Open Pathway Quality Initiative Report

Institutional Template

The enclosed Quality Initiative Report represents the work that the institution has undertaken to fulfill the Improvement Process of the Open Pathway.

Signature of Institution’s President or Chancellor

Sheila K. Gestring, President

Date

Printed/Typed Name and Title

University of South Dakota

Name of Institution

Vermillion, SD

City and State

The institution uses the template below to complete its Quality Initiative Report. The institution may include a report it has prepared for other purposes if it addresses many of the questions below and replaces portions of the narrative in the template. This template may be used both for reports on initiatives that have been completed and for initiatives that will continue and for which this report serves as a milestone of accomplishments thus far. The complete report should be no more than 6,000 words.

Quality Initiative Reports are to be submitted by August 31 of Year 9. HLC recommends that institutions with comprehensive evaluations in the first half of Year 10 submit their report at least six months prior to their Assurance System lock date. Submit the report as a PDF file to pathways@hlcommission.org with a file name that follows this format: QI Report No Name University MN. The file name must include the institution’s name (or an identifiable portion thereof) and state.

Date: August 30, 2019

Contact Person for Report: Lamont A. Sellers, Associate Vice President for Diversity

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Report Categories

Overview of the Quality Initiative

1. Provide a one-page executive summary that describes the Quality Initiative, summarizes what was accomplished and explains any changes made to the initiative over the time period.

In September 2015, the University of South Dakota (USD) submitted the Quality Initiative (QI) proposal: “Campaign for Inclusive Excellence: Increasing the Recruitment, Retention, and Success of Students of Color.” The initiative is a five-year project aimed at directing efforts toward the institution’s strategic plan goals associated with diversity and inclusive excellence. The initiative proposed to create a high-level commission and campaign approach to achieving those strategic goals. The initial composition of this commission was to include representatives from USD governing bodies and service providers and three subcommittees were outlined to oversee the major areas of the initiative: recruitment, retention, and success (graduation).

In May 2017, the QI was modified to provide for better efficiency in addressing the initiative goals and needs of students. In the revised QI, the President’s Council on Diversity & Inclusiveness (President’s Council) was appointed as the committee to fulfill the role of the commission outlined in the original submission. The President’s Council has representatives from across the institution and also includes the chairs from each diversity/inclusive excellence committee in the colleges, schools, and functional areas of the institution making it a logical group to serve the QI function. As a result, the campaign approach as outlined in the original submission was abandoned in favor of standing agenda items for the President’s Council. A sub-committee was formed to specifically address issues associated with the QI, and the sub-committee presents a report to the President’s Council annually.

Based on all metrics outlined in the proposal, USD has been successful in its campaign to increase the success of students of color. Enrollment, retention, and graduation rates of students of color have risen. In addition, student perceptions of diversity and inclusive excellence across campus have improved since the campaign began in 2015. However, data metrics are not the only measure of the effectiveness of the campaign. There have also been structural changes on campus to streamline campus functions and facilitate an inclusive excellence culture. These structural changes have had an impact at all levels of the institution from department/functional area committees on diversity, to strategic planning and student learning outcomes associated with diversity, to senior level administrative changes for setting and coordinating institutional level priorities.

This university-wide initiative has addressed the three Diversity and Inclusiveness goals outlined in the university’s strategic plan and has informed the forward momentum of the university’s diversity and inclusive excellence efforts. It has served to ensure the success of all students at USD, especially the targeted populations of under-represented groups. The addition of data dashboards has allowed stakeholders across campus to utilize data-driven decision-making to address Quality Initiative areas of concern. Despite our successes, we recognize that there is still much to be done in this area, and this will continue to be a strategic focus in the future. As USD moves forward, the President’s Council, the Center for Diversity and Community (CDC), and the Office for Diversity will continue to provide leadership for diversity and inclusive excellence efforts across the institution.
Scope and Impact of the Initiative

2. Explain in more detail what was accomplished in the Quality Initiative in relation to its purposes and goals. (If applicable, explain the initiative’s hypotheses and findings.)

