



Academic Affairs Report

October 3, 2025

Agenda Item #1: Capital Outlay

Information

Action

Discussion

Purpose:

The purpose of this action is to approve the Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Outlay Project Request to the State of Michigan for the renovation and expansion of the Center for Applied Science and Engineering Technology.

Background:

Each year the State of Michigan's Budget Office seeks proposals from Michigan's State universities for capital outlay projects. These proposals are the first phase of the capital outlay process. If capital outlay projects are included in the Fiscal Year 2027 Executive Budget, only planning authorizations are recommended in that phase. If chosen, the university will then enter the second phase and prepare professional preliminary design documents and secure support for construction. The university then provides the professional planning documentation to the State for a second round of approval and authorization.

Capital Outlay projects must be for academic buildings, excluding administrative buildings and housing. The state funding will cover a maximum of 75% of the total cost of the project. The university must commit to covering the remaining 25% through university resources and/or philanthropy. The State may choose to cap the dollar amount at a value less than 75%. Planning authorizations do not guarantee future construction authorizations.

Lake Superior State University is requesting Board of Trustees approval to request Capital Outlay funding to renovate and expand the Center for Applied Science and Engineering Technology (CASET Hall). LSSU would like to seek \$30.0 million in state funding support to assist with CASET Hall building renovations and to build an additional wing for that facility. This would require a \$10.0 million match through philanthropic initiatives.

Built in the late 1970s, CASET Hall is in need of major repairs. This project, which has been a priority since 2019, was elevated to the top of LSSU's capital outlay list in spring 2023 due to significant structural issues, including a weakened foundation, outdated plumbing and electrical systems, insufficient ADA access, and the need for enhanced hands-on learning spaces for high-demand programs. The urgency of this project escalated when CASET Hall was temporarily closed after a fire

on September 27, 2023, which, while contained to the Robotics Lab, caused extensive smoke damage throughout the building. The insurance coverage brought CASET Hall back to pre-fire conditions, but that work identified opportunities for improvements to fire suppression systems and air handling. CASET Hall currently houses the School of Engineering and Technology, the School of Computer Science and Mathematics, and the Paramedic and Fire Science programs, which are part of the School of Criminal Justice, Fire Science, and Emergency Services. The renovation will update hands-on learning spaces and address structural issues, while the expansion will allow LSSU to consolidate the entire School of Criminal Justice, Fire Science, and Emergency Services within the building. This will provide right-sized classrooms, advanced training technology, and increased capacity for all programs at the certificate, associate, and baccalaureate levels.

The renovation of the existing structure will include upgrades to both infrastructure and student learning focusing on:

- Repairs to the foundation of the building;
- Upgrades for existing HVAC systems, fire suppression/safety systems, and plumbing;
- Updates and rebuilds throughout the building to accommodate students with disabilities or special needs, including ease of passage walk-throughs, doorways, and access points to facilitate movement between classrooms, and a gender-neutral restroom;
- Redesigned classrooms with more inclusive ADA compliance in furnishings and spaces;
- Redesigned classrooms with more effective active-engagement learning configurations and furnishings;
- Updates to the IT infrastructure throughout the building for uniformity, including online instructional and video/audio capabilities, and in the computer labs that support LSSU's commitment to exploratory, active, and applied learning;
- Installation of cutting-edge instructional technology in classrooms for mathematics and computer science programs to expand their capacity to provide high-level course options to dual-enrolled high school and Early College students at regional locations—further expanding educational access to remote and rural locations in Northern Michigan;
- Installation of building security and safety measures, including improved fire suppression systems, swipe card entry scanners, cameras, and locking mechanisms;
- Enlarged doors into shop areas and added large safety window panels to lab and workspace areas to facilitate public viewing and increase awareness of these academic programs by visually highlighting those programs to campus visitors;
- Installation of sustainable features throughout the building, including solar windows, wind turbines, green roof system, and creation of an electric vehicle charging station in the building's adjacent parking lot; and
- Reconfiguration and expansion of the current Emergency Medical training lab to include modern training spaces for first-responder programs with an ambulance simulator, a dispatch area to

facilitate simulated emergency communications between students in Fire Science and Emergency Medicine programs, redesign of classroom spaces, addition of more storage spaces, and creation of a large training space where students can practice vehicle extraction, triaging, treatment, and transporting of patients in a realistic setting.

