

Assurance Argument
Arapahoe Community College - CO

8/15/2016

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Argument

Arapahoe Community College's (ACC) mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations. ACC draws its role and mission from [Colorado Revised Statute, 23-60-201](#) that was amended to read:

There is hereby established a state system of community and technical colleges which shall be under the management and jurisdiction of the state board for community colleges and occupational education. The mission of the community colleges shall be to serve Colorado residents who reside in their service areas by offering a broad range of general, personal, vocational, and technical education programs. Each college shall be a two-year college. No college shall impose admission requirements upon any student. The objects of the community and technical colleges shall be to provide educational programs to fill the occupational needs of youth and adults in technical and vocational fields, two-year transfer educational programs to qualify students for admission to the junior year at other colleges and universities, basic skills, workforce development, and a broad range of personal and vocational education for adults.

In addition, in February of 2014, the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) was authorized to offer Bachelors of Applied Science (BAS) degrees in career and technical fields, via [Senate Bill \(SB\) 14-004](#).

ACC's mission statement addresses the Colorado statute in that it states: "to provide innovative and responsive educational opportunities in an accessible, inclusive environment that promotes success for students, employees and the community."

Development of ACC's Mission Statement

Arapahoe Community College's [vision, mission, and values statements](#) were developed through ACC's strategic planning process initiated during the 2008-09 academic year and repeated during the 2014-15 academic year. Building upon the evaluation of and the momentum created by the HLC-sponsored Vital Focus Project, a [collaborative strategic planning process](#) was developed, the guiding

principles of which are inclusion, participation, and transparency. ACC's strategic planning process provides that all decisions be made within the policy requirements of the SBCCOE as well as the current and projected public policy environment. ACC's [strategic plan](#) aligns with the strategic planning process and priorities of the CCCS.

As the [Strategic Planning Process Organization Chart](#) shows, the Strategic Planning Process Steering Committee was charged with oversight of the planning process. The Strategic Planning Process Design Council was made up of five task forces led by tri-chairs appointed by the Steering Committee and were representative of each of the employee groups at the College – faculty, classified support staff, and administrative staff. At least one member of the ACC Leadership Team was also a member of each task force. The task forces included Environmental Analysis; Values, Vision, Mission; Strategic Directions; Communication; and Evaluation. The tri-chairs, together with volunteer task force members from across ACC, designed the collaborative process for arriving at the strategic plan. The purpose of the Strategic Plan Content Council was to affirm the strategic planning work products, determine the need for additional information, and to make any required adjustments to ensure a consistent, logical strategic plan.

ACC's Leadership Team served as the liaison between the Strategic Planning Process Design Council and the Strategic Plan Content Council. The Leadership Team is comprised of the President, Vice President of Instruction, Vice President of Administrative Services, Vice President of Student Affairs, the Chief Financial Officer, all Deans of the College, executive-level Directors of the College, ACC's Chief of Police, the chairs of the Classified and Administrative Assemblies, and the President of Faculty Senate. All departments of the College are represented by this group. Members of the Facilitation Team (representing all employee groups); campus-wide strategic planning meetings; classified and administrative assemblies; faculty senate; and student, alumni, business, and community focus groups provided input to the strategic planning process.

Work products of ACC's Strategic Planning Process included the environmental analysis, vision, mission and values statements, and ACC's strategic directions, goals, and tasks. The charge of the Environmental Analysis Task Force was to provide an initial structure that would systematize data collection and serve as a foundation for the creation of the strategic plan.

Five key factors currently impacting ACC's planning process and expected to significantly transform ACC's environment over the next five years were identified: Competition and Enrollment Trends, Technology, Geographic/Social/Cultural considerations, Industry/Employment Demand, and Colorado's Political/Regulatory/Legislative Environment. A scan of pertinent, measurable indicators from internal and external sources was performed for each key factor. A resulting set of questions guided discussions regarding the relevancy and timeliness of ACC's existing vision, mission, and values statements and informed the collaborative identification of ACC's strategic directions and goals for the 2015-2020 planning period.

During the previous strategic planning process, 2008-10, ACC stakeholders revised the mission statement. On February 2, 2009, the Strategic Plan Content Council approved the revised mission statement as well as the vision and values statements. All statements were reviewed by ACC's Advisory Board in March of 2009. Board members requested that the mission statement reflect ACC's role regarding both educational and economic opportunities. The revised mission statement was officially approved to serve as the foundation for the remainder of the strategic planning process. ACC's most recent strategic planning process (2014-15) resulted in no changes in the vision and mission statements produced during 2009. The values statements were unchanged as well with the exception of a new value, "Inclusion," added to the list. ACC's current statements are listed below.

VISION

To be the leader in Community College education in the state of Colorado.

MISSION

To provide innovative and responsive educational and economic opportunities in an accessible, inclusive environment that promotes success for students, employees and the community.

VALUES STATEMENTS

Lifelong Learning

We uphold the highest academic standards and support the growth and success of each individual.

Integrity

We encourage the free exchange of ideas in an open environment that embraces honesty, respect and personal responsibility.

Community

We foster trusting relationships and respectful communication through collaboration with our students, employees and community partners.

Inclusion

We honor an open dialogue in a safe environment that respects and embraces individual differences.

ACC's Programs, Services and Enrollment Profile Align with ACC's Mission

ACC's [strategic plan](#) evolved from and thus supports the institutional mission statement. The strategic directions, together with ACC's values statements, ensure academic programs, student support services, and operational processes align with the mission of the College.

All programs and departments of the College have a mission statement that supports ACC's mission statement. The [mission statements](#) of these units serve as the link between the institutional mission and the specific instructional and administrative objectives established by each unit.

Academic Programs. ACC's instructional mission is to "embrace current and emerging educational practices that inspire faculty and staff to engage all individuals pursuing learning opportunities and facilitate successful goal completion." ACC's instructional goal is to transform students' lives by providing unparalleled learning experiences in a supportive and accessible environment. Similarly, the College's administrative and operational units are charged to enhance the student learning experience through the support, facilitation, and/or stimulation of student achievement and success.

ACC's [academic program offerings](#) show the institution's commitment to providing innovative programs resulting in degrees or certificates to promote student success. There are over 100 degree and certificate programs for students as well as [Workforce Training programs](#) helping students and the community regarding career opportunities that are aligned with present workforce demands. Programs and degrees are offered at multiple campuses, with day and evening face-to-face classes as

well as over 300 online classes.

The guiding principles of [ACC's Instructional Plan](#) include “future-oriented” thinking that encourages innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to delivering instruction. Innovation is a strategic focus of ACC as a part of the Technology Leadership Strategic Direction. [Assessment results from ACC's e-Learning department](#) make it clear that the collaborative use of technology-enhanced teaching and learning is one of the keys to the success of ACC students. ACC's [Instructional Plan](#) commits to innovative instructional delivery as well as complementary learning spaces. ACC's new Library Commons was designed to transform what was a traditional library space into a space that fosters learning and communication. Printed books still play a critical role in supporting learners; digital technologies offer additional pathways to participatory learning and methods of understanding from a variety of sources.

ACC's Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs have advisory committees whose membership represents a cross section of occupational areas pertinent to the respective discipline. Their purpose is “to assist educators in establishing, operating, and evaluating programs [that] serve the needs of students, business and industry, and to provide expertise pertaining to technological change.” ACC's [Advisory Council](#) serves the same purpose for the College's other academic programs as well as focusing broadly on the College overall. The overarching goal of ACC seeking assistance from these advisory groups is to remain responsive to economic opportunities and market-valued skills through educational programs and activities. Recent examples include the addition of a [Business Capstone course and an International concentration](#) and a new [Health Care Data Analytics certificate](#).

Student Support Services. ACC's philosophy is that every employee of the institution plays a role in the learning process. The institution is committed to an all-College recognition that student learning occurs both inside and outside the classroom including learning directly related to [ACC's institution-wide Learning Outcomes](#). All non-instructional areas of the College provide student support services. The assessment of administrative/operational units and the use of that information for institutional improvement is key to quality preparation of students and their performance. Teaching and learning is the collective responsibility of all areas of the College as noted in ACC's [2015 Quality Initiative Report](#).

ACC's student support services include the typical advising, financial aid, testing, tutoring, career and transfer centers, and so on. ACC's student support services also include non-academic areas such as facilities, fitness center, child development center, and fiscal services. All are committed to ACC's mission as evidenced by their individual missions noted previously. ACC's holistic view of student preparation is grounded in the core values of lifelong learning, integrity, community, and inclusion. In conjunction with ACC's mission, ACC's Learning Outcomes address the knowledge, skills, and values that are fundamental to the personal and professional growth of ACC students, employees, and the communities that ACC serves.

Enrollment Profile. ACC's [enrollment profile](#) is represented through a variety of statistics that address institutional mission. It is, however, the commitment of the institution to recruiting, enrolling, and aiding students to completion that align pragmatic activities with exhibited results. As illustrated in Chart 1 below, [ACC's total headcount](#) increased, steadily, from the 2010-11 Academic Year (AY) through the 2012-13 AY. This was due to the decline in the Colorado economy as evidenced by an April [2016 report published by CCCS](#). Beginning with the 2013-14 Academic Year (AY), total headcount started to decline. This is not surprising as the economy was beginning to rebound. Headcount fell slightly over 2% from the 2012-13 AY to the 2013-14 AY. Headcount declined approximately 12% from the 2013-14 AY to the 2014-15 AY.

**Chart 1. Arapahoe Community College
Annual Headcount Enrollment
AY 2010-2011 to 2014-2015**

2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
18,036	19,881	20,246	19,775	17,403

Source: CCCS Fact Book, Academic Year 2014-2015.

The primary reason ACC’s enrollments have not dipped significantly in a time of economic recovery is the [increase in concurrent enrollments](#) from AY 2010-2011 through AY 2014-15, as shown in Chart 2. ACC has seen an 80% increase in high school student enrollments over that five-year period. Concurrent Enrollment programs are made available at public high schools where students in grades 9 through 12 can take college-level courses at no cost to the students. The courses are taught by qualified instructors with postsecondary credentials and take place either at the high school or at a higher education institution such as ACC. Concurrent enrollment participation has been defined as a predictor of college success in [The Effects of Concurrent Enrollment on the College-Going and Remedial Education Rates of Colorado’s High School Students, March 2014](#).

**Chart 2. High School Students Attending
Arapahoe Community College
2009-2010 to 2014-2015**

2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
1,988	2,532	2,964	3,553	3,579

Source: CCCS Fact Book, Academic Year 2014-2015.

Fall-to-fall retention trends for both full- and part-time students have declined over the past five years. ACC’s [strategic plan](#) [24] addresses this issue, as does the Colorado Department of Higher Education through its [annual performance goals](#) for Colorado institutions of higher education.

ACC’s minority enrollment continues to rise, as do the [three-year graduation rate trends for minority students](#). ACC’s [Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative \(COSI\)](#) encourages applications of underrepresented populations beginning in secondary educational years, evidencing ACC’s commitment to making an accessible education available in an inclusive, welcoming environment. ACC partners with area high schools with significant numbers of minority students toward successful entry into and completion of a postsecondary education. The most recent figures available (fall 2015) for current partners indicate Englewood High School has a minority student population of 46%; 35% of Littleton High School students are characterized as minority; and Sheridan High School’s student population is 86% minority. Concurrent enrollment courses are in place in all three high schools.

Total degrees awarded by the College have been on an upward trend over the past five years, leveling off in the 2013-14 AY. ACC granted 10% of the total of 18,074 degrees awarded by the Colorado Community College System for the 2014-15 AY. The [CCCS Fact Book for AY 2014-15](#) shows that ACC has experienced positive growth in total transfers to four-year institutions from the 2012-13 AY through the 2014-15 AY. The College received the Transfer Performance Incentive Award (\$750,000) from CCCS for the highest increase in transfer rates of all 13 CCCS colleges between 2009-10 and 2012-13. ACC registered a 3.7% increase in transfer rates over that period.

ACC's [resident tuition](#) remains quite affordable for public higher education in Colorado. In 2015-16, the legislature capped CCCS colleges at a 6.5% increase in tuition for 2016-17. Decisions regarding annual tuition rates are made by the SBCCOE at their annual Board meeting. The guidelines allow colleges that desire higher rates seek permission from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) via documents called financial accountability plans. The decisions are made in accordance with the [CCCS Financial Accountability Plan](#) approved by CCHE in December 2010. In April 2016, SBCCOE approved a 4.9% increase in resident and non-resident tuition; fees (excluding pass-through fees) for CCCS colleges for the 2016-17 AY will increase by 1.2%. Programs with differentials, such as nursing, will see a 5.9% increase on the differential only. A variety of [tuition and fee rates](#) apply, depending upon whether students are classified as residents or non-residents and whether they are enrolled in traditional, hybrid, or online classes.

The [College Opportunity Fund](#) (COF) is the State's contribution to the resident tuition rate. COF eligibility requires students to fill out a stipend application. For the 2016-17 AY, COF pays \$75/credit hour; the rate is set annually by the Colorado General Assembly. ACC also invests over \$400,000 of institutional funds each year for student scholarships and offers a tuition reimbursement program that provides its employees accessible educational opportunities.

ACC Aligns its Budget with its Strategic Plan

In partial response to the recommendations of the HLC 2006-07 Evaluation Team, ACC has aligned strategic planning and budgeting decisions. ACC demonstrates a conscious effort to produce and support student learning, assesses the extent to which discipline and institution-wide Learning Outcomes are being met, and makes changes toward improving student learning, accordingly. ACC assesses its operational processes in the same manner to determine if benchmarks for selected processes have been met. A plan for [closing the loop](#) on institution-wide and discipline outcomes is being implemented to collaboratively review the results of assessment and determine what needs to be changed to improve institutional effectiveness. These discussions will provide input to the strategic plan and necessarily impact the institutional budget.

The present budget model focuses funding around three key objectives: ensuring proper resources for existing operations, funding new opportunities and initiatives, and maintaining adequate reserves for future prospects. These objectives are in alignment with the [strategic plan of the College](#) and the [SBCCOE Strategic Plan](#). (Please see Criterion 5.C. for a detailed description of ACC's integrated budgeting process.)

Sources

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Argument

Articulation of ACC's Mission

ACC's mission statement, along with vision and values statements, is clearly articulated and displayed in many public documents. The College's guiding statements are posted in all classrooms, departmental offices, conference rooms and at various locations on all three campuses. The mission statement is also located on the ACC website and instructional program web pages; broadcast on the campus informational TV screens; printed on the back of employees' business cards; displayed in annual reports, the [ACC catalog](#), [Student Handbook](#) and [Faculty/Instructor Handbook](#); and printed on College press releases. It is central to all media campaigns. ACC's new [marketing plan](#) clearly articulates ACC's mission to ACC's stakeholders and the public.

Articulation of Key Aspects of ACC's Mission

ACC does not have a document, per se, that interprets the institutional mission statement. Rather, ACC's mission is reflected and implemented through ACC's [strategic planning process](#) and [strategic plan](#), with the cultural foundation of the institution expressed through ACC's statement of values. ACC's vision, mission, and values statements are outlined in Core Component 1.A.

ACC's institutional mission statement was affirmed through the [strategic planning process](#) that began with an Environmental Analysis in the fall of 2013. The Environmental Analysis Task Force consisted of the President of Faculty Senate, the Chair of Administrative Assembly, the Chair of Classified Assembly, the Assistant Registrar, the Director of Institutional Research, the Dean of Workforce Partnerships, ACC's Chief Financial Officer, the Executive Director of the ACC Foundation, and an adjunct faculty member.

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

ACC's Role in a Multicultural Society

ACC embarked upon a collaborative strategic planning process in the fall of 2008. The resulting [strategic plan](#) for the 2010-2015 period included "Communication" as a Strategic Direction. One of the Strategic Goals associated with the Communication Strategic Direction was to "Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of internal communication." The College had not, up to that time, focused upon the importance of not only understanding diversity but encouraging it to enhance the ACC experience for students, employees, and the community.

ACC's current President joined the College just as the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan was being completed. Building upon an [understanding of the ACC Diversity Statement](#), she encouraged the addition of a Diversity Strategic Task Force enabling ACC employees to arrive collaboratively at a concept/philosophy of diversity. Related activities included the creation of a Diversity Implementation Task Force that, with input from constituent groups including staff, administration, students, and the ACC Advisory Council, formulated the Diversity Statement quoted here. [Leadership Team minutes](#) reflect the statement was adopted on May 24, 2012.

We respect, understand, and embrace the differences and similarities among our students, staff, faculty and the community we proudly serve. As a community, ACC encourages the richness of diversity and values the dignity of all persons. We strive to foster an equal and positive learning environment that reflects the diverse nature of the people of Colorado and the nation.

Attention to Diversity in ACC's Processes and Activities

The Diversity Implementation Task Force was formed in October 2014 charged with developing activities to embed diversity efforts, aligned with the Diversity Statement, throughout the College. While these activities were in fulfillment of the strategic plan under which the College was then operating (2010-2015), they also aligned with the environmental analysis conducted as part of ACC's 2014-15 strategic planning process to create a new strategic plan for 2015-2020. As noted earlier, one of the five key factors of the environmental scan/analysis was geographic/social/cultural considerations. A related sub-factor is the internal demographics of ACC's student and employee population. The associated strategic question is: "What can ACC do over the next five years toward providing meaningful opportunities to the diverse population we serve?" In November 2014, ACC's faculty and staff were surveyed about how ACC's Diversity Mission Statement is embodied within departments, among employees, and beyond campus. To expand diversity efforts, in March 2015, the Diversity Implementation Task Force took on more permanency with a deliberate change in name to the College Diversity and Inclusivity Project.

As part of the 2014-15 strategic planning process, the efforts described above contributed to the addition of a new values statement, "Inclusion." The Inclusion Value Statement spells out how employees and students are expected to "live our mission" with regard to the multicultural population ACC serves: "We honor an open dialogue in a safe environment that respects and embraces individual differences." Further, one of ACC's new [Strategic Directions](#) is "Inclusive Culture," guiding ACC stakeholders to "welcome and engage individual differences, [by] committing to collaboration and transparency in communication and decision-making." Strategic goals for this strategic direction are supported by the [Inclusion values statement](#) and focus on (1) maintaining sensitivity to the demographics of students, faculty, and staff and (2) demonstrating commitment to diversified experiences across academic programs and the overall College environment.

One of the expected outcomes of Strategic Goal 1 is to increase ACC's enrollment of underserved populations by at least 1% per year to increase the diversity of the student population. ACC also has reached out to attract a more diverse faculty and staff through its newly-designed [marketing plan](#). Through professional development efforts, ACC addresses employees' personal knowledge and understanding of people of various racial and cultural backgrounds. All registration materials are offered in both English and Spanish.

ACC's service area is made up of Douglas County and parts of Arapahoe, Denver and Jefferson counties. As documented in [ACC's Spring 2016 Databook](#), ACC draws the majority of its students from Douglas and Arapahoe counties. According to [U.S. Census Bureau statistics](#), between 2010 and 2015, the increase in the Hispanic/Latino population for Douglas and Arapahoe counties totaled approximately 20,000. This increase accounted for 21% of the total population increase in both counties. ACC's new **marketing plan** is addressing this opportunity by directing television advertising, digital, and movie theatre spots toward affordability, accessibility, and inclusion. Marketing spots and materials are offered in both English and Spanish as well.

Positive employee impact is evidenced by results from the most current (2015) [Mountain States Employee Opinion Survey](#). The mean rating for the "Climate for Diversity" dimension increased from 4.03 in 2012 to 4.12 in 2015, with 3.75, and above, considered a "very positive" rating. Of the 307 employees responding (52% response rate), 82% indicated that demographic status (ethnicity) does not negatively impact their work environment at ACC; 11% were neutral on the subject or felt there was no application to them. Seven percent agreed that their ethnicity negatively impacts their work environment at the College.

Multiple activities/events planned and promoted by the College Diversity and Inclusivity Project have already yielded positive responses from both students and employees as evidenced through the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, [CCSSE](#), and the [Mountain States Employee Opinion Survey](#), respectively, regarding their experiences with individuals whose attributes differ from their own. ACC's procedures in response to the [Rehabilitation Act 508](#) and the [Assistive Technology Act](#) are aligned with the [CCCS President's Procedure 3-125g](#) that spells out procedures for accessibility to all web-based information developed, hosted, or maintained by CCCS.

ACC's procedures have focused on differences in learning and educational experiences. An example is faculty awareness in the area of Universal Design. New materials and resources are viewed for accessibility prior to adoption or insertion into the curriculum. The eLearning department and Student Access Services (formerly Disability Services), in collaboration with ACC faculty, are working to caption videos in current courses so that all individuals have an equal opportunity to learn. Accessibility training is required for all faculty (full-time and adjunct) and staff to learn how to adapt materials. Ongoing training continues for faculty and staff to expand learning opportunities in developing accessible materials. Additionally, joint efforts in Instruction and Student Affairs

(embedded in the new [strategic plan](#)) include exploring opportunities to work with the American Council on Education and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning in developing and approving competency-based learning options for students to address varied educational backgrounds and skills.

ACC's [2015 Quality Initiative Report](#) has as its focus that teaching and learning are the collective responsibility of all areas of the College. This includes educating each other about diversity issues. The comprehensive assessment model resulting from the Quality Initiative/Academy Assessment Project incorporates the assessment of institution-wide Learning Outcomes, including Cultural Awareness, within academic disciplines and the assessment of ACC's operational processes in relation to those same Outcomes. Assessment plans for the 2015-16 AY indicate that 7% of ACC's Assessment Organizations are incorporating the [assessment of the Cultural Awareness Learning Outcome](#) in their general education/operational processes during the current academic year. Efforts to increase this percentage are encouraged through [ACC's 2015-2020 strategic plan](#) via the College Diversity and Inclusivity Project.

In addition to their attention to increasing College access to diverse populations, ACC's Student Affairs Office provides a number of services to support the interest/needs of current students.

[ACC's student clubs and organizations](#) sponsored through Student Affairs offer an inclusive environment that welcomes individual differences. Examples of these clubs are the Equality Club, the Japanese Club, and the Veterans Club. ACC has the honor of being included on the [Military Friendly Schools list for 2016](#).

Other diversity education initiatives include a [Business and Communications Study Abroad](#) program in business and communication (understanding the role of culture in international business) as well as the [Art program](#), which gives students the opportunity to create art on location inspired by both history and contemporary culture.

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1.D - Core Component 1.D

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

ACC's Commitment to the Public Good

The Colorado Community College System ([CCCS](#)) [statutory mission statement](#) is intended to serve Colorado communities and residents for each of the 13 colleges' service areas. ACC's mission statement directly reflects the statutory mission as noted in Core Component 1.A. ACC leadership believes that by providing "innovative and responsive educational and economic opportunities," students will be prepared as lifelong learners for successful employment and capable of being informed contributors/leaders in their respective communities.