When initiated, the specific goals of the proposal were to address the Diversity and Inclusiveness goals of the institution’s strategic plan: to commit to a systematic, intentional, comprehensive, and holistic approach to diversity and inclusive excellence; integrate diversity and inclusive excellence into all areas of university life; and become a regional leader in initiatives and outreach for diversity and inclusive excellence. The metrics used to evaluate the QI project were: enrollment, recruitment, retention, graduation rates, success in gateway courses, measures of student satisfaction, and assessment of results of campus climate surveys. These metrics were selected because institutional data indicated that there were disparities in success rates when comparing white students with students of color across the university.

Since submission of the QI proposal in the fall of 2017, USD has made progress toward diversity goals as evidenced through the selected data metrics. Student satisfaction in aspects of diversity and inclusion has improved as evidenced by National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey (SSI) responses. Two NSSE questions speak directly to the QI: How much does USD emphasize a commitment to diversity (asked only in 2018) and how often have you had discussions with people from race/ethnicity other than your own (from 2016 and 2018 administrations). The combined student responses selections for the Very Little and Some categories for the question “How much does USD emphasize a commitment to diversity” was 34% for first year students and 28% for senior students. For the second question (discussions with people from a race/ethnicity other than your own), the combined student selected responses for Never and Sometimes decreased from 51% of first year students and 46% of seniors in 2016 to 41% (first year students) and 42% (seniors) in 2018. The SSI was implemented once before the implementation of QI work and two additional times with results showing steady improvement (Table 1). An asterisk in the table represents a significant difference in the student responses between the implementation for that year and the previous year.

Table 1. Student Satisfaction Inventory Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory Item</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is a strong commitment to racial harmony on this campus</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>5.58*</td>
<td>5.75*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Item: USD has a large number of students from diverse backgrounds</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>5.37*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Item: Learning how to talk about diversity with other students is promoted</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>5.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Item: Faculty members show tolerance and respect for diversity in the classroom</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>5.87*</td>
<td>5.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Item: Courses include multi-cultural and diversity topics</td>
<td>5.78</td>
<td>5.45</td>
<td>5.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution’s commitment to under-represented populations</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>5.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To monitor the success of the QI, the Institutional Research Planning and Assessment (IRPA) office has compiled institutional data into an infographic detailing the measures outlined in the QI submission: total enrollment, full time-first time students of color enrollment, retention rate, four-year graduation rate, and six-year graduation rate. The infographic is available to all institutional stakeholders. USD has made progress on diversity measures (Table 2).
Table 2. Results of Data Metrics for Institutional Success of Students of Color

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USD Data Metric</th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
<th>Fall 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Enrollment</td>
<td>1095</td>
<td>1356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment as Percentage of all Students</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Enrollment Total*</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention Rate</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention Rate Gap vs. White Students</td>
<td>-13.2% lower</td>
<td>-11.6% lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Year Graduation Rate</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Year Graduation Rate Gap vs. White Students</td>
<td>-25.9% lower</td>
<td>-14.5% lower</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*First-time, full-time, degree-seeking undergraduates taking at least one on-campus course

One of the major accomplishments of the QI is that all stakeholders across campus now have access to data tools and dashboards to help make better informed, equity-minded decisions on the status of students of color within the institution. The dashboards include the following data: enrollment, persistence, completion, student satisfaction, and graduate outcomes. Each dashboard is regularly updated, and data within each can be disaggregated by ethnicity.

3. Evaluate the impact of the initiative, including any changes in processes, policies, technology, curricula, programs, student learning and success that are now in place in consequence of the initiative.

USD recognized that a key factor in the success of the project related to the need for coordination of activities. Prior to the President’s Council’s restructuring for the QI work, campus units were operating on an ad hoc basis and in isolation with very little knowledge of what was happening in various areas across the institution. Therefore, one of the most significant impacts of the QI in reference to campus changes has been related to modifications in institutional structure. USD has also implemented changes on campus related to curriculum, professional development, and student support services since implementing the QI. Changes are summarized by category below.

