

## **Academic Review Paralegal Studies Program**

### **Executive Summary**

The Lake Superior College Paralegal Studies program has grown steadily since its inception in 2001. The program has experienced steady expansion in student interest and enrollment, in the nature and frequency of course offerings, in program faculty available to teach those courses, and in the program's relationship with the local community of legal employers. The Paralegal Studies program has developed into a course of study that can be completed in an entirely online format. This has attracted an increasing number of true distance students to the program as well as creating opportunities for non-traditional students who are unable to attend traditional on-ground classes.

This expansion has not been without growing pains. Analysis of the data included in this report suggests two major opportunities for improvement of the program – one in the area of advising and retention of program students; the other in the area of enhanced program enrollment. While advising and retention have top priority in the short run, the Paralegal Studies faculty has prepared a three-year Action Plan that defines program goals in six areas – academic review, advising, curriculum, faculty development, student retention, and program partnerships.

The academic review process involved gathering and synthesizing information from a variety of sources. In addition to a previous assessment of the benefits of seeking ABA Approval, program faculty sought and utilized information from Program Directors and instructors in other paralegal education programs. The Legal Studies Advisory Committee provided significant input, as did program faculty. Student input was sought where appropriate.