The project also includes plans for a new 2-story 64,000 square foot wing to provide additional learning spaces for three Schools, paving the way for enrollment growth in the critical skill degree programs offered by those Schools. Construction of a new wing for CASET Hall will highlight a new Robotics Lab and a new Engineering Design Center. This development will also provide a single unified location for the School of Criminal Justice, Fire Science, and Emergency Services, which currently operates in multiple locations across campus and at one rented off-campus facility. The new wing will house advanced driving and de-escalation labs, crime simulation labs, and updated modern fire science educational training labs, transforming LSSU into a state-of-the-art training facility for students and regional first responders alike.

If approved, the University must raise \$10 million through a capital campaign. Fundraising for the project would be the University's top philanthropic priority. In FY 25, the Advancement office raised \$3.6 million, well above their five-year average of \$2.2 million. This strong performance demonstrates that raising \$10 million over a standard seven-year capital campaign (two years in a silent phase and five years in a public phase) is attainable, while still allowing the institution to meet other fundraising priorities.

Suggested Action/Motion:

Move to support the aforementioned Capital Outlay Project request to the State of Michigan.

President's Recommendation:

Approval of the motion, as presented.



Academic Affairs Report

October 3, 2025

Agenda Item #2: Conferal of Summer 2025 Candidates for Degrees

Information

Action

Discussion

Purpose:

The purpose of this action is to confer the appropriate degrees upon the list of candidates for Summer 2025 as certified by the Registrar as having completed their graduation requirements.

Background:

The enclosed list of candidates is submitted to the Board of Trustees for the granting of the appropriate degrees. The respective chairs certify these candidates have completed all major departmental requirements and the Registrar certifies these candidates have completed all University requirements. The Registrar's memo and List of Candidates is in Appendix A.

Suggested Action/Motion:

Move to confer the appropriate degrees upon the list of candidates for Summer 2025.

President's Recommendation:

Approval of the motion, as presented.



Academic Affairs Report

October 3, 2025

Agenda Item #3: Academic Affairs Update

Information

Action

Discussion

Purpose:

The purpose of this information is to provide an update on activities in the area of Academic Affairs.

Background:

Highlights from the Academic Affairs Monthly Updates

Monthly updates have been sent to campus and the Board that contain the activities and accomplishments of our students, faculty, and staff in Academic Affairs since the last board meeting. These reports also include upcoming events. For your reference, you can find archived copies of the monthly reports for [July](#), [August](#), and [September](#) by clicking on the links. These reports are full of powerful examples of experiential learning, faculty and students collaborating on important scholarly activities, recruitment and outreach efforts, and ways in which they engage with and contribute to our community. In many cases, these activities are seamlessly integrated. Some highlights of this integration from the monthly reports include:

1. Faculty and staff from the School of Computer Science & Mathematics, the School of Engineering & Technology and the Center for Freshwater Research and Education presented at the quarterly meeting of the MiSTEM Network held on campus. Their presentations and lab tours for state leaders and directors from across Michigan highlighted LSSU's role in advancing project-based learning and showcased how curriculum, senior projects, and industry connections directly benefit regional K-12 and higher education initiatives. CFRE Education and Outreach Specialists and Research Technicians highlighted LSSU's unique partnerships and our work to advance place-based learning, which sparked interest in expanding programming beyond the Upper Peninsula.
2. The College of Great Lakes Ecology and Education welcomed new freshmen and transfer students with *CoGLEE Connections*, a day-long event blending outdoor adventure, cultural experiences, and community partnerships. Activities ranged from a sunrise hike and river kayaking, to painting sidewalk murals downtown, to a Water Ceremony led by a Sault Tribe Elder and Knowledge Keeper.