**Structural Changes:**

Since September 2017, a number of structural changes have been made to provide increased coordination across the university. The Associate Vice President (AVP) for Diversity has been appointed to the Executive Council, the president’s executive staff that meets weekly to discuss, review, and make university-wide decisions. The AVP’s presence helps to ensure that diversity and inclusive excellence are represented at the highest administrative level of the university. The AVP is also a member of the academic affairs senior staff and functional area groups--Provost Council, Provost Executive Staff, Deans Council, and the former Student Success Team. Student Services has bi-weekly Senior Staff and All Staff meetings where the AVP for Diversity maintains a presence. The president has also appointed the AVP for Diversity to serve on the Support Center Review Council that is involved in the university budget process, hearing reports and requests from institutional units and making final recommendations to the University Budget Committee. This represents a shift in the engagement of the AVP for Diversity with university governing and administrative structures. The AVP has a much more comprehensive view of the institution and is able to better inform various areas related to the QI and student success, in particular.

A sub-committee of the President’s Council was established to specifically address issues related to the QI. The charge was to inventory efforts from across campus related to recruitment, retention, and graduation and to propose efforts to improve student success.
Each college, school, and major functional area has a Diversity/Inclusive Excellence/Equity and Inclusion committee that focuses on addressing the diversity and inclusiveness needs of their particular area. Committees meet regularly and make recommendations to their respective deans and vice presidents for improvement. Each of the committee chairs has an appointment to the President’s Council on Diversity and Inclusiveness and presents their progress towards the Quality Initiative.

The Provost’s Student Success Team has been meeting over the past 5 years, however, in fall 2018 the team membership was expanded and re-organized to better address the needs of students of color in particular. Members of this team and the QI subcommittee have attended the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Diversity, Equity, and Student Success Conference, bringing back valuable information and best practices to inform the work of various groups across campus. The Student Success Team conducted a process audit and mapping of major student processes to identify weaknesses and gaps that allow for attrition of students, especially students of color. This committee has recently been transitioned to one that is focused on first and second year retention.

Academic departments and student services functional areas have been encouraged to develop diversity goals and/or student learning outcomes associated with diversity and inclusiveness. This effort has been supported by the Director of Assessment, Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), and Office for Diversity by providing faculty professional development on writing and assessing diversity goals from a SMART framework (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) using the Multicultural Organizational Development (MCOD) model. While the Nuventive system was implemented on campus to catalog and track departmental goals and student learning outcomes, the software also allows the Director of Assessment to generate regular reports specific to the QI goals for the AVP for Diversity and other leaders across campus. This provides leadership an opportunity to review progress toward individual diversity goals, offer opportunities to support departments through ongoing training and professional development, and provide consultation for addressing any concerns raised.

In 2018, USD reinstated the role of Native American Academic Advisor in the Academic and Career Planning Center (ACPC). The position had been eliminated when it was vacated in the fall of 2015 with the goal that all academic advisors would be trained to serve our Native American population. However, data from IRPA showed a marked decline in Native American retention rates that may have been attributed to this vacated position, leading to the reinstatement of the position in the fall of 2018. This academic advisor is charged with working specifically with Native American undergraduate students, providing support that begins with the registration process for incoming students and concludes at graduation. The reinstatement of this position is an excellent example of how the QI has enabled USD to use data to inform policy. Additionally, Native Student Services has changed their programming model to intentionally focus on support services for student growth and academic support and development.

Finally, the Admissions Office has retained a Multicultural Recruitment Coordinator, who oversees recruitment efforts for students of color and other diverse populations. The coordinator also works with the entire recruitment and admissions counseling team to address concerns for students of color that express interest in, apply, and/or matriculate at USD. In addition, admission of Native American graduate students have been assisted by the Graduate Dean who participates annually in the National American Indian Science and Engineering (AISES) meetings.