ACC's current [Learning Outcomes](#) were developed by faculty and staff who considered ACC's unique educational environment in conjunction with the American Association of Colleges and Universities [LEAP campaign "Essential Learning Outcomes"](#) a component of their [VALUE Initiative](#). The goal is to guide students' cumulative progress through successively higher levels of education to be prepared for 21st century challenges in their communities and the workforce. While it is understood that students will achieve varied levels of mastery regarding ACC's Learning Outcomes, preparing learners for life success is a primary commitment of the College.

ACC's Commitment to Educational Responsibilities

ACC's concern for the public good is grounded in the positive externalities a college education yields to society as a whole. ACC leadership has crafted the ACC experience to yield graduates whose lives profile institution-wide Learning Outcomes as well as the skills/knowledge acquired through a selected field of study. The goal is for an ACC education to benefit graduates as well as those with whom they live and work.

As a State, not-for-profit institution, ACC's responsibility is to the people of Colorado—not to investors or a parent organization. Instead, oversight of the College is the responsibility of SBCCOE. The College's Advisory Council advises ACC's President and the SBCCOE on the long-term educational needs of the area served by the College and on other matters identified in [C.R.S. 23-60-206 statute](#). It serves as the liaison between the College and area employers in order to facilitate the assessment of employment, training, and educational needs of the service area. The Advisory Council serves as the liaison between the College and local school boards, other community colleges, four-year institutions, county commissioners, city councils, other local elected officials, and other relevant groups or persons.

Incorporated in 1970 under Colorado law as a [501\(c\)\(3\) nonprofit organization](#), the ACC Foundation, governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, also assists the College in achieving its educational commitments. The [Foundation's mission](#) is “to create public awareness and funding resources that provide financial assistance and broad-based community support for Arapahoe Community College's students and programs.”

Given the support from the SBCCOE, ACC's Advisory Council and the ACC Foundation, the College is able to maintain its focus on providing a quality education for its students.

ACC's Response to External Constituencies

Identification of external constituencies and communities of interest for ACC were foundational to the [environmental analysis phase](#) of ACC's current strategic plan. The alignment of ACC's budgeting and planning processes ensures institutional resources are sufficient to serve and engage with the key constituencies of the College. All efforts in this area are tied to providing innovative, responsive educational and economic opportunities for the public good. ACC offers experiences for students seeking degrees/certificates/transfer credits, students interested in non-credit experiences, and community members who enjoy opportunities for personal growth and development through exhibits, performances, speakers, etc., throughout the academic year. Examples of the external constituencies important to ACC and the manner in which the institution responds include:

- Prospective and current students, including high school students and families
- ACC Alumni
- Veterans of the Armed Forces
- Cities of Littleton, Parker, and Castle Rock
- Communities, individuals, organizations, and employers in ACC's service area

ACC's services for prospective and current students are designed to build a collaborative, responsive, and caring relationship in order to empower students to become responsible consumers of their own education. ACC's "[Start Now](#)" program provides prospective and currently applied but not enrolled students the opportunity to complete student orientation and testing in a one-day session. Academic Advising assists in identifying strengths and challenges students may have in maximizing their potential while connecting academic and career goals. ACC also provides high schools in its service area an opportunity to earn both high school and college credit simultaneously through its [Concurrent Enrollment program](#). This serves students and their families by lowering the cost of college and helps prepare students for a seamless transfer to college.

The [ACC Alumni Association](#) works with the [ACC Career and Transfer Center](#) to provide career assistance within one year of graduation as well as partners with employment professionals to provide alumni with career opportunities. Networking events, such as the annual [Career and Job Fair](#), not only benefit students; they connect ACC graduates with local employers.

[ACC's Veteran Services](#) area exists to help ease the transition into civilian life and to provide guidance through the many unique challenges encountered while entering the academic environment. The Resource Center within the Veteran Services space is open to all ACC Veterans and is a welcoming space dedicated to promote camaraderie and support among the student Veteran community in ACC's service area.

ACC often hosts public forums around topics of general interest, such as city-wide elections. Political Science students contribute to the planning and logistics of these events. The purpose is to give

community residents an opportunity to make an informed decision about candidates as well as inform students about the political process. ACC is the host site for the Community Leaders Forum held in February of each year. Interested community members, together with the mayors from cities within ACC's service area, discuss opportunities and challenges of the economy and legislation that will affect local neighborhoods and businesses. ACC is also the site of the annual [Littleton Western Welcome Week Pancake Breakfast](#), a community "homecoming" event held every August, sponsored by the City of Littleton and area businesses.

ACC serves individuals in the community and service area through ACC's [Community Education](#) classes. Hundreds of non-credit adult and community education classes are offered throughout the year. ACC has been recognized by the American Association of Community Colleges as a [Champion College](#) and leader in serving the unique needs of 50+ community members. The Community Education department also offers GED preparation classes that are designed to assist individuals in improving their skills to complete the GED exam. The Youth College, coordinated by Community Education during the summer months, provides elementary, middle school, and high school youth the opportunity to enrich their knowledge and expand their minds encompassing practical skills and reinforcement of [Colorado Standards](#).

Also responding to the needs of external constituencies is the [Child Development Center](#) —a preschool and child care center that offers an affordable, safe, and stimulating environment to children of ACC students, staff, and faculty, and families in surrounding communities. The [ACC Fitness Center](#) offers programs to the public, such as Silver Sneakers (a fitness program for senior citizens in the community). Free fitness membership is available for employees of the College.

The ACC Music Department proudly presents choir and orchestra concerts each semester for the enjoyment of the surrounding community. The [Colorado Gallery of the Arts](#) exhibits artwork of Littleton Public School students, statewide artists, ACC student artists, and faculty/staff artists on a year-round basis. ACC's Facilities Rental Department also rents space to a variety of community and business organizations for meetings and events, furthering the college-community connection.

ACC recognizes the need to give back to the community through service learning projects, benefitting both the students participating in these opportunities as well as the community organizations they serve. ACC recently joined the Community Works Institute as a member of [Campus Compact of the Mountain West](#), a membership organization of colleges and universities devoted to promoting civic learning and elevating higher education engagement in the region. ACC facilitates blood drives to benefit outside organizations, such as Children's Hospital Colorado. ACC's [Sustainability Club](#) conducts a "clothing swap" each year as a service to ACC students and employees.

ACC engages business and industry in a variety of ways. Advisory Committees work in tandem with Career and Technical Education programs and ACC works closely with Arapahoe/Douglas County Works!, a member of the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment's statewide network of workforce centers, to understand the current needs of industry in the Denver metropolitan area. ACC recently partnered with the University of Colorado-Denver Jake Jobs Center for Entrepreneurship on "Launchpad," a new [Entrepreneurship Certificate](#). The Launchpad Certificate incorporates instruction, networking, mentoring by seasoned entrepreneurs and participation in the Jake Jobs Business Plan competition.

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1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Summary

ACC's mission is clear and is articulated publicly. It guides the institution's actions and decisions to achieve ACC's vision "to be the leader in community college education in the state of Colorado" and reflects the collective values of ACC's stakeholders. Through the strategic plan, ACC continues to strengthen all aspects of the mission to promote the success of students, employees, and the broader community.

ACC has provided evidence that ensures the College meets Criterion One and is continuing to make improvements to meet its mission through efforts outlined via the strategic directions and goals of its 2015-2020 Strategic Plan:

- Maintain sensitivity to the demographics of ACC students, faculty, and staff through multiple activities and events designed and implemented through the College Diversity and Inclusivity Project.
- Demonstrate commitment to diversified experiences across academic programs and the overall College environment via the transformation of curriculum and co-curriculum.
- Establish and foster effective partnerships to increase access and student success through the expansion of career pathways, student internships, and increased scholarship opportunities.
- Explore and establish meaningful partnerships with business, industry, other educational entities, community organizations, and governmental agencies that model best practices implemented at other community colleges.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Argument

Arapahoe Community College (ACC) is a part of the Colorado Community College System (CCCS). CCCS comprises the State's largest system of higher education, with 13 colleges across Colorado serving more than 151,000 students annually. All CCCS colleges are governed by the policy making body State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE). SBCCOE governs CCCS and all member colleges with the role of establishing [overall strategy](#) and leadership of the State's 13 community colleges as well as secondary and post-secondary Career and Technical Education in the State of Colorado.

The [nine members of SBCCOE](#) are appointed by the Governor of Colorado and confirmed by the State Senate. In addition to the nine voting members, SBCCOE includes one community college faculty member and one student member in a non-voting capacity. The responsibility of the nine board members includes acting as the body corporate, governing board, and administrators of occupational education at the postsecondary and secondary level and as the approving authority for Veterans' education. SBCCOE policy development is driven by State rules and regulations, and resulting language in the policy is broad and aligned to the strategic mission: "To provide an accessible, responsive learning environment that facilitates the achievement of educational, professional and personal goals by our students and other members of our communities in an atmosphere that embraces academic excellence, diversity, and innovation."

SBCCOE appoints a CCCS President whose responsibilities include establishing procedures for enacting Board policy. Each member college president reports to the CCCS President. The CCCS President acts as a representative of the SBCCOE when working with and visiting the member colleges including Arapahoe Community College. The CCCS President delegates control and day-to-day management to the presidents of member colleges through [established policies and procedures](#).

ACC's Financial Functions

Arapahoe Community College is committed to operate with integrity and in a manner consistent with being a publicly-funded State agency. ACC is required to adhere to all fiscal rules, regulations, procedures, and policies that are in place for the State of Colorado and the Colorado Community College System.

ACC follows State and CCCS policy and procedures for all matters related to accounting, budgeting, and procurement. The [State of Colorado Fiscal Rules](#), [State of Colorado Procurement Code of](#)

[Ethics](#) and [Rules](#), Colorado Community College System [Accounting Procedure Manual](#) and [Series 8 of Board Policies and System President Procedures](#) govern all fiscal practice at ACC. The rules and policies are operationalized at ACC through process and workflow documents and forms as evidenced by the following examples:

- [Purchase Requisition Form](#);
- [Travel Request Forms](#), [Travel Reimbursement Form](#); and
- [P-Card Agreement](#)

All documents and forms are aligned to CCCS policy and procedures; they are accessible to faculty and staff on the ACC Portal's employee tab.

Several controls are initiated by the State of Colorado and the Colorado Community College System to ensure compliance with all policies, rules, and guidelines. An annual [fiscal compliance packet](#) is submitted to the State and CCCS. This document provides assurances that ACC is abiding by required practices. An [audit](#) of the Colorado Community College System is conducted by an external firm on an annual basis. Each CCCS college participates but may not be required to be included in the full scope audit each year. All CCCS fiscal officers are required to attend annual training that includes information about ethics, risk, and contracts. This training is mandatory to maintain State Controller signature delegation authority. Training resources are provided to faculty and staff through mandatory training for all procurement card holders and via the ACC Portal, an example of which is the [Purchasing 101](#) presentation.

For grant purposes, ACC follows federal guidelines and any other specific guidelines as determined by the [grant agreement](#). In the instance that the grant does not have specific fiscal rules, ACC follows the State and CCCS guidelines and rules. ACC consistently will apply the strictest interpretation from a fiscal point of view including timesheets, procurement, and auditing.

ACC's Academic Functions

Program and course development and offerings are established through several processes that rely on the expertise from various employee roles at the College. Program development is governed by [Colorado Department of Higher Education \(CDHE\) policy](#), [Series 9 of Board Policy and President's Procedure](#), Arapahoe Community College Procedures (AP) and workflows, and external regulatory and accreditation requirements. Academic programs are required to be reviewed annually through a formalized process resulting in a snapshot status at the prefix level demonstrated by the [Health, Math and Science 2015 program review](#). Every three years, a more comprehensive internal review is conducted that explores finer details of the prefix as demonstrated by the [Business, Management & Retail Sales review document](#). Five-year renewal requirements also exist for any career and technical education (CTE) program. CCCS provides requirements for the renewal process in the [CTE Administrators Handbook Section 5.00 Postsecondary Program Approval Requirements](#) that align to the integrity of the program.

A key component in the program development, approval, renewal, and closure is the Curriculum Committee. [ACC's Curriculum Committee](#) is composed of a cross-disciplinary set of faculty members, instructional project coordinator, advisor, and registrar. This group is responsible for reviewing program changes, new courses, and new programs as well as assisting with the development of processes and definitions. The Committee has established [forms](#) that require multiple signature authorization prior to inclusion of program changes in the catalog or advertisement to students. A challenge has been the application of contact hours to the various instructional types and delivery methods that exist at ACC. During the 2016 academic year, the curriculum committee has

undertaken a project to establish definitions and guidelines in [AP 9-12 Curriculum Development](#) for the application of contact hours and credit hours for the purpose of program development and course scheduling.

ACC's Personnel Functions

ACC is governed by the policies, regulations, and rules required by the Colorado Department of Personnel as outlined by the [State Personnel Board Rules, Universal Policies](#) published by the Department of Personnel and Administration's Division of Human Resources, and [Series 3 of Board Policies and System President Procedures](#). These policies, rules, and procedures apply to all staff at ACC including the "Estates" discussed below and any hourly employees, student employees, and, as applicable, Work Study students. ACC adheres to all required Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) rules and regulations as demonstrated by the inclusion of [language on all job descriptions](#) and the [employment online landing page](#). All faculty or administrator positions for which ACC is hiring go through the required hiring process as outlined by procedure [AP 3-10a Employment Standards For Instructors](#) and [AP 3-10b Employment Selection Procedure](#). All positions existing at ACC have a [job description](#) on file that lists required and preferred candidate qualifications, the guide for search committees, the qualifications they are seeking in candidates, and duties required for the position. Employees are encouraged to embrace the [recommendations of the Diversity Task Force](#) that include the use of best practices when conducting resume review and interviews.

ACC has three "Estates" the membership of which is based on the employee designation as determined by job description, responsibilities, and position description questionnaire. The three estates are Faculty, Administrator, and Classified. Each estate elects an [executive committee](#) responsible for conducting at least [monthly assemblies](#) that serve as an opportunity to share information and voice any concerns that may be shared across the estate. The president of each estate attends all [Leadership Team](#) meetings. These three estates are one aspect of the shared governance approach at ACC. The ACC [shared governance statement](#) provides details about ACC's philosophy and strategies regarding shared governance.

Communication for and between employees at ACC is a cornerstone of the College's operations. Regular communication opportunities include the monthly [ACC Insider newsletters](#), four [College-wide meetings per academic year](#), two all-College "budget roadshow" presentations, [an annual safety presentation](#), various notifications including [FERPA notification](#), and access to student newsletters and student publications. Employees participate in several all-College professional development and training initiatives. The week prior to fall and spring semester is known as Building Campus Connections. This week includes mandatory all-College, division, and department meetings along with optional professional development sessions that allow for sharing of new regulatory requirements and best practices in teaching and learning. One day is set aside each fall and each spring for professional development that includes breakout sessions covering a wide variety of topics of employee appeal as well as College-wide division and/or department meetings.

ACC adheres to all required training and disclosures that are driven by Federal, State, and CCCS policy. All employees are required to complete annual [Workplace Answers](#) training for meeting the requirements of Title IX and the Clery Act. [Accessibility training](#) is required for those employees who are in the classroom or develop materials for students, staff, or public consumption. Employees are required to abide by the [SBCCOE BP 3-70](#) Colorado Community College System Code of Ethics and if applicable must complete an annual disclosure and notification of conflicts of interest form.

ACC's Auxiliary Functions

Auxiliary units at Arapahoe Community College are fully integrated into the culture and operations of the College. All auxiliary units abide by State of Colorado, Colorado Community College System, and ACC policies, procedures, and guidelines mentioned above in the fiscal section. Auxiliary units fully engage in College-wide initiatives including participation on the [Strategic Plan Content Council](#) by the executive director of the ACC Foundation and the executive director of Community and Workforce Programs. Similar to other administrative units, auxiliary units are required to submit annual assessment reports, one example of which is from the [Community Education and Workforce Training unit](#).

All auxiliary unit employees are members of the appropriate employee “Estate” as discussed in the Personnel section. This ensures auxiliary unit employees are fully integrated into the College environment. The complexity of this integration sometimes presents challenges for particular auxiliary departments. At times work responsibilities of personnel funded through auxiliary unit monies are not strictly associated with the auxiliary unit. As an example, ACC’s Fitness Center functions as an auxiliary unit, but portions of the Fitness Center are used for academic purposes and funded through the general fund. Personnel in that department may perform cross functions due to the variety of constituents served.

Additionally, the Community Education, Workforce Training, Fitness Center, and Child Development Center are known to be operating at a loss on a year-over-year basis. This has resulted in an initial examination of business practices to determine adjustments that need to be made for the continued operation of the units. ACC is making strides in this area as demonstrated by the development and implementation of the [Child Development Center’s action plan](#). ACC is also continuing work on the development of a revised and fair indirect cost recovery structure that encourages increased revenue generation.

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2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Argument

ACC is compelled to present itself in an ethical and clear manner to build meaningful connections with past, present, and future students as well as community stakeholders. Students have many choices when selecting a college to meet their educational goals. Truthful and meaningful presentation of ACC through marketing and recruitment contributes to the reputation of the institution and establishes the high standards of the College as a quality choice.

Cost to Students.

The SBCCOE considers and sets tuition and fees on an annual basis at its public April Board meeting. This allows for transparent discussion and deliberations on action items such as tuition and fees. Once tuition and fees are set, current and prospective students have access to online resources that provide current information about cost of attendance and payment options.

The ACC website provides students, parents, and the public several additional resources about tuition, fees, and options for payment. The Financial Aid Office, Cashiers Office, Scholarship Office, Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF), and Veteran Services Center also provide resources on their webpages. ACC's [net price calculator](#) provides estimated cost of attendance based on several factors. Calendars and deadlines for payment as well as collection processes are addressed on the Cashiers Office webpage. A plethora of resources are provided for financial aid applicants including [FAQs](#), [deadlines](#), and [instructions](#). [Tuition and fees](#) have a dedicated website that includes details about specific fees and COF stipends clarifying the full cost of tuition and COF stipend reduction.

Catalogs and Handbooks

The ACC Catalog is accessible via the header of all ACC webpages. The Catalog contains details about [paying for school](#), [getting started](#), [academic policies and procedures](#), and [legal notices](#). The Catalog also contains [academic program information](#) and [course descriptions](#). Updates occur annually and as needed due to policy or procedural changes. The Curriculum Committee is responsible for approving academic program and course description updates. Administrators and faculty are listed in the [Catalog](#) as well as the [website](#); both sites list the credentials of these personnel.

The [Student Handbook](#) acts as a supplement to the Catalog and is accessible online. Alternate formats such as hard copy or braille can be requested through the Student Life office or the Student Access Services (formerly Disabilities Services) office. The handbook includes information about campus safety, communication, technology, financial matters, learning outcomes, and student resources including clubs and support services.

Annual publication of the [Faculty/Instructor Handbook](#) provides information pertinent to the instructional aspects of College operations. Information is targeted to faculty as well as adjunct instructors. Topics include classroom procedures, facilities information, support services, and student resources.

Although ACC attempts to continuously monitor existing processes, forms, and webpages, the sheer volume of pages and resources available inevitably leads to some out-of-date information. ACC continuously reviews and revises its web pages; site check software is used to determine broken links; and ACC web analytics staff review and repair any errors.

Academic Programs

Information regarding academic programs is included in the Catalog and Student Handbook as mentioned above. The most popular way for students, community members, and faculty and staff to access information about specific academic programs is ACC's website. Each ACC program web page is formatted to a template designed to provide current and prospective students as well as the community with relevant, clear, and consistent information. The template includes gainful employment data, links to course descriptions, program application processes, industry exam pass rates, graduation rates, HLC accreditation, programmatic accreditation information, and contact information. An example of these elements is displayed on the [Physical Therapist Assistant program page](#). A single page that contains all accreditation information in a consolidated manner is in development. Program handbooks are produced for academic programs requiring secondary admission procedures. The handbooks contain information about the instructional programs' requirements. These are described in depth in the Federal Compliance Document.

Faculty and academic department chairs have identified the process for developing and revising academic programs as disjointed and confusing. The process of moving a program change from conception to curriculum committee to State/Federal approval to accreditation to inclusion in the Catalog is not clear nor easy. The confusion can lead to program changes being communicated to students prematurely. Deans, the registrar, and department chairs have started implementing work processes that include documentation of changes, checkpoints for any change, and roles and responsibilities of faculty and staff for program changes and development.

Recruitment and Admissions.

ACC adheres to consumer protection as required by Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and the CCCS. CDHE establishes policies for state institutions of higher education for the purpose of implementing "[C.R.S. 23-1-125 Commission directive - student bill of rights](#)". The Students Bill of Rights is implemented by CDHE through the [appeals process](#). SBCCOE policy [Series 4 – Students](#) provides all consumer protection information. ACC provides the information mentioned above to inform student of their rights.

ACC has implemented the Banner Recruiter software module that streamlines communication with interested students. The software establishes norms of communication and messaging to ensure that relevant and timely information is provided to future students. This Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool will guide new students through the application and registration process. ACC is also involved in the piloting of the Educational Advisory Board's (EAB) Student Success Collaborative Navigate product that addresses "dropout culprits" by providing guided onboarding, analytics-based academic planning, course scheduling that accounts for academic and life responsibilities, and personalized support to keep students on-track until completion.

The 2015 restructuring of the Student Services division at ACC to include a Vice President of Student Affairs has proven to be beneficial. A positive outcome of this new position, and subsequent reorganization, is that marketing, website development, admissions, and recruitment are aligned in that division of the College and to ACC's value statements of Community and Inclusion. This will

result in more consistent communication of information to students and the community based on a shared and aligned leadership strategy.

Open Records Act

As a State-funded institution of higher education, ACC must abide by all statutory requirements as outlined in C.R.S. 24-72-201 known as the [Colorado Open Records Act \(CORA\)](#). When presented with a request, ACC responds within the timeframe allotted by law. [Arapahoe Procedure 3-110 Records Management and Colorado Open Records Act Request](#) establishes the record manager at ACC.

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2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

[Colorado Revised Statute 23-60-102](#) authorized the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education. The role of [SBCCOE](#) is a policy-making body that oversees all aspects of its community colleges and Career and Technical Education in the State of Colorado. In this capacity, SBCCOE governs CCCS and establishes overall strategy and leadership of the 13 state-supported community colleges. ACC is an autonomous member college of CCCS.