3. The MyMichigan/Superior Simulation Center hosted physicians and nurses, including recent LSSU BSN graduates, for hands-on training in high-stakes emergency scenarios. This collaboration strengthens confidence and clinical readiness while directly improving patient care in our community.
4. Dr. Paul Kelso led a field excursion for the binational Sault Naturalists club, guiding participants through the billion-year-old geology of the Mid-Continent Rift. The program connected academic expertise with community interest in local natural history and landscapes. The Sault Naturalists is a binational nature club with over 250 members from Ontario and Michigan.
5. Fire Science faculty partnered with local fire departments to deliver training and host annual equipment testing on campus. This collaboration provides vital services to regional departments while creating opportunities for student internships and career pathways.

Office of Sponsored Programs

New Grants since July Board Meeting

Michigan College Access Network (MCAN)

External Grant Awards				
Sponsor	Amount	Award Period	Budget Highlights	PI
Michigan College Access Network (MCAN)	\$10,000	09/01/2025-12/31/2026	Salary/Fringe: N/A Indirect Costs: N/A	Bridgette Russell

LSSU will participate in the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN) Gateway Course Redesign Faculty Academy. Professional development, collaborative learning, and implementation funding from the Faculty Academy will enable the LSSU team to engage in a transformative redesign process. Mathematics faculty and support services staff will explore the unintentional barriers students may face and redesign mathematics courses to help students complete the general education mathematics requirement. This project will strengthen gateway math courses and support students toward degree completion and economic mobility.

Assessment and Accreditation

Representatives from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) visited campus in July to meet with stakeholders regarding the proposed Master's program in Fisheries and Wildlife. Reviewer feedback was positive, and we are now awaiting the final decision of HLC's Institutional Action Committee, scheduled for Tuesday, September 30, 2026.

Preparation is also underway for the 10-year Comprehensive Evaluation, scheduled for September 28-29, 2026. LSSU's Assurance Argument must be submitted by August 31, 2026. To lead the self-study and writing process, an Assurance Argument Leadership Team has been established consisting of:

- Dr. Kimberly Muller, Chief Academic Officer and Accreditation Liaison Officer
- Ms. Sausha Tews, Assessment Coordinator and Assurance System Coordinator

- Dr. Derek Wright, Chair, *Criterion 1 Mission*
- Prof. Bryan Fuller, Chair, *Criterion 2 Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct*
- Dr. Jennifer Gorman, Co-Chair, *Criterion 3 Teaching and Learning for Student Success*
- Prof. Alexandra Van Doren, Co-Chair, *Criterion 3 Teaching and Learning for Student Success*
- Prof. Koral Brady, Chair, *Criterion 4 Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning*
- Ms. Ana Robbins, Writer

Committees have been formed for each the four criteria, involving over 50 faculty and staff members. In turn, these individuals will engage others throughout campus in this important assessment practice. The criterion chairs are responsible for drafting the language and direction of the narrative while ensuring there is supporting evidence. Ms. Robbins will ensure consistency of tone, alignment across sections, and clear, effective communication throughout the final document. Early tasks include reviewing past reports and responses, assigning committee roles, collecting and analyzing data and evidence, and drafting initial outlines. Committees will identify findings and gaps in data to support continuous improvement. Updates on this important initiative will be provided in future board reports.

Professional Development Day Summary

Lake Superior State University hosted its annual Professional Development Day on Thursday, August 21, organized by the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETAL) around the theme of student retention. Faculty and staff participated in a series of sessions designed to strengthen institutional effectiveness and enhance student success.

The keynote speaker, Dr. Laurie Schreiner, Professor Emerita of Higher Education at Azusa Pacific University, delivered a presentation on *The Thriving Campus: Creating an Environment in Which All Students Can Flourish* and provided participants with many opportunities to discuss ways we can support students and each other. With more than 30 years of experience in higher education, Dr. Schreiner provided evidence-based strategies to help institutions create environments where students and communities thrive. Additional sessions included a student panel offering first-hand perspectives, a strategic planning discussion led by President Travis, and a faculty/staff panel highlighting best practices in going “the extra mile” for students.

Participant feedback was largely positive, with many attendees highlighting the keynote address and student panel as particularly impactful. Faculty and staff valued the opportunity to reflect on their roles in fostering student success and to reconnect as a campus community ahead of the fall semester. We also received suggestions for improvement that will be incorporated into future offerings.

Further professional development opportunities have already been planned for the coming year including:

- A faculty and staff book discussion with faculty and staff at Northern Michigan University on the book *Radical Grace* by Candice Price and Milos Savic.
- Lunch-n-Learns throughout the year on topics such as AI, creating supported spaces for learners, and advising.