**Training and Professional Development:**
Various offices across campus (CTL, Diversity, Assessment, etc.) have provided faculty and staff the opportunity to attend various workshops and training events to support an inclusive excellence culture. A sample list of activities is provided here and more information on specifics of these workshops will be provided upon request.

- Diversity/Inclusive Excellence Workshop
- Be SMART: Creating Inclusive Program Goals Workshop
- Frameworks of Learning: Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* " Workshop
- Native American Student Success: History and Strategies Part I Workshop
- Native American Student Success: History and Strategies Part II Workshop
- Annual MLK Faculty Day of Service Workshop
- Unconscious Bias Webinar and Customized Training for Supervisors Workshop
- Consultation with screening committees for faculty & staff positions
- MLK Multicultural Student-Athlete Summit
- Introduction to Systemic Racism, Crossroads Antiracism Organizing and Training Facilitated Workshop
- Multicultural Leadership Institute
- Expressions of Identity Program

**Student Services Areas and Grants:**

The QI has impacted the function of student services areas. These areas have developed student learning outcomes associated with diversity and inclusive excellence and strategic goals are also tracked annually. In addition, grants have been received to support student success initiatives associated with diversity. The first of these grants was a TRIO Student Support Services grant. The grant was written and received on September 1, 2017 to support initiatives for student success. The grant serves 144 low-income, first-generation and disabled students. The goals of the grant are to increase retention, graduation and academic standing of these students, and each year the grant has met or exceeded its goals. The activities of the grant include tutoring, mentoring, academic advising, personal/career counseling, financial and economic literacy, goal setting cultural enrichment and graduate school counseling. The grant currently serves a high number of underrepresented students and students with disabilities that meet the criteria for participation.

In 2017, USD was awarded a grant by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute as part of their Inclusive Excellence Initiative establishing the USD Inclusive Science Initiative (USD-HHMI). The initiative seeks to make USD a regional leader in enrolling and retaining students from a non-traditional backgrounds in the sciences. With the philosophy that students from underrepresented groups already make many changes to adapt to the environment of higher education, the grant challenges its recipients to facilitate institutional change to better meet the needs of these students. The program targets students from under-represented minority groups and those who are the first in their families to attend college, with an emphasis placed on American Indian students who represent the largest ethnic minority group in South Dakota. The programmatic goals are: to enhance faculty mentorship training, create an environment that stimulates an interest in the sciences in a broad range of students, to provide the tools for the students themselves to cultivate a science identity that meshes with their cultural identity, and to understand in greater detail the motivational processes that promote student success in the sciences. In the fall of 2018, 23 students meeting target demographics of the grant participated in the first HHMI First Year Experience course taught by faculty from the Basic Biomedical Sciences program.
Finally, members of Student Services, Financial Aid, Enrollment Management, and USD bookstores worked collaboratively to develop a book loan program to enable students with financial need to apply for an interest-free loan to bridge the gap between the start of classes and the receipt of their financial aid.

Curricular and Academic Program Changes:

The QI also had an impact on academic areas. For example, since the initiation of the project, the Department of History added a diversity course requirement to their Bachelor’s program as a result of discussions based on findings from their diversity review. In addition, a new Multicultural Studies minor has been added, and the English Language Learners Certificate was modified into a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners Certificate to incorporate inclusiveness and diverse cultural contexts into the curriculum.

The Indian University of North America summer program is a unique partnership between the Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation and USD. The program provides participants with the opportunity to take freshmen-level university courses during the summer after their high school graduation. Participants also work at paid working internships at the Memorial’s visitor complex. The Native American Advisor helps bridge these students to the USD campus by providing admissions, registration, and advising support, and communicating with students and summer program staff throughout the summer to help them prepare for their arrival to campus in the fall. As a result, this program has encouraged Native American students, mostly from South Dakota, to matriculate to USD for their degrees.

Programming:

Areas across campus have instituted various programming opportunities to address diversity and inclusiveness that are open to the university community and provide space for learning as a community about issues and opportunities for diverse populations. These programmatic contributions improve the campus climate for diversity and engage the campus community outside of the classroom. Examples are provided below and more information will be provided upon request.

