of AAS programs provide multiple celebration and exit points
- Student support efforts earn a gap of less than .25 in all support areas as measured by the Student Satisfaction Inventory

All targets can be viewed in the full [strategic plan](#).

After Board approval, the college published the strategic plan so individual unit plans could be aligned with the college-level targets. Units also will use results from annual unit reviews, assessment of student learning, program and unit reviews, and evaluation of operations to develop their individual unit plans and to develop annual budget requests.

Each year, the college will prepare a strategic planning report that will show evidence of performance in its academic and operational and student support units and progress toward unit and college-level targets. In addition, the annual report will show the college learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability at both the college and unit levels. The annual report also will show how Western Dakota Tech uses data to improve quality and the service provided by programs, operational and student support units, and the college. The review of data also will allow for targets to be adjusted, removed, or added based on the college's capacity, fluctuations in revenue, and emerging factors such as technology, demographic shifts, globalization, and other factors.

The college strategic plan and its specific, measurable targets, set the stage for a culture where faculty and staff clearly document that they collect, analyze, and use institutional information. WDT has created a new position to provide the support faculty and staff need to accomplish this work. Until 2016, WDT employed a position that helped develop reports at the request of faculty and staff. However, the position devoted just 10 percent of its time to report writing, and it was clear the position was not meeting the college's data reporting and analysis needs. In spring 2016, the college created a new position, [Data Research and Analysis Director](#), to provide the support faculty and staff need. The college remained patient while it struggled to find qualified candidates until a highly experienced candidate applied and accepted the position. The candidate will join WDT in early June 2016. Individual offices already have a list of reports they want and need so they can make better-informed decisions and better understand the big-picture environment in which WDT operates. Examples of those reports include an enrollment funnel, retention by cohort, and common student success factors. Those reports and others will be stored on a shared drive and on the college website, as appropriate, so faculty, staff, and college constituents can access them. In addition, the Data Research and Analysis Director will develop a dashboard of critical data points such as current enrollment and credit hour generation so college leadership will have immediate access to real-time information.

College- and unit-level planning processes will be enhanced through the adoption of Strategic Planning Online, a software system that includes modules for assessment, accreditation, planning, budgeting, and credentialing. The template-based system will allow programs and units to easily and seamlessly enter planning objectives and connect them to the college strategic plan. The planning templates create the foundation for continuous improvement by requiring entry of data such as intended results, status reports, actual results, and results analysis. This process will make it possible to conveniently analyze activities and use the analysis to inform the subsequent year's plan.

As noted in the WDT Self-Study and in the reports from the HLC visiting team and the Institutional Actions Council, program review at WDT was completed through a state-level process that required the reporting of key data points such as enrollment and retention. The college understands it needs to engage in a more in-depth process for academic programs and create a review process for student support and operational units. That effort began in spring 2016 with a task force of faculty and staff that created the processes, templates ([academic programs / student support and operational units](#)), and rubrics ([academic programs / student support and operational units](#)) for program and unit reviews that will take place every three to five years depending on the issues a program or unit faces. With the processes in place, every unit began work on program or unit reviews in the spring semester. The deadline for submitting the reviews is June 30, 2016, but as of this writing, some programs and units had already completed their work. The program or unit lead is responsible for completing the program review and forming a team of on-campus and off-campus reviewers who read the individual reviews and complete a rubric. The review team then meets with the program or unit to discuss the team's findings.

The early results are very encouraging. For example, the [Surgical Technology program review](#) shows the program analyzed its classrooms and labs and noted two challenges—the lack of enough electrical outlets and the level of noise that comes through a retractable wall. In its unit plan for 2016-2017, the program will use the results of that analysis to create objectives to alleviate the problems. In addition, the Surgical Technology program review includes a three-year plan for equipment, technical resources, and facility needs. This list will allow program reviews to connect with the program's budget request in future years.

The [Criminal Justice program review](#) also shows example of collecting, analyzing, and using data. The program's director analyzed the program-specific results of the Student Satisfaction Inventory, a nationally normed survey the college administers every two years. The program found:

- **Issue:** Students were not satisfied with faculty availability. **Corrective action:** Adding additional office hours.
- **Issue:** Academic advisor does not help students set goals. **Corrective action:** The program director, who also is the program advisor, will set individual advising appointments with each student in the program.

