

Colorado State University - CO

HLC ID 1046

OPEN PATHWAY: Mid-Cycle Review

Visit Date: 6/4/2018

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Context and Nature of Review

Visit Date

6/4/2018

Mid-Cycle Reviews include:

- The Year 4 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Biennial Review for Applying institutions

Reaffirmation Reviews include:

- The Year 10 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Review for Initial Candidacy for Applying institutions
- The Review for Initial Accreditation for Applying institutions
- The Year 4 Review for Standard Pathway institutions that are in their first accreditation cycle after attaining initial accreditation

Scope of Review

- Mid-Cycle Review

There are no forms assigned.

Institutional Context

Colorado State University (CSU) is a land-grant comprehensive graduate research university with a state-mandated mission of offering a comprehensive array of degree programs including exclusive authority to offer programs in agriculture, forestry, natural resources, and veterinary medicine. As a large state-funded organization (33,413 enrolled students in fall 2017), academic programming at CSU rises to meet its mission by providing 74 Bachelor's, 86 Master's and Professional, and 51 Doctoral degrees including undergraduate and graduate programs in agriculture, forestry, natural resources, and veterinary medicine. As a land-grant institution, CSU's academic programs primarily serve constituents within the state with 74% of undergraduates being Colorado residents. While CSU's degree programs primarily serve Colorado residents, the institution has a suitable national and international population, currently serving 1,995 international students and scholars from over 100 countries.

In recent years the institution has intentionally focused on initiatives in the areas of diversity/inclusion, student success, and fiscal planning. To promote diversity and inclusion the campus adopted The Principles of Community which outline expectations related to the areas of inclusion, integrity, respect, service, and social justice. Various committees, plans, activities, and assessments have also been implemented in efforts to increase diversity and inclusivity at Colorado State University, and has resulted in a gradual increase in student diversity from 15.6 % in 2012 to 21.2 % in 2017.

Although graduation rates have risen from 63% to 68% in recent years, efforts such as the development of the All University Core Curriculum, implementation of two iterations of the Student Success Initiative, and assorted social services and programs are all aimed at further increasing graduation and retention rates of CSU students. Resources such as a new learning management system (Canvas), an electronic student alert system (Unizin), and placement of

department-based Academic Success Coordinators have been recently incorporated to provide CSU students the academic and social resources needed for student success.

Relative to fiscal planning, despite limited growth in state appropriations and a state law (GASB 68) that directly impacts the school's bottom line, CSU is finding ways to strengthen its fiscal position and maintain a healthy Financial Indicator Score (most recent CFI = 2.49). Processes such as the Budget Development Schedule, frequent ledger reconciliations, expenditure alignment with strategic plan initiatives, and publication of the interactive Budget Planning Tool illustrate that fiscal planning at all levels is thoughtful, transparent, and inclusive as CSU consistently works toward achievement of its stated mission.

Interactions with Constituencies

(05-23-18) Prior to the lock-down and review the HLC team chair contacted the Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness via a phone conference to discuss the review process that would be followed.

(06-15-18) HLC team chair sent email update on progress to the Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness

(6-25-18) HLC team chair sent email update indicating no additional documents would be required to the Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness

Additional Documents

Additional materials reviewed included the following websites:

<https://www.colostate.edu/>

<https://admissions.colostate.edu/what-we-stand-for/>

<http://engagement.colostate.edu/>

https://provost.colostate.edu/provost/media/sites/75/2016/02/302314_2015-format-strat-plan_PR7.pdf

<https://studentaffairs.colostate.edu/about-us/mission/>

<http://studentachievement.colostate.edu/mission/>

<https://admissions.colostate.edu/what-we-stand-for/>

<https://vpr.colostate.edu/>

https://apps.natsci.colostate.edu/documents/CNS_StrategicPlan_Web.pdf

<https://vpr.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/OVPR-2017-Town-Hall-Meeting.pdf>

<http://www.cwi.colostate.edu/mission.aspx>

<http://engagement.colostate.edu/>

http://busfin.colostate.edu/Forms/Fin_Statements/finacct16.pdf

<https://vpr.colostate.edu/ricro/rcr/courses-and-education/>

<http://policylibrary.colostate.edu/policy-browse.aspx>

http://webdoc.agsci.colostate.edu/IT/Web_Managers/CSU%20Web%20Accessibility%20Training%20-%206-19-17.pdf

<https://accreditation.colostate.edu/program-accreditations-academic/>

<https://president.colostate.edu/media/sites/95/2018/06/Executive-Org-Chart-Summer-2018.pdf>

<https://financialaid.colostate.edu/base-tuition/>

<https://president.colostate.edu/budget-updates/>

<https://source.colostate.edu/principles-of-community-point-the-way-for-shared-campus-values/>

<http://policylibrary.colostate.edu/policy.aspx?id=603>

<http://www.csusystem.edu/board-of-governors/meetings-agendas>

<http://www.csusystem.edu/uploads/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Policy%20108%20CSUS%20Board%20Conflict%20of%20>

https://diversity.colostate.edu/2016_campus-climate-survey/

<http://international-initiatives.colostate.edu/distinguished-speakers/>

<https://dspace.library.colostate.edu/handle/10217/180165>

<https://art.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2018/01/BFA-Capstone-Requirements.pdf>

<https://warnercnr.colostate.edu/hdnr/conservation-leadership/capstone-projects/>

<https://history.colostate.edu/undergrad/capstone-courses/>

<https://www.online.colostate.edu/degrees/biomedical-engineering/advisory-board.dot>

<https://curriculum.colostate.edu/guaranteed-transfer-pathways/>

<http://www.cm.chhs.colostate.edu/about-us/files/CMAcademicQualityandOutcomeAssessmentPlanwFlowChart.pdf>

<https://msfn.colostate.edu/diversity-blueprint/>

<https://facultycouncil.colostate.edu/faculty-manual-section-d/>

<https://www.ir.colostate.edu/data-reports/faculty/>

<https://fsas.colostate.edu/intro/>

<http://irpe-reports.colostate.edu/nsse/NSSE-2012-results-by-Online-Plus-status.pdf>

<https://tilt.colostate.edu/proDev/pdi/>

<https://oeo.colostate.edu>

<http://takingstock.wp.casa.colostate.edu/early-performance-feedback/>

<http://www.ssw.chhs.colostate.edu/students/graduate/index.aspx>

<https://diversity.colostate.edu/student-diversity-programs-and-services/>

<https://artmuseum.colostate.edu/>

<http://avenir.colostate.edu/>

http://bspm.agsci.colostate.edu/01-2__trashed/gillette-museum/

<http://studentachievement.colostate.edu>

http://csurams.com/news/2011/11/1/Rams_score_big_in_NCAA_graduation_report.aspx

<https://collegian.com/2017/10/hodge-colorado-state-diversity-not-reflected-by-university/>

<https://www.denverpost.com/2017/01/25/colorado-state-university-diversity-grant-lawsuit/>