- School of Education Culturally Responsive Teaching Institute
- School of Health Sciences Diversity and Inclusivity Forum
- Beacom School of Business Panel Presentation
- Center for Diversity and Community Diversity Symposium
- School of Law Thurgood Marshall Lecture
- Oscar Howe Curatorial Fellowship
- Sanford School of Medicine Annual Distinguished Lecture in Native American Health

4. Explain any tools, data or other information that resulted from the work of the initiative.

The individual diversity committees housed in the colleges and schools have utilized an in-house, research-based tool, the Inclusive Excellence Guidebook, that details nineteen areas of consideration for evaluating their diversity and inclusiveness efforts in a comprehensive, strategic manner which has resulted in programmatic changes.

USD has two Qualified Administrators for the Intercultural Development Inventory with plans to increase this capacity to six total Qualified Administrators. The campus-wide rollout of this assessment tool began in fall 2018 in the University Housing and Academic & Career Planning Center areas. The units completed the assessment and participated in group and individual
profile reviews. The assessment culminated with the development of plans to improve unit effectiveness in diversity and inclusiveness competencies.

Recognizing the need for academic departments to participate in diversity and inclusiveness efforts, the departments were asked to consider developing diversity/equity related strategic goals and student learning outcomes which were uploaded to an assessment tracking platform (Nuventive). The software provides a mechanism for the Director of Assessment to compile diversity related reports for the QI Subcommittee and AVP for Diversity to review annually.

Prior to the QI, institutional data were not disaggregated and broadly available across campus. The development of dashboards by IRPA allows constituent units to track data by ethnic groups more effectively. Also, the QI infographic provides an annual update for the metrics specific to the QI.

While not implemented specifically for the QI, some new institutional databases and reporting systems have enhanced the ability of faculty, staff, and administrators to address USD’s QI goals. The Nuventive platform assists faculty and staff in monitoring department level performance data, strategic planning, and management of student learning outcomes. Coyote Connections (EAB’s Navigate system) enables professional academic advisors, faculty advisors, academic program leaders, and academic affairs to get appropriate resources to struggling students. Finally, the USD Involved platform assists students in tracking activities for issuance of a co-curricular transcript.

5. Describe the biggest challenges and opportunities encountered in implementing the initiative.

The biggest challenge for the diversity and inclusive excellence efforts continues to be coordinating the vast number of initiatives and programs across the campus. The campus community has responded to the needs of the populations targeted in the QI and there has been an increase in activity; however, mechanisms to capture and assess effectiveness of the activities have yet to be developed. In addition, it has been recognized that the institution still needs to work to present a consistent message with clear priorities and expectations to the campus community. It has been shown in the USD School of Health Sciences that the consistent messaging from the Vice President and Dean of Health Sciences has led to systemic change in the work within the Diversity, Inclusivity, and Cultural Awareness Committee and strategic change in academic programs, physical space, recruitment, and retention efforts.

Another challenge for USD is its Upper Midwest location and predominantly white population. This makes attracting a critical mass of diverse students, faculty, and staff a hurdle for recruitment and retention efforts. There has been success in athletic programs to attract African American males, particularly in football; however, the rest of campus struggles to diversify the student body. In addition, there has been a notable increase in Latino students over the last few years. Within faculty and staff groups there is not a critical mass of persons of color to provide support and community for one another and students. These challenges, coupled with resource constraints, compounds issues for recruitment and retention. However, admissions continues to actively seek ways to better engage communities of color in the local region and forge relationships in emerging markets. One mechanism to attract more students of color is the recently approved in-state tuition rate for residents of Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, and other adjoining states. This makes USD an economically attractive option in areas that have much greater diversity. A final challenge is that the State of South Dakota does not provide need-based financial aid that would assist in attracting students of color from the region and around the country.
USD’s greatest opportunities lie in the influx of new leadership. In 2018, a new president was appointed by the South Dakota Board of Regents, and she has, in her inaugural year, initiated a strategic planning process that will help us to chart a future vision for the institution. Diversity will be a key component of this planning. For example, some members of the strategic planning committee are committed to visiting each of the tribal nations and institutions of higher education within the state of South Dakota. Additionally, a new Provost has restructured the Office of Academic Affairs, created new committee structures, and forged a renewed commitment to inclusive excellence. There has been movement within leadership in the colleges and schools, with new deans in Arts & Sciences, Health Sciences, Education, and Law, each of whom have renewed the commitment to diversity and inclusive excellence within their units. There are also new opportunities within Native Student Services with retirement and hiring of a new director.