Priorities of ACC's Governing Board

The nine members of [SBCCOE](#) are appointed by the Governor of Colorado and confirmed by the State Senate. In addition to the nine voting members, SBCCOE includes one community college faculty member and one student member in non-voting capacity. SBCCOE policies are established independently but are aligned to State of Colorado statutory regulations and to Colorado Department of Higher Education and Colorado Commission on Higher Education policies and guidelines. SBCCOE establishes policies and general standards of operations in the areas of College Personnel, Students, Internal Audit, Fiscal, Buildings and Grounds, and Safety and Security. These policies are operationalized in two ways. The [CCCS President's Procedures](#) are adopted and implemented for CCCS as a whole. At ACC, [operational procedures](#) are adopted and guide the day-to-day implementation of the Board Policies and System President's Procedures.

SBCCOE acts independently within the parameters of State and Federal laws and policies to advance the vision and mission of its colleges. The Board has the authority to organize as demonstrated by [Board Policy 2-10 Board Committee Structure](#), which describes the makeup of the Board and committee responsibility. [Board Policy 4-20 Student Tuition and Fees/Scholarships](#) demonstrates the authority of the Board in approval for tuition, special rates, and fees. [Series 8 of Board Policies and System President Procedures](#) outlines the fiscal responsibilities and controls that are adopted for the CCCS colleges. The SBCCOE guided the development of and approved the [CCCS 2015-2025 Strategic Plan](#).

SBCCOE has authority to approve college projects and budgets within the State of Colorado rules and law. The Board provides final approval to move forward with CCCS projects as well as college-specific projects that require Board approval. An example of this is ACC's Fitness Center remodel request at the [December 2015 Board meeting](#). [ACC's annual budget request](#) is presented to the

SBCCOE for approval during the regular Board meeting each June.

ACC's Governing Board Reviews/Considers Interests of ACC's Constituencies

Monthly Board meetings provide college presidents the opportunity to update SBCCOE on college initiatives. In addition, a written [ACC Monthly Board Report](#) is submitted prior to each Board meeting that serves to inform SBCCOE about activities and outcomes at the College, in alignment with the SBCCOE strategic plan. The President's office sends out a monthly call to employees for report items. These items are generated by staff and faculty as appropriate, compiled by the executive assistant, and submitted in an accessible format.

SBCCOE rotates locations of their meetings; ACC hosts one Board meeting bi-annually. This provides the Board an opportunity to visit the College and allows faculty, staff, and students the opportunity to attend a meeting and interact with SBCCOE members. In addition to monthly updates, each SBCCOE governing Board member is assigned as a liaison to each college. ACC's liaison is Mr. Rich Martinez, who participates in graduation ceremonies and College visits and represents ACC to the SBCCOE.

While the SBCCOE monthly agenda allows for any one person or group to address the Board, the vast majority of CCCS employees and other stakeholder groups do not have routine interaction with the Board. This constraint is mitigated through the variety of specific task forces and special project groups who do have the opportunity to engage with the Board. In addition, several Board meetings throughout the year include a standing agenda presentation by a college-designated outstanding program, faculty, and student.

Several SBCCOE policies authorize the formation of stakeholder groups to accomplish CCCS goals. Representatives of these groups have the authority and responsibility of providing input to SBCCOE about the CCCS and college activities. [Board Policy 2-30 State Faculty Advisory Council and Faculty Shared Governance](#) establishes a faculty forum at each college and the State Faculty Advisory Council (SFAC) to maintain effective communication among the Board, CCCS, and faculty of the college. [Board Policy 4-25 State Student Advisory Council](#) establishes an advisory council of students that includes representatives from each college's student government association. One member of the council is elected annually to serve as the student representative to the State Board.

On behalf of the SBCCOE, the CCCS convenes [several stakeholder groups](#) for meetings at regular intervals throughout the year. The [Educational Services Council](#) meets monthly, is comprised of Instruction and Student Affairs Vice Presidents, and provides input for CCCS implementation of policy, procedures, and centralized initiatives. The fiscal officers meet regularly to align budgetary priorities, goals, and policy of CCCS colleges. A registrars' group exists to provide the opportunity for two-year college registrars to meet regularly, engage in professional development opportunities, discuss issues impacting their respective institutions, determine solutions, and ensure consistency in practice among CCCS institutions. The Information Technology Committee advises CCCS about prioritization of technology implementation. The 13 community college presidents also meet monthly with the CCCS President and members of the CCCS senior staff to discuss and evaluate executive level issues, procedures, and matters and make recommendations to the Board.

A major focus of the SBCCOE in recent years has been the role and relationship of non-permanent instructors within CCCS. The work of an Adjunct Task Force, convened in 2014 to explore the relationship between the colleges and adjunct instructors, resulted in a [November 2014 report](#) identifying a variety of gaps and areas for improvement. Recommendations in this report were reviewed at a subsequent Board meeting and approved for implementation at all CCCS colleges. ACC's implementation plan and activities are discussed in more detail in Criterion 5.

The development of the 2015-2025 CCCS Strategic Plan reflects the importance that SBCCOE places on understanding stakeholders' needs. The plan was crafted through an extensive outreach effort that included strategies to understand the needs and challenges of the colleges. This outreach is demonstrated on [page 12](#) of the CCCS strategic plan noting visits to all colleges across the State. ACC faculty and staff had an opportunity to provide input regarding aspects of the CCCS strategic plan.

ACC's Governing Board Preserves its Independence in Support of ACC

SBCCOE members are required to abide by [BP 3-70 Code of Ethics](#) that outlines the standard of ethics and contains annual disclosure requirements and political party affiliation clauses. Protection exists for individuals reporting breaches in the codes of ethics in [BP 3-71 Whistle Blower Protection Policy](#). This policy includes protection from retaliation.

As State entities, the SBCCOE, CCCS, and ACC are required to abide by all open government laws enacted. The [Colorado Open Records Act](#) and Colorado Open Meeting requirements outline what information is available to the public, how the public can request access to information, and which information is protected by executive sessions.

ACC's Governing Board Delegates Day-to-Day Management of the College to the Administration; they Expect the Faculty to Oversee Academic Matters

SBCCOE authority rests in the policies and procedures established. Policy development is driven by State rules and regulations. Resulting language in the policy is broad and general so that each college is able to implement according to the needs of the communities it serves. The challenge of the Board is their oversight of all 13 State-supported community colleges. Fully understanding the strategies and initiatives of each individual college requires the Board to operate at the policy level and leave the details to the individual colleges. By assigning a Board liaison to each college, the SBCCOE ensures additional oversight and connection to the individual colleges. Implementation of CCCS strategies can be a complex challenge for ACC at times, as demonstrated by the application of the new developmental education curriculum. However, by working through issues at CCCS stakeholder meetings and sharing best practices among sister colleges, the norm is that growing pains are short lived. This collaboration is a major strength of a Board governing multiple colleges.

For example, [BP 7-01 Audit Committee](#) establishes the Audit Committee as a subcommittee of the Board. The role of this Committee is to oversee audit processes, work with the external auditor, and provide policy oversight. The policy does not provide authority to the Committee to oversee or dictate day-to-day work or line-item spending unless otherwise required by State law.

Each college has a president appointed by the SBCCOE who reports to the CCCS President. SBCCOE delegates control and day-to-day management of the college to the President through various policies. [BP 8-60 Delegation of Signature Authority](#) delegates authority for signature to the CCCS President, college presidents, or college chief business officers. [BP 2-25 College Advisory Council](#) requires an advisory council be formed at each college, whose role is to advise, serve as liaisons to the external community, and promote college programs.

Academic responsibilities are delegated to standing faculty committees and taskforces. Work done by the [Statewide Faculty Curriculum Committee](#) and at annual two-plus-two faculty meetings is representative of the delegation of duties from the SBCCOE to faculty. CCCS task forces are established to work on large scale projects such as the Developmental Education Task Force. The work of this Task Force has resulted in the construction and implementation of new developmental education curriculum. Each college has implemented the [policies, procedures, and recommendations](#)

[of the Task Force](#) in a manner that reflects its own student body and educational outcome goals. The previously mentioned State Faculty Advisory Council has the authority and responsibility to act as a liaison between college faculty and the Board and make recommendations to the System President and SBCCOE on policies and other areas of interest.

It is also the responsibility of each CCCS college to assess service area needs and to develop a plan for addressing those needs. Evidence of ACC's ability to operate independently is ACC's [strategic plan development process](#). The development of the strategic plan was fully a local effort with participation of faculty, staff, and students directing the process. ACC's resulting strategic plan is aligned to SBCCOE and CCCS goals but is wholly its own.

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2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Argument

ACC is committed to a learning environment that embraces the exploration of teaching techniques, learning styles, and instructional formats. The College is driven by faculty members' freedom of expression and their ability to pursue and teach in a way that leads to student success. The College provides faculty the freedom to create their own class content within parameters established by the [Colorado Common Course Numbering System \(CCCNS\)](#).

ACC's Policies and Procedures

ACC defines Institutional, Instructor, Student, Guest/Speaker, and Library freedom and responsibilities in [Arapahoe Procedure 1-40 Academic Freedom](#). This procedure calls for "institutional integrity in the way the College manages its affairs—specifies its goals, selects and retains its faculty, admits students, establishes curricula, and fixes its fields of services". [AP 3-20 Due Process for Faculty](#) is established to provide a fair and orderly process for the involuntary termination of employment of faculty members at Arapahoe Community College. Faculty on permanent status after 3 years of being provisional have the liberty to run their classes at their discretion while meeting commonly agreed upon outcomes approved by faculty at the College and through the State Faculty Advisory Council.

[CCCS President Procedure 3-31 Evaluation of Faculty Performance](#) and [Arapahoe Procedure 3-31 Evaluation of Faculty Job Performance](#) establish the guidelines and processes of evaluation of faculty. The goal of faculty evaluation is to assess faculty performance and reward contribution to the success of students and improve the environment of the College community. The evaluation process applies to all faculty and relies on the establishment of a performance plan and evaluation of teaching and service components of the job. These procedures establish a fair method of evaluation that incorporates the aforementioned definitions of academic freedom and due process.

ACC's Student-Centered Pursuit of Learning

[Arapahoe Procedure 4-30a Student Code of Conduct: Responsibilities and Rights](#) ensures the rights of all ACC students to pursue their educational objectives and details the rights of students. Academic rights include freedom of expression and evaluation based on academic performance, not based on opinion or other factors. Students also have the ability to file grievances if they feel rights are being violated.

[Student groups, clubs and organizations](#) are prevalent at ACC. Groups are encouraged to pursue interests and enhance their learning experience at the College. One example of the freedom of expression and pursuit of truth is the student-run [Writers Studio Club](#). This club is one mechanism that provides students a voice at ACC through workshops and presentations on interesting and essential topics in the world of creative writing. [Board Policy 4-50 Student Government](#) establishes the right to form and organize student government and requires organizational documents for operation at each CCCS college. [ACC's student government organization](#) is provided an opportunity

to interact with College leadership through a variety of ways, including working with the Assistant Director of Student Life as an advisor, consulting with the President's Student Advisory Council, and meeting regularly with the President.

Diverse speakers are invited to the campus. The subject matter addressed by the speakers is relevant and timely. Diversity of speakers and viewpoints expressed are paramount to the learning environment. This diversity can be seen most explicitly in the ["Hot Topic" speaker forums](#) that invite a wide variety of outside speakers to share their views without fear of controversy in an inclusive and engaging format. The majority of events held at ACC are open to public.

ACC Faculty Experience Freedom in Teaching

Faculty create their own assignments and rubrics for grading as well as select their own materials and teaching tools. Faculty in some departments form committees to select textbooks and instructional tools. While all faculty – full-time and adjunct – adhere to the same rigor and standards, there is great diversity across [syllabi](#), course calendars, and models of teaching. Faculty also drive the development of curriculum and new courses. Evidence of faculty-driven course development can be seen in the broad offerings and types of courses available to students. As an example, ACC offers the course ["Eastern Wisdom"](#).

All initiatives developed by CCCS and implemented across all member colleges are vetted through committees and/or taskforces. These committees and taskforces are composed of a variety of stakeholders from multiple CCCS colleges. Therefore ACC's voice is one of many that contribute to the implementation of CCCS initiatives. As an example, course contact hours and credit for prior learning initiatives are inconsistent across CCCS colleges. The topic of establishing common contact hours across all 13 colleges has been of interest to CCCS. Implementing common contact hours for all CCCS colleges has the potential to impact aspects of articulation and teaching at ACC. Another example of a CCCS initiative that caused disruption at ACC is the Alternative Credit Project. In this particular project, faculty members have limited input regarding how credit is to be awarded. There is a perception among some faculty that decisions are being made by CCCS without a faculty voice.

There are several mechanisms in place to overcome this concern and encourage a faculty voice in CCCS initiatives. ACC faculty are encouraged to participate in the annual [faculty-to-faculty conference](#) (two-to-two), in which faculty from Colorado's community colleges share best practices and discuss issues in an environment that allows for a free exchange of information. This conference is one aspect of professional development opportunities offered to faculty and instructors, the learning of which can be applied as appropriate to the classroom setting.

Title IX and external compliance requirements from the various policy making organizations (Department of Education, external accreditors, etc.) has potential to limit freedom of expression due to concerns such as lawsuits or implications that the classroom is not a safe place. This concern may alter the College's relationship with high school students concurrently enrolled at ACC due to their age. Arapahoe Community College's Center for Professional Enrichment has been established to identify and provide a variety of [professional development opportunities](#) to address some of these concerns.

ACC recognizes the need to ensure adjuncts feel sufficiently engaged in departmental discussions, including those regarding course content and choice of textbooks. Additional support is offered to adjunct instructors through the [Adjunct Advancement Program](#). Professional development activities through this program are intended to contribute to the expertise in the classroom and enhance the personalization of the pursuit of teaching and learning.

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2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, students and staff.

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

ACC Provides Oversight/Support Services to Ensure Research and Scholarly Practice

ACC does not focus on scholarly research as part of its strategic plan or statutory mission. In order to accommodate the occasional request of a researcher, an [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\) for Human Subjects Research](#) is in place. The role of the IRB is to review proposed research projects that involve the use of human subjects, ensure that the individuals involved in the project are treated ethically, ensure that all subjects are provided with substantial information about the study and consent to be a subject in the study, and ensure that all private information will be handled with confidentiality.

ACC's IRB is registered with the Federal Office for Human Research Protection as an [Institutional Review Board with the identification of IORG0005103](#). The IRB reviews all projects and programs involving human subjects in accordance with [ACC's IRB Charter and Operating Procedures](#) and regulations established Federally or by the sponsor.

ACC Students are Offered Guidance in the Ethical Use of Information Resources

Arapahoe Community College provides students multiple resources to assist them in understanding and learning the ethical use of information in their decision-making processes. ACC offers students guidance through direct instruction and modeling behavior, makes pertinent resources (described below) available, and provides faculty professional development for emerging challenges in this area. ACC's approach is designed to round out the educational experience and help with translating skills from the academic environment to the workplace. In turn, this better prepares students to be more responsible citizens and establishes lifelong skills, ensuring the credibility of their ACC education and their degree for transfer.

Faculty and adjunct instructors vary in how they handle plagiarism issues. Contributing to this inconsistency is the fact that research online is complex, and there are many citation styles. The resources described below are examples provided to the student and to faculty members and adjunct instructors to combat these concerns.

Faculty and adjuncts provide direct instruction on what it means to plagiarize. In class, information is provided at minimum via the [syllabus](#) and online through [D2L announcements](#). All students in biology and mortuary science courses are required to complete a [test on plagiarism](#). Students are also required to review information about appropriate methods to [work with cadavers](#). Students who utilize Career Center resources benefit from direct modeling from staff to establish the importance of resume development with truth and honesty. New student orientation includes a session with a

[librarian](#) during which available resources about academic integrity and plagiarism are introduced. Additionally, staff are available in the Writing Center to answer questions concerning appropriate citations.

Resources available to students are primarily web based. Information about research assistance can be found via the [library landing page](#). Assistance includes one-on-one sessions, tutorials, and subject guides. Information literacy classes are tailored to the course needs. A [video](#) on ACC's YouTube channel provides information about plagiarism. Students also are provided access to software that holds them accountable. The TurnItIn program is used widely by faculty and adjuncts. Faculty and adjuncts are able to pull [analytics](#) from the TurnItIn program. In addition, faculty and adjuncts are provided professional development opportunities that include best practices about academic integrity and plagiarism.

ACC Has and Enforces Policies on Academic Honesty and Integrity

Arapahoe Community College publishes an [Academic Misconduct Statement](#). This statement provides definitions and holds students accountable for their actions, whether they be intentional or unintentional. Inconsistencies in the reporting of incidences of plagiarism among faculty and adjuncts do occur. Faculty and adjuncts try to balance between the teachable moment and intentional cheating. ACC's [Academic Integrity Committee](#) grew out of the many appeals that came through Student Life. The Committee is composed of faculty across disciplines and schools in addition to a representative from Student Life and a representative from the ACC Library. Consistent practices regarding how plagiarism is reported give faculty and adjuncts the tools and authority to report plagiarism and allow ACC to address plagiarism as soon as possible. The Committee is working toward standards across all disciplines to address how students can avoid plagiarism and are working to provide faculty and students with concrete and relevant examples. The Committee provides [presentations](#) that focus on definitions and best practices for the intentional design of assignments and assessments to discourage plagiarism. Faculty are driven to hold each other responsible and to adhere to the same standards. This allows Student Life to address and enforce any appeals in a consistent manner.

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2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Summary

ACC has provided evidence that the College acts with integrity and conducts its work in an ethical and responsible manner. The College operates in accordance with State of Colorado laws and policies. The SBCCOE and CCCS establish additional standards of practice through policy and procedure. State of Colorado Fiscal Rules and the Accounting Procedure Manual establish clear expectations for fiscal practice. Academic program development is guided by the requirements of the Colorado Department of Higher Education and CCCS procedures. Human Resources operates in a manner consistent with Colorado's State Personnel Rules and CCCS policy and procedure. All business is subject to the Colorado Open Records Act. ACC presents itself to students, community, and other stakeholders in a transparent and ethical manner through its website, FAQs, handbooks, and catalog. The College has available tools and resources about academic integrity for students, faculty, and staff. Finally, the College has established procedures that define rights, roles, and responsibilities for all stakeholder groups.

Our self-assessment has identified the following areas that provide opportunities for growth:

- Demonstrate a conscious effort in consistently applying academic misconduct procedures across all disciplines and course sections.
- Establish standard practices and processes for the development of new programs and courses to ensure communication to stakeholders about program changes is correct and timely.
- Maintain an increased focus on the business practices of auxiliary units to ensure personnel duties are within the parameters of the work unit, with a focus on continuing efforts to establish break-even or profitable units.
- Encourage continued ACC faculty and staff participation in SBCCOE and CCCS initiatives to ensure the College's voice is heard.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Argument

ACC Ensures the Appropriateness of Required Performance in Courses/Programs to Degrees/Certificates Awarded

ACC's instructional area applies several methods to ensure courses and programs are current and that students perform at the college level. These methods include the Curriculum Committee, common course numbering, guaranteed transfer pathways, program review and approval, program assessment, third party accreditors, external advisory groups, and the Academic Integrity Committee. The faculty-led Curriculum Committee reviews and approves all new courses and programs. Committee members apply a rigorous set of standards outlined in the [new program approval form](#) and [new course form](#). All new courses align with the CCCS Common Course Numbering (CCCNS) system. These courses are vetted through state-wide discipline groups and approved by the academic officers from each college. Of the over 2,000 courses on CCCNS, 500 of them have been approved by public 4-year institutions in Colorado as [guaranteed transfer courses](#). These courses are referred to as GT Pathways courses and will always transfer and apply to GT Pathways requirements in every Liberal Arts & Sciences bachelor's degree at every public Colorado institution. There is a current effort, initiated by the CCCS Provost, to incorporate LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes criteria into all guaranteed transfer courses. Newly approved courses are shared with appropriate Student Affairs personnel to ensure currency of Advising, Financial Aid, Registrar/Admissions, Outreach, and other staff.

Programs are reviewed annually by academic leadership (Vice President for Instruction, Academic Deans, and Community and Workforce Dean) per Arapahoe Community College Procedure 9-20 ([AP 9-20](#)) and provide a summary of the general health of each program. Additionally, all programs receive a comprehensive review every three years. At the State level, Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs are reviewed every five years. Enrollment, placement, and completion data are analyzed and department chairs provide a five-year plan for all CTE programs. At the department level, programs are required to participate in program assessment that assesses discipline outcomes and institution-wide student Learning Outcomes (see Criterion 4 for more details). Additional evidence that ACC students perform at college level includes pass rates on normed tests (e.g., nursing,

IT, paralegal, HIT) that are endorsed by third-party accreditors.

Academic Standing applies to all students who have completed 9 or more credits at ACC, regardless of the number of term credits they attempt from that point forward. ACC determines Academic Standing following the posting of the majority of term grades for each semester. Students placed on probation or suspended are notified of their status. Suspended students are not allowed to attend any CCCS college in the subsequent semester/s unless an appeal is approved. Academic Standing status is noted on the advising, official, and unofficial transcripts. The Academic Standing of a student is not specific or limited to ACC; it does impact a student's enrollment at other CCCS colleges. Students placed on Probation or Suspended will be notified of their status at their student email address only.

Because faculty recognized inconsistencies in rigor among program areas, a new [Academic Integrity Committee](#) was formed. The goal of the Committee is to promote a proactive culture of academic integrity at ACC by educating and supporting faculty in their mission to provide high-quality assignments that promote high-quality student work. The Committee also investigates current academic integrity issues at ACC and works with faculty, staff, and students to provide appropriate solutions.

ACC Differentiates Learning Goals between Program Offerings

The [ACC Catalog](#) provides information on the requirements for all associate level degrees and certificates. ACC awards the Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Arts, Associate of Science Degrees, and Certificates. Within the AA and AS degrees, [19 Degrees with Designation](#) are guaranteed to transfer. These agreements are statewide, have CDHE oversight, and apply to all State community colleges and 4-year public institutions. As ACC moves forward to develop [Bachelor of Applied Science degrees](#), systems will be put into place to articulate and differentiate the distinct learning objectives for 300- and 400-level courses.

ACC Ensures Consistency of Program Quality/Learning Goals Across Modes of Delivery and Locations

Faculty adhere to the CCCS requirement that all courses, regardless of delivery method, part of term, or location, maintain at least 80% consistency from course-to-course based on [CCCNS course competencies and course outline](#). All courses offered at ACC must be part of the CCCNS database and are consistent across all 13 CCCS colleges. To create uniformity across courses, faculty are encouraged to use a [UDL Syllabus Template](#) with required elements (e.g., accommodations statement, campus security statement, and opportunity to evaluate the course).

All courses (face-to-face, hybrid, and online) are required to use Desire2Learn (D2L), ACC's learning management system, for posting of a welcome announcement, faculty contact information, course syllabus, calendar (if not part of the syllabus), and an active, up-to-date grade book. The eLearning department reviews courses each semester for consistency and compliance and works with faculty on recommended improvements.