<https://collegian.com/2018/04/students-against-white-supremacy-call-for-the-removal-of-turning-point-usa-from-campus/>

https://connect.colostate.edu/register/tentative_evaluation

<http://policylibrary.colostate.edu/policy.aspx?id=679>

<https://curriculum.colostate.edu/ucc-agendas-minutes/>

<https://accreditation.colostate.edu/program-accreditations-non-degree/>

<https://accreditation.colostate.edu/program-accreditations-academic/>

<https://tilt.colostate.edu/courseDD/hip/>

<https://president.colostate.edu/budget-updates/>

<http://budgeter.colostate.edu/Main.aspx>

<https://vpr.colostate.edu/kr/kuali-research-training/>

<http://www.budgets.colostate.edu>

<https://accountability.colostate.edu>

<https://source.colostate.edu/record-annual-fundraising-tops-197-million/>

<https://giving.colostate.edu>

<https://www.moody.com/credit-ratings/Colorado-State-University-CO-credit-rating-600024086>

[http://www.csusystem.edu/uploads/ckfinder/userfiles/files/CSUS%20FISCAL%20RULES%20%20with%20policies%](http://www.csusystem.edu/uploads/ckfinder/userfiles/files/CSUS%20FISCAL%20RULES%20%20with%20policies%20)

<http://www.csusystem.edu/board-of-governors/board-members>

http://www.csusystem.edu/uploads/files/2018_05_08_13_09_15_May%202018%20Approved%20Minutes.pdf

http://www.csusystem.edu/uploads/files/2015_12_11_20_50_05_December%202015%20Approved%20Minutes.pdf

https://dspace.library.colostate.edu/bitstream/handle/10217/185845/UBOG_2017_034_AppMinutes_Oct-5-6.pdf?sequence=34&isAllowed=y

<https://foundation.colostate.edu/board-of-directors/>

<http://ap.colostate.edu>

<https://ap.colostate.edu/university-committees/>

<https://cpc.colostate.edu>

<http://facultycouncil.colostate.edu>

<https://facultycouncil.colostate.edu/committee-memberships-chairs/>

<https://ascsu.colostate.edu>

<http://opc.prep.colostate.edu>

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.)

Rating

Met

Evidence

Colorado State University (CSU) is a state-funded comprehensive graduate research institution whose overarching role and mission are formally defined by the Colorado State Legislature, and have been codified in Colorado Revised Statute Title 23 Article 31. The institution's state mandated mission has remained unchanged since the previous comprehensive accreditation site visit, as have the strategic mission and nine accompanying values developed and approved for the campus by CSU Board of Governors in 2005.

After a year of development, debate, and campus dialog, on December 15, 2015 the President's Cabinet endorsed a new set of guiding principles for the campus known as The Principles of Community to complement the current mission. As detailed on the Vice President for Diversity's web post "Principles of Community Point the Way for Shared Campus Values", the development process involved the entire campus, and the principles of Inclusion, Integrity, Respect, Service, and Social Justice align with the campus focus on inclusion. These principles pertain to all CSU community members, and adoption of The Principles of Community is pervasive, appearing on numerous administrative and college websites, in institutional and departmental planning documents, and in core resources such as the General Catalog.

Per the codified mission, CSU is expected to offer a comprehensive array of degree programs, and has exclusive responsibility for Veterinary Medicine as well as academic programming in agriculture, forestry, and natural sciences. As evidenced in the Official List of Colleges, Departments, Majors, Minors, and Degrees and within the General Catalog, CSU continues to achieve this mission by offering a wide array of degree programs (74 Bachelor's, 86 Master's and Professional, 51 Doctoral degrees) including programs specific to agriculture, forestry, and natural resources within the

Colleges of Agricultural Sciences and the Warner College of Natural Resources, as well as the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. Additionally, as a large land-grant institution (33,413 enrolled students in fall 2017), academic programming at Colorado State University meets land-grant expectations by primarily serving Colorado constituents with 74% of CSU undergraduates being Colorado residents.

Lastly, student support at CSU is aligned to the stated mission. The Division of Student Affairs Annual Report 2015-16 as well as the more recent Division of Student Affairs Strategic Plan 2016-2109 demonstrate the direct alignment of student services activities to the institution's strategic goals, which are outlined in the Opportunities: 2016 Strategic Plan for the campus. Within the Student Affairs documents specific student support activities are directly paired with aspects of the strategic plan. These documents and pairings demonstrate that student support services directly align with campus strategic planning, which focuses on achievement of the mission, vision, and Principles of Community adopted by Colorado State University.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

CSU embraces its role as a state-funded comprehensive graduate research institution and clearly articulates its mission, values, and guiding principles through multiple documents including reports and strategic plans for the campus, colleges, and student support entities. These documents are current (Colorado State University Plan Opportunities 2016-2018; 2016-2019 Division of Student Affairs Strategic Plan, College of Natural Sciences Strategic Plan 2021), and address the nature and scope of the programs and services offered by CSU. The mission, values, and guiding principles are also evidenced on high-visibility web pages such as the General Catalog, the Admissions website, the Vice Provost for Research page, as well as areas associated with state-mandated outreach such as the Colorado Water Institute website.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

CSU has a long-standing commitment to supporting the role of its students, faculty, staff, and alumni in a multicultural society, and the institution offers a wide variety of policies, programs, and plans that demonstrate it is attentive to human diversity and the constituents it serves. This includes posting of federal policies such as ADA acts, Title IX, and Affirmative Action on school websites, as well as the provision of institutional planning such as the New Diversity and Inclusion Blueprint, the Inclusive Physical and Virtual Campus policy, Student Success Initiatives I and II, and the President's Commission on Diversity and Inclusion which are all designed to increase diversity and inclusion.

Programming such as the Annual Diversity Symposium, Study Abroad, the International Initiatives Distinguished Speaker series, and the Social Justice Leadership Institute give the CSU community opportunities to partake in diverse and inclusive activities. Additionally, support services offered by entities such as the Women and Gender Advocacy Center, GLBT Resource Center, and the Native American Cultural Center work to serve minorities or underrepresented CSU students with programs such as the LEAD conference. Lastly, the Hiring Subcommittee of the President's Commission on Diversity and Inclusion provides "training for all academic searches" that addresses the candidate pool's diversity and unconscious bias, demonstrating that the institution is making a conscious effort to be inclusive and increase diversity in its hiring practices.

In addition to promoting inclusive hiring practices, CSU periodically assesses the campus climate in relation to diversity and inclusion and makes adjustments. For example, the Assessment Group for Diversity Issues in conjunction with the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness conduct the Employee Climate Assessment every two years. Results of the 2016 Employee-Climate Survey show that CSU faculty perceive the campus to be more inclusive (65% agree, up from 58% in 2014), but that respondents of color and transgender report more negative experiences than peers, and that 63% of employees agree their work unit creates a supportive environment for employees from diverse backgrounds (down from 68% in 2014). From this survey emerged campus-wide support for supervisory training and in particular, supervisory diversity training. This led to the creation of the Supervisor Development Program which began in spring, 2017, and is required of all faculty and staff who supervise on campus. This comprehensive training program time frame is 3 years and includes 12 courses, at least two of which specifically focus on inclusion.

