Colorado College - CO

HLC ID 1043

OPEN PATHWAY: Reaffirmation Review

Visit Date: 2/26/2018

Dr. Jill Tiefenthaler President

Linnea Stenson HLC Liaison

Leah Adams-Curtis Team Member

Ken Schneck Team Member Henry Smith Review Team Chair

Nicholas Capo *Team Member* Lynette Olson Federal Compliance Reviewer

Darby Hiller Team Member

Context and Nature of Review

Visit Date

2/26/2018 **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

- Reaffirmation Review
- Federal Compliance
- On-site Visit
- Multi-Campus Visit (if applicable)
- Federal Compliance

Institutional Context

Colorado College was founded in 1874 in Colorado Springs near Pikes Peak and has enjoyed a strong and stable, continuing accreditation history with the North Central Association/Higher Learning Commission beginning in 1915. Since the last comprehensive visit in 2008, a number of changes have occurred; notably a new president, growth in the endowment, and significant strides in diversity. The bold aspirational mission to "provide the finest liberal arts education in the country" and the unique delivery modality of three-and-one-half week block courses which began in the late 1960s remain enduring distinctives of the College.

Colorado College enrolled 2,185 degree-seeking undergraduates in Fall 2017. Regarding gender choice, 52.72 percent of students identify as female, 44.76 percent as male, 2.29 percent as non-binary, and less than 1 percent as transgender or genderless. Colorado College's 208 full time faculty, 333 full time administrators, and 235 full time staff, support one graduate and 50 undergraduate programs.

While enrollment has remained stable over the past decade, changes have occurred in diversity and selectivity. Over the past decade the percent of students of color has increased from 14.6 to 24.3, and foreign students are up from 2.5 to 8.7 percent.

Admission to Colorado College is highly selective and has become more so over the past decade. The admittance rate has decreased from 31.79 percent in 2007 to 15.1 percent in 2017, while the yield has increased from 34.0

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percent in 2007 to 45.3 percent in 2017, when the college received more than 8,000 applications.

Since the last HLC comprehensive visit the College has continued to move forward with important initiatives that advance and enhance the public good for the constituencies it serves. Additionally, they have introduced more robust assessment practices to evaluate student academic achievement. Colorado College has directed its considerable financial resources to support mission priorities, and has maintained a consistent identity with a relevant educational influence in higher education throughout the region and nation.

Interactions with Constituencies

President and Cabinet

- President
- Dean of the College/Dean of the Faculty
- VP for Enrollment
- Senior VP for Finance and Administration
- VP for Advancement
- VP for Student Life/Dean of Students
- VP for Information Technology/Chief Information Officer
- VP for Communications
- Assistant VP/Special Assistant to the President
- Director of Athletics

Steering Committee for Reaffirmation (Assurance Argument)

- Dean of the College/Dean of the Faculty
- Associate VP, Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness
- Director of Assessment and Program Review
- Research Analyst, Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness
- Paraprofessional, Dean's Office

Area Focus 1 - Mission Aspiration to offer the "finest liberal arts education in the country"

- Faculty, Art
- Faculty, Human Biology and Kinesiology
- Faculty, Race, Ethnicity and Migration Studies
- Faculty, Economics and Business
- Faculty, English
- Faculty, Philosophy
- Faculty, Molecular Biology
- Faculty, Molecular Biology
- Faculty, Molecular Biology
- Faculty, German Studies
- Faculty, Japanese
- Faculty, Southwest Studies
- Faculty, History (former dean)
- Faculty, Classics
- Faculty, History
- Faculty, Emeritus
- Faculty, Political Science