Full-time faculty are supervised by academic deans; adjunct instructors are supervised by department chairs or program coordinators. Each supervisor observes a minimum of one course per teacher per year as required in [AP 3-80](#). New faculty attend a new faculty orientation to introduce them to the mission and values of the College with emphasis on information needed for instruction and navigating ACC processes.

Concurrent enrollment (dual credit) courses follow the same requirements as outlined above. Faculty

qualifications, course syllabi, class activities, and assessment follow the same set of procedures and policies. Department chairs or concurrent enrollment liaisons visit high schools to conduct classroom observations. Teachers at the high schools meet annually with College faculty. Additional information is provided in Criterion 3.C.

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3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

Argument

ACC Assures Appropriateness of General Education Program to Educational Offerings and Degree Levels

Per the [College Catalog](#), all students receiving degrees acquire a general education component. The following list reflects expectations regarding general education coursework:

- Demonstrate college-level reading and communication
- Understand and apply mathematical concepts and reasoning
- Think critically and creatively, solve problems effectively, and extend knowledge to new environments
- Use appropriate and current technologies to collect, retrieve, organize, and process information
- Acknowledge social responsibility, good citizenship, and diversity
- Develop leadership, teamwork, relationship management, and conflict resolution skills

Through its assessment activities, Arapahoe Community College is continuously working to ensure its graduates have the skills required by their respective degree programs. The College offers both technical and liberal arts education, and because some programs must meet third party accreditation standards, the general education requirements may differ. All programs are in alignment with [Colorado Department of Higher Education \(CDHE\) requirements](#), which include standard general education requirements for all AA, AS, and AAS degrees.

Purposes, Content, of ACC's Intended General Education Requirements are Articulated and Grounded

ACC general education requirements are grounded in a framework based on institution-wide Learning Outcomes entitled [Learning Outcomes for Student Enrichment and Process Improvement](#). As a result

of ACC's last HLC visit, the institution revisited and strengthened the general education outcomes by identifying and defining a set of institution-wide Learning Outcomes. These learning outcomes address the knowledge, skills, and values that are fundamental to the personal and professional growth of ACC students, staff, and faculty. They were collaboratively developed by faculty and staff initially in March of 2010 and refined in the summer of 2011. The learning outcomes are grounded in the American Association of College and Universities [VALUE Initiative](#) (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education), a campus-based assessment initiative to determine "whether and how well students are meeting graduation level achievement in learning outcomes that both employers and faculty consider essential."

ACC employees have a responsibility to the student learning process, through either the stimulation, facilitation and/or support of student achievement. To ensure all students develop these skills and attitudes, assessment practices are in place for instructional programs as well as operational units across the College. Leadership is provided through the [College Assessment Project \(CAP\)](#). CAP is a multi-functional committee that provides coaching to Assessment Authors and review of assessment plans and reports for all assessment areas. Each assessment area selects two learning outcomes to assess in the annual assessment cycle. As an example, the Admissions and Records department selected Communication and Information Management in 2016. For the [Communication Learning Outcome](#), this department assessed the success of a new process implemented to streamline late registration for students. On the instructional side, an example of [assessment of the Communication Learning Outcome](#) from the Psychology department is a direct measure through pre/post-tests of the ability of students to differentiate the cognitive and behavioral components of human language, social interaction, and communication from the perspective of the psychology discipline.

ACC is proud of the advances made in the area of assessment. Participation in the HLC Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning and a focus on assessment for the Quality Initiative have contributed to a robust general education program.

ACC Engages Students in Collecting, Analyzing, and Communicating Information; Mastering Modes of Inquiry or Creative Work; and Developing Skills Adaptable to Changing Environments

In Colorado, Guaranteed Transfer (gt) Pathways courses, within the [gtPathways General Education Curriculum](#), must meet criteria in content, critical thinking, written communication, and technology (through information acquisition, application, analysis, synthesis, communication, and evaluation). To ensure quality education, each degree program employs instruction and assessments focusing on these criteria.

Examples of student engagement include: College Composition and Reading where students explore their own identity development and personality traits through scaffolded research projects. Students in the LIT 115/PSY 102 [Learning Community](#) bring in artifacts to present orally and on the online discussion board. Students practice information analysis as they create and design case studies or experiments, using multiple research methodologies around one question. Environmental Science [field-based labs](#) utilize experiential learning, collection and evaluation of data, and written lab reports. Communication students select their topics, research and evaluate information for speeches, and use technology for visual presentations that they will encounter in the workforce. Paralegal students learn to break down laws to understand that most issues are not black and white and to understand problems from the perspectives of all stakeholders.

Inquiry and creative work examples include [Computer Music Applications](#) that teach the basics of a particular software but give music students creative freedom to bring their individual skills and

interests to their projects. [Interior Design](#) students are assigned projects that invite creative inquiry to solve the “problem” presented to them. Geology students investigate globalization and find worldwide examples. Nursing and pharmacy students role-play patient scenarios.

Students learn to adapt to changing environments in a variety of ways. Many courses require students to work in groups and to switch roles during group projects. These practices increase students’ cultural literacy, problem-solving skills, and flexibility. Art students take their artwork into galleries and other venues to display and gain responses. Media students apply skills from traditional/analog media into digital media and vice versa. In ACC health programs, clinical rotations place students in a variety of settings (e.g., inner-city, suburbs, senior facilities, home care, and hospice).

Examples from Selected Departments. Learning outcomes are addressed in all programs. ACC’s HIT program exemplifies these outcomes: the Health Information Technology (HIT) program curriculum consists of learning activities involving application of database management, informatics, and data analytics competencies. Some learning activities use MS Excel to familiarize students with analysis of healthcare data to produce visualizations reflecting process outcomes. [Visualizations](#) are used by Health Information Management (HIM) professionals to present statistical summaries to the organization’s management team. Learning modules focus on the collection (extraction) of pertinent information from the healthcare provider’s database and in the manipulation, via Excel functionality, to demonstrate compliance with business and regulatory requirements. Beyond hands-on exposure to simulated healthcare business processes, students are asked to review scholarly papers produced by the HIM community. These learning activities prepare students for placement into an HIM assignment in the field.

The History department offers innovative education through Immersive Game-Based Learning (IGBL). Since 2012, one faculty member has developed and implemented [gamification in history courses](#). Gaming principles (e.g., role playing, strategic military and economic empire building, competition, level perks, and badges) motivate students to learn the curriculum, as well as the skills of teamwork, communication, critical thinking, and working with primary sources.

In Biology, four labs in every BIO 111 section work with the University of Colorado-Denver to complete real-life research while learning current techniques in biology. One project/lab in every BIO 204 section works with the University of Colorado-Boulder to complete real-life research while learning current techniques in microbiology (e.g., detecting antibiotic-resistant bacteria in Colorado waterways), particularly the analyses component of research, as well as data collection. [Science Café](#) is a community forum/roundtable in which ACC Biology faculty and instructors lead seminars, workshops, and roundtable discussions about current topics in biology. All students, faculty, staff, and community members are invited. Biology and English faculty and ACC students are forming a Pseudoscience Committee to increase awareness of pseudoscience in the media.

ACC Emphasizes Recognition of Human Cultural Diversity to Students

Recognizing human cultural diversity is a high priority at ACC and is supported by the CCCS mission: “To provide an accessible, responsive learning environment that facilitates the achievement of educational, professional and personal goals by our students and other members of our communities in an atmosphere that embraces academic excellence, diversity, and innovation.” Additionally, the [CCCS 2015-25 Strategic Plan](#) includes a key performance measure to ensure “equity in outcomes for students from underrepresented groups, as compared to overall student outcomes.” CCCS and all of the Colorado community colleges are committed to closing the attainment gap.

ACC’s Diversity Statement is: “We respect, understand, and embrace the differences and similarities

among our students, staff, faculty and the community we proudly serve. As a community, ACC encourages the richness of diversity and values the dignity of all persons. We strive to foster an equal and positive learning environment that reflects the diverse nature of the people of Colorado and the nation.” In addition, “Inclusive Culture” is one of the five strategic directions in [ACC’s Strategic Plan](#) that guides our actions and decisions to “maintain sensitivity to the demographics of our students, faculty and staff within the area we serve,” and “Inclusion” is an ACC value that supports our institutional mission: “we honor an open dialog in a safe environment that respects and embraces individual differences.” Further, one of ACC’s Learning Outcomes for Student Enrichment and Process Improvement is “Cultural Awareness: identify, distinguish, or express a diversity of aesthetic, cultural, and historical perspectives.”

There are many examples of how ACC supports diversity from student clubs, to institutional programming, to formal support services.

Diversity and Inclusivity Project. During the 2015-16 academic year, ACC’s former Diversity Committee met and collaboratively renamed the group the [College Diversity and Inclusivity Project](#) to better represent the work of the group. The team worked aggressively to move inclusivity projects forward. Notable projects include a series of "diversity" [questions](#) to be included in candidate interviews for administrators and faculty; workshops on ESL and ELL educator training; guest speakers on ACC’s campuses to increase diversity awareness; and planning for either an on-campus or virtual diversity/community area for students to meet and access academic, cultural, and community resources and technology.

Student Clubs. Student Clubs are discussed below and in Core Component 3E.

Institutional Programming. Student Life and Instruction collaborate throughout the year to bring programming to students and staff to celebrate diversity. Some examples include:

- A textural 2-D and 3-D art exhibit, [SharedVisions](#), with student work from both ACC and the Center for the Blind, was open to the community.
- A permanent exhibition on display in our entry hallways, The Milestone Project, includes photographs and biographies of individuals within the institution (faculty, staff, and students) as well as community members who were born outside of the U.S.
- We have enjoyed visiting artists and speakers such as blind African American jazz great [Henry Butler](#) and award-winning author of *Differences Matter: Communicating Social Identity* Brenda Allen.
- Student clubs such as the Equality Club and the Veterans Club honor our diverse student population.
- Annual study abroad courses provide students an opportunity to study and explore culture, business, and aesthetics across the globe.

Student Access Services. The [Student Access Services](#) department works with ACC students with disabilities to ensure they have access to learning environments where they can be successful. Acknowledging the advantages of an asset-based approach in place of a deficit-based approach, this department recently changed its name from Disability Services to Student Access Services.

Universal Design for Learning. The needs of all students are addressed through a robust initiative to promote [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#). In support of this initiative, ACC has written an [Accessibility Plan](#) and has required all employees to complete online training on how to make web content accessible. The eLearning department based their [assessment project](#) on UDL to monitor the institution’s progress. The results indicated 58% of employees completed the training during this first

year of implementation.

Faculty and Student Contributions to Scholarship, Creative Work, and Discovery of Knowledge

As stated in [AP 3-80](#), recognized aspects of faculty teaching assignments include participation in professional development and awareness of new instructional approaches and activities relevant to the assigned teaching field. Accordingly, many faculty publish and present scholarly work, often in collaboration. As a community college, the institution does not require faculty research; however, some ACC faculty continue to participate in this activity. The following examples highlight contributions across various departments.

Math faculty and students contribute to scholarly knowledge in their discipline. Math faculty present regularly at the Colorado Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges (ColoMATYC) meeting. For example, Russell Ellwood created and shared graphical animations that help students visualize important concepts. Cathy Schnakenburg, Alexis Venter, and Heidi Barrett presented a session on the benefits of integrating open-ended questions into the math curriculum. Students present at regional and national conferences. Approximately 20 ACC students attend the Pikes Peak Regional Undergraduate Math Conference every year; five have presented expository or research talks over the past five years. Additionally, mathematics faculty have presented the results of their research on ACC's developmental education program at the ColoMATYC (Colorado Math Association of Two Year Colleges) annual conference.

Faculty, administration, and student support services had roles in ACC's Developmental Education Redesign. Best practices and lessons learned were shared in a collection of [scholarly essays](#).

For several years, History faculty members have served as judges for [National History Day](#). This service reinforces another of ACC's strategic directions, "Collaborative Partnerships." The mission of National History Day is to provide students with opportunities to learn historical content and develop research, thinking, and communication skills through the study of history and to provide educators with resources and training to enhance classroom teaching.

Stacy Mintzer Herlihy and ACC's Psychology faculty, E. Allison Hagood, co-authored an article in [Human Vaccines & Immunotherapeutics](#) and a book, [Your Baby's Best Shot](#), that scientifically address misconceptions and controversies about vaccinations.

Published each spring, [Progenitor Art & Literary Journal](#) is an award-winning journal produced by ACC students in ENG 231. *Progenitor* accepts original and unpublished prose, art, and photography from contributors around the world. In continuous production since 1967, *Progenitor* has consistently ranked among the top college literary magazines in the country.

[The Colorado Gallery of the Arts at ACC](#) presents the annual juried Art Students Exhibit and exhibits of local and national artists. The Art department and the [Healing Arts program](#) at the Parker and Littleton Adventist Hospitals are collaborating on two exhibitions at the hospitals featuring visual arts, music, nature, and community outreach by Art students. In partnership with the Colorado Center for the Blind, ACC Biology faculty, Terry Harrison, conducts an annual shark dissection for blind/vision-impaired middle and high school students. In 2015, students from ACC and the Colorado Center for the Blind presented a collaborative exhibit of tactile art entitled "[SharedVisions](#)" at the Colorado Gallery of the Arts at ACC.

ACC Philosophy faculty, Dr. Jeff Broome, a highly-acclaimed Colorado and Wild West historian, has won national and international awards for his writings. Broome was consulted for a 10-week

historical series entitled [Legends & Lies: Into the West](#).

ACC Interior Design student Cynthia Cohen, won the National Kitchen & Bath Association's (NKBA) 2014-15 Student Design Competition in the "Bath Project" category. ACC has been ranked among the top nine schools nationwide in the NKBA's most recent [Excellence in Education ratings](#).

Members of the [ACC DemoSat team](#) (a subset of the Colorado Space Grant Consortium) built a scientific payload for an Edge of Space Sciences (EOSS) high-altitude hydrogen balloon. ACC's DemoSat payload, which was attached to the balloon, was developed to test mechanical doors so that future payloads might successfully obtain biological samples.

ACC partners with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) on the [U.S. Department of Education's First in the World \(FITW\) program](#). The FITW program, which effectively combines the strengths of both instructors and technology, provides grants to institutions of higher education to heighten the quality of learning experiences while increasing students' ability to meet employer standards entering the workforce.

In accordance with ACC's mission, the institution is committed to student success through innovative and responsive education. The examples above highlight professional development and creative, scholarly contributions of ACC faculty and students in various disciplines. Learning happens through experiences in formal and informal settings. As such, this work often extends beyond the classroom, anticipating and responding to the needs of the broader community.

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3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.
2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Argument

ACC has Sufficient Numbers of Faculty and Continuity of Faculty to Carry Out Classroom and Non-classroom Roles

Based on Spring 2016 (June 20) [Human Resources data](#), ACC employs 105 full-time faculty and approximately 380 part-time instructors. With 9,301 students, ACC has a 1:14.6 student/faculty ratio. For the 2014-15 AY, the percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty was [approximately 40%](#). Faculty and instructors follow the [Faculty/Instructor Handbook](#) to provide a quality, consistent experience for students. Full-time faculty have a teaching load of 30 credit hours per academic year, and adjunct instructors are limited to 13 credit hours each semester. [AP3-80](#) outlines the specific teaching and service responsibilities of a full-time faculty member. Typically, full-time faculty devote 70% of their time to teaching and 30% of their time to service. As identified in [AP3-31](#), faculty contribution to service may include, but is not limited to, departmental service such as advising and outreach, administrative assignments, and committee work; CCCS, College-wide, and campus committee work; sponsoring or participating in student activities; and attendance at College activities and events. Additional activities may include serving as the College representative on a local board or commission, making community or professional presentations, serving as a liaison to local schools, or serving as an elected or appointed member of local boards. Variance occurs for new faculty, faculty serving as department chair, and faculty in special roles, such as associate dean.

All faculty participate in assessment of student learning and strive to provide students with a variety of assessment measures to meet the needs of a diverse student population. College grading guidelines are clearly defined in the [Faculty/Instructor Handbook](#). All departments and instructional program areas are strongly encouraged to participate in program assessment. Assigned College Assessment Project Advisors assist Assessment Authors through the planning and reporting process. There were 79 Assessment Organizations required to submit assessment plans and reports during the 2015-2026

assessment period. Of those 79 Organizations, 72 (91%) submitted plans and reports. Participation involves the assessment of two discipline-specific learning outcomes as well as two institution-wide Learning Outcomes. College Assessment Project Assessment Advisors work one-on-one with Assessment Authors to encourage compliance. The number of programs participating increases year over year. The 3-year [Instructional Plan](#), created collaboratively by faculty and administrators for 2014-2017, informs goals for departments and individual faculty members.

The [Curriculum Committee](#), led by faculty and comprised of faculty and Registrar staff, is charged with the approval of all curriculum-related changes. Decisions are made regarding new courses and programs, as well as changes to and closure of academic and vocational programs. The structure of the Curriculum Committee is evidence of ACC's shared governance approach.

ACC has Appropriately Qualified Faculty and Instructors

ACC faculty and instructor qualifications are consistent across all delivery methods and programs. Qualifications align with HLC Assumed Practices on faculty qualifications. Qualifications are clearly defined in [AP 3-10a](#), stating that faculty hold a degree in their program at least one level above the level at which they teach, except in programs for terminal degrees or when equivalent experience is established. In addition, for Career Technical Education (CTE) program areas, ACC follows [State credentialing guidelines](#).

Faculty teaching transfer and general education courses hold a Master's degree in their discipline. If a faculty member holds a Master's degree in a discipline other than that in which he or she is teaching, that faculty must have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline. The hiring process requires general education faculty and instructors to provide transcripts as evidence that they meet qualification requirements.

Faculty teaching CTE courses, under the State Board for Community College and Occupational Education (SBCCOE), must hold a valid credential. To obtain a full time credential, faculty must hold a college degree in a related field or possess a valid/current industry license or certification. Additionally, they must have work-related experience: 2,000 hours for a faculty member with a bachelor's degree or higher and 4,000 hours for a faculty member with an associate's degree or industry license. Within three years of hire, faculty also complete two courses, EDU 250 - CTE in Colorado and EDU 260 - Adult Teaching and Learning. Ongoing professional development is required to maintain the credential. All faculty teaching ACC courses for credit are required to meet these requirements, including high school teachers teaching concurrent enrollment (dual credit) and anyone teaching in one of ACC's consortia programs.

ACC has a credentialing officer on staff to monitor all CTE faculty and instructor credentials. The position is responsible for record-keeping, notifying teachers of pending expiration, collaborating with Human Resources and Concurrent Enrollment staff, and informing deans and department chairs of expired credentials.

ACC Instructors are Evaluated Regularly According to Institutional Policies/Procedures

Full-time faculty are evaluated annually in accordance with the System President's Procedure, [SP 3-31](#). This procedure was revised in October of 2014 to make the evaluation process consistent across the 13 community colleges in the CCCS. All 13 colleges now use a similar process that incorporates goal setting within a performance plan (written individually by each faculty member), classroom observations, review of student evaluations, and a final evaluation meeting between the faculty and his/her supervisor. Faculty teaching and service goals are to align with the CDHE Performance Plan,

the CCCS Strategic Plan, ACC's Strategic Plan, College Learning Outcomes and/or ACC Instructional Plan as well as discipline and department goals. Supervisors are required to complete a minimum of 16 hours of supervisory training to ensure consistency and quality during the evaluation process. The procedure outlines the importance of reviewing both teaching and service responsibilities; faculty are provided written feedback with ratings of Needs Improvement, Commendable, or Exemplary. All full-time faculty members are supervised by an academic dean. In accordance with meeting the requirements of SP 3-31, [AP 3-31](#) provides faculty with complete details.

Part-time and concurrent enrollment (dual enrollment) instructors are evaluated annually through [classroom observations](#) conducted by a department chair or concurrent enrollment liaison. At the conclusion of each course, ACC students have the opportunity to provide anonymous evaluation comments; department chairs review these comments as part of the part-time instructor evaluation process.

ACC's Institutional Processes/Resources Ensure Faculty are Current and Adept in Their Teaching Roles

Faculty Development Funding. To help faculty stay current in their respective fields and implement best teaching practices, the Professional Development Funds Committee (PDFC) oversees the distribution of funds for this purpose. In past academic years, the PDFC has overseen the distribution of \$25,000. In the coming academic year, \$45,000 will be distributed, along with additional department resources, to engage faculty in professional development. The fund consists of \$20,000 in institutional dollars and a proposed \$25,000 from the annual Perkins grant.

[Applications](#) for funds to attend conferences and workshops must justify the benefits to ACC and align the benefits to [ACC's strategic directions](#) and [institution-wide Learning Outcomes](#). Additionally, requestors must describe specific ways they will share their new knowledge and experience with their colleagues. From FY13-14 through FY14-15, 37 requests were funded. Faculty may also receive professional development funding out of department budgets. ACC provides tuition reimbursement for job-related coursework completed at any CCCS institution, up to 12 credit hours per semester and 24 credits per fiscal year for all full-time employees, their spouses and dependents. The ACC Education department offers [Career and Technical Education \(CTE\) credentialing renewal requirements](#) for post-secondary faculty, part-time instructors, and secondary K-12 teachers.

The [ACC Foundation's Mini Grant Program](#) provides funding to support opportunities for faculty and staff to develop projects or fund special initiatives. Areas include, but are not limited to, enhanced student learning and performance; curriculum development; innovative uses of technology; development of instructional activities; development of alternative fiscal resources; professional development; improvement of administrative/support services; purchase of equipment and technology; and other projects that would not normally be funded by area or departmental budgets. See [data on funded requests](#) from fall 2012 through spring 2015.

The Center for Professional Enrichment (CPE). The Center collaborates with the Human Resources department to provide a wide range of opportunities including [new faculty orientation](#) and [mentoring](#), Professional Teaching Communities, Book Groups, [Passport for Professional Enrichment](#), webinars, and workshops. ACC's Leadership Academy, Certificate for Teaching Excellence and Master Teacher Certificate (MTC), Adjunct Advancement Program ([AAP](#)) and the New Department Chair Academy are also included in the CPE's programs. All ACC employees receive a biweekly email with the [Professional Training & Enrichment Calendar](#), session descriptions, and links to online registration. The [Certificate of Teaching Excellence and Master Teacher Certificate \(MTC\)](#) provides a

comprehensive development plan that allows full-time faculty to become models of excellence in teaching. There are 47 faculty members participating in the MTC program. Since 2012, 16 Level I, 11 Level II, and 4 Level III awards have been earned. The Adjunct Advancement Program offers adjunct instructors the opportunity to participate in a professional development plan that recognizes teaching effectiveness and qualifies participants for salary increases. In fall 2015, the Center initiated an Adjunct Instructor Appreciation and Professional Enrichment Evening to recognize and reward part-time instructors for their excellence in teaching and service.