Planning, training, and programming efforts appear to be having an impact at CSU in relation to

student make-up and experiences. Student diversity on campus has increased by 4.7% since the prior HLC review, and student diversity now sits at a respectable 21.2% with an even higher incoming class diversity of 27.2%. Additionally, the Office of International Programs reports that the number of participants and funding for study abroad has grown steadily in the past several years with students receiving a record total of over \$450,000 in scholarships abroad in the past year. Lastly, results of the SSI indicate improvements in retention and persistence, narrowing of the 6-year graduation gap for diverse students from 5 to 3 percentage points, and declines in first-time student probations from 19.4% in 2012 to 12.2% in 2016.

While student-focused efforts appear to be making an impact, data on the impact of recent practices targeted at increasing diverse faculty and staff are less clear. As initiatives such as the CSU Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Campus Climate Blueprint and the Bias Reporting System move forward CSU should ensure it assesses these efforts and make adjustments as needed to achieve the desired outcomes.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

CSU continues to demonstrate a firm understanding of its public obligations and academic responsibilities. In addition to on-campus programs and activities, the institution supports several auxiliary units with externally facing missions such as CSU Online, CSU Extension, the Agricultural Experimental Station, the Colorado State Forest Service, and the Colorado Water Institute. The off-campus community services provided by these auxiliary entities directly align with CSU's mission and support the achievement of Goals 5 and 6 of the University Strategic Plan which specifically focus on engagement, public interaction and strategic partnerships.

As a non-profit state institution, CSU is mindful of its obligation to engage with and inform its constituents. A variety of websites such as the CSU Policy Library, Budget Updates page, and the Opportunities 2016 Strategic Plan page, keep the broader public informed about all facets of the institution's actions including policies, finances, and planning. Additionally, a multitude of programs, offices, and initiatives linked from the Office of Engagement website highlight CSU's engagement with its constituents through employer and industry partnerships, consortia, and advisory boards which allow for community interaction and feedback on specific research activities and academic programs.

As indicated in the last site visit, the institution does not generate funding for other entities, and its 2016 designation as an Innovation & Economic Prosperity University by the Association of Public Land-grant Universities demonstrates the institution's firm commitment to engagement, service, and meeting its land-grant public obligation.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Evidence

Colorado State University's core mission has not changed since its last review and evidence shows the mission is well articulated and continues to guide the institution's operations. CSU clearly articulates its mission, values, and guiding principles, and the recent development and adoption of the Principles of Community demonstrates the specific support the campus community is giving to diversity. Additionally, CSU has a long-standing commitment to supporting the role of its students, faculty, staff, and alumni in a multicultural society, and the institution's actions and extensive auxiliary units reflect a clear understanding of and commitment to its public service responsibility. The Team finds that this Criterion is met.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

Colorado State University (CSU) is a state-funded comprehensive graduate research institution that promotes and supports integrity in all facets of the institution. Within the academic realm, CSU's integrity expectations for faculty, students, and staff are evidenced in multiple areas including sections of the Faculty and Administrative Professional Manual, within departmental ethics codes, in the General Catalog, within syllabi, and on the Academic Integrity website of the Student Resolution Center. Faculty, students, and staff can also readily find information on any integrity policies posted in the Policy Library by the Office of Policy and Compliance. To support integrity on campus, faculty, students, and staff benefit from a variety of lectures and resources provided at events such as the annual Academic Integrity Week or the Data Integrity Conference, and from training and materials provided by entities such as TILT, the Lory Student Center, and the Research Integrity and Compliance Review Office.

Regarding integrity in terms of personnel issues, CSU continues to adhere to federal and state policies related to areas including affirmative action, ADA compliance, and non-discrimination through the work of entities such as the Office of Equal Opportunity, the Assistive Technology Resource Center, and Human Resource Services. CSU also posts a plethora of policies within the Policy Library that encompass everything from NCAA Compliance to Bullying in the Workplace, demonstrating CSU is attentive to all manner of personnel-related integrity issues. Similarly, the Board of Governors Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policies illustrate that the governing body of CSU has policies and procedures in place to ensure integrity is maintained at all administrative levels on campus and beyond.

The Team found budgeting and expense monitoring processes in place that work to ensure CSU operates with financial integrity. The FY19 Budget Development Schedule outlines the entire budgeting process including identification of who is involved, which includes a range of stakeholders such as the Budget Subcommittee, Faculty Council, President's Cabinet, Council of Deans, Associated Students, and the Board of Governors. A robust electronic financial workflow system as well as monthly reconciliation of accounts allow Campus Services personnel to monitor finances on a regular

basis, while the Office of Internal Audit performs periodic reviews that are reported to the Board of Governors of the CSU System. Additionally, the institution makes readily available financial reports such as the Budget Summaries, Financial Transparency Report, Compensation Report, and Annual Financial Accountability Reports, and the President provides regular fiscal communication with the campus on the Budget Updates website.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The Team found that institutional information is accessible and understandable in numerous publications and websites such as the Factbook, IPEDS data reports, Financial Transparency reports, and in the VSA College Portrait. Academically, the General Catalog, which is accessible via the University website provides information on program requirements that span the admission process to degree completion. Within the 2017-2018 General Catalog detailed information is presented on admission policies and procedures (application process, transfer credit, etc.), finances (tuition and fees, payment information, financial assistance, etc.), academic policies and procedures (advising, academic standards, credit hour definition, drop and withdrawal, grade appeals, etc.), and an Overview, Requirements, and Major Completion Map for each undergraduate academic program of study at CSU (online and on-ground). Requirements for graduate level studies are embedded within the General Catalog in the Graduate and Professional Bulletin area. Information relevant to online students such as the Gainful Employment Disclosure as well as the SARA website for state authorizations are also provided and accessible via websites.

Regarding personnel, the General Catalog lists all CSU administrators and faculty including position title and educational credentials, while contact information relative to all employees at CSU was witnessed by Team members via the readily accessible Online Directory website. More specific personnel information including biographies, educational credentials, teaching, and research activities were viewable for all faculty on College websites.

CSU also presents itself clearly relative to costs, with the Net Price Calculator website, College Portrait, and General Catalog providing detailed information on tuition/fees, the aid available, qualifications, application and payment processes. Financial aid information is also presented on the Office of Financial Aid website and in the General Catalog, and tuition and fees are also identified on the Tuition and Fees website.

Lastly, the administrative and governance structures are displayed on the Executive Organizational Chart, and a comprehensive list of all academic accreditations is prominently displayed on the Program Accreditations website in addition to specific acknowledgement of HLC accreditation in the General Catalog.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

The mission, scope, and activities of the Colorado State University System (CSUS) Board of Governors have not changed since the last HLC site visit, and remain appropriately focused on the preservation and enhancement of CSU. Per the state constitution of Colorado, the governing board has "general supervision of their respective institutions," and CSUS governs according to its Bylaws, which state the Board "...exists to support, enhance, and protect the unique missions of its constituent institutions and to encourage collaboration that benefits students in Colorado."