Commitment to and Engagement in the Quality Initiative

6. Describe the individuals and groups involved at stages throughout the initiative and their perceptions of its worth and impact.

Associate Vice President for Diversity: The AVP for Diversity served as the lead on the QI since its inception, provided leadership for the QI Subcommittee’s work, coordinated efforts across the institution, disseminated reports, and consulted with constituencies across the institution.

Vice President of Academic Affairs & Provost: The Provost provided broad-based support for the AVP for Diversity and QI Subcommittee (including financial) for the QI effort. The Provost and AVP have met on a bi-weekly basis to discuss progress and needs over the lifespan of the QI, as well as, to strategize how to effectively address concerns.

Vice President of Student Services & Dean of Students: The VPSS provided broad-based support for the QI effort and served as the lead on some of the major efforts, including writing, receiving, and implementing grants for JumpStart, TRiO Student Support Services, Upward Bound, and Talent Search. The VPSS met with the AVP bi-weekly to discuss and needs over the lifespan of the QI, as well as, strategize how to effectively address concerns. Additionally, the VPSS has provided strategic partnership opportunities for engaging with students groups and resources provided by the Student Services areas.

QI Subcommittee: This group has provided support through data collection (interviews and meetings with various student-facing offices and groups), review and comment on metrics reports, and made recommendations for QI implementation.

President’s Council on Diversity & Inclusiveness: The Council served as the group responsible for directing the QI. It received regular updates in monthly meetings and provided valuable feedback on metrics reports, recommendations for programming and activities, and recommendations for additional points of contact within colleges, schools, and functional areas.

Office for Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment: Institutional research and assessment provided metrics and reports throughout the QI via the development and maintenance of various dashboards, and the AVP for Institutional Research and Director of Assessment were also available for regular consultations.

The understanding of Inclusive Excellence campus-wide has drastically increased, as has the coordination and support of diversity programming. All departments on campus have recognized the need for equity-minded perspectives associated with recruitment, retention, and success of
students of color. There has also been a concentrated effort for actively engaging in critical inquiry to better understand issues facing students of color at USD.

The Provost has described the worth and impact of this initiative as follows:

“I have been at USD for over 20 years, including two HLC accreditation efforts that identified the university’s diversity efforts as problematic. Both accreditation reports identified both structural and environmental issues that required attention, but we didn't always approach things holistically. Our efforts under the current QI have, I think, resulted in significant progress in how we both perceive and implement diversity efforts on campus. Even as recently as 6-8 years ago, “diversity” meant the Office of Diversity organizing a series of discrete events on campus that would somehow transform the campus community’s perception of the world around them. The QI has fostered a completely different attitude towards diversity on campus, where we now consider the role of diversity in everything we do. We still have infrastructure designed to specifically organize programming efforts, but now one sees diversity considered more systematically in strategic planning at all levels, program design, curriculum, facilities, and embedded more deliberately in the university’s daily functions. The end result is a richer educational and co-curricular environment that has significantly changed the student experience at USD. There is certainly room for improvement, but I consider our progress under the QI to have been rather remarkable.”

7. Describe the most important points learned by those involved in the initiative.

Intentional use of data to drive and support the QI was key. As an example, the institution had a native student advisor in the ACPC. When the individual left, the position was eliminated and all advisors worked with the native students. Shortly thereafter, native student retention began to decline, and a review of institutional data revealed the elimination of a dedicated advisor was the issue, prompting the re-filling of the position. Native student retention has since risen.