- A new “Peer Perspectives” program where faculty observe each others’ classes outside the evaluation process and reflect on effective strategies.
- An Early Career community of practice.
- A spring Professional Development Day with keynote speaker, Dr. Jared Tippets, focused on retention.
- A spring presentation by Dr. Anton Treuer, author of *The Cultural Toolbox: Traditional Ojibwe Living in the Modern World*.

Continuing Education

Library and Academic Services staff have worked to build a new continuing education line-up this fall. Offerings include:

- Basic Home Repair—Plumbing
- Documentary Photography
- Beginning Yoga
- Learn to Macramé
- Basic Home Repair—Electric
- Homemade Watercolor Christmas Cards

This new non-credit initiative seeks to engage the campus and broader community in relatively inexpensive classes to foster lifelong learning outside the classroom.

Suggested Action/Motion:

None

President’s Recommendation:

N/A



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October 3, 2025

Appendix A: Conferral of Summer 2025 Candidates for Degrees

Registrar's Office

TO: Kimberly Muller
FROM: Katie Kelsey
DATE: September 10, 2025
SUBJECT: Candidates for Degrees for the Summer Semester 2025

The attached list of candidates is submitted to the Board of Trustees for the granting of the appropriate degrees. The respective chairs certify these candidates have completed all major departmental requirements, and I, as the Registrar, certify these candidates have completed all University requirements.



LAKE SUPERIOR STATE UNIVERSITY

Summer Semester 2025 Graduates

Miranda Marie Allen	Associate	Early Childhood Education
Reese Bennett Camp	Bachelor of Science	Mechanical Engineering
Alexander Eckman	Certificate	Microscopy and Microanalysis
Sarah Ann Eles	Bachelor of Science	Kinesiology
Benjamin Phillip Evans	Bachelor of Science	Fire Science Generalist
Hayden Goldstein	Bachelor of Science	Cannabis Business
Mariana M Johnson	Associate	Fire Science
Joseph Kramer	Bachelor of Science	Mechanical Engineering & Robotics
Austin LaCoursiere	Associate	Engineering
Charlize Rae Lopez	Bachelor of Science	Fire Science
Delaney Joyce MacDowell	Associate	Fire Science Generalist
Jillian Emma Michaels	Bachelor of Science	General Studies
Adam Joseph Miller	Bachelor of Science	Criminal Justice
Kathryn Mitchell	Associate	Business Administration
Mia Kate Morgan	Bachelor of Science	Fire Science
Iara Navarro	Bachelor of Science	Geology
Harold H. Newfer III	Bachelor of Science	Business Administration
Harold H. Newfer III	Associate	Social Science
Wylie Conner Nunn	Bachelor of Science	General Studies
Wylie Conner Nunn	Certificate	Business Adm-Entrepreneurship
Angeline Parker	Bachelor of Science	E-Marketing
Angeline Parker	Associate	Criminal Justice
Kurt Wolfgang Pursche II	Bachelor of Science	Criminal Justice Law Enforce
Kurt Wolfgang Pursche II	Certificate	Business Admin-Marketing
Sydney Quinones	Certificate	E-Marketing
Ashley Madison Render	Bachelor of Science	Cannabis Production
Alayna Schulte	Bachelor of Science	Environmental Science
Alayna Schulte	Associate	Parks and Recreation
Justin Zachary Sherwood	Bachelor of Science	Natural Resources Technology
Nicholas Sprague	Bachelor of Science	Criminal Justice
Kaylen Staggs	Bachelor of Science	Business Administration
Kaylen Staggs	Associate	Cannabis Chemistry
Ryan James Todd	Associate	Cannabis Science
Rachel Vallad	Bachelor of Science	Fire Science
Hailey Grace Warner	Bachelor of Science	Fire Science Generalist
		Business Admin-Management

Jayda Bryanna Williams	Bachelor of Science	Accounting
Jayda Bryanna Williams	Certificate	E-Marketing
Benjamin David Zallen	Bachelor of Science	General Studies
Benjamin David Zallen	Associate	Cannabis Science