Faculty Recognition. ACC acknowledges the quality teaching of its faculty in a number of ways. Each year, one faculty member is nominated by all constituents at the College for the Faculty of the Year award. The faculty member is honored with a recognition plaque that is posted in several places throughout the College alongside Administrator, Classified, and Alumni of-the-Year awards. This faculty member is also invited to give the keynote speech at graduation. A second honor bestowed on quality teachers is the Distinguished Faculty award as outlined in [AP 3-55](#). Each year the College community nominates faculty for this award. A maximum of five faculty are selected and earn a \$1,500 stipend and acknowledgment in the [College Catalog](#).

e-Learning. The eLearning team is committed to the mission of the institution through the support of intellectual, personal, and professional growth of ACC students, faculty, and staff. eLearning provides Quality Matters (QM) training. Quality Matters is a nationally recognized, peer review process to certify the quality of online courses and to promote continuous improvement. ACC has nine QM reviewers. Four of the reviewers are eLearning staff, and five are faculty members on the Online Advisory Committee from the departments of Business, Economics, English, History, and Nursing. In collaboration with the Center for Professional Enrichment, approximately ten instructors have completed a course entitled, “How to Design Your Online Course from Quality Matters.” From July 2014 through June 2015, eLearning offered 61 workshops designed to help instructors improve their courses in all delivery formats and 35 webinars for students and faculty.

ACC Instructors are Accessible for Student Inquiry

The [Faculty/Instructor Handbook](#) describes communication as an essential function of faculty. ACC email is the official method of communication between all faculty, staff, and students.

Faculty are accessible to students through office hours. As outlined in [AP-3-80](#), full-time faculty are required to keep and post a minimum of five hours of office time per week. The ACC online Employee Directory lists email addresses, phone numbers, and office locations for all full-time faculty. Additionally, office space is provided to part-time instructors on each campus for private appointments with students.

ACC Student Support Services Staff are Appropriately Qualified, Trained, and Supported in their Professional Development

Each position within Student Affairs has a job description that outlines the requirements and qualifications for the position. The qualifications, abilities, and education vary by the position. Financial Aid Advisor, Academic Advisor, Director of Career and Transfer Center, Assistant Director of Student Life, and Research Librarian are all examples of student support positions at ACC.

ACC’s Human Resources (HR) department posts all position openings. Under HR’s direction, applicants are carefully screened for minimum qualifications and then forwarded to a screening committee for further review. Top candidates selected by the screening committee are forwarded to

the hiring manager for final interviews.

Staff also have opportunities for professional development through the Center for Professional Enrichment. Human Resources offers a “Peaks Program,” named after the mountains in Colorado over 14,000 feet in elevation that encourages staff to “climb” a series of courses throughout the year to achieve a certificate of completion. For the 2015-16 academic year, 124 employees participated in the Peaks Program. Additionally, administrative departmental budgets include funds for professional development opportunities, and department supervisors support staff development through participation in organizations such as The American Association for Women in Community Colleges (AAWCC) and Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA). Administrative professional development is also provided through various CCCS programs and activities. Staff collaborate with peers from other CCCS colleges on a regular basis. For example, all Student Access Services directors meet monthly to discuss trends and learn from each other.

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3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).
5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

Argument

ACC's Student Support Services are Suited to the Needs of the Students

ACC meets the needs of its student populations through comprehensive student support services available at all campus locations. Student services are provided for academic support; Veterans' services; academic accommodation services; and graduation, career, and transfer planning. ACC assesses student satisfaction with instruction and support structures through the national CCSSE student survey. ACC surveys students every three years. Recent [CCSSE results](#) indicate the institution is on par with national benchmarks in most areas. There is room for improvement in the area of Support for Learners. Steps to address this gap are being implemented through ACC's [Strategic Enrollment Management team](#).

Academic Support. All tutoring services have been pulled together under one umbrella to ensure consistent tutor training, quality offerings, and easy navigation for students seeking support. All tutoring information is available to students on the [tutoring webpage](#) and is also covered during new student orientation. Specific tutoring programs include: Writing Center, Math Support Center, Student Success Center, Computer Information Systems Flex Lab, Design Software Assistance (DSA) Lab, and course-specific tutoring sessions. To meet diverse student needs, tutoring is available at all three campuses as well as online.

Graduation, Career, and Transfer Planning. The Career and Transfer Center and Academic Advising monitor student needs through annual assessment outcomes. The results of assessment guide what services are offered, influence decisions on how to increase student satisfaction, and drive procedures and processes. These departments provide students with ongoing services from admission to graduation. The Career and Transfer Center hosts two Career Fairs and two Transfer Fairs annually. These events are highly attended and provide the institution with valuable input and feedback from student attendees, industry representatives, and 4-year university partners.

Veteran Services. [Veteran Services](#) provides specialized services to support current military service members, veterans, and their families as they pursue their academic, career, and personal goals. A Student Veterans Association is also available to provide an open and welcoming community that

promotes camaraderie and support among ACC military veterans. A dedicated lounge and study area has been available for veteran students since 2012. Veterans are given guidance on financial resources and how to navigate Veteran benefits through the Veterans Benefits program, within the Financial Aid Office.

Student Access Services. For students who demonstrate need, Student Access Services supports them with accessibility options, accountability, and promotes self-advocacy to ensure the student's success. ACC is actively completing a [three-year accessibility plan](#) to make all public and instructional web content ADA compliant. ACC's eLearning department has assembled training modules in D2L to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities for web-accessibility across the College.

ACC Learning Support/Preparatory Instruction Address Students' Academic Needs

The admissions process is key to creating a strong foundation for success. Upon completion of the application for admission, students are assessed for college readiness and must meet criteria established by the State for college preparedness through one of multiple methods. Students meet the criteria via an ACT or SAT threshold, prior college experience, or completion of a college placement test in ACC's [Testing Center](#) to determine math and English course recommendations. Additionally, all new college students coming to ACC are required to attend a new student orientation prior to registration. Students transferring from another institution are offered the opportunity to have a one-on-one orientation with an academic advisor. A [fact sheet](#) for students that includes basic skills assessment policy, placement scores, options for meeting criteria, and other details is available to students online.

Prerequisites are associated with most college-level courses to guide students into a recommended course sequence and give them the foundation to be successful as they advance in their academic studies.

ACC was recently part of a system-wide developmental education redesign. Informed by a review of developmental education strategies across the CCCS and national research, institutions implemented programs that reduced the number of developmental courses needed to begin college-level coursework and incorporated national best practices such as mainstreaming and supplemental support. This program significantly improves the preparedness of ACC students as proven by developmental education [assessment data](#). Furthermore, ACC is piloting a first-year experience for new students who test into at least two developmental education courses. This pilot program provides students with student success strategies that include math refresher workshops, New Student Orientation, and an online course—AAA 076: First Year Success—that requires students to connect with student service areas such as the Career and Transfer Center, Student Success (tutoring), Student Life, and other important campus resources.

All students are encouraged to work with the [Career and Transfer Center](#) as well as [Advising](#) to create an academic plan. Degree and planning sheets are available for all certificates and degrees to enable students to follow a plan of study. The Career and Transfer Center provides career assessments such as Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), Strong Interest Inventory (SII), StrengthsQuest, and Focus 2. Additionally, counseling is available to assist students in matching aptitudes and interests with employment opportunities.

ACC Academic Advising is Provided to Suit Programs and Student Needs

Academic Advising provides a wide range of services and resources for students. As of fall 2015, the department has initiated a new model in which students are assigned to academic advisors based on

their declared program of study. Students new to ACC are notified of their assigned advisor upon receipt of their admissions acceptance letter. This new advising model helps students build stronger connections with staff on campus and utilize Academic Advising services more effectively. The new model also aids in retention and graduation efforts.

Specialization in fewer programs allows advisors to convey more specific and targeted academic, career, and transfer information to students. Academic Advising also has advisors assigned to specific student populations. Advisors are assigned to international students, students working their way through developmental education courses, and scholarship recipients. All advisors also provide students with information on College-wide resources such as tutoring, housing support, financial aid, disability services, etc.

Academic Advising staff meet weekly. Instructional department chairs and program leads are frequently invited to attend to provide detailed information about specific programs at ACC. Members of the advising team are also included on cross-functional committees such as scheduling, enrollment management, and instructional leadership. Early alert requests from faculty are directed through Academic Advising so that academic advisors can reach out to students who may need additional support. The Parker and Castle Rock campuses have an assigned advisor that works with students enrolled at these extension campuses.

In addition to general advising, all CTE program areas and Degrees with Designation AA and AS degrees have assigned faculty advisors. Faculty advisors have a unique perspective, given their industry experience; they support students in finding an appropriate academic and career pathway. Typically, students start in Academic Advising for general guidance, initial course selection, and career planning. As they progress in their area of study, students meet regularly with a faculty advisor in their program area.

Students also have online tools to manage their academic goals. Students have 24/7 access to ACC's portal, MyACC, where they can find class information, financial status, grades, etc. Another advising component of MyACC is an integrated [Degree Works](#) module. This system provides students with an individualized tracking tool to view what courses they have completed, what courses they are currently enrolled in, and what courses are necessary for their graduation.

ACC Provides Students and Instructors the Infrastructure and Resources Necessary to Support Effective Teaching and Learning

To effectively support teaching and learning, a robust technological infrastructure is a necessity, and ACC prides itself on maintaining up-to-date facilities and programs. ACC has an [IT strategic plan](#) that aligns with the institution's strategic plan. The IT strategic plan is updated annually, as is the ACC strategic plan. ACC's instructional technology is on a four-year hardware rotation. This includes all student and faculty computer systems (offices, labs etc.). Over 130 rooms on ACC's campuses have Smart technology capabilities. Smart rooms include touch panel controls, automated screens and lighting, and document imaging cameras. All ACC facilities have access to wireless internet connections, and all ACC buildings and campus locations are interconnected with a single production network.

The Parker and Castle Rock campuses include the same setup for technology as the Littleton campus. All classrooms have like equipment and setup in order to provide an experience that reduces service barriers for instructors and students, alike.

All classrooms are equipped with a classroom control system (touchpad design) to allow instructors to

dim lights, lower screens, and project from a laptop, lectern computer, or document imaging camera as required for instruction. All classrooms are equipped with a phone near the lectern to allow the instructor immediate access to assistance. These phones also allow for emergency communications via speakerphone.

Enterprise-wide technology systems that ACC uses are supported through the CCCS IT function. This includes the student information system, employee email and finance/HR systems, and the learning management system. ACC IT works on behalf of ACC students, faculty, and staff when communication or troubleshooting is needed.

The eLearning department, separate from IT, supports faculty and students in the use of Desire2Learn (D2L), ACC's learning management system. All courses—onsite, hybrid, and online—are required to have components within D2L. Students consistently access instructor contact information, syllabi, and updated grades for every class at ACC.

ACC is recognized by the community for its quality Health Careers programs. Maintaining high quality science labs is a top priority. Current labs are highly functional and include all necessary equipment and materials. The labs are supported by two FTE laboratory assistants. Plans are in progress for a complete lab renovation (\$12M investment) at both the Littleton and Parker campuses. All of the science programs (chemistry, physical sciences, and biology) will benefit.

ACC develops and maintains a broad spectrum of clinical sites for [health-related careers](#), including health information technology, pharmacy technician, nursing, emergency medical services, phlebotomy, mortuary science, and physical therapist assistant. ACC full-time faculty and preceptors provide onsite supervision of students. Third-party accrediting bodies also review sites during program reviews. Many of the clinical locations provide excellent resources and individuals who serve on ACC's advisory boards.

ACC has two programs with unique facility needs for learning. First, the [Law Enforcement Academy](#) must provide distinct facilities to train police officers. These facilities (e.g., firing ranges, emergency vehicle operations tracks, and arrest control environments) are all State approved through the Police Officers Standards and Training (POST) Counsel. Second is a comprehensive [Automotive Technology Program](#). This award-winning program provides students with an exact replica of a large automotive service environment, including lifts, automobiles donated by major auto companies, electronic diagnostics, and a 200 square foot tool room. Accredited by the National Automotive Technician's Education Foundation (NATEF), facilities are reviewed by this accrediting body every five years.

The arts program is also a premier program with a dedicated Art and Design Center. This unique facility provides classrooms, labs, technology, and studios that emulate industry environments. For all Arts and Humanities students, there is a 226-seat theater, a community-centered art gallery, and access to a plethora of galleries and museums in downtown Littleton and the adjacent Denver metropolitan area.

ACC Provides Students Guidance in the Effective Use of Research and Information Resources

The [Arapahoe Community College Library & Learning Commons](#) promotes lifelong discovery, critical thinking, and academic excellence through an accessible, inclusive, and collaborative environment. Located on the Littleton campus, the ACC Library provides print, online resources, and other educational material for its students and faculty. Staffed with five full-time MLS degreed librarians, the collection includes over 30,000 print books, 160,000 ebooks, 755 audio/visual items,

3,500 streaming online videos, 192 reserve items, and 49 print journals that are archived for one year. The Library is open 68.5 hours a week during fall and spring semesters and 57 hours a week during summer semester. When the Library is closed, students and faculty have access to AskAcademic, a 24/7 reference chat service that is staffed by academic librarians.

Within the Library & Learning Commons, students have access to computers, laptops, iPads, an instruction lab, large and small group study rooms, a dedicated Law Library, and the Writing Center. A variety of comfortable seating is available from quiet, individual study carrels to diner style booths for collaborative work. The Biology department supplies anatomical models, microscopes, and slides within the Reserve Collection. From the library website, students can access topic guides covering many academic subjects, video tutorials, and citation tools. Library research orientation sessions are taught by the reference librarians within the Library, in the classroom, and via WebEx sessions for online classes. Students can also make one-on-one appointments for extensive help from a librarian. At the extension campuses, a reference librarian holds weekly reference hours.

The ACC Library subscribes to 21 electronic databases including EBSCOhost Academic Search Complete, ProQuest Research Library, JSTOR Arts and Sciences V, and Films on Demand Nursing and History Collections. Database articles, streaming videos, and ebooks can be accessed online 24/7 from both on campus and off through EZproxy remote authentication. The Library utilizes Online Computer Library Center's WorldCat catalog to discover local holdings as well as items available at WorldCat libraries worldwide that can be requested through its interlibrary loan service. The Library also encourages requests for purchases of print books, ebooks, and DVDs through ACC's patron-driven acquisition program.

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3.E - Core Component 3.E

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

Argument

Co-curricular Programs are Suited to ACC's Mission and Contribute to Students' Education

ACC's mission states that the College is committed to "responsive educational opportunities." In making this claim, ACC places emphasis on dynamic and engaging co-curricular programming. All of ACC's co-curricular programs are guided by the Office of Student Life that collaborates effectively with departments across the College including instruction, facilities, and extension campuses. ACC is a commuter college comprised of traditional-aged college students and a considerably large segment of adult learners who have families, jobs, and a variety of other responsibilities. Students have a home life, a work life, and ACC supports them in their student life.

In planning for co-curricular programs, the Office of Student Life sends out an [annual student survey](#) to all students to determine interest in programs and the times that are convenient. Student Life uses feedback from this survey, along with reference to College traditions, consistently popular events, and collaboration with ACC's Student Government, to develop a [semester calendar](#) of co-curricular programming. In keeping with the ACC's mission and student feedback, family and wellness programming are highly desirable to meet the needs of both traditional and non-traditional student populations. Two popular events are "PJ's with Santa" and "Breakfast with the Easter Bunny," which are open to the community, students, and their families. Other institutional traditions include a Halloween costume contest, a murder mystery dinner theater, and end-of-semester barbeques. Student Life purchases discount tickets to high-cost activities such as white-water rafting, Pirates Cove Water Park, and horseback riding. Many students could not afford these activities without the support of the College. Additional details are available in the Student Life (formerly known as Student Affairs) [Annual Report](#). Specialized student social events provide an improved sense of belonging that contributes to student retention and increases student well-being. Grounded in student development theory, Student Life provides students with programming on wellness, prevention awareness, and safety training as recommended by Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act. (VAWA).

There are also specialized activities that have an academic connection. Excellent examples include the faculty-run Writers Studio; the online student newspaper, the [Arapahoe Pinnacle](#), and the production of the student literary journal [Progenitor](#). These programs reach out to students and the community, giving exposure to student writers. Throughout the year, faculty bring in a variety of professionals including panels of publishers or writers to talk about their craft, professional authors to read their own work and discuss common issues around writing. Writers Studio also offers day-long writing festivals open to students and the community. In keeping with the mission of serving a diverse student population, the faculty provide a wide range of content and experiences to address the needs of both

traditional-age students (hip content, graphic novels, etc.) and non-traditional students (well-known authors who appeal to them). There are also academic-related and social [student clubs](#) that are student-led with faculty advisors. Examples include History Club, Philosophy Club, American Society of Interior Designers (ASID), and several STEM-related student clubs, such as Astronomy Club. Many of ACC's CTE programs provide students with an industry-specific student club and corresponding competitions. Examples include the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA) and the American Institute of Architects (AIA). ACC students have placed at the national level in many of the competitions.

Students in the Arts and Business programs may study outside the U.S. through international trips. Students first attend class in a classroom setting and then experience academic concepts in authentic contexts by participating in a two-week experiential tour.

ACC conducts activities that are aligned with requirements for regulatory compliance. To address Title IX and VAWA federal mandates, ACC holds several events to promote education and awareness. For example, ACC hosts a Consent Carnival to provide an engaging and informative event on effective practices related to appropriate conduct around sexual behavior, harassment, and discrimination issues. Bi-annual events are held for students to address drug and alcohol awareness. ACC annually promotes Constitution Day in partnership with the Political Science and History departments.

ACC's participation in [HLC's Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning](#) enabled ACC to launch a campaign to bring awareness to all areas of the College, including operational units, that we teach students through the way we do business. The idea that every department of the College supports, facilitates, and/or stimulates student learning/student success has been institutionalized at ACC.

ACC Demonstrates Claims in the Mission Statement through Educational Experiences

ACC claims, through its [mission and values](#), to provide an innovative and responsive educational environment, to provide economic opportunities, and to foster collaboration with community partners. ACC demonstrates these claims by providing students with innovative teaching and learning experiences such as service learning initiatives, study abroad programs, [award-winning online content](#), and a commitment to ongoing improvement of classroom technology and its implementation as identified in the [Instructional Plan](#). In particular, there has been a renewed commitment to service in the past two years. As a result, ACC has become a member of the Campus Compact of the Mountain West, "committed to promoting a renewed vision of colleges and universities as active and involved members of their communities." ACC is working to bring service learning activities to classrooms and co-curricular activities across the College.

Economic development is also central to the mission. ACC has a robust non-credit [Community Education department](#) that provides life skills workshops, online offerings, a 50+ program for mature adults, a Youth College over the summer, just to list a few of the learning opportunities. The Workforce Training Program (WFT) at ACC serves the employee development and economic growth needs of local companies including technical and soft skills training. WFT staff assess training needs and develop customized programs to meet each company's goals. Credit and non-credit options are provided as well as certificates of completion and Continuing Education Units (CEUs) upon the demonstration of successfully learned competencies based on industry standards. Services are provided for a diverse set of clients including professional, technical, and manufacturing; small, medium, and large companies; profit, non-profit, and governmental agencies, from entry-level to executive-level positions. WFT also manages the State-funded Colorado First and Existing Industry

grant programs.

Other unique training programs open to the general public include a State-certified RN Refresher Program, an Event Management Program approved by the Colorado Festivals and Events Association (CFEA), and an online Medical Transcription training program preparing students for a health care career in a growing field.

Evidence of the contribution that all Colorado community colleges have on the Colorado economy is available in the [2012 Economic Impact Report](#) initiated by the Colorado Community College System. The research revealed the CCCS generates more than \$3 billion every year in economic benefits to the State and local communities. ACC's economic contribution to its community, identified in the [economic impact fact sheet](#), includes \$216.5 million toward the local economy and 3,590 average wage jobs.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Summary

ACC has provided evidence that the College has met the standards of Criterion 3 by providing high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered. Dual credit instruction, online classes, and offerings at all three campuses are rigorous and challenging. To ensure consistency across all locations, formats, and parts of term, ACC offers the same courses, has the same requirements for faculty, and ensures courses meet the same learning outcomes.

Faculty oversee curriculum development and assess student learning. They are evaluated with established institutional procedures, are current in their disciplines, are adept in their teaching roles, are supported in their professional development, and are accessible to their students.

Students are supported by a robust package of student services including tutoring, writing assistance, social activities, academic accommodations, advising, and co-curricular programming. The student educational experience goes beyond the classroom with opportunities to engage in student clubs, service learning, connections to industry expertise, internships, and career services, not to mention navigating support services across the College. All of these efforts support ACC's mission.

Our self-assessment has identified the following areas that provide opportunities for growth:

- ACC has room to grow in addressing diversity on campus. The diversity of faculty and staff does not reflect the community served. In their first year of work, the Diversity and Inclusivity Project has made great progress. ACC anticipates maintaining these efforts and making diversity a high priority.
- Although faculty have been committed to the assessment process for over 12 years, there is an opportunity to reevaluate and align program assessment with current best practices, make assessment relevant and meaningful in all programs, demonstrate more effectively how ACC collaboratively closes the loop, and communicate the results across the College community.
- ACC is excited to move forward with the creation of meta-majors and guided pathways to graduation. ACC, like many community colleges, historically has had an emphasis on access and now is focusing on student success. By providing students with guided pathways that are supported across the institution, ACC can better serve students and the broader community.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

Argument

ACC Maintains a Practice of Regular Program Reviews

Requirements that guide the College regarding program review and evaluation are established by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) in the [Program Review and Evaluation Policy](#). Implementation standards and details are described in [System President's Procedure \(SP 9-47\)](#) and [ACC Instructional Program Review Procedure \(AP 9-20\)](#).^[3]

ACC has three program review processes: 1) Annual Program Reviews, 2) Comprehensive Program Reviews, and 3) Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that comply with the State/Colorado Community College System's (CCCS) program renewal and reporting requirements.

1. [Annual program reviews](#) are completed for all instructional disciplines. Each review contains three academic years of information for comparison purposes. Data collected and analyzed include enrollment/FTE, FTE to full-time faculty ratios, scheduling, class cancellations, size, and fill rates,

extension campuses, cost per FTE, and completion/positive placement rates for CTE programs. Associate deans compile annual program review data. ACC Learning Leadership analyzes trends to determine the vitality of programs. Decisions on hiring new faculty, marketing needs, and possible teach-out strategies are informed by the data from the annual program reviews.