- Faculty, Religion (chair)
- Faculty, English
- Faculty, Economics, Associate Dean of the College
- Faculty, History, Crown Director
- Faculty, Film and Media Studies
- Faculty, Mathematics, Associate Dean of the Faculty
- Faculty, Philosophy (chair)
- Director of Internal Communications
- ITS Application Programmer/Analyst
- Campus Operations and Plant Manager
- Director of Innovation
- Director of the Colket Center for Academic Excellence
- Director of Education Solution (ITS)
- Associate Controller
- Director of Family and Parents Programs
- Director of Accessibility Resources and ADA
- Director of Assessment and Program Review
- Director of Admissions Outreach and Recruitment
- Interim Director of Human Resources
- Assistant VP and Director of the Butler Center
- Security and Server Applications Manager
- Infrastructure Manager (ITS)
- Solutions Center Manager (ITS)
- Director Fine Arts Center
- Instruction and Research Librarian, Head of Library Instruction
- Associate VP for Student Life
- Student, Political Science (junior)
- Student, Economics (senior)
- Student, Psychology (senior)
- Student, Neuroscience (junior)
- Student, Feminist and Gender Studies (senior)
- Student, International Political Economy (junior)
- Student, Economics and Asian Studies (senior)

Area of Focus 2: Engaged Teaching and Immersive Learning in the Block Plan

- Faculty, Japanese
- Faculty, German Studies
- Faculty, Sociology/Chair of CEC
- Faculty, Molecular Biology
- Faculty, Molecular Biology
- Faculty, Economics and Business
- Faculty, English
- Faculty, Economics
- Faculty, Mathematics (visiting)
- Faculty, Mathematics and Computer Science (visiting)
- Faculty, Chemistry and Biochemistry
- Faculty, Film and Media Studies
- Faculty, History, Crown Faculty Center Director
- Faculty, Economics/Associate Dean of the College

- Faculty, Geology
- Faculty, Organismal Biology and Ecology
- Faculty, Education
- Faculty, Sociology
- Faculty, Molecular Biology
- Faculty, Emeritus
- Faculty, Classics
- Faculty, Psychology
- Faculty, Philosophy
- Faculty, English (chair)
- Faculty, Spanish and Portuguese
- Faculty, Russian
- Faculty, Mathematics
- Senior Assistant Director of Admission for Operations
- Application Programming Analyst (ITS)
- Accountant, Finance Office
- Director of the Quantitative Reasoning Center
- Curator of Visual Resources
- Associate VP for Student Life
- Research and Instruction Librarian, Head of Library Instruction
- Library Director
- Director of Financial Aid
- Culture and Linguistic Diversity Education Specialist
- Director of Assessment and Program Review
- Director of the Colket Center for Academic Excellence
- Director of Educational Solutions (ITS)
- Music Librarian
- Student, Political Science (senior)

Board of Trustees

• 6 select board members including the Chair

Open Forum: Criteria 1 & 2

- Student, Environmental Science
- Student, Economics & Business, Asian Studies (senior)
- Student, Neuroscience (sophomore)
- Student, Environmental Science (sophomore)
- Student, History/Political Science, Honor Council (senior)
- Student, Political Science (senior)
- Student, Sociology (sophomore)
- Student, Feminist and Gender Studies (junior)
- Student, Feminist and Gender Studies/Political Science (junior)
- Student, Political Science (junior)
- Faculty, Political Science
- Faculty, Political Science
- Faculty, Mathematics and Computer Science
- Faculty, Natural Sciences
- Faculty, Physics
- Faculty, Economics

- Director of the Wellness Resource Center
- Research Analyst Advancement
- AVP of IT Services ITS
- Senior Talent Acquisition/Employment Manager
- AVP and Director of the Butler Center
- Interim Director of Human Resources
- Lead Academic Administrator Geology Department
- Lead Academic Administrator Languages Department
- Library Director
- Director of International Programs
- Director of Internal Communications
- Director of Faculty Research Support
- ITS Programmer/Analyst
- Accountant, Office of Finance and Administration
- Senior Associate Dean of Students
- Creative Director, Office of Communications
- Registrar
- Staff, ITS Solutions Center
- Staff, ITS Solutions Center Analyst
- Staff, Admissions

