UW-Stout’s efforts to implement LEAP are demonstrated in one of the goals in the FOCUS 2020 strategic plan, which was inspired, in part, by the LEAP campaign focus on high impact practices and learning outcomes: To increase student participation in applied research, increase student experiences that develop intercultural competence, and require an applied learning experience from all students.

**Intercultural Competence**

In the area of intercultural competence, UW-Stout has done work on curricular revisions, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), and with programs to increase enrollment and retention of multicultural students at Stout. Together, these efforts have led to a 50% reduction in the achievement gap for first to second year students for racial and ethnic minorities. In addition, enrollment of racial and ethnic minority students has increased by 25% in the last five years and the number of minority graduates has increased 30% over the same time period.

UW-Stout has an undergraduate six-credit requirement in the area of global perspectives (GLP). In alignment with the UW System Shared Learning Goal of intercultural knowledge and competence and in support of the UW-Stout FOCUS 2020 goal, the requirements for the GLP designation are being revised. Through the work of a faculty governance curriculum committee, the criteria for new course proposals or course revisions is to include more detailed descriptions of student learning outcomes as well as a post-course assessment in the area of intercultural competence.
The IDI developed by Dr. Mitchell Hammer was used as a distinct, cross-cultural valid assessment for measuring and building cultural competence. Dr. Hammer visited UW-Stout and spent two days with the Chancellor’s Advisory Council (CAC) in 2013 to share research and metrics with opportunities to measure and cultivate intercultural competence of individuals, groups and campus community. The CAC completed the IDI and discussed ways to increase awareness, understand cultural differences, and expand perspectives and behaviors to enhance intercultural competence campus-wide. Additional Intercultural Development licensed professionals served as consultants to work with the Diversity Leadership Team, faculty, staff and students throughout the past two years. In fall 2015, all of the new freshmen participated in professional development to study the intercultural development framework as part of orientation. This framework will be expanded throughout 2015-16.

In an effort to advance multicultural competence and awareness within the classroom, the grant-funded Infusing Diversity across the Curriculum program was launched in 2010. Since then, 40 faculty have designed, implemented and assessed assignments and activities that have helped to transform courses with diversity-based content. These assignments have incorporated such High Impact Practices as undergraduate research, writing-intensive exercises, collaborative assignments and projects, the design of capstone course projects, and numerous activities associated with enhancing diversity/global learning.

UW-Stout has also implemented numerous programs and services to increase enrollment and retention of multicultural students. For example, we offer a TEACH Support Network, with the goal to support diverse and underrepresented high school and college students interested in exploring careers in the teaching profession. The program provides a variety of services including tutoring, peer to peer mentoring, student employment, summer precollege programming, career readiness workshops and initiatives, and various collaborative initiatives around the campus, region and state. The multicultural student services staff also reach out to students in a variety of methods to support and assess student’s personal, academic, financial,
cultural, and career needs. The emphasis is on empowering this diverse group of students and cultivating inclusive excellence.

**Applied Learning, High Impact Programs**

UW-Stout has also implemented programs to increase the number of students working on campus, increase enrollment in the honors program, and increase student engagement in activities known to be associated with higher retention rates. As a result of these efforts, UW-Stout’s [first to second year retention rate](#) has been steadily increasing and is currently at our second highest level on record. Further, nearly 90% of UW-Stout students participate in an internship, co-op, student teaching or independent study before they graduate.

To achieve these goals, UW-Stout has significantly expanded programs designed to engage students in their freshman year. For example, over 100 students have participated in a program that pairs students with faculty/staff for on-campus job opportunities and these students have substantially higher retention rates than the campus population. Further, a Pick One! initiative has been implemented to encourage all students to get involved in an activity during their first year.

An Honors College was established in 2012. From 2008 to 2013, enrollments in the Honors College tripled. Retention rates consistently exceed the campus populations by 10 percentage points and graduation rates consistently exceed the campus population by 20 percentage points. Honors College promotes academic excellence by supporting many high impact pedagogical practices that connect with LEAP goals. These include Honors colloquia, held one every semester, focusing on a common reading and small group discussion on broad ranging topics like free speech, sustainable food, economic recession and aging. Honors courses are conducted in a seminar style, with small groups of students expected to be active in discussion. Many courses have experiential learning embedded in their content. For example, Plants and People (Biology) course involves working in the pollinator garden, and Honors Jazz History includes attending live jazz concerts.
Every Honors student completes an Honors contract, which is a research, creative, or service learning, independent project, completed under the supervision of a faculty/staff mentor. Honors College promotes undergraduate research and dissemination at conferences. Honors College maintains a vibrant living and learning community in the Antrim Frogatt dorm. Students in the learning community have participated in many service learning experiences, volunteering and fundraising for the food pantry, sewing pillowcases for the local shelter and collecting books for the local jail.

On the curriculum side, the Nakatani Teaching and Learning Center (NTLC) brings instructors together to study specific teaching and learning related topics. Examples have included Universal Design within the Classroom and the extended Infusing Diversity across the Curriculum program. Communities of Practice (CoP) have been used to support such faculty-led scholarly inquiry as Undergraduate Student Research Framework, Film and Film Studies, Mindfulness Practices in Higher Education, Learning Objective Based Assessment, and more. Participating instructors commit to research, develop, incorporate and evaluate student projects and assignments in their courses, often including High Impact Practices. Student learning is also evaluated.

**Applied Research**

Increasing opportunities for students, faculty and staff to engage in applied research has been a major topic in each of the last three years during campus-wide discussions, called the engagement sessions. In 2014, UW-Stout established a goal to become an emerging research institution. To achieve this goal, there have been dedicated efforts to increase student opportunities to participate in research. For example, the NTLC has offered various CoPs, including one associated with Research Skills Development. During summer 2014, Dr. John Willison from The University of Adelaide, Australia, and one of the creators of the [Research Skill Development Framework (RSD)](https://www.researchskillsframework.org), facilitated a workshop on our campus. His presentation introduced the RSD Framework to numerous UW-Stout faculty; several of which participated in a year-long Community of Practice (CoP). They explored how the RSD Framework could be used to support the development and expansion of students’ research skills within their courses. Through the CoP, participants expanded their understanding,
comfort and competence in teaching research strategies. Due to the success of the CoP, an additional Community of Practice for 2015-16 was planned and funded by a UW System Undergraduate Student Research grant. In addition to the classroom experience, Dr. Willison was able to return to UW-Stout to facilitate a Student Research Skills Symposium to share the RSD Framework with faculty from our campus, the UW System, and beyond.