2. Comprehensive program reviews are completed on a rotating basis on a three-year cycle. Comprehensive reviews utilize a template and include data from the annual review with analysis, scheduling and enrollment strategies; SWOT analysis; partnerships; program approval, accreditation, and compliance reports; certificate and degree information; degree transfer; employment and labor trends; resources and needs; student success reporting; and program assessment. Comprehensive program reviews are written collaboratively with the respective department chair, associate dean, deans and faculty members within the department, as appropriate. Information from each Comprehensive Review is shared with Learning Leadership. Comprehensive Reviews provide the department and Learning Leadership with an in-depth analysis of the health and vitality of the program and areas to emphasize and grow as well as opportunities for improvement.

3. Reporting for CTE programs is submitted to CCCS annually, via the [VE-135 form](#). The form consists of information about and from graduates, and every five years, via the Program Renewal assurance process, including plan of study, five-year plan, and advisory committee minutes. Public reports, including trends data, can be accessed at [Colorado CTE Reports](#). Any changes to the CTE programs are reviewed according to the procedures set forth in the administrative handbook. CTE department chairs are responsible for gathering the necessary information for the program renewal. CCCS CTE professionals review the information sent from the College, pull completion rates, enrollment data, and nontraditional student information before they approve for an additional 5 years, approving for a 3-year provisional period, or denying.

ACC Evaluates All Credit that it Transcripts

All transfer credits applied to a student's record are evaluated by trained staff members of the Admissions & Records Office. When necessary, the services of appropriate third parties are utilized for the evaluation of various prior learning and international transcripts. Current and prospective students may access information regarding the [transfer credit evaluation process](#) including evaluation of experiential and prior learning and associated costs, through the ACC website and ACC [College Catalog](#).

In fall 2015, ACC, as a part of the larger CCCS, began participation in the [Alternative Credit Project](#) through the American Council of Education (ACE). The goal is to help adults who have college credit, but no credential, come back and complete their degree. As a part of the adoption of the project, ACC examined current levels of credits awarded for prior learning and will continue to monitor the number of credits awarded to learn what practices and projects are effective in helping students reach degree or certificate completion. From the 2013-2014 academic year through the 2015-2016 academic year, ACC has awarded almost 7,200 hours of [credit for prior learning](#) in ten different subject areas.

ACC reviews requests for credit for prior learning experience attained outside the sponsorship of an accredited postsecondary education institution. To guide this process, ACC and other schools in the CCCS developed a [PLA Manual](#). Credit is not awarded for the "experience" but for "college-level learning" that entails knowledge, skills, and competencies students have obtained as a result of their prior learning experiences. Learning must be evaluated through formal procedures; meet requirements, objectives, and outcomes of specific courses at the College; and relate to the student's educational program. The College follows Board Policy [BP 9-42](#) and System Policy [SP 9-42](#) in

awarding Credit for Prior Learning.

Standards for Awarding Credit for Prior Learning (CPL):

- The College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- Advanced Placement (AP) Exam Equivalencies
- Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support program (DANTES)
- Excelsior College Examinations (ECE), American College Testing Proficiency Program (ACT-PEP/RCE/EXCELSOR), and International Baccalaureate (IB)
- Other nationally recognized testing, training, licensing or certification programs that assess levels of knowledge, skills and competencies of students

Standardized tests are assessed using the CCCS Standardized Test Matrix prepared by CCCS staff from the System Provost's Office. Additionally, ACC adheres to the AP and IP exam cut scores process for Colorado Public Colleges and Universities as noted in [CCHE Prior Learning Assessment Process](#).

ACC's Policies Assure the Quality of Credit Accepted in Transfer

The transfer credit evaluation process at ACC is guided by the [institutional business process](#), [CCCS Educational Services procedures \(ES 9-82\)](#), [CCCS Transfer of Credit Policy \(BP 9-71\)](#), and [CDHE Policy](#). These documents provide the framework for an effective and thorough transfer credit evaluation process that ensure a) students' credits transfer appropriately toward their declared degree or certificate and b) ACC's standards for content and quality are maintained. ACC's business processes and other guiding documents and resources are reviewed annually or as a result of CCCS policy changes to ensure ongoing compliance.

ACC Maintains/Exercises Authority Over Prerequisites, Rigor, Expectations for Student Learning, Access to Learning Resources and Faculty Qualifications

Institutional authority over the quality and rigor of courses and programs as well as the qualifications of program faculty is maintained and exercised as follows:

Course pre-requisites. Course pre-requisites are determined by faculty as appropriate to discipline. Approval is obtained by the appropriate Instructional Dean and Vice President for Instruction.

Rigor of courses and expectations for student learning. The rigor and appropriate level of courses are assured throughout Instruction by utilizing the Curriculum Committee and Office of the Registrar and Academic Advising. The College has established a description of the levels of student performance associated with each letter grade used in the [grade point system](#).

The Curriculum Committee, comprised of faculty members, a non-voting instructional dean, and the College Registrar, has jurisdiction over all curriculum proposals and makes recommendations concerning the curriculum programs of the College, including degree programs, certificates of completion, and all courses granting college credit.

The College sets high expectations for student learning by incorporating an academic honesty statement in each syllabus and by providing students with opportunities to excel through programs such as the [Great Books Program](#) and membership in [Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society](#).

Access to learning resources. ACC maintains an extensive infrastructure and resources to support student learning. Oversight of these resources is maintained through the academic leadership of the

Vice President for Instruction, the Academic Deans, the Vice President of Student Affairs, and directors/coordinators of services. The Learning Commons is part of Instruction, overseen by the Dean of Community and Workforce Partnerships. The [Student Success Center](#) reports to the Dean of Legal, Communication, Behavioral and Social Sciences. Through collaborative efforts between many departments with faculty oversight and involvement (Math, English, CIS, Art and Design, and the Learning Commons), a schedule of all available resources was created online for faculty and students utilizing ACC's tutoring services. These departments share resources to provide the support and structure needed surrounding training, marketing, and faculty involvement. There are hours devoted to support student success through peer-to-peer and faculty-to-student tutoring. The schedule includes information on tutoring and resources available in the Student Success Center, Computer Information Systems, Design Software Assistance, Mathematics Support Center, Writing Center, and Library.

Establishing faculty qualifications for college program. The structure for determining the qualifications required for all faculty positions including dual enrollment is provided in [AP 3-10](#). The handbook identifies the general qualifications associated with faculty and adjunct instructors.

ACC Maintains Specialized Accreditation for its Programs

A list of programs with specialized accreditation or approval is in the [College Catalog](#) and on [ACC's Web site](#). Each program posts information in the Catalog and on the programs' web pages. An example of how each program's information is shared can be viewed via the [Mortuary Science Catalog page](#) and [web page](#).

ACC Evaluates the Success of its Graduates and Assures the Education Provided Properly Prepares Students for Advanced Study or Employment

Degree and certificate programs at ACC are evaluated and assessed in a cycle that allows for continuous improvement. One such data point for assessment is evaluation of the success of program graduates. For many programs with external accreditation, as previously discussed, both completion rates and employment rates are closely monitored and utilized to assess program effectiveness. Sample program [Program Exam Pass Rates](#) contain program name, exam type, year, number of students taking exam, completion rate, and Colorado State average. A comprehensive report is also submitted to CCCS on programs with external accreditation, including the number of students who successfully passed the necessary examinations required for licensure or other certification.

To comply with the Colorado Career and Technical Act (CTA) and Federal Perkins regulations for CTE funding, CCCS is required by law to collect Colorado CTE enrollment and follow up student data (employment) each year through the aforementioned [VE-135](#).

Efforts to track effectiveness of programs by seeking employment data is often a challenge. Graduate surveys, or students transferring out to four-year institutions is not systematically supported in Colorado; tracking requires significant investment for outside firms to assist. In 2014, ACC invested in a commercial tool, [The Outcomes Survey](#), to assist in further meaningful assessment of graduate outcomes. This tool was used for 2015 and 2016 graduates. Annually, ACC surveys graduating students to solicit information about their employment, future academic plans, and feedback about ACC. This [information](#) is shared with the public via ACC's Institutional Research website.

ACC has also partnered with institutions who receive transfer students from ACC to assess student performance as evidence of successful preparation for advanced study. One example of such evidence is reported by University of Colorado Denver who shared [2011 student cohort information](#) regarding ACC students who transfer to the institution. Along with quantitative evidence, ACC utilizes

Advisory Committees to gather feedback from employers and industry stakeholders regarding success and readiness of graduates. Websites for programs share [Gainful Employment](#) information.

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4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Argument

ACC's clearly stated [Learning Outcomes for Student Enrichment and Process Improvement](#) are the direct result of recommendations by the 2006 HLC Evaluation Team and ACC's participation in the HLC-sponsored Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning. The 2006 Team concluded that at ACC a "culture of institutional assessment is not embraced nor valued" and recommended organizational attention to institution-wide assessment and the assessment of general education outcomes at an institutional level. At the time, assessment was occurring throughout instructional and administrative areas; however, the information gained was not being applied equally across the institution toward the improvement of student learning outcomes and institutional processes.

ACC's Student Learning Outcomes and Processes for Assessment

Recommendations of the 2006 Evaluation Team and ACC's self-review prompted the formation of an Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) and the design of an [Institutional Effectiveness Model](#) for College operations. The [mission of the IEC](#), adopted in May 2008, was "to promote a plan of systematic evaluation that advances evidence-based decisions for improvement in teaching, learning, and services throughout all levels and organizational units of the institution." The [Core Indicators \(C.I.\) Institutional Effectiveness Model](#) for community colleges was adopted by the IEC, as it aligned with ACC's purpose to deliver value and measure performance in ways that are defined by a number of different stakeholders. The focus of the C.I. model was to identify core indicators that are regularly-produced measures describing "a specified condition or result that is foundational to the achievement of a college's mission and meeting the needs and interests of key stakeholders." The C.I. model is a stage model and allowed ACC to implement its [Institutional Effectiveness Plan \(IEP\)](#) on a gradual basis over a three-year period. The Core Indicators Model performed well for ACC in relation to compulsory indicators such as persistence, graduation rates, career program placement rates, transfer rates, licensure and certification pass rates, etc. However, as of fall 2010, the ACC community had not yet fully embraced a culture of institutional assessment.

In January 2011, the President, VP for Instruction, and Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness met to lay out the timeline for accomplishing one of the Student Success strategic goals adopted as part of the [2010-2015 strategic plan](#), namely, to "*integrate student Learning Outcomes into all programs/areas of the institution.*" In March 2011, Bob Mundhenk, HLC Visiting Scholar, came to the Littleton campus for an all-day blitz to assist College employees in learning more about implementing Learning Outcomes, college-wide. Bob's visit resulted in ACC revising/refining current

LOs to incorporate a higher level of cognition and paring down ten LOs to a more manageable number. The faculty group who initially proposed the LOs, together with administrative and staff representatives, met jointly in June 2011 to arrive at [ACC's current Learning Outcomes](#). The LOs are grounded in the American Association of College and Universities [VALUE Initiative](#). ACC's Learning Outcomes clearly illustrate the philosophy of ACC regarding what we believe students should know and be able to do as a result of their educational pursuits at the College. The focus is to "equip students with essential skills for academic, personal and professional success through excellence in teaching and learning." The next step was to effectively engage the ACC community in *assessing* student performance regarding institution-wide Learning Outcomes. The greatest emphasis is to use assessment results to prepare students for life success, that is, address/impart the knowledge, skills, and values that are fundamental to the personal and professional growth of ACC students, employees, and the broader ACC community.

The conversation of January 2011 also involved consideration of application to HLC's [Academy for the Assessment of Student Learning](#). ACC applied and was accepted to the Academy to begin a four-year commitment in November 2011. As noted in the [2015 Quality Initiative Report](#), ACC's action project was to "develop a comprehensive institutional assessment model that is cohesive, user-friendly and sustainable in order to generate continuous improvement." ACC's IEC morphed into a seven-member Core Assessment Team (CAT) of individuals across campus committed to ACC's Academy Action Project and included faculty, administrative staff, the Vice President for Instruction, the Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness, and an academic Dean well-versed in assessment. Thus, a new framework was established for assessing the integration of LOs across the College and applying what was learned from that assessment to continuous institutional improvement. ACC's goals for Academy participation corresponded to what was lacking in terms of institutional assessment at the time.

- Embrace assessment for institutional improvement
- Integrate LOs College-wide
- Design College-wide process assessment relating to LOs
- Link process assessment with curricular learning and assessment

The foundational strategies to accomplish the Academy project were based upon a well-designed, successful Instructional program assessment model already in place. This was instrumental in gaining faculty buy-in and the trust of staff in operational support units. Key to achieving Academy Action Project goals was the commitment of ACC's senior leadership. ACC successfully completed the Assessment Academy in June 2015. The [Results Forum Report](#) provides documentation that all goals were met.

ACC Assesses Learning Outcomes in Curricular and Co-Curricular Programs

Even before ACC was accepted for membership in the Academy, leadership expressed a commitment to the assessment of not only Instruction but of administrative and support processes (aka operational support units) because what constitutes an institution's primary effect on a student . is in both program and institutional outcomes. The ACC internal community is dedicated to the institutional mission to promote an environment for the success of all of ACC constituencies. The College's philosophy is that institutional outcomes include what a student takes from his/her experiences in courses, programs, activities, and other experiences on campus, including observance of the way ACC carries on day-to-day business. The impact Instructional units desire from the classroom experience is that both discipline and institution-wide learning outcomes are met resulting in student learning; for operational units, the goal is that process improvement will directly affect financial efficiencies, productivity, reduce legal liability, etc., with the indirect impact being increased student satisfaction,

retention, and completion rates.

The strategy of the Core Assessment Team to pattern the model for assessing operational units after the Instructional Assessment model enabled the use of assessment plans and report forms that were easily adapted. A rubric patterned after the rubric for reviewing Instructional assessment reports was designed to review operational unit assessment reports as well.

The process for designing assessment plans and properly utilizing assessment reports for the assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals at ACC is grounded in four simple questions:

- What do you do well?
- What are you curious about or need to know?
- How will you measure what you are doing?
- How will you use your results?

The process relies on affirmation and discovery, plus a continual effort to use assessment results for institutional improvement toward even greater student success. The Program Assessment Committee (PAC) instituted the measurement of two of the new LOs and two discipline outcomes as of the beginning of the fall 2011 semester. The CAT collaboratively agreed that, initially, operational units would be required to measure one of the new LOs during the 2011-2012 Academic Year. The learning curve was a bit steep; consequently, operational units received a good deal of guidance in the process. Additionally, Instruction had opted to measure the Information Management LO during the fall 2011 semester; thus, by default, Information Management was the first LO that operational units measured.

Assessment Authors in operational areas state their process improvement plans either in terms of improvements to the unit processes that contribute to student learning or improvements to the assessment methodology toward a more precise measure of the effectiveness or efficiency of those processes. As operational units have become more comfortable with assessment, they have the option to measure *any* of the six Learning Outcomes—the same option offered faculty. The compass for what to measure rests with each operational unit and what they have determined to be most meaningful in measuring their processes. ACC's institutional assessment structure enables all units to answer the four questions that drive assessment.

In the initial stages of implementing ACC's Academy Action Project, the PAC provided Assessment Advisors for instructional units and the Core Assessment Team provided assessment coaches for operational units to complete the assessment process. The first step toward sustainability of ACC's Academy Action Project was the integration of the Program Assessment Committee and the Core Assessment Team. As noted, these groups worked separately from each other over the four years of participation in the Assessment Academy. The decision to combine the groups was made to truly integrate instructional units and operational areas toward institutional assessment efforts that also further implemented the idea of a culture of assessment at ACC. The combined group was named the College Assessment Project (CAP) and is made up of faculty and administrators and headed by a Steering Committee of all three Vice Presidents: the VP of Instruction, the VP of Student Affairs, and the VP of Administrative Services. The faculty and administrators on the CAP team are corporately known as Assessment Advisors and work with Assessment Authors in both instructional and operational areas to answer the four assessment questions. ACC's assessment processes and the reports generated reflect real-time information about the status of College-wide assessment. ACC's assessment processes and methodologies reflect good practice and high participation by curricular and co-curricular areas, as detailed in this Criterion under the discussion of good assessment practices.

ACC Uses Assessment Information to Improve Student Learning

Prior to the summer of 2012, assessment plans and reports were completed and evaluated manually for Instructional units. ACC's Assessment Academy Action Project included the purchase of an Assessment Management System (AMS) to record all assessment plans/reports, plus to aggregate data for decision-making purposes. The Core Assessment Team designed the questions to be asked in the Planning module of the AMS and aligned with the four assessment questions.

ACC's senior leadership has access to all assessment plans and reports. The AMS is a repository for the assessment plans and reports of [all assessment organizations of the College](#) that reflect real-time, credible information about the status of College-wide assessment. The implementation of the AMS also offers a Feedback Report that allows for comments from Assessment Advisors, citing strengths and weaknesses of assessment plans and reports, with suggestions for improvements during the next assessment cycle.

One of the questions posed in the AMS is related to how assessment units plan to use their results to improve institutional processes or academic instruction. Units are required to set/establish benchmarks regarding the achievement of the outcomes they measure, be they discipline outcomes or institution-wide Learning Outcomes. The AMS produces a [Meta-Analysis Report](#) that tracks whether benchmarks regarding student learning/success have been met, surpassed, or not met. Results for the 2015-16 AY show that 85% of institution-wide LOs assessed met, or surpassed, the established benchmark; 82% of discipline outcomes assessed met, or surpassed, the established benchmark. Those areas that do not meet the benchmark investigate the reason why the benchmark was not met and may modify the aspect of instruction, or process, that is the focus of assessment. The academic practice, or process, is reassessed during the next assessment cycle to determine if improvement has occurred. For example, the [Biology department assessed the Quantitative Reasoning institution-wide LO](#) by administering a pre/post-test specifically designed to test quantitative reasoning. The questions involved graphing and extrapolation using a provided data set that students were required to graph. The benchmark was set at a 10% change in ability between the pre-test at the beginning of the semester and the post-test at the end of the semester. The average percent change was less than 5%. The Assessment Authors concluded that the data should be accepted with caution because of a confounding effect due to the format of the assessment. It was difficult to determine if the benchmark was missed because quantitative reasoning across students did not improve over the semester, or if performance on previous questions impacted their ability to correctly answer the questions evaluating quantitative reasoning. The assessment results prompted the Biology department to revise their assessment format for the 2016-17 assessment period to remove this confound.

When comparing the results of assessing the Communication LO in relation to the Career Explorer Workshop (CEW) for 2014-15 and 2015-16, the [Career and Transfer Center](#) (CTC) discovered a pronounced increase in workshop attendance when the cost of the workshop was either "free" or at a reduced rate. The free workshop did not create "buy in," so more students registered and didn't follow through on participating. The evaluation of the differing fee structures allowed the CTC to conclude that a small fee is the optimal scenario for impacting student success in workshop participation. For the 2016-17 fiscal year, the CTC requested budgeting assistance to cover the cost differential between the cost of career assessments and what students are charged.

The examination of individual assessment reports for curricular and co-curricular areas demonstrates that the assessment loop is being closed via the use of assessment results to maintain or improve instructional methods or institutional processes, respectively. However, ACC currently does not offer a forum for the discussion of student achievement/success as measured by the aggregate performance

on institution-wide LOs. A plan is in place to consider these assessment results for the 2015-16 assessment period during the regularly scheduled all-College Professional Development day in mid-October 2016. The details of the plan are discussed in the following section.

ACC's Assessment Processes Reflect Good Practice

ACC embraces the concept of assessment as a continuous source of information essential for improving Learning Outcomes, programs, teaching and learning methods/strategies, and the College's institutional processes. While there are many similar definitions of assessment, ACC has adopted the following:

- The collection, review, and use of information about programs and processes for the purpose of improving learning and institutional effectiveness (Marchese in *Assessment Essentials*, 1999).
- A process in which the affirmation and discovery of effectiveness supersedes reporting requirements.
- Assessment is about improving what ACC does for students and how effectively those things are done.

Although the goals of assessment are the same for the assessment of student learning and the assessment of processes in operational units, the mission statements differ. This is due to the fact that the focus of instructional assessment is educational/student outcomes, whereas within the operational support units, the focus of assessment is on the process or service the unit intends to accomplish to facilitate and/or support student success.

Instructional Assessment Mission – To continuously assess student academic achievement at all levels in order to support and improve student learning.

Operational Unit Assessment Mission– To continuously assess the processes of operational support units to improve their effectiveness in light of ACC's Learning Outcomes.

ACC's assessment model follows an intentional process of assessment units' mission statements being reflective of ACC's overall mission. This means the strategic directions and goals of the institution are embedded in assessment processes. Assessment is ongoing and drives the goals of the unit, the outcomes to be achieved, how outcomes for benchmarks are set and measures determined, and the process for analyzing data for program, and process improvement. [Multiple measures of assessment](#) are used across the College to determine the achievement of institution-wide outcomes.

ACC follows the typical cycle of assessment, i.e. planning, implementing, assessing, reporting/revising toward institutional improvement. It is designed to impact strategic planning and budgeting processes to further student learning and success. ACC's has both a detailed [assessment cycle for promoting institutional effectiveness](#), as well as a [timetable for assessment](#) outlining the processes for all participants across campus. The assessment process at ACC also includes an annual assessment of the assessment process, itself. An [assessment feedback survey](#) was administered to Assessment Authors in April 2016. The majority of respondents (80%) were faculty. Fifty-nine percent of those responding agreed that ACC's assessment process allows them to clearly document student learning and/or process improvement. However, 73% believe it would be beneficial to modify the assessment cycle to occur bi-annually rather than annually, to yield more meaningful data.

ACC's institutional assessment process takes place in an environment that is receptive and supportive. Of the 79 assessment organizations responsible for submitting assessment plans and reports during the 2015-16 assessment period, 77 (97%) successfully completed the task. Not only has the philosophical

commitment of ACC leaders to institutional assessment been crucial to its success, the dedication of resources to accomplishing goals regarding institutional assessment has been equally important. The purchase and implementation of the AMS, together with the training of three Unit Administrators, regularly-scheduled conference calls with company representatives, and professional development opportunities for all ACC employees has enabled the success of storing, tracking and exhibiting assessment results to internal and external audiences. Latest and archived results can be accessed through ACC's [Assessment website](#).

With the Closing the Loop Plan in place ACC will complete the final step in best practices for institutional effectiveness; namely, utilizing information gained from a multitude of sources to assess ACC's instructional programs and operational processes to improve and sustain student learning and organizational effectiveness. ACC's process of [collectively closing the loop](#) involves (1) the communication of assessment results from assessment organizations to College leaders, (2) the review and synthesis of assessment results by College leadership, (3) the consideration of internal and external factors outside of assessment that impact institution-wide LOs, (4) the prioritization of assessment results, (5) gathering employee feedback, and (6) discernment of employee feedback by College leaders regarding impact on ACC's strategic plan and institutional budget.