Open Forum: Criteria 3 & 4

- Student (2)
- Faculty (6)
- Faculty, Psychology (2)
- Faculty, Psychology, Bridge Scholars Program Director, Associate Dean
- Faculty, Organismal Biology and Ecology (4)
- Faculty, Physics
- Faculty, Theatre/Dance
- Faculty, English
- Faculty, Education (2)
- Faculty, Art History
- Faculty, Political Science, Honor Council Faculty Advisor, Assessment Coordinator
- Faculty, Political Science
- Faculty, Mathematics and Computer Science
- Visiting Faculty, Mathematics and Computer Science
- Faculty, Japanese
- Faculty, Art History
- Faculty, Economics (2)
- Faculty, Molecular Biology (3)
- Faculty, English department chair
- Faculty, Chair Assessment Committee
- Faculty, French/African Studies
- Faculty, Mathematics, Dean of the Faculty
- Faculty, Religion
- Faculty, Sociology
- Faculty, Mathematics
- Faculty, Southwest Studies
- Faculty, Classics

- Faculty, Computer Science (2)
- Faculty, Philosophy
- Faculty, Spanish
- Faculty, Emeritus/Ombudsman
- First Year Experience Director
- Librarian
- Director of the Colket Center
- Director of Educational Solutions (ITS)
- Director of Quantitative Reasoning Center
- Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Education Specialist
- Director of Accessibility Resources and ADA Coordinator
- Director of Assessment and Program Review
- Research and Instruction Librarian, Head of Library Instruction
- Manager of Solutions Center
- Innovative Solutions Engineer
- Accountant, Finance Office
- AVP for Student Life
- AVP for Administrative Services
- Director of Admissions Systems, Operations and International
- Writing Program/Writing Center Director
- Solutions Center Team Lead
- Music Librarian

Open Forum: Criteria 5

- Student, Honor Council (2)
- Faculty, Psychology, Director of the Bridge Scholars Program, Associate Dean of Academic Programs and Strategic Initiatives
- Faculty, Economics and Business
- Faculty, Director of the Environmental Studies Program
- Faculty, Organismal Biology and Ecology
- Faculty, Honors Council Advisor
- Director of International Programs
- Senior Budget Analyst
- Director of Assessment and Program Review
- Solutions Center Team Lead (ITS)
- Research Analyst
- Tutt Library Director
- Digital Innovations Librarian
- Registrar
- Lead Academic Administrative Assistant
- Social Sciences Librarian
- Head of Research Services/Sciences Librarian
- Interim Director of Human Resources
- AVP for Administrative Services
- Director of Financial Aid
- AVP for Advancement Operations
- Director of Alumni Relations and AVP of Advancement
- Director of Summer Session
- Associate Dean of the College

- Research Analyst
- AVP for Student Life
- Director of Outdoor Education
- Director of Internal Communications
- Music Librarian
- AVP, Institutional Planning and Effectiveness
- Director of Parent and Family Programs
- Senior Associate Dean of Students
- Associate Controller

Federal Compliance Review Meeting

- Registrar
- Associate VP, Institutional Planning and Effectiveness
- Research Analyst, Institutional Planning and Effectiveness
- Special Projects Coordinator
- VP for Communications
- Director of Financial Aid
- Associate Director of Athletics
- Associate Director of Campus Safety
- Director of Admissions Outreach and Recruitment
- Director of Teacher Education Programs

Drop In Meetings

- Students (3)
- Faculty (5)
- Staff (9)

Additional Individual Meetings

- Director of Assessment
- Senior Budget Analyst
- President
- Dean of College/Dean of the Faculty

Additional Documents

- "Colorado College Plan: Building on the Block" (new publication in the resource room)
- Provost organizational chart and responsibilities (from the President)
- Annual budgeting slides from Excel@CC professional development presentation (from Senior Budget Analyst)