The Board meets regularly six times per year excluding retreats, with a minimum of two of these meetings occurring at CSU. A review of select minutes of the meetings (Aug 1 - 2, 2017; Feb. 7 - 9, 2018; May 2 - 3; 2018) demonstrates that the Board engages with broad issues that are relevant and appropriate, such as strategic planning, fiscal/financial affairs, international partnerships, and real estate and facilities transactions, but does not partake in the day-to-day management of the institutions it oversees.

To ensure the Board acts with integrity, a Conflict of Interest policy is contained with the Bylaws as well as in Policy 108: CSUS Board Conflict of Interest Policy found in the CSUS Policy and Procedures Manual. Additionally, the Board is transparent in its actions with all meeting agendas posted at least 5 days in advance, and minutes are recorded and posted for all meetings on the CSUS website.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Rating

Met

Evidence

CSU states it is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in a number of official documents and policies. For example, the Freedom of Expression and Inquiry Policy states that, "...Colorado State University considers freedom of discussion, inquiry, and expression to be in keeping with the history and traditions of our country and to be a cornerstone of education in a democracy," and encourages anyone who feels they have been treated unfairly because of their views to contact the Student Resolution Center which addresses violations of this policy. Similarly, the Students Rights section of the General Catalog states, "CSU considers freedom of inquiry and discussion essential to a student's educational development. Thus, the University recognizes the right of all students to engage in discussion, to exchange thought and opinion, and to speak, write, or print freely on any subject in accordance with the guarantees of Federal or State constitutions." These policies as well as others witnessed in the Academic Faculty and Administrative Professional Manual and Student Conduct Code are supported and enforced through multiple avenues including the Student Resolution Center, Compliance Reporting Hotline, and the Student Complaint Form and Student Complaint Reporting policy.

Additionally, the Free Speech and Peaceful Assembly Policy has been in effect at CSU since August, 2012, but recent scheduling of controversial speakers on the CSU campus led the Board to adopt the CSUS Board Free Speech and Peaceful Assembly Policy in February, 2018. The campus has also responded with a strong reiteration of the institution's stance on the freedom of expression and pursuit of truth through multiple venues. Included in this campus reiteration are the First Amendment website launched by the Provost's office; a Presidential Address on free speech and civility in fall, 2017; the Free Speech Summit in collaboration with the Colorado Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education; the CSUnite Walk and Community Gathering; and the First Amendment Conversation Series held in partnership with the Vice President for Diversity and the Center for Public Deliberation. High levels of attendance and interest in these activities indicate these efforts have been well received, and the activities themselves demonstrate CSU's strong commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

Colorado State University has multiple policies, processes, and support mechanisms in place to support ethical research practices. As an example, all faculty, students, and staff at CSU who work with human or animal subjects must go through Human Subjects and/or Laboratory Animal Use training offered by the Research Integrity and Compliance Review Office to ensure knowledge of and compliance with research practices involving human and animal subjects. The Research Integrity and Compliance Review Office also serves to support ethical research and scholarly practices by offering training to faculty, students, and staff in the form of workshops such as the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) workshop. Additionally, the institution currently offers 19 different courses focusing ethical professional behaviors that staff and students take to meet the federal standards for the provision of ethics training. Lastly, offices such as the Biosafety Office, Office of Sponsored Programs, Research Services, and IRB Office provide training, support, and oversight to all research activities to ensure the integrity of scholarly practices at CSU.

Academic integrity is promoted and monitored on the CSU campus through activities, policies, and academic offices. Students are made aware of integrity policies such as the Student Conduct Code and Academic Integrity Policy through the General Catalog and communications such as the Chancellor's letter on Compliance Reporting and Expectations sent to CSU faculty, students, and staff in May, 2018. In addition to awareness, students are also offered ethical guidance during Academic Integrity Week and through an Information Literacy course that is offered to students as part of the Colorado Guaranteed Transfer Pathways Curriculum. The Student Resolution Center and Student Conduct Services provide training and intervention support to students, but also serve to enforce the Academic Integrity policy and Student Conduct Code, which address issues associated with all academic misconduct. These offices adjudicated 304 cases of academic misconduct in FY 2017, demonstrating that integrity policies not only exist, but are also being enforced.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Evidence

Based on the evidence reviewed, the Team asserts that CSU meets Criterion 2. The institution acts with transparency and integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary operations by readily sharing information on budgets, academic requirements, credentials, and activities. Additionally, review of the CSU Policy Library reveals a plethora of policies and procedures aimed to ensure all members of its community (faculty, staff, students, administrators, and Board members) act in an ethical and responsible manner. Lastly, the institution supports a variety of compliance offices that ensure all aspects of campus operate with integrity.

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).

Rating

Met

Evidence

CSU's University Curriculum Committee approves curricular changes initiated by faculty with clear definitions and processes outlined in the Curricular Policies and Procedures Handbook, including distinctions between majors and minors, course levels, prerequisites, and course delivery. The report states that a number of new programs are approved each year and departments utilize advisory boards, alumni, and disciplinary accreditors to maintain curricular currency. For instance, Biomedical Engineering's advisory board is comprised of industry leaders, including a program scientist at NASA.

CSU's general education curriculum is set by the state of Colorado's Guaranteed Transfer Pathways Curriculum, which in 2016 adopted LEAP student learning outcomes and content competencies. The Assurance Argument states that these SLOs and competences are scheduled to be integrated within CSU general education courses by 2020.

CSU's *Official List of Colleges, Departments, Majors, and Minors* outlines clear distinctions across academic programs at all levels. CSU has continued to focus on program assessment through the development of program learning outcomes that are distinct across programs and levels, providing examples from programs in Early Education and Organizational Learning, Performance, and Change. The Assurance Argument states a goal is helping faculty create sustainable assessment plans. A specific example reviewed by the team included the Academic Quality and Assessment Outcome Plan from the Department of Construction Management.

CSU's curriculum and program review processes ensure that course delivery is consistent across delivery modes. Online courses incorporate Quality Matters Standards and require the common

student course survey, and syllabi provided demonstrate equivalent standards for learning. CSU does not offer concurrent courses on high school campuses. The Semester at Sea program offerings are continually reviewed by the Provost's office with the appointed Academic Dean. The Assurance Argument notes that NSSE data from seniors in online programs report higher engagement levels. Evidence to support this claim was found in the NSSE Scores Among Online Plus and Traditional Students report.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

In 2017, a CSU taskforce convened to make recommendations regarding the integration of disciplinary learning, general education, and student affairs programming through the development of 5 Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) that inspire responsible citizenship in the 21st century. These ILOs are being finalized and implemented. The Assurance Argument notes changes have been initiated since the team visit regarding assessment processes for general education outcomes.

According to the report "Recommendations Regarding Institutional Learning Objectives," a 2017 task force was charged with examining ILO's and final recommendations are due fall 2018. These recommendations seek to answer two questions: What is the aim of the CSU educational experience? and What is distinctive about the CSU educational experience?