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

Argument

ACC Has Defined Goals for Student Retention, Persistence, and Completion

The current [2015-2020 Strategic Plan](#) has defined goals and specific outcomes for retention, completion, and transfer. Data from the [2014-15 CCCS Fact Book](#) indicate ACC's fall-to-fall retention rate for all students (part-time and full-time) is 39.8%. This compares with a CCCS average of 48.6% for all CCCS community colleges and a 46.9% for the six CCCS urban colleges. Because there is room for improvement, ACC has an ambitious yet attainable goal of increasing the year-to-year retention rate by 3% each year for the five years of the strategic plan. IPEDS first-time/full-time cohort retention rates are higher at 51%. As a community college, ACC tracks both graduation and transfer rates to measure completion. [2014-15 CCCS Fact Book](#) data indicates ACC's graduation rate (based on 150 percent of normal time) is 18.5%, and its transfer rate is 15.2% for a total completion rate of 33.7%. The CCCS total (all community colleges) is 34.2%. ACC is on par with its completion rate and has designated a goal of 1% per year increase in transfer rates for the five years of the strategic plan. In acknowledging ACC's commitment to diversity, the graduation rate for minority students is 15.8%. Success rates, measured as the number of students successfully completing a course, average 84.5%. ACC's President shares the strategic plan goals for retention and completion with all employees each fall at the all-College assembly.

ACC Collects and Analyzes Information on Student Retention, Persistence, and Completion

ACC tracks retention, persistence, and graduation rates using the IPEDS methodology for tracking entering cohorts of first-time, full-time degree-seeking students. Additionally, data from the College's SIS system, Banner, is used to determine metrics for all students since the majority of ACC students are not first-time/full-time students. ACC's Office of Institutional Research produces a [Data Book](#) twice each semester (census date and end of term). The report is distributed to all members of the Leadership Team; members disseminate it to their employees. The Data Book measures enrollment, student demographics, enrollment by program, and degrees conferred by program. The Data Book is published on the Institutional Research (IR) website.

ACC Instruction tracks data on Instructional programs. An [Annual Academic Program Review](#) is also produced by ACC's Instructional associate deans. This report covers enrollment (headcount and FTE) by school and program; the ratio of full-time faculty members to FTE; scheduling modalities; class cancellation rates, class size, and fill rate; and cost per FTE. As previously mentioned in Component 4.A, each program area at the institution undergoes a [Comprehensive Program Review](#) every three years resulting in a detailed report, an example of which is found in the [Comprehensive Program Review for Business, Management & Retail Sales](#).

ACC uses Information on Student Retention, Persistence, and Completion of Programs for Improvements, as Data Warrants

The College Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) team leads ACC's continuous quality improvement efforts related to retention, persistence, and completion. The SEM team is comprised of a wide cross-section of institutional membership and is tasked with examining retention, persistence, and ultimately student completion. Prior to 2015, there had been a long-standing Enrollment Management Committee at the College, but it had been minimally active for 18 months. The President restructured the Student Services division in late 2014, moving from a Dean of Student Services model to a comprehensive Student Affairs model with the addition of a Vice President of Student Affairs. This new position was the direct result of the institution's assessed need to strategically address the enrollment, retention, and persistence of students. The VP of Student Affairs is tasked with convening and chairing the Strategic Enrollment Management team to analyze, identify, and address enrollment concerns. Five-year trends indicate flat or declining levels of enrollment, persistence, and retention, without significant gains. The team is focused on issues of strategic enrollment and retention utilizing best practices and frameworks of practice focused on completion strategies from sources including [Achieving the Dream](#), [AACC Pathways Project](#), and the [Community College Research Center at Columbia University](#).

Examples of program improvements that resulted from attention to retention, persistence, and completion:

- In fall 2015, the Academic Advising model was changed from a cafeteria offering of "see any advisor" to an assigned academic advisor to allow for more proactive, intrusive, and intentional advising. [Initial analysis](#) indicates more students have met with an academic advisor than in the two previous fall terms. The new motto of advising invites students to have a Purpose, a Person, and a Plan.
- The FAST program (Financial Aid Success Team) was developed to address students who are approaching ineligible aid status (low GPA and low completion percentage). Students are assigned a staff member from the College from a variety of departments. The student is required to meet with his/her advisor to discuss success strategies, academic planning, and any concerns related to the upcoming semester. Additionally, review of Pell and loan usage provides students with an awareness of what is needed to complete a degree in a timely manner.
- Retention specialists have been hired in specific program areas, such as Health and Paralegal, to provide proactive advising and support. A recognized best practice, the retention specialist meets regularly with all students and can provide support in a variety of areas including financial, personal, and academic.
- Recognizing the need to remove barriers and overhaul ineffective processes that discourage student enrollment, ACC is in the process of implementing [College Navigate](#), a software service tool through the [Educational Advisory Board](#). To date, ACC teams have mapped critical onboarding processes to identify opportunities for improvement and leakage points resulting in student departures.

ACC's Processes and Methodologies for Collecting/Analyzing Information on Student Retention, Persistence, and Completion Reflect Good Practice

ACC's methods for data collection and analysis of student success factors reflect good practice. While IPEDS definitions are utilized as required by the Department of Education, ACC regularly collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion via a number of variables beyond IPEDS. Data is pulled from Ellucian Banner (ACC's student information system), from State completion and enrollment rates, and surveys such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), employee surveys, and ACC assessment projects. The effective analysis and use of these data continue to be a work in progress. There are many questions to be answered; the key is to transform the many sources of data available into meaningful information.

The Strategic Enrollment Management team is in the process of developing a series of monitoring reports that can be used by cross-functional teams to analyze data related to completion, enrollment, persistence, and retention. Student type (part-time, full-time), gender, ethnicity, Veteran status, level of developmental education needed upon entrance, high school or zip code, age, financial aid status, and other factors have been identified to be examined to determine gaps of achievement or trends requiring appropriate interventions. ACC is serving as a pilot institution for the implementation of the Educational Advisory Board's Student Success Collaborative product, [Navigate](#), in fall 2016. The product will assist with analytics-based academic planning to help students succeed, from onboarding to completion. It will also enable ACC to consider data sources outside student information produced in Banner that may provide information valuable for planning purposes. It will enable end users the ability to drill further into student data, bringing in different variables and dimensions. Perhaps the most exciting feature is empowering students to better navigate their educational experience.

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4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Summary

ACC demonstrates responsibility for the quality of the educational programs, learning environments, and support services it offers. This is accomplished through an assessment process that evaluates their effectiveness for student learning and success to promote and achieve continuous improvement.

ACC has provided evidence that ensures the College has met Criterion 4. However, there are numerous opportunities for growth:

- Overcome faculty skepticism about accepting prior learning assessment/competency-based learning to achieve the performance measures set forth in the SBCCOE strategic plan for CCCS to create competency-based courses and competency-based strategic pathways.
- Ensure the primary outcome of the “Closing the Loop” plan is collaboratively discussing assessment findings to improve student learning and success via the revision of programs/processes.
- Utilize the Navigate product to assist administrators in identifying and analyzing student data to succeed as well as empowering students to navigate their educational experience in a way that motivates retention and completion.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

5.A - Core Component 5.A

The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Argument

ACC has established a cycle of continuous improvement. Because the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) has governing oversight of ACC, its vision and mission informs the structure for ACC's policies and financial decisions. SBCCOE allocates financial resources to the College, requires an annual balanced budget, establishes policies that govern the employee groups at the College, approves master facilities and program plans, grants spending authority for capital construction, audits the College for compliance, approves academic programs and degrees, and specifies reporting requirements as dictated by State statutes and State fiscal rules.

ACC remains an autonomous institution that develops its own strategic plan, operates independently in the use of its resources, and creates its own processes that are consistent with its mission. ACC is a thriving institution with a shared vision and strong goals, coupled with a solid resource base to meet its purpose. ACC's organizational structure, resources, and budgeting processes; shared governance processes; approach to integrated planning and continuous improvement guide the College in responding to future challenges and opportunities.

ACC Has Fiscal/Human Resources and a Physical/Technological Infrastructure Sufficient to Support Operations

Fiscal Resources. ACC has a strong fiscal position through strategic planning, budget discipline, and the alignment of resources with College priorities. ACC has a variety of funding sources including tuition and fees, State-appropriated funds allocated through SBCCOE, grants, auxiliary funds, and ACC Foundation support. ACC has stable financial resources and a strong budget reserve. The revenues per student available to Colorado institutions are less than revenues available to similar

institutions in most other states. Therefore, [tuition and fees](#) account for the majority of ACC's general fund revenues. When enrollments decline, increased revenue is mainly from [tuition rate increases](#). ACC has developed other funding sources via State, Federal, and private foundation grants and from fundraising efforts of the ACC Foundation to keep the College accessible and affordable to students.

The Colorado Community College System (CCCS) is responsible for the distribution of State General Fund revenue allocation to all 13 CCCS colleges and the SBCCOE operation. SBCCOE uses a revenue allocation formula that is FTE-based and subsidizes rural institutions through a sliding scale. SBCCOE is awarded a fixed percentage from the initial State allocation to cover its operations. All cash tuition earned by any CCCS college remains with the institution. ACC's revenue is approximately 75% cash tuition and 25% state allocation, not including any State capital, controlled maintenance dollars, or Work Study monies. The CCCS Office receives additional funds from CCCS colleges for services provided to the colleges. This is mainly for technology, such as the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and other software. Participation may be mandatory (ERP) or optional (Ad Astra), depending upon the service provided and needs of the individual college. The College also receives funds from the CCCS office for services it provides, for example, revenue generated from CCCOnline courses provided by ACC. Given the environment in which ACC operates, the College has sufficient control and discretion to use its resources in a manner that educational purposes are not adversely affected.

The [ACC Foundation](#) was established in 1971 to support the students, staff, and programs of the College financially and to assist in the coordination of strategic partnerships to enhance the College's mission. Through fundraising efforts, the ACC Foundation provides over \$250,000 to students, staff, and institution-wide programming annually. As a non-profit, 501(c)(3), non-federal grant revenue is administered through the Foundation for scholarships, stipends, and capital projects.

ACC's budget priorities are instruction and academic support services, as they are required to meet ACC's core mission, student learning and success. In FY 2016, 47% of the budget was allocated to Instruction, 13% to academic support, and 10% to student services, representing 70% of funds allocated directly to student needs.

Human Resources. Recognizing the importance of talented employees to the ACC mission, well over half of the institutional operating budget is committed to employee compensation. Because of reductions in State revenues due to a declining economy, faculty, administrative, professional and technical personnel (APT) experienced two years of no salary increases in FY 10 and FY 11. Classified staff, whose salary increases are set by the State, experienced four years, FY10 – FY 13, with no salary increases. To mitigate the impact of rising benefit costs to employees, ACC, CCCS, and the State covered a portion of or all increases depending on the individual's benefit plan. In response, ACC actively worked to provide professional development opportunities for all staff, including implementing a tuition benefit program. Professional development opportunities are highlighted in ACC's strategic plan in connection with Student Success, Technology Leadership, Inclusive Culture, and Organizational Sustainability.

Research conducted by CCCS revealed a discrepancy between average faculty salaries in Colorado community colleges and average faculty salaries in public 2-year colleges across the nation based on the College & University Personnel Association (CUPA) data. To remedy this situation, in May 2012 the SBCCOE approved a 5-year plan to bring faculty salaries up to the national average. Recently CCCS HR presented a [faculty salary plan update](#). In 2012, average ACC faculty salaries were 11.2% below the national average salaries for faculty at 2-year public institutions. The first increases under the 5-year plan were applied in fiscal year 2013. ACC has funded the faculty salary plan each subsequent year. Fiscal year 2017 is the 5th and final year of the plan. The faculty salary plan update

shows the progress ACC has made. Core faculty are defined as those faculty who have participated in the plan since its inception. For fiscal year 2016, average faculty salaries for ACC exceed the initial 2012 target salary by 6% and are slightly higher than FY 15 CUPA faculty salaries for 2-year public institutions.

ACC implemented a tiered compensation program for adjunct instructors tied to professional development. ACC annually increases its average instructor compensation by at least the same percentage as it increases the average salary for all other employee groups.

Full-time employees at ACC fall into three distinct categories of positions: classified, faculty, and administrator and professional technical (APT). Based on active jobs as of 6-20-16, ACC employs the following numbers of employees:

Estate	Number of Employees
Administrator/Professional/Technical (APT) Full-Time	115
Classified Full-Time	93
Faculty Full-Time	105
APT Temporary	38
Instructor/Adjunct/Instruction Related Hourly	380
Grand Total	731

Classified members: ACC is a part of the State of Colorado personnel system. Classified positions are regulated by the Colorado State Personnel Board Rules and Personnel Director’s Administrative Procedures. Benefits are administered through the Colorado Department of Personnel and Administration’s Division of Human Resources. Classified employees are eligible for cost-of-living and merit-based salary increases. The SBCCOE may establish policies and the CCCS President may establish procedures for classified employees that are not in conflict with Department of Personnel Board Rules and Administrative Procedures.

Non-classified members: Non-classified employees are those who fill positions that are exempt from the [State Personnel System, pursuant to C.R.S. 24-50-135](#). Non-classified positions fall into one of the following categories: Faculty, Adjunct Instructors, Students, and APT.

Succession planning is embedded in ACC’s strategic plan, ACC’s Leadership Academy, and ACC’s culture of continuous improvement. Open searches continue to be a deeply-rooted norm at ACC. Leadership positions are normally filled via a national search that tends to be the case across higher education, according to a [2008 survey conducted by Witt/Kieffer](#) executive search firm. ACC’s shared governance structure and commitment to a diverse workforce makes succession planning a much different activity than for a corporate institution. ACC recognizes the importance of succession planning and has seen the benefits of cross-functional training of the Registrar for Financial Aid Director responsibilities. Additionally, ACC’s Instructional area has created and implemented an

associate dean structure to provide assistance to instructional deans while nurturing the talents of future ACC leaders.

APT staff are those employees whose duties are comprised of more than 50% administrative, supervisory, professional, and/or technical duties performed by positions that have been exempted from the State Personnel System. These positions are at-will and regulated by SBCCOE policies and procedures. All manager, director, coordinator level positions, and above, are APT. In addition, positions that require technical expertise are classified as APT. All of these positions have minimum educational requirements; salary increases are entirely merit-based.

Student positions support the work of various offices and provide opportunities for employment on campus. Student employment is subject to the rules of the funding source for the position. Their employment records are subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). A Work Study student has federally-determined financial need and qualifies through the Financial Aid Office for a specific Federal or State aid program. Employment not funded through Federal or State programs is funded through ACC student hourly departmental budgets. All student employees are limited to working no more than 20 hours a week when classes are in session and must be enrolled in at least 6 credit hours. The number of student employees varies each year. As of March 2016, there were 89 Work Study student employees and 42 student hourly employees.

The Office of Human Resources provides a systematic, appropriate, and fair approach to manage the human resource needs of the College. For example, when seeking to fill a vacant position or create a new one, departments must follow a process that includes details of the type of position, job description, recruitment logistics for advertising, an organizational chart, and other specified instructions. ACC's [2015-2020 strategic plan](#) incorporates activities for the President's Cabinet, Human Resources department, and the Leadership Team to modify ACC's employee selection procedure.

ACC is purposeful in fostering inclusivity for applicants and advertises to attract a diverse candidate pool. The [ACC Affirmative Action Plan](#), required by Board policy, identifies service region, student, and employee demographics. ACC is narrowing the gaps and creating a more diverse employee population that better mirrors the entire ACC community at large. HR is purposeful in advertising/posting positions in locations that address an identified gap. To increase hiring committees' sense of awareness regarding diversity, HR provides a list of diversity questions that were developed by the [College Diversity and Inclusivity Project](#), one of which must be included in the interview portion of the screening process.

All employees, regardless of the employment category or status, are provided with policies and procedures during their onboarding process. Additionally a [new employee orientation](#) is provided to all employees and is comprised of modules appropriate to the employment category. These modules are inclusive of HR programs such as benefits and pay and Civil Rights, to include Title IX, safety, FERPA, College resources, etc. Employees are informed how to report a concern or issue through the Office of Human Resources, Student Life, and/or Campus Police. The College's behavioral intervention team known as [COST \(Campus Outreach and Support Team\)](#) is identified on the ACC website and can be contacted in various ways, including through an online referral through the [Refer a Concern](#) reporting process.

An integral part of ensuring the competence and ability of all employees is the [comprehensive evaluation plans](#) used for all employee groups at ACC. Performance evaluation is required annually or semi-annually, depending on the employee classification. Comprehensive professional development is provided and required for evaluators to effectively manage performance and fulfill the requirements

of the process(es). Refresher training is offered each semester for evaluators and those being evaluated.

As noted in Criterion 1, ACC participates in a validated employee climate survey administered through Mountain States Employer's Council (MSES) every 2-3 years. This is an effort to broadly monitor employee perceptions with respect to the working conditions, training opportunities, confidence in College leadership, and a variety of other areas. Results are shared with the College Leadership Team for discussion, emailed directly to all employees, posted on MyACC (Portal) for future reference, and presented at all-College meetings. Additionally, an employee climate survey is administered by CCCS every other year to assess employee satisfaction on similar items. Results of this survey are shared and discussed in the same manner as the MSES.

Based on the MSES survey results, the overall working environment at ACC is positive. ACC's hard-working students and friendly staff and faculty foster a desired workplace. Employees are able to perform their jobs with pride and are given the opportunity to affect change and add value to the institution through professional development and [ACC's Leadership Academy](#). ACC provides for flexibility, open communication, and alignment of leadership, all of which further substantiates a healthy work environment and enhances the basic principles of succession planning.

As with all institutions, ACC has opportunities for improvement and growth. Changing economic conditions and declining enrollments impact budget, staffing, technology, and facilities, creating challenges for students, staff, and faculty. For example, the size of the workforce of the College does not always provide promotion opportunities for staff wishing to move up within a department. Renovation of facilities may need to be completed in phases rather than in one project. Policy restrictions from the State, or SBCCOE, may not allow ACC to advance institutional goals regarding employee raises.

In virtually all areas, measured employee opinions from the overall [MSES survey](#) regarding ACC have become more positive from 2006 to 2015. The Climate dimension of the survey refers to how employees think and feel about their work environment and reflects the culture and values of the organization. Over the past 10 years, the climate dimension has increased from an average rating of 2.32 to 3.4 on a scale from 0.0 to 5.0. The Communication dimension measures the satisfaction level for which information is transmitted between employees and supervisors or managers. This was a relatively weak area for ACC when measured 10 years ago, but has seen significant improvement from an average rating of 2.77 to 3.81. The positive results have their foundation in a focused effort by College leadership to address more effective communication strategies, increase access to professional development opportunities, and role model the value of employee engagement. ACC has been named one of the top 100 places to work in Colorado by *The Denver Post* for the past two years.

Physical Infrastructure. ACC is committed to maintaining quality facilities at all three of its campuses. In addition to providing instruction, each campus has the support services to assist students with enrollment, testing, advising, and other tutoring and learning assistance services.

ACC has aligned physical and classroom space to allow for continued growth and expansion. The Littleton Campus encompasses five buildings on 51 acres and is conveniently located in Littleton adjacent to the downtown area. ACC has two satellite campuses in Parker and Castle Rock. The 22,500 square foot Parker campus is located 17 miles from Littleton and offers general education courses as well as workforce training and community education courses. The leased Castle Rock Campus consists of five classrooms and office space, offering general education courses and selective career coursework. Both Castle Rock and Parker offer student services support in the form of Academic Advising, Financial Aid Counseling, tutoring services, and Career and Transfer services to

support the entire student experience. Employees travel regularly between all three campuses to ensure student engagement and success, both in and out of the classroom.

ACC's Littleton campus has an aging infrastructure with two buildings built in 1950 and two others built in 1972 and 1978. The College's facilities are managed by an experienced director and a staff of 35 that includes maintenance, custodial, and grounds staff. The mission of the Facilities department supports the vision and mission of the College by operating in a responsible manner that values, manages, and preserves ACC's human, natural, and financial resources.

ACC actively pursues all funding resources to maintain buildings and finance construction and improvement projects. As a State agency, the physical structures are State-owned facilities, subject to statutory oversight provided by the State of Colorado Office of the State Architect. All construction projects, regardless of funding source, must follow [Office of State Architect and fiscal policies and procedures](#). Two sources of State funding for facility improvement projects are available and are allocated by the State of Colorado: capital construction and controlled maintenance. Access to these funds requires several planning documents including a [Facilities Master Plan](#), a [Facility Audit](#) and a [Five-Year Controlled Maintenance Plan](#). The College makes decisions based on these documents and annually reviews their relevance to maintaining the physical infrastructure that supports ACC's mission.

The College's Facility Master Plan, written in November 2010, has two remaining projects: the Science and Health Lab Renovation and the Learning Commons project. Limited State funding has been available for capital construction requests. ACC has made the decision to move forward with the Science and Health Lab Renovation project using 12.5 million dollars of institutional funds in order to expedite renovation. The project will begin in 2016. The Learning Commons project has moved forward in phases over the past few years utilizing institutional funds, grant dollars, and innovation funds given by CCCS.

Controlled Maintenance funds are limited to supporting needed corrective repairs or replacements of facilities' physical deficiencies that focus on life/safety issues. The College supplements these funds with internal dollars to fund facility improvements outlined in ACC's planning documents. ACC annually reviews the five-year controlled maintenance plan that is supported by the Facility Audit documentation. Projects are prioritized by the Facilities Director with input from staff and the Vice President for Administrative Services. The final prioritized list is approved by executive leadership.

For minor projects, any College employee has the opportunity to put forth projects for consideration through the [Area Improvement process](#). These projects are primarily funded through the Facilities department's annual budget. They are prioritized based on life/safety and student or departmental impact. This process ensures that the entire campus community has input to facility improvements.

Technology. The Information Technology department at CCCS and ACC ensure that staff, students, and community members have access to the technology needed to achieve their goals. CCCS IT supports administrative IT needs shared between the 13 community colleges. CCCS support includes hosting the Banner records system, managing central servers for efficiency and cost effectiveness, creating joint reporting for audit and reporting needs, managing phone systems and ACC's D2L Learning Management System. The ACC IT director meets monthly with IT directors from across the CCCS System. This allows for collaboration on projects relevant to all colleges and serves as a communication channel to address concerns of customers and to develop System-wide plans and deployments for technology that affects all colleges in the State.