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

- The Colorado College mission statement was revised in 2003 and reaffirmed by the current president in 2011. The mission declaration seeks in part to "be the best" selective liberal arts college, and appears to be strongly embraced and understood by the constituency. This bold aspirational mission inspires others. The Campus Climate survey indicates that 92 percent of the faculty and staff indicated an understanding between the mission and what they do. In meetings with faculty, staff, and students they expressed their excitement for the mission and their collective alignment with its purpose. During discussions with board of trustee members, all six representative members expressed their understanding, enthusiasm, and passionate embrace of the mission.
- The current mission, vision and core values have remained essentially unchanged for many years and continues to guide Colorado College's planning and decision making. Over the past 15 years the College has attempted to strengthen the focus and has sought to operationalize the mission. After assuming office in 2011, and after conducting a Year of Listening, the President appointed a team to create action plans to ensure mission achievement as part of the strategic plan. This plan was formally approved by the board of trustees in 2012 in a process of broad community participation. Evidence of the continuity of the mission can be found in the "Building on the Block" plans which illustrates how the College strategically addresses the themes of the mission. Most recently, in 2017 the board approved "Building on the Block II" which gives further evidence that mission is a key element of past and present planning.
- The quest "to provide the finest" is seen in the focus in three areas quality faculty, small classes, and a commitment to the liberal arts. Additionally, as a highly selective College there

is a high predictability that the students who are admitted have the potential to achieve the desired goal of excellence. The theme of excellence is expressed often with expressions such as "seeking excellence," and delivering "education of the highest caliber." Students were exceptionally engaged in conversations and sessions held by the team, and recounted the specific role the mission statement played in their decision to come to Colorado College, and the congruence between mission and their educational goals.

• In recent years, a 12 person budget committee has allocated the largest portion of an increased budget to programs and expenses pertaining to its strategic planning initiatives to advance educational excellence. The investment in the library as a learning center to become the "intellectual hub" for the campus is commendable. Actions such as funding to develop "a top-notch professional development program" provide evidence that financial support for the mission is intentional and primary.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

- Colorado College's mission and seven core values can be found in a myriad of locations including printed materials such as bulletins and the College websites. Official and informal documents publicly provide unmistakable evidence of the mission. It is apparent that the mission is understood and guides planning.
- The mission is not only clearly stated, but many examples illustrate how it is being achieved. Stories are found in key locations such as a website called "Faces of Innovation," and the alumni magazine, "The Bulletin," which share how the alumni, faculty, and students exemplify the mission. Collectively, these stories demonstrate the value placed on scholarship, teaching, and service - a core element of mission.
- The connection between mission and action can be seen in the activities encouraged and subsidized for the students. These experiences find their locus in the mission's intention to connect students with "the adventurous spirit of the Rocky Mountain West." The faculty shared with the team the belief that these experiences, and others help foster "habits of intellect and imagination" which in turn prepare students for life-long living and learning.
- A culture of mission driven decision making and action exists at Colorado. Flowing from the institutional mission and values, the various academic and nonacademic programs have created mission statements that guide their efforts. In open forum meetings departments shared how their respective missions resonated with, and built upon the mission of the College.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

- Over the past decade the percent of students of color has increased from 14.6 to 24.3, and foreign students are up from 2.5 to 8.7 percent. The growth in student diversity illustrates significant progress on this goal. However, in the student survey conducted by the HLC prior to the visit, (while a question on diversity was not one of the questions for quantification), the issue of diversity was the most frequent student comment of concern. During the past decade of intentional efforts to increase student diversity, the progress to increase employees of color has been noteworthy. Evidence of progress is seen in the statistics from 2007-08 to 2016-17 where the percentage of full-time faculty of color among all full-time faculty increased from 18.1 to 24.7 percent. Additionally, over the past five years 21 of 53 faculty (39.6%) hired were identified as persons of color or "other."
- In 2014 the Board stated that "diversity and inclusion are key to a liberal arts education of the highest caliber." The Butler Center embodies the physical and symbolic commitment to diversity. While progress is being made, the discussions with key individuals reveal an understanding that more is yet needed in this area.
- The increase in diverse student applications in 2014 which seemed to begin with the relationship with QuestBridge is commendable. The growing pool of applicants of color should bode well as Colorado College purposely shapes the student body to achieve diversity goals.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