CSU clearly outlines the four required elements defining AUCC approved courses as well as gpa and credit requirements that students must achieve within the program in its General Catalog and since 2017, the AAUC has been articulated to the Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Courses for Colorado Public Higher Education institutions. The AAUC requires a capstone experience that offers opportunities for integration and reflection on students' baccalaureate education and as represented by the task force report referred to in 3B1 of the assurance argument, seeks to bridge the traditional elements of a liberal arts education with its land grant mission of access, excellence, and engagement.

CSU's AUCC requires all undergraduates to build competencies in writing, speaking, and problem

solving-- including the senior capstone experience--within their degree programs and has been nationally recognized by U.S. News and World Report for its focus on writing in the disciplines. While there is no broad discussion of whether graduate programs require similar competencies, a specific example of articulated expectations at the graduate level includes the Master of Social Work Program which requires as the outcomes “practice life-long learning, engage in scientific inquiry, and utilize critical thinking to inform practice at all system levels.”

CSU’s current AUCC program recognizes human and cultural diversity through requirements in Social and Behavioral Science, Global and Cultural Awareness, and Arts and Humanities. The Assurance Argument describes discussions exploring requiring diversity competencies for all SBS courses and prioritizing diversity as a Foundational competency. Further evidence of such discussion is represented in the 2018 “CSU Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Campus Climate Blueprint” <https://msfn.colostate.edu/diversity-blueprint/> which identifies a goal of embedding diversity and inclusion throughout CSU curricular and educational programs and research. CSU references the Student Success Initiative stage 2 report, which provides numerous examples of how CSU is working to eliminate the graduation achievement gap by promoting inclusive environments and supporting student identity development.

CSU’s research profile and activities are appropriate to its institutional mission. Its 2017 research expenditures of \$338 million, coupled with faculty-developed patents, licenses, inventions and national recognitions, demonstrate CSU’s reputation as a research active institution that contributes to the state of Colorado’s economic development and innovation. CSU supports several undergraduate research programs that provide mentored experiences across various disciplines and student demographics (first year, juniors, multicultural, etc.) such as HURS, the Rocky Mountain Scholars program, and the Multicultural Undergraduate Research Art and Leadership Symposium.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

CSU streamlined its faculty appointment types in 2018 to ensure consistency across units and increased the number of overall faculty by 6% since the last HLC visit. Student to faculty ratios are 18:1 and one in four lecture courses enroll less than 20 students, with 35% of undergraduates taught by tenure track faculty. As referenced in 3B of the assurance argument, faculty are engaged in assessing student learning through the general education AUCC curricula. Faculty are also appropriately trained, and credentials for all instructional staff can be readily accessed via the Faculty Manual.

Faculty qualifications are ensured by adherence to guidelines outlined in the Faculty Manual as well as peer review of credentials by faculty within individual units during hiring and evaluation processes. An interactive site listing all faculty credentials and faculty reports on appointments can be found on the Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness site, which indicates ninety-one percent of tenure and tenure line faculty hold a terminal degree in their discipline.

All CSU faculty are evaluated through annual processes based on their effort distribution as well as promotion and tenure processes, both of which are expressly outlined in the Faculty Manual. Since 2016, faculty report their activities using Digital Measures to assist in the evaluation process and “reduce the burden around the collection, maintenance, and reporting of faculty teaching, research, and service accomplishments.”

CSU ensures instructors are current in their disciplines through the credential requirements and annual evaluation processes described in 3C 2 and 3 in the assurance argument. In addition, the Institute for Learning and Teaching provides a robust series of workshops, seminars, colloquia and professional development programs to provide ongoing and enhanced inquiry to support teachers' development around teaching and learning, including a summer institute, graduate teaching certificate program, orientations, and short courses for instructors. Collectively, the TILT annual report notes that 3,652 individuals including faculty, graduate students, state classified professionals, administrative professionals, and others participated in one or more of these programs.

CSU's Professional Manual notes faculty requirements to be accessible for conferences and advising through office hours and pre-arranged appointments. Evidence that CSU faculty are accessible is shown by NSSE data on first year and senior student interactions with faculty.

CSU staff positions are filled through search committee reviews, and position descriptions outline minimum qualifications. CSU's Office of Equal Opportunity provides search committee training to ensure hiring guidelines are followed. Individual CSU units provide training and several units provide professional development opportunities. Examples of professional development offered to CSU staff include activities associated with the Professional Development Institute as well as the Supervisor Development Program.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

CSU describes numerous support services for a wide-ranging group of students, including low income, first generation, honors, online, ethnic minority, LGBTQ, DACA, military and veteran students and those who have aged out of foster care, are food insecure, or who have disabilities. Many of these services can be found at the Student Achievement Collaborative, a unit which dually reports to both Student Affairs and Academic Affairs as their services are integral to both academic and personal student success. Such services include academic, financial, social, and leadership opportunities provided through curricular and co-curricular programs, summer institutes, residential learning communities, and online networks. A wide range of student diversity and adult learner programs are readily promoted on the Student Diversity Programs and Services website.

CSU offers a range of orientation and transition services to support first year and transfer students' needs, and the institution explicitly outlines information in the General Catalog, websites, and other publications regarding course credit and placement to help students understand how their credits will count toward specific majors. CSU states that 80% of instructors for first-year course sections participate in the Early Performance Feedback initiative regarding student performance in the first four weeks of class, which triggers outreach to students identified as not performing satisfactorily.

CSU has made academic advising a central component of its overall Student Success Initiative, dedicating additional staff, resources, and technologies to make academic guidance a central focus across departments and degree programs. Data provide strong evidence of successful impact in this area, including increased retention and graduation rates, student satisfaction about advising (NSSE), and national recognition and grant funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Educause.

CSU has prioritized a new learning management system (Canvas) and associated pilots of learning analytics through the Unizin Consortium to provide a strong learning infrastructure and to support students at risk. CSU Online similarly provides digital tools, surveys, video engagement, analytics, and virtual reality platforms to support effective teaching and learning. No evidence was provided regarding labs, performance spaces, clinical sites, or museum collections within the Assurance Argument, but a search of the CSU website surfaced several examples including the Gregory Allcar Museum of Art, the Avenir Museum of Design and Merchandising, and the C. P. Gillette Museum of Arthropod Diversity. A full discussion of CSU libraries is referenced in 3D.5 of the assurance argument, and the team confirmed within library websites that CSU offers adequate library resources to its constituents.

CSU provides guidance in research and information gathering through its AUCC GT Pathway courses, Technology Training Center, Interactive library tutorials, a distance learning library team, and a 16.8 million refurbished Information Commons that provides study space, course reserves, and numerous technologies needed to engage in such work (laptops, databases, electronic journals, and a virtual reality room).