High level strategic thinking was the second major component to the successful QI. The goals of the QI were institutional in scope and were actually tied directly to the goals of the institution’s strategic plan. This necessitated oversight by a high-level committee, chaired by the AVP for Diversity (who reports directly to the President), with representation from across campus. A top-level committee provided opportunities to guide and direct initiatives across campus via a top-down method of consistent messaging and priority setting. While that messaging is still not perfect, the nature of the high level committee to meet and discuss issues has helped the institution progress through the initiative. As a result of the strategic nature of the initiative, the Center for Diversity and Community is more engaged with faculty, the Native American Cultural Center has created targeted programming to increase engagement of students, and admissions is capitalizing on the in-state tuition provided to residents of adjacent states through recruitment in nearby areas of greater diversity, such as Sioux City, Omaha, and Minneapolis.

Resource Provision

8. Explain the human, financial, physical and technological resources that supported the initiative.

Associated human resources:

The QI Subcommittee is an all-volunteer committee made up of the AVP for Diversity; Associate Dean of Law School; Associate Dean of Sanford School of Medicine; Professor and Chair of Physical Therapy; Professor and Director of Clinical Psychology; Assistant Professor and
Coordinator of Native Studies; Associate Provost; Vice President of Student Services and Dean of Students.

Associate Vice President for Diversity: Chair of the QI Subcommittee and lead author on QI Open Pathways document.

Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost: Monitors the progress of the QI and provides strategic support of the overall effort.

Vice President of Student Services and Dean of Students: Monitors the progress of the QI and provides strategic support of the overall effort.

**Financial resources:**

The Office of Academic Affairs has provided $50,000 annually (FY 18, 19, and 20) toward this strategic diversity initiative. Additionally, there has been funding from Academic Affairs to support a strategic partnership with the Indian University of North America at Crazy Horse Memorial.

The Office for Diversity (through the President’s Office) has provided programmatic support for workshops, speakers, travel, and materials.

The Student Services Division has provided financial support for the Center for Diversity and Community, Native Student Services, grant writing for TRiO Student Support Services, and JumpStart. Through the budgeting process, financial support has increased each year for these programs which serve diverse students.

**Plans for the Future (or Future Milestones of a Continuing Initiative)**

9. Describe plans for ongoing work related to or as a result of the initiative.

USD has entered a strategic planning process as the current plan sunsets in AY 2019-20. The President and Executive Council have stated that diversity and inclusive excellence are to be an integral component of the next plan. As a result of that commitment, the AVP is part of the strategic planning committee. In addition, there is a planned listening tour at South Dakota tribal communities to gain perspective from those external stakeholders to improve retention and enrollment efforts for native students.

The USD Community College for Sioux Falls (an additional location for the university) has recently been restructured to provide additional opportunities for access to higher education and workforce development in the metropolitan area. The demographics are different than that of the main campus and efforts to incorporate strategies for success of students of color will be important.

There is a commitment from both the President and the Provost’s Office to foster a culture of data-driven decisions and assessment. As such, a wide variety of areas are looking to utilize the data we have at our disposal and ways that we can actively use the data to improve student outcomes. As an example, the USD-HHMI program will be looking at the success of students of color in science gateway courses to determine strategies to increase retention.
10. Describe any practices or artifacts from the initiative that other institutions might find meaningful or useful and please indicate if you would be willing to share this information.

We have found that increasing the recruitment, retention, and success of students of color is not a goal that can be solved by a single practice or artifact. This has been an institutional effort, and as such has relied on collaboration and cooperation between many different units across campus. It has also relied on funding from a variety of areas, clear support from the highest levels of campus administration, intentional use of data, and the dedication of key faculty and staff. We also recognize that, despite our clear successes, we have more opportunities to eliminate the gap in measures of success between our white students and our students of color. Having said all that, we are happy to share information about our results and our current status.