- Discussions with campus leaders described a renewed commitment to "fostering a collective sense of place in the College's location in the Southwest." In efforts to fulfill the element of the mission outlined in "Building on the Block" efforts have been made by the President, administration and faculty to be actively engaged with the community. A specific example of serving the public good can be observed in the initiative, "Collaborative for Community Engagement," which facilitates sustainable partnerships between the campus and the area. Additionally, the activities of students in several projects to clean up or beautify the region including the city park, Shooks Run, and the campus-wide community service project, "Colorado Springs Day of Service," show engagement with the community for the public good. Examples of connectivity and partnerships with the local community are appropriate to mission attainment.
- Colorado College is cognizant of the challenges and opportunities faced as a small residential college in a metropolitan area. The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College was conceived to create and maintain strong and positive relationships with neighbors and external constituencies. This element of the strategic plan, which clearly links to the mission, declares that the Fine Arts Center initiative will "nurture a community of artists, invite visitors to campus, build an innovative program of arts education, and develop an arts corridor." If realized as envisioned, the Arts Center has the potential to transform a key connection between the region and the College.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

- Evidence abounds demonstrating that Colorado College understands, embraces, and follows its mission in decision making and planning. The College takes mission seriously and effectively manages the mandate to serve the public good of Colorado and the Southwest.
- Creative initiatives such as the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College demonstrate the College's intentional efforts to collaborate with the region and serve the public good.
- Many of the activities and measures used by the College to assess the aspirational aspect of their mission are thoughtfully conceived and well managed.
- The team encourages the College, in light of the centrality of the Block Plan to mission achievement, to continue to seek quantifiable measures to provide assurance of the efficacy of the block plan and discover ways to maximize learning with this pedagogical system. Since the Block Plan is the College's unique and signature delivery modality and key to student learning, special attention should be given during on-boarding for new faculty who are unacquainted with it.

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

One of the seven Core Values of Colorado College articulates a commitment to "practice intellectual honesty and live with integrity." Minutes from meetings of the Board of Trustees display their efforts towards financial integrity via their audit process (publicly available on the website) and regular reporting of investments. The various documents of the College containing policies and procedures regarding fair and ethical behavior include the Faculty Handbook, the Staff Handbook, the Student Handbook, and the Bylaws of the institution. Staff and faculty during various meetings during the site visit affirmed the conclusion that the institution does indeed operate with fairness and integrity.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

- Colorado College displays their course catalog on their public website; it is searchable by keyword, Departmental Courses, Interdisciplinary Programs, Non-Departmental Studies, and Thematic Minors.
- Additionally, students and the public are able to locate links to to All-College Requirements, Academic Policies, Academic Resources, Accreditation, International Programs, Tuition & Fees, and Financial Aid one click off of the homepage. Although a list of staff for the Athletic Department was easily located on the public website, staff during the site visit confirmed that a full list of non-athletic staff on the website does not exist and many departments do not name the staff working in their offices on their individual websites or printed materials. Staff confirmed that this important information is currently being added to the website.
- Overall, the institution presents itself clearly and completely to the its students and to the public with regard to their core information.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

- The Board of Trustees is organized into five standing committees (Executive Committee, an Investment Committee, a Budget and Finance Committee, a Governance Committee, and a Buildings, Grounds, and Campus Infrastructure Committee) to reflect the core elements of the institution. Additionally, since 2012, the President of the College has created Strategic Planning Teams for the Board to ensure that their deliberations remain topical with regard to changing priorities for the institution.
- At the trustee lunch during the site visit, the trustees detailed the many ways they interact with students, faculty, and staff to stay current on the interests of the college community. They described various interactions including multiple open meetings, invitations to outings in Colorado Springs, feedback from clearly-valued student and new alum trustees, and classroom instruction by trustees in the Block Plan. In various site visit sessions, members of the campus community affirmed the accessibility and demonstrated interest of the trustees in the health and well-being of both Colorado College and the students, faculty, and staff. Additionally, the trustees enumerated meetings both formal and informal in which they interact with external constituents to factor in their interests, when appropriate, into deliberations.
- Each member of the Board of Trustees annually signs a "Conflict of Interest Policy" and "Code of Ethical Conduct" in which these terms are defined and Trustees must disclose related entities with which they have a "material interest or involvement." New members sign a "Responsibilities and Expectations" document at the start of their term, take an oath of office affirming their agreement to these terms, and participate in an orientation at which the president familiarizes the group with the economics of higher education and the board's policies.
- As stated in their Bylaws, the Board of Trustees appoints the President and various administrative officers and grants them the authority to "perform the usual functions and duties