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

CSU provides numerous co-curricular programs and services through the Collaborative for Student Achievement, and reports higher levels of student satisfaction with such services compared to peers based on NSSE data. The SLICE program provides student development opportunities through one-time and/or multiple workshops that students can attend to increase competencies and credential themselves via a certificate program. The Institute for Teaching and Learning and Career Services provide academic and career preparation services and networks while the Health Network provides medical and wellness services, including modules on alcohol and sexual assault most students are required to take. CSU requires most first year students to live in residential housing and its Annual Residence Life assessment report shows students who live on campus are more academically successful than those who do not. Student-athletes participating in one of the 16 intercollegiate sports have access to tutoring, learning resources, and leadership and service experiences and according to the "Rams Score Big in NCAA Graduation Report" CSU student athletes demonstrate higher academic achievement than the general student population. Overall CSU's co-curricular programs contribute to students' academic achievement and leadership development in an enriched educational environment.

CSU's contributions as a land-grant institution that provides access and value to students are evidenced by national measures such as the CLA+ and NSSE, institutional surveys on students' first destination post-graduation compared to national and Colorado averages, as well as lower CSU graduate debt averages compared to national norms. As reported in the First Destination survey, 91% percent of graduate students in 2015-16 reported either a job offer or secured plans for employment after graduation. CSU's land-grant contributions are further evidenced by two economic impact studies that report 1 in 25 workers in the state of Colorado has a CSU degree and CSU is an "economic powerhouse" in producing start-ups, jobs, and tax revenues. CSU's land-grant heritage in civic engagement is also recognized by its annual inclusion on the Peace Corp's Top Producing University list.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Evidence

As summarized in the evidence files within each criterion 3 section, CSU has strongly demonstrated that it provides a high quality education in keeping with its land-grant mission of ensuring access and opportunity to Colorado students. Since its last HLC visit, CSU has continued to assess, expand, and improve its programs (general education curriculum, academic advising, early warning feedback, student success initiatives), its faculty hiring and development (revision of appointment titles, professional development through TILT) and its co-curricular and student support programs (undergraduate research, SLICE.). The evidence reviewed by the Team supports statements within CSU's HLC argument that it provides students with access to quality programs led by qualified faculty and staff professionals. Thus, the Team asserts that CSU has met Criterion 3.

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).

Rating

Met

Evidence

CSU has demonstrated a current system of review of academic programs, with the most recent program review policy update approved in a 2017 Board of Governors meeting. The FY 2017 Sociology program review provided within the Assurance Argument serves as a solid example of the system-wide processes which are in place to ensure appropriate review of all academic programs. Evidence is also found within the General Catalog, University Curriculum Committee meeting minutes, and the Policy Library website that supports CSU's assertion that policies insuring programs reviews as well as reviews of the quality of transcribed credits are in place and being followed. The guidelines for transfer credit are outlined in formal Transfer Policies and enforced by Admissions and Enrollment, while student understanding of potential credit transfer is supported with the

Transferology and Tentative Transfer Evaluation websites. Program Learning Outcomes (PLO's) are also required of all academic programs and monitored by the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness. The Team's evaluation of the PLO's for two academic programs (Political Science and Interior Design) served as a demonstration that CSU has rigorous academic programs with appropriate expectations for student learning.

As required by CSU policy, oversight of the quality and rigor of courses offered are relegated to the departments and academic units. However, as previously indicated, all academic programs must outline PLO's and undergo program review which is overseen by the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness. To improve upon existing instructional practices, the use of Highly Impactful Practices (HIPs - defined as instructional approaches that require students to more actively and intensively engage in their own learning and have been found to correlate positively with deepened learning, increased academic achievement, and persistence to graduation) are strongly encouraged by the TILT office, and a website is provided to assist units in using the practice.

A comprehensive list of specialized accreditation for specific programs has been reviewed on the Program Accreditations - Academic website, and 34 specialized programs at CSU have received accreditation from 19 distinct accrediting entities including major agencies such as ABET, AACSB, CACREP, and TEAC. Similarly, 9 non-degree programs such as the CSU Health Network, Intensive Program, and Early Childhood Center have also obtained accreditation from their respective agencies as listed on the Program Accreditations - Non-degree website.

Various offices including the Career Center, the Registrar's Office and the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness utilize multiple formal and informal data sources (e.g. National Student Clearinghouse StudentTracker, Unemployment Insurance, and LinkedIn) to track the success of CSU graduates. Graduate success is monitored through these data sources and compared to the results of the First Destination Survey (FDS). The most recent graduation data indicate that 64% of CSU alumni enter the workforce immediately, 85% of graduates secure their first destination plan within 6 months of graduation, and 84% are employed in jobs related to their career plans. Additionally, one in five graduates continues his/her education at one of hundreds of unique institutions, while a portion choose to engage globally with organizations such as the Peace Corps, netting CSU the ranking of 10th in the country for Peace Corps' annual Top Volunteer-Producing Colleges and Universities list.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

As described in the Assurance Argument, the institution has made changes to the process of assessing student learning and achievement. Course student learning outcomes (SLOs) are required by the curriculum committee, a sample of which was submitted in the Assurance Argument. In addition to SLOs, program learning outcomes (PLOs) and a corresponding assessment plan are required components of all new program proposals. Furthermore, every undergraduate program of study is required to include a capstone experience that consists of a designated course or sequence of courses that offer the opportunity for integrative and reflective learning. Examination of a provided example of a capstone project by the Team supported this argument.

CSU uses both direct and indirect methods to assess both curricular and co-curricular experiences. In addition to the CLA+, licensure/certification examinations, and capstone test/experiences such as portfolios or defenses, many academic programs request feedback about student performance from internship providers and employers. These direct assessments of student learning ensure the curriculum is current and that students are well prepared to demonstrate the skills and knowledge necessary in their discipline.

The use of nationally standardized tools, such as the CLA+ and NSSE, are one demonstration of how the institution follows and adopts best practices. Another is the use of LEAP rubrics in the assessment of general education. The LEAP agenda and resources from exemplar institutions are also informing ongoing discussions around the development of ILOs. A task force has been formed and has met (Fall 2017 and Spring 2018: November 2, 16, 30, January 25, February 8, 22, March 8, 22) to develop Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) based on the AAC&U Essential Learning Outcomes, and examples found in the Voluntary System of Accountability and the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. Although a relatively new initiative, the formation of ILOs at CSU is a positive step and the institution is encouraged to continue forward on this path in the coming years.

As a result of insights gained through formal and informal assessments by faculty, hundreds of curricular course changes (range of 500-1100 formal requests per year to the UCC) are implemented annually and an average of four new academic degree programs are approved. These curricular adjustments are evidence of the faculty's understanding of both student learning and the state of their discipline. This process is facilitated by what CSU refers to as a "learning ecology" approach to support the improvement of student learning. This approach is described as a method to ensure the responsibility for student learning is distributed across campus instead of isolating it to faculty in the classroom. The approach leverages resources and expertise from multiple entities such as the Division of Student Affairs and the Office of the Vice President for Diversity to help inform teaching strategies that will increase graduation and retention as well as eliminate attainment gaps for first-generation and minority student populations. As an example of a specific element within this learning ecology, CSU is in its second term of piloting the LoudSight Learning Analytics product that presents dashboards to faculty, students and advisors for risk prediction in individual courses, fusing demographic student data from Banner with in-course data from Canvas.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.)