The [2015-2020 ACC IT Strategic Plan](#) aligns with the [2015-2020 ACC Strategic Plan](#). The IT

Strategic Plan is committed to technology leadership to support all aspects of ACC's business and academic needs. At the forefront of organizational sustainability and student success are the assurance of long-term viability and up-to-date technology to maintain a competitive edge in serving students and attracting partners to achieve ACC's vision. The IT department works collaboratively with College leadership, faculty, staff, and students to ensure a strategic approach is taken to an ever increasing reliance on technology.

ACC's Resource Allocation Process Favors Educational Purposes

ACC's academic mission takes precedence over all other areas in the budgeting/resource allocation process. While ACC is required to present the budget to the SBCCOE for approval, it is the responsibility of the College to establish its budget based on enrollments, projected revenues, and forecasting. ACC's resource allocation occurs through a comprehensive, [collaborative budget process](#) with participation from across the College. This integrated planning and resource allocation process, as described in the [2013 Progress Report on Integration of Planning and Budgeting](#), ensures that student success remains its core purpose. The fact that the majority of College operating expenses are allocated toward instruction and academic support is evidence of dedicated funding to educational purposes and student success. ACC does not disburse or return revenue to any superordinate entity.

ACC's Mission Statement is Realistic in Light of Organizational Structure, Resources, and Opportunities

ACC's strategic planning process was grounded in the environmental analysis. The [Environmental Analysis Task Force](#) identified five key factors impacting the planning process and expected to significantly transform ACC's internal and external environment over the next five years. The analysis included consideration of organizational structure, resources, and both internal and external opportunities. ACC's existing vision, mission, and values statements were confirmed by the environmental analysis and guided the strategic planning process.

ACC's Staff is Appropriately Qualified and Trained

ACC's recruiting, hiring, evaluation, and professional development of employees follows all policies and procedures of the State of Colorado, CCCS, and ACC. ACC supervisors, departments and selection committees work with Human Resources to fill vacant positions and administer the application process including minimum and preferred qualifications driven by industry and State hiring guidelines and standards. The Office of Human Resources at ACC utilizes an online applicant tracking system that fosters a diverse method for acquiring applicants with knowledge, skills, abilities, and other attributes. The system provides access to many resources whereby job announcements cast the widest possible net to a varied population of applicants. Several screening processes determine minimum qualifications and further parses out preferred qualifications through a screening committee process. Candidates must demonstrate their credentials and experience throughout the screening and selection processes through written and verbal demonstration. Top talent is identified and credentials verified by HR.

For Classified employees, the State of Colorado Department of Personnel and Administration establishes processes pertaining to recruitment and selection, employee minimum qualifications, compensation, and annual performance evaluations. The State completes an objective comparative analysis screening of all candidates, validating that minimum qualification requirements are met. Once the screening process is complete, the College receives a list of the top six ranked candidates to consider for the available position.

ACC is committed to providing ongoing professional development opportunities for its staff and faculty. ACC dedicates annual professional development funds to support opportunities for faculty, APT, and Classified staff. The Office of Human Resources provides training and development focused on professional competency attainment for soft and technical skills targeted to all employment categories. In 2011, ACC's Center for Professional Enrichment and the Human Resources department began collaborating on employee professional development in response to dissatisfaction with the lack of professional development opportunities for non-faculty shown on the MSES. Employees are invited to attend as many of the professional development opportunities as appropriate to their specific job responsibilities. A recent focus for the College includes preparedness and awareness training on safety, regulatory, and compliance (Civil Rights and Sexual Harassment) matters to safeguard students, faculty, staff, and administrators. These programs are facilitated by Campus Police, the ACC Safety Committee, HR, and Student Affairs. All employees' performance evaluations include a professional development component to ensure employees remain current with needed skills.

Approximately 10 employees are nominated every year to participate in ACC's internal Leadership Academy. This supplemental training develops strengths and shores up weaknesses of future leaders. The Leadership Academy is a one-year complete leadership development program that begins with leadership seminars and culminates in a practicum experience for employee participants. The purpose is to identify and nurture ACC talent. Additionally, as of 2011, College employees and their dependents are eligible for tuition assistance. Employees can expand and refine their skills to aid in their current job or jobs they aspire to in the future. ACC has reimbursed over 300 credits each of the past three years to staff and eligible dependents.

ACC Has a Well-developed Process for Budgeting and Monitoring Expense

ACC engages in a participatory budget process. The President's Cabinet and Leadership Team are responsible for working with their respective budget managers, departments, and committees to help them identify resource and staffing needs and balance priorities in meeting ACC's strategic goals. This process ties directly to the results of the [Closing the Loop Plan](#). The Budget Office and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) compile the constituents' budget requests and confer with specific Cabinet members as needed. Utilizing revenue forecasts and incorporating external expenditure requirements, the CFO and the President approve the final budget based on available funding and alignment with the College strategic plan.

The present ACC budget model focuses funding around three key objectives: ensuring proper resources for existing operations, funding new opportunities and initiatives, and maintaining adequate reserves for future prospects. These objectives are in alignment with the strategic plan of the College and the CCCS. Budget decisions are made based upon the priorities of the institution as reflected in the College's strategic plan, directions, and goals. This budgeting approach has evolved over the past six years with the College's strategic planning process and encourages participation from all levels of the College.

Personnel requests are addressed during the Fall Semester to ensure timeliness in recruitment of vacant or new positions. The Budget Office sends a [memo](#) to Cabinet members, Deans, and department leaders describing the Personnel process and timeframe, including a reminder to collaboratively discuss staffing needs with all department members. ACC's President and Cabinet meet to discuss all requests and strategize on the positions to move forward, pending budget review, alignment with strategic plan initiatives, and additional information needed. Once the President and Cabinet finalize the personnel requests for the next fiscal year, decisions are presented and reaffirmed with impacted areas.

Operational budgets are addressed during the Spring Semester. The Budget Office sends a [memo](#) to Cabinet members, deans, and department leaders, as well as all fund managers, describing the Operations budget timeline and parameters. [Worksheet templates](#) are sent with the memo for the purpose of making changes in the budget driven by assessment results and other institutional data. Leaders are reminded to collaborate with all members of their respective departments and to identify resources needed in alignment with strategic plan initiatives. All requests are to reflect actual needs, regardless of the funding prospects, to ensure that all needs are considered in the process. The Budget Office staff take into consideration historical information regarding enrollment, State economic data, funding formula guidance from CCCS, and ACC's Strategic Plan. Budget templates and supporting documents are compiled into an initial Master Budget. The initial Master Budget is reviewed with the President. This initiates a feedback cycle where changes are discussed and additional information gathered until the budget is finalized for submission to the SBCCOE for approval at its June meeting. The budget is presented to the College by the President and CFO at annual "[Budget Roadshow](#)" meetings.

ACC is governed by the [State of Colorado Fiscal Rules](#). CCCS has well-developed internal control policies and accounting structures for overseeing the fiscal and resource allocations that are followed by the College. ACC utilizes standard budget and financial forms and procedures to ensure accountability and wise fiscal management. [Instructional and informational documents](#) are accessible via the portal for employees. Expenses must occur and be recorded according to State policies and guidelines. Vice Presidents, Deans, and directors are accountable for managing their respective budgets, including personnel expenditures and operating expenses. Budget oversight by functional areas with budget responsibility ensures that expenses and commitments are monitored regularly. Banner provides the detailed activity of all revenues, expenses, and commitments. Auxiliary units, grants, and scholarship programs work directly with the fiscal services accounting department to manage the particular stipulations of these budgets.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Argument

ACC Has and Employs Policies/Procedures to Engage Internal Constituencies in ACC's Governance

All departments of the College are represented by [ACC's Leadership Team](#). Information presented at the SBCCOE meetings is disseminated by the President to the Leadership Team at bi-weekly meetings. It is the responsibility of Leadership Team members to disseminate information, foster discussion, and gather input about the President's updates. Members of the Leadership Team report information from their respective areas to Leadership Team members and, in turn, report information gathered from the various areas of the College to the employees in their respective departments. This group approves and makes decisions of key importance to the College.

Each estate holds monthly meetings for members—Faculty Senate, Classified Assembly, and Administrative Assembly. These meetings provide opportunities for estate-specific professional development, estate-specific information sharing, and input gathering. Estate presidents are members of the Leadership Team and report on estate activities and concerns. Faculty participate in the activities mentioned above and have mechanisms for input on academic policies and curriculum decisions. A number of faculty committees provide senior leadership with guidance on processes and procedures such as the [Curriculum Committee](#) and the [College Assessment Project](#).

Students have many opportunities to provide input to the College and participate in College activities. The College values student input and provides fiscal resources and dedicated space for groups to meet including office space for Phi Theta Kappa and student government. The president of ACC Student Government is the students' voice to campus administration. President Doyle established a President's Student Advisory Council comprised of 15-to-20 different students each year, representing all types of ACC students. Meeting monthly during the academic year, these students provide the President with direct input on College issues and matters.

Shared governance gives the College community appropriate voice and consideration in decision-making and creating procedures and processes that align with SBCCOE and other regulated policies.

ACC's Governing Board Provides Oversight Regarding Financial and Academic Policies/Practices and Meets Legal and Fiduciary Responsibilities

The SBCCOE and ACC's administration, faculty, staff, and students are engaged in sharing the critical tasks to accomplish the College's mission. The details of the composition of the SBCCOE are presented in Criterion 1. The SBCCOE has responsibility for oversight of both secondary, postsecondary Career and Technical Education, and community college governance. The SBCCOE allocates financial resources, requires an annual balanced budget, approves and provides spending authority for capital construction, audits the College for compliance, and approves academic programs and degrees.

The complexity of acting as the governing board for 13 community colleges as well as all secondary and post-secondary Career and Technical Education in Colorado has required the SBCCOE to adopt several strategies, one of which is the adoption of Board policies that set the parameters of fiscal, academic, and administrative procedures and operations. The other two are discussed in Criterion 2 and deal with the structure of meetings that allow for updates and information gathering and opportunities for interaction with employees, students, and community members. SBCCOE has the authority to establish policies and delegate the implementation of those policies to the CCCS President and the college presidents.

Effective Structures for Contribution and Collaboration Involve all ACC Employees and Students in Setting Academic Requirements, Policy, and Processes

All forums, advisory boards, and committees noted above are examples of opportunities for ACC to engage internal constituents to share information and viewpoints and contribute toward shared governance at ACC. The Employee Campus Climate Survey results demonstrate an increased confidence by employees that their input is considered in the decision-making process. The following are examples of shared governance at work at ACC.

ACC has always had a purposeful plan for instruction. The detailed [instructional plan](#) specifically documents ACC's instructional direction. All instructional faculty and staff offered input to the plan. Instructional collaborations also included input from non-instructional areas. The plan requires instruction to work in concert with others across the institution in order to achieve the stated goals.

Performance management and evaluation procedure(s) were recently updated for faculty and non-faculty (APT) positions based on feedback obtained during the strategic planning process. This process also involved committees comprised of various areas of the College to come together to align ACC's procedure(s) with new CCCS procedure(s). Due to the link between performance and merit pay, this also necessitated further collaboration in [procedure\(s\) affecting how merit pay is calculated and distributed](#). The procedure as updated through committee and sub-committee work is documented in the Evidence File.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Argument

ACC Allocates Resources in Alignment with Its Mission and Priorities

ACC's mission and strategic plan serve as the core documents that guide resource allocation. The components of the strategic plan are openly discussed, and all relevant stakeholders are given opportunity for input and feedback. ACC's strategic plan is a living document that is reviewed annually to ensure its goals and initiatives still meet the needs of the College. ACC's top priority is student success. Therefore, instructional support both in and out of the classroom dominates resource allocation. The environmental analysis and assessment findings that have been integrated into strategic planning discussions are the driving force for budget decisions at the College. Examples of budget decisions based upon strategic priorities include the hiring of a new faculty position for the Music Audio Technology program, release time for faculty to participate in the developmental education redesign, and improvements in ACC's technology infrastructure.

ACC Links Its Processes for Assessment of Student Learning, Evaluation of Operations, Planning, and Budgeting

ACC's priorities and goals determine the planning process that drives decisions and therefore the annual budget and resource allocation. ACC is committed to connecting its planning processes, assessment of student learning, and resource allocation. In the last seven years, ACC has developed both an effective and collaborative strategic planning process as well as institutional processes for assessing student learning and operational processes. Given the successes in developing and implementing these processes across the institution, the College recognizes the need to improve its institutional effectiveness through the discussion of assessment results and the [Closing the Loop Plan](#) that prioritizes needed institutional changes across the institution.

Flexibility within the strategic plan and the budget is one of many reasons that ACC has been successful in implementing strategic goals. Budget managers are able to shift resources to accommodate the current priorities of the College and the changing landscape of higher education in the State of Colorado. This ensures a connected process between the strategic plan and the budget and has allowed some departments to move further toward the implementation of objectives that add value to the institution.

The implementation of [ACC's 2010-2015 strategic plan](#) was completed August 31, 2015. ACC accomplished 71% of the expected outcomes attached to 2010-2015 strategic goals and tasks. As an evolving document, some tasks were not pursued over the course of plan implementation. Those that were not met included unrealistic targets or were simply unattainable with current resources. Expected outcomes that were not achieved but are still relevant to improving ACC's future and in line with current vision, mission, and values are included in the 2015-2020 strategic plan.

ACC's Planning Process Encompasses the Perspectives of Internal and External Constituent Groups

A full discussion of ACC's strategic planning process is included in Criterion 1.A.

ACC Plans on the Basis of a Sound Understanding of Current Capacity

ACC incorporates Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and CCCS budget and enrollment forecasts into the planning process. The impacts of Federal and State mandates are monitored by College leadership, as well. Information from these sources is actively communicated to the whole College through a variety of modes: the environmental analysis, semester College assembly activities, Leadership Team meetings, employee Estate meetings, and timely email communication from the CCCS President and/or ACC President.

ACC's CFO/Business Officer builds budgets with revenue targets that are estimated using historical enrollment trends, State economic forecasts, the Governor's Office of State Planning and Budgeting (Long Bill information), CCCS allocation estimates, and consultation with appropriate ACC colleagues. This information is shared with the President and the President's Cabinet to keep all senior leaders informed about the status of the upcoming fiscal year. Enrollment and revenue projections are monitored and compared against actual results throughout the fiscal year using Institutional Research reports and Budget Office financial statements. Each budget is built with flexibility to withstand changes in revenue targets and/or emergencies.

ACC's Institutional Planning Anticipates Emerging Factors

For the last two cycles of the strategic planning process, the environmental analysis has identified the internal and external factors that ACC should address for planning purposes over the next few years. The five key factors serving as the foci of the strategic plan are addressed via the strategic directions, strategic goals, tasks, and activities that are linked to expected outcomes from specific institutional planning. With a focus on service to students, employees, and the broader community, the College regularly reviews its position in the higher education community as well as its position in the metro Denver area and the State in terms of student preparation for employment or transfer.

Sources

- 38 Institutional Effectiveness_2010-2015 Strategic Plan_mt_20160504
- 50 Institutional Effectiveness_Closing the Loop Plan_July 2016

5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

Argument

ACC Develops and Documents Evidence of Performance in its Operations

ACC monitors the effectiveness of its operations through assessment of Learning Outcomes as they apply to institutional processes and operational data produced by the IR Department. This process documents ACC outcomes that align with CDHE and CCCS performance indicators, including overall enrollment, completion percentages, transfer and graduation rates, remedial course completion goals, and closing the attainment gap. Essential data includes [enrollment reports](#), IPEDS, SURDS, [CCSSE results](#), the CCCS student satisfaction survey, and [employee climate surveys](#). Internal and external audits verify compliance with Federal, State and CCCS regulations. Instruction conducts annual program reviews and comprehensive reviews on a three-year cycle. A number of instructional programs maintain independent accreditations. Individual faculty and instructors receive feedback at the course level from students using an online course evaluation system.

Employee performance evaluations occur each year and document individual performance for that year. Supervisors meet with employees to provide feedback, discuss progress toward meeting prior goals, set new goals that align with those of the department and College, and discuss employee self-reflection of their performance. Individuals who hold the title of director and above also participate in a 360 evaluation process for personal development and are expected to comment on strengths and areas for improvement in their evaluations. Additionally, all employees are given the opportunity to annually evaluate the College President, initiated by a process through CCCS.

As outlined in Criterion 4, ACC's Assessment Management System (AMS), was purchased to record all assessment plans/reports and to track ACC's strategic plan. The AMS aggregates data for decision-making purposes. The Assessment Management System also tracks the implementation of ACC's strategic plan and produces reports to monitor progress on the accomplishment of expected outcomes.

ACC Learns from its Operational Experience and Improves its Institutional Effectiveness, Capabilities, and Sustainability, Overall and in its Component Parts

Attention to the recommendations of the 2006 HLC Review Team have greatly impacted ACC's instructional and operational processes over the past ten years. Those changes have been highlighted and documented throughout the Assurance Argument. The areas of greatest concern were:

- Faculty, staff and administrative relationships
- Assessment of learning
- Integration of planning and budgeting

HLC completed a successful focused visit and report in the fall of 2009 to address progress on faculty,

staff and administrative relationships. A monitoring report on the assessment of student learning was also successfully submitted and positively reviewed in the fall of 2009. Initially, a focused visit was recommended to review ACC's steps toward integrating planning and budgeting during the 2010-2011 academic year. In their report of the Commission-mandated focused visit of 2009, the HLC Team stated "the currently scheduled 2010-2011 focused visit is not needed." In their words, "The team recommends that the requirement of a mandated focused visit in 2010-2011 be rescinded." This was due to the team finding "ample evidence of a planning process currently underway, in which budgeting is clearly related to planning." Rather, a progress report on the integration of planning and budgeting was required, submitted and positively reviewed in March of 2013.

In short, ACC has benefitted from lessons learned in terms of deficiencies pointed out by the 2006 HLC Team. Continuous self-assessment confirms ACC has improved the effectiveness of the overall institution and its component parts in terms of the capability to cumulatively impact shared institutional purposes and, therefore, organizational sustainability. Specific areas in effect in 2006 to which ACC has responded that are addressed in this argument are summarized below, by Criterion.

MISSION and INTEGRITY

- ACC is an autonomous member college of CCCS. (Criteria 2 and 5)
- Day-to-day control and management of State of Colorado procedures for CCCS is delegated to ACC's President by the CCCS President (Criterion 2)
- ACC's President's Cabinet establishes and implements ACC policies in accordance with ACC's mission (Criterion 2)
- President Doyle's formation of a Leadership Team addresses communication concerns regarding topics of key interest to ACC employees (Criteria 1, 2, 4 and 5)
- New employee orientation has been developed for specific estates to familiarize newcomers with ACC's communication processes as well as resources and opportunities. (Criterion 5)
- "Comings and Goings" of personnel are communicated by Human Resources via ACC's Portal, monthly, and position openings e-mailed to ACC employees immediately upon notification to HR of position availability (Criterion 5)
- Fiscal services' annual "Budget Roadshow" provides increasing transparency about institutional budgeting and planning. (Criteria 2 and 5)
- ACC's organizational climate has improved considerably as evidenced by employee opinion survey results and selection as one of Colorado's "Top 100 Work Places" by *The Denver Post* the past two years, 2015 and 2016. (Criterion 5)

PREPARING for the FUTURE

- ACC has developed a collaborative strategic planning process that was successfully implemented in 2008, with the plan launched in fall 2010. The same process was utilized for the 2015-2020 strategic plan. (Criteria 1 and 5)
- Strategic planning outcomes are documented in the strategic plan and results aggregated for decision-making purposes through ACC's Assessment Management System that contains a strategic planning module. (Criterion 5)
- Assessment data is collected from institutional and operational units and analyzed together with other institutional data for a holistic evaluation of institutional effectiveness toward continuous improvement through annual review of the strategic plan (Criterion 4)
- ACC employees have become much more adept in the implementation of Banner, ACC's SIS. Fiscal services conducts quarterly trainings on Banner and also on demand when employees need immediate assistance (Criterion 5)
- In May 2012 the SBCCOE approved a 5-year plan to bring faculty salaries up to the national

average. ACC applied the first increases under the 5-year plan in fiscal year 2013. (Criterion 5)

STUDENT LEARNING and EFFECTIVE TEACHING

- ACC continues to recognize and reward Distinguished Faculty and honor them through acknowledgement of the award in the ACC Catalog, an article in the *ACC Insider*, and presentation of a plaque at the all-College Celebration in May (Criterion 4)
- ACC's Master Teacher Certificate (MTC) provides a comprehensive development plan that allows full-time faculty to become models of excellence in teaching. Faculty earning the MTC are honored at the all-College Celebration each May (Criterion 4)
- The ACC Foundation encourages innovation in teaching through their mini-grants program (Criterion 3)
- ACC emphasizes faculty professional development to keep faculty current in their respective fields and implement best teaching practices; professional development funding is documented in the institutional budget (Criteria 2, 3, 4, and 5)
- ACC's succession plan consists of a strategic plan that has a common cause and employee ownership, a Leadership Academy to develop internal candidates, and a community culture that aspires to quality across the institution (Criteria 1, 3, and 5)
- ACC's philosophy of general education is expressed in ACC's Learning Outcomes for Student Enrichment and Process Improvement; assurance that curriculum addresses the institution-wide LOs is documented in annual assessment reports (Criteria 1, 3, 4, and 5)
- ACC assesses institutional effectiveness through the assessment of Learning Outcomes across the institution, specific programs and the annual review of the strategic plan. (Criteria 1, 3, 4, and 5)
- A program review process is in place that is separate and different from the annual assessment of instructional units (Criteria 2, 3, 4, and 5)

ENGAGEMENT and SERVICE

- ACC's strategic planning process that was conducted in 2008 and, again in 2013-14 was grounded in an environmental analysis that included internal and external constituencies. What was learned shaped the strategic plans that followed (Criteria 1 and 5)

Sources

- 14 Human Resources_Mountain States Employee Survey 2015_mt_20151222
- 22 Student Affairs_CCSSE_2015_mt_20160622
- 36 Institutional Effectiveness_Enrollment Trends_CCCS Analysis final 4-28-16_mt_20160726
- 72 Student Affairs_CCSSE Results_2015_mt_20160602

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

Summary

ACC's organization structure, resources and budgeting processes, shared governance processes, approach to integrated planning and continuous improvement guide the College in responding to future challenges and opportunities. ACC has provided evidence that ensures the College meets Criterion 5. Areas that provide opportunities for improvement include the following:

- Continue to narrow the gaps to ensure the employee population better mirrors the ACC community at large.
- Collaborative partnerships and external funding are necessary to further overcome the impact of declining enrollments on the institutional budget.
- Continuous updating of ACC's aging infrastructure is imperative.
- Communicate the results of ACC's "Closing the Loop" plan throughout the College for continuous improvement of Institutional Effectiveness.

Sources

There are no sources.