- **Issue:** Advisor is not knowledgeable about program requirements. **Corrective action:** The program director, who also is the program advisor, will set individual advising appointments with each student in the program.
- **Issue:** Program requirements are clear and reasonable. **Corrective action:** The program director, who also is the program advisor, will set individual advising appointments with each student in the program. In addition, the program director recommended changes to the program information on the college website and in the catalog.

An initial analysis of the completed program reviews showed some programs and units engaged in meaningful analysis of the information included in their reports. Other programs and units successfully showed all the activities that have happened but did not engage in a deep level of introspection. This opportunity for improvement has been noted and will be communicated to programs and units so the next round of reviews can reach their potential to deliver the level of information and analysis to impact programs and units in meaningful ways.

The program and unit review process is sound and provides programs and units actionable data that will carry through to annual planning efforts. Those annual plans, called unit plans, will use data from program reviews, assessment results, and enrollment and retention reports to show each program’s and unit’s objectives for a given year. Programs and units will connect those objectives to specific targets in the college’s strategic plan to ensure programs and units focus their efforts on meeting college-level goals. For example:

- The Admissions office may set a new student enrollment goal of 500 for an incoming fall cohort and show that objective directly helps accomplish strategic plan target 1.1.1: Teamwork and quality drive growth to full-time enrollment of 1,500 as measured by tuition collected.
- The Welding and Fabrication program may set an objective of having every second-year student participate in an internship to help meet college-level target 1.1.5: Partnerships and program quality increase career placement in field of study to 90 percent.
- The Vice President for Finance and Operations may set an objective of adjusting the budget process to meet strategic plan target 2.1.5: Base salaries increase at least three percent every year.

The examples show the interconnectedness of the college’s strategic plan and unit plans and demonstrate WDT is planning for the future through the use of data and institutional information.

Plans are already in place to ensure planning activities continue through the 2016-2017 academic year. The following schedule demonstrates those planning efforts:

Timeline	Activity
February – August, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) customization and setup</li> <li>• SPOL training materials development</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPOL training with Marketing and Medical Simulation Center units</li> </ul>
October 11, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPOL training for all faculty and staff</li> </ul>
October 31, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final SPOL planning data input</li> </ul>
December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPOL objective status updates</li> </ul>
January 3-6, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty development days: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete unit planning reports for 2016</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
January 15, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete review of progress toward college Strategic Plan</li> </ul>
January 31, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2017 unit plans due</li> <li>• Publish annual planning report</li> </ul>
February 21, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment/Planning work day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SPOL objective status updates</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2017-2018 budget requests developed with assessment and planning data</li> </ul>
April 13, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment/Planning work day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SPOL objective status updates</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
May 15-17, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty Development Days: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SPOL objective status updates</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

It is clear WDT meets Assumed Practice D.4, and the college has plans in place to ensure the work continues. By the time WDT submits its Assurance Filing in July 2017, the college will be able to show evidence it exceeds the Assumed Practice and the related Criteria and Core Components. The evidence will include:

- Reports created to inform decision-making
- Demonstration of how data informed decision-making and program and operational improvement
- Institutional Effectiveness webpage and shared drive with reports available to the campus and public
- Program and unit plans
- Annual planning report that shows progress toward program/unit objectives and college-level targets
- Program and unit reviews for those chosen to engage in the process
- Adjustments to the WDT Strategic Plan based on analysis of progress toward targets
- Documentation showing how planning efforts are connected to budget planning

The evidence and plans for continued effort presented in this report demonstrate WDT is collecting, analyzing, and using institutional information. The evidence shows WDT understands what it needs to accomplish to better document its efforts and that the work is underway. The evidence also shows WDT is creating the processes required to sustain planning and continuous improvement efforts over the long term through the creation of a Data Research and Analysis Director position, the implementation of Strategic Planning Online (SPOL), and the development of planning activities. The college believes these efforts will lead to a culture of

documented, intentional, continuous improvement where the college is constantly engaged in documenting its deliberate planning and analysis efforts that result in meaningful improvements to programs and operational units.

## **Part 4 Conclusion**

The evidence is clear. Western Dakota Tech meets Assumed Practices C.6 and D.4 and is taking this opportunity to exceed expectations. The college's activities this academic year and its plans for the future demonstrate WDT understands its opportunities for improvement in the areas of assessment of student learning; the collection, analysis, and use of institutional data; and in documenting those efforts.