Rating

Met

Evidence

CSU takes seriously its responsibility for maintaining high quality curricular and co-curricular programs. The curriculum is rigorous and student learning is assessed continuously. Assessment results are formally reviewed in the program review process and evidence that they are used in quality improvement processes is required. Programs within the Division of Student Affairs support the AUCC (general education) learning outcomes, especially those related to communication and multiculturalism. The institution relies heavily on data to inform conversations related to student success for all students and is focused on eliminating attainment gaps for sub populations of students that have historically been at risk for attrition. Since the last reaffirmation visit, CSU has met the ten-year 2006 Student Success Initiative (SSI) goal of a 70% 6 year graduation rate and has begun pursuit of the goals of the second version of the graduation/retention initiative, SSI-2. Steps are being actively pursued such as identification of Student Success Key Performance Indicators and use of predictive modeling to help CSU achieve their next ambitious graduation goal - an 80% 6-year graduation rate with absolute elimination of graduation attainment gaps. Although ambitious, CSU has a solid track record of meeting lofty student success goals, and was recently recognized nationally by the APLU Project Degree Completion committee for its impressive work around student success.

As indicated in the previous site visit report, CSU has a robust system in place for student success reporting. From the traditional IPEDS and Factbook publications to a publicly available interactive reporting tool found on the Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness (IRP&E) website, these data sources demonstrate the institution actively collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion. Additionally, CSU's recent recognition as an exemplar data institution and appearance in four recent publications by EDUCAUSE and the Association for

Institutional Research titled "Turning Data Into Actionable Information at Colorado State University" highlight multiple ways the institution uses the data it gathers to create strategic and systemic institutional change.

Based on the comprehensive Access to Excellence plan (SSI-2), CSU's extensive student data systems, and institutional participation in a variety of national initiatives and organizations including the receipt of national recognition, the Team has confidence that CSU will make progress toward meeting its 2020 goals for retention and graduation as outlined in the SSI-2 report.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Evidence

CSU appears to be tracking and evaluating the progress of its programs and students well. The institution has clear guidelines, procedures, and personnel in place to ensure academic program quality, the quality of the credit it transcripts and transfers, and the quality of its student learning outcomes and environments. Regular program reviews, creation of new ILOs, integration of HIPS, and a "learning ecology" approach are but a few of the ways the institution supports and improves student learning.

The Team determined that CSU is formally reviewing assessment as affirmed in the last accreditation visit, and continues to use data to improve the quality of curricular and co-curricular programs. Updates such as additional data systems (Unizen, Canvas) and the new SSI-2 Access to Excellence plan have been introduced to further improve student learning and ultimately increase retention/graduation rates. Recent awards from multiple national organizations (APLU, EDUCAUSE, etc.) are clear indications that Colorado State University is on the right path in its evaluation and improvement efforts, and the Team finds that CSU meets Criterion 4.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

In 2013, Colorado State University was found to have the necessary resource base to support its current educational program and plans for maintaining and continuing to improve their quality in the future. They have maintained the course. As has historically been the case, the Colorado State Board of Governors ensures funding is appropriately prioritized and allocated to university needs as a state governmental entity and non-profit. Although, and as noted in during the last visit and through the Office of Budgets website, the state has allocated fewer funds to the university than enjoyed in the past, the university focused on and prioritized critical hires, reducing expenses, fundraising, grants, sponsored programs, and increasing tuition to balance its budget. This was done through a well-articulated process as shared through the Budget Development Schedule, with timelines and owners, and made transparent through the Budget Planning Tool--an interactive, web-based dashboard showcasing where and how funds are allocated. Each purchase is tracked and monitored, with follow-up as needed. Through defined SPARCs in the Strategic Plan, relevance to strategic plan and vision is aligned. Also, all units reconcile their accounts on a monthly basis. Routine audits are made across the university, as well, which feeds up through the Board of Governors and is shown in minutes, such as the February 2018 meeting minutes.

As shown in the 2017 Accountability Report, institutional expenditures reflect a focus on academics,

35% to instruction and academic support, and 19% to research. Approximately 5% of expenditures are allocated to administrative services. As shown in an Aug. 7, 2017, Source article, during FY16, CSU raised \$197.8 million in annual fundraising and set records for both academic (\$166 million) and athletics (\$31.8 million). FY16 saw 29 gifts of \$1 million or more, an increase of more than 4,000 donors, and an all-time high alumni participation rate of 10.7%. On December 15, 2017, Moody's website declared the university has an AA3 rating and a stable outlook. In its own evidence files, it shows the 2016-2017 Financial Report of CFI being above 1.0 for the past few years, including an increase from 1.79 in 2015 to 2.49 in 2016.

Further support showcasing the university's efforts toward strengthening their quality, the university created and adopted an updated strategic plan in 2016 as a challenge to the university community for resource planning and prioritization. To accomplish goals set forth in the plan, the university is investing in new, modern technologies for learning systems, financial and student information systems. These efforts to enhance customer service and streamline operations will promote efficiency and create environments to support student success.

Through the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness, the university provides faculty credentials and qualifications online in a transparent process within the Current Faculty Credentials website. Although faculty credentials are public, many staff also hold certifications and specialized credentials in their field. Further, all supervisors go through a required training, named the Supervisor Development Program, which was enacted in FY17 and focuses on supervisor mindsets and resources leading to an internal certification.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

During the most recent 10-year reaffirmation review, CSU was found to have governance and administrative structures in place that promoted effective leadership and supported an inclusive process to fulfill its mission. The Team finds that this continues to be the case. CSU operates within the oversight of its Board of Governors and the rules and statutes of the State of Colorado. The Board has final authority to approve all enterprise budgets and fees. According to the Colorado State University System Board of Governor's website, the Board contains faculty and student representation through governance groups (Executive, Evaluation, Academic and Student Affairs, Audit and Finance, and Real Estate/Facilities), and meets 6 times per year. The transparency of financial progress and of meeting minutes are shown through the Meetings and Agendas section of the Board's website.

According to the Faculty Council website, Faculty Council is in charge of all academic-related policies whereas the Office of Policy and Compliance coordinates and manages all non-academic policies. As shown on the OPC's site, policy development requires consultation with individuals from all parts of the University to understand potential impacts and to consider input from a variety of perspectives. Further, the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) is directly involved in the policy development process. This set-up ensures all stakeholders are involved in the creation and feedback process in decisions impacting their work.

Through the Faculty Council, Administrative Professionals Council, and Classified Personnel Council, employees participate in shared governance activities by serving on their respective employee councils, voting in elections, attending meetings and events, and serving on committees (e.g., SPARC, Campus Safety, University Programs, University Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, Strategic and Financial Planning, and so on). Meeting dates and minutes are posted on the sites. Students are also involved in shared governance and are represented by the Associated Students of Colorado State University (ASCSU). The Strategic Planning Area Review Committees (SPARCs,

which are comprised of members from across the university) work closely with shared governance groups to support and advocate for alignment of budgets and policies to the advancement of strategic plans. As shown through the 2016-2018 Strategic Plan website, a specific SPARC is assigned to each effort on the plan. To ensure aligned planning occurs at all levels it may be advantageous to see this structure reiterated within academic unit strategic planning documents, as well, such as Vet Med and Natural Sciences. Further, since strategic planning is a repeated business process every 3 years, it could benefit the community to have even greater transparency about the planning process, constituents, and opportunities to become involved. CSU may also consider taking advantage of additional opportunities to share the process and meetings for SPARCs with the campus and external communities, since they are a critical link to institutional alignment of the plan to action and reflection.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

During the last self-study, Colorado State engaged in systematic and integrated planning. As shown on the CSU Accreditation web presence, CSU leverages faculty, staff, and student councils in conjunction with SPARCs (Strategic Planning Area Review Committees) to ensure its resources are aligned with the Board of Governors' vision and the university mission and priorities. This process is then publicly verified through the Accountability, Budgets, and Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness sites for appropriate resource allocation. The university uses budget algorithms and models to predict and regularly adjust models to new information and then shares those projections through the Office of Budgets. Further, the university leverages a three year review cycle to ensure continual involvement across AP, CPC, Faculty, and ASCSU councils.

Although it is easy to find the process for policy creation or developing annual budgets, it proved to be more difficult for the Team to find information about the process and stakeholder involvement in the development for the strategic plan. The plan references memberships that align with councils and the Team trusts the process is working since there is a transparent strategic plan with participation to enact that plan woven throughout the university. For instance, alignment, metrics, and updates of unit plans to campus plans occur at the Board of Governors meetings through the Strategic Mapping Updates portion of the meetings. Although a minor observation, the Team found it challenging to identify when and how external constituents were involved in the strategic planning process, and suggest CSU consider making the planning process and participants more transparent to interested external constituents.

CSU works to ensure fiscal stability even in years in which state support declines. As shown in the Budget Planning Tool, projected increases in enrollment revenue are not included in base budget projections. From the Office of Budgets, revenues from enrollment growth are held in reserve and used as one-time funds until the following year, when currently enrolled students are forecast to

return.

Through the work to stabilize budgets, CSU has been able to implement enhancements such as the first-year learning communities and high impact practices into curriculum through TILT and Academic Success Coordinators (advisers). Further, the Strategic Enrollment Management Team assesses campus capacity and ensures they create a student composition that reflects the population. The university is making forward momentum to student diversity goals (27% minority first year students as of Fall 2017 according to the Fall 2017 Freshman Profile Report from IRPE), but has a ways to go to meet its objectives in the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Campus Climate Blueprint.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Rating

Met

Evidence

Colorado State has shown continued effort to systematically improve its performance and does so in a transparent way. As indicated in the last HLC Team report, data and analysis goes through the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness as the central point of contact to share evidence of performance in its operations. The office is responsible for documenting performance in mandatory state/federal reporting, the academic program review process, and in accreditation submissions. The OIRPE's Data and Analysis and Office of Budgets' Budget Planning Tool sites employ interactive dashboards that provide the university community high level understanding of opportunities and constraints, and encourages participation in forging new ways to address all necessary university obligations.

As an example of continued student service improvement, the university redesigned the approach for requesting/receiving financial aid information from students and parents, and made the information and application process transparent. For their efforts, the Registrar's office was nationally recognized by EDUCAUSE for its change in focus from student transactions to supporting student success.

Further, CSU created The Institute for Learning and Teaching (TILT) which is now home to tutoring, undergraduate research and curricular design/redesign efforts. In 2017, Colorado State University was one of seven public universities selected to receive a three-year, \$515,000 grant from the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities to expand the use of adaptive courseware in undergraduate classes to improve student success. They also joined Unizin as one of the founding institutions, which provides the opportunity to leverage local and consortia data to rapidly improve student learning outcomes.

As shown through data dashboards from Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness, efforts in TILT for curricular and co-curricular experiences and support has led to increased graduation rates and increased efficiency to graduation. Examples include the creation and modification of learning communities, faculty professional development in inclusive pedagogy, design and use of flipped classrooms, self-serve degree audits, curricular maps for on-time graduation, unit-centric academic guidance, and the use of learning analytics and adaptive courseware through grants and consortia memberships.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.

Evidence

Colorado State University continues to provide sufficient resources, structures, and processes to fulfill its mission, continually improve the quality of its offerings, and, based on historical events, is even better able to respond to future opportunities and challenges. Through its governance, strategic planning, and transparency in budget and university outcomes, it is no surprise that priorities and budgets are aligned. In sum, the university is forward thinking and is transparent to its constituents, both internal and external, in how it is choosing to address challenges and opportunities it faces within the context of the changing landscape of higher education in Colorado and beyond. The Team finds that CSU meets this criterion.

Review Dashboard

Number	Title	Rating
1	Mission	
1.A	Core Component 1.A	Met
1.B	Core Component 1.B	Met
1.C	Core Component 1.C	Met
1.D	Core Component 1.D	Met
1.S	Criterion 1 - Summary	
2	Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct	
2.A	Core Component 2.A	Met
2.B	Core Component 2.B	Met
2.C	Core Component 2.C	Met
2.D	Core Component 2.D	Met
2.E	Core Component 2.E	Met
2.S	Criterion 2 - Summary	
3	Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support	
3.A	Core Component 3.A	Met
3.B	Core Component 3.B	Met
3.C	Core Component 3.C	Met
3.D	Core Component 3.D	Met
3.E	Core Component 3.E	Met
3.S	Criterion 3 - Summary	
4	Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	
4.A	Core Component 4.A	Met
4.B	Core Component 4.B	Met
4.C	Core Component 4.C	Met
4.S	Criterion 4 - Summary	
5	Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness	
5.A	Core Component 5.A	Met
5.B	Core Component 5.B	Met
5.C	Core Component 5.C	Met
5.D	Core Component 5.D	Met
5.S	Criterion 5 - Summary	

Review Summary

Conclusion

Based on the Assurance Argument provided by Colorado State University and the additional evaluation of numerous documents and information provided on the CSU website, the Team was satisfied that the institution meets the Higher Learning Commission's Criteria for Accreditation including all Core Components. The financial, physical, technical, and human resources are adequate and used appropriately to support the mission of this land-grant comprehensive research institution on all levels. Ample support structures exist for faculty and students, and academic programming is sufficiently rigorous and assessed on a regular basis. Co-curricular and outreach activities are extensive, and clearly serve to meet the needs of all CSU constituents. Policies, procedures, systems, and resources are in place to ensure institutional effectiveness, and campus planning is ongoing, strategic, and inclusive. Because of the aforementioned findings, the Team asserts that CSU meets all HLC Criteria and recommends that the institution remain eligible to choose its accreditation pathway.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation

Met

Sanctions Recommendation

No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation

Not Applicable to This Review

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.