of their respective offices and positions." The Bylaws further grant faculty "the right to discuss the subject of instruction in such manner as they deem most effective." Numerous faculty during the site visit confirmed that they do indeed have primacy over the academic program.

• Through both the documents presented and the conversations during the site visit, it is clear that the governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

Colorado College articulates their commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in their Faculty Handbook under the header, "Faculty Tenure and Academic Freedom." This policy details the institution's dedication to "the unrestricted search for knowledge" and an endorsement of the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning with the liberty to present unpopular or contested viewpoints, to explore sensitive topics of inquiry in their classes, and to conduct research in any area of investigation relevant to their teaching. During the site visit, faculty repeatedly articulated the wide berth the College gives them to develop new courses and areas of interest, including a salary review process that factored in the expectation that faculty be innovating via asking them directly to list new courses that they have created.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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 College supports both an Institutional Review Board as well as an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee to provide effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students. Information on both committees (including definitions, process, and contact information) is publicly available on the institution's website.
- During the site visit, members of the campus community articulated numerous methods within the academic program (including the IRB and IACUC listed above), library procedures, and the working relationship between students and faculty that all serve to provide grounding on the ethical use of information resources. In the Assurance Argument, Colorado College cites the First Year Experience (FYE) program as being students' first introduction to the ethical use of information resources and mentions no other institutionalized procedure for delivering this guidance. However, as confirmed by both students, staff, and faculty during the site visit, the FYE program gives faculty great latitude in deciding FYE course delivery, thus resulting in vastly different amounts of time spent on this introduction to ethical use of resources. Staff members during the site visit expressed difficulty in presenting a consistent amount of information across FYEs as each faculty member approaches the course content differently. Consequently, more work would need to be done to standardize the consistent delivery of material in the FYE.
- Although the faculty retain final authority over grades, alleged violations of academic honesty and integrity can be heard through the Honor Council, a panel of students with a faculty advisor. This Honor System is described across documents as a central element of the College's academic program and its jurisdiction is established in both the Course Catalog and the Faculty Handbook. During the site visit, the importance of the Honor Code and Honor Council were repeatedly highlighted by students, staff and faculty.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Evidence

The documents of Colorado College and the conversations during the site visit confirmed that the institution acts with integrity with various policies and procedures to support ethical and responsible conduct in all areas. Students, staff, faculty, and trustees all place integrity at the heart of their practices, and it clearly guides their work both individually and as a college community.

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, postbaccalaureate, 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

- Colorado College is keeping its undergraduate degree programs current and appropriate to higher education. The Faculty Handbook demonstrates that the College relies upon two standing committees to monitor its curriculum. The Curriculum Executive Committee (CEC) handles overall curriculum design and review. The Committee on Instruction (COI) evaluates all new course proposals or course modifications and any requests for course designations as Critical Perspectives (CP) or Quantitative Reasoning (QR) as well as the curriculum for any new program proposed by the Curriculum Executive Committee. Evidence included in the COI's Procedures demonstrates that the committee's membership, its meeting schedule, and its procedures for the 2017–2018 academic year are available on the dean's office's website section for chairs and program directors. During the Open Forum Discussion on Criterion 3, the chair of the Curriculum Executive Committee updated the assurance team on proposed changes to the Critical Perspective requirements that were going to be discussed during a meeting upcoming in several weeks. In multiple sessions, faculty members discussed successful revisions to majors or the establishment of new programs (including environmental science, molecular biology, and others). An external review process is established and functioning for academic and staff units.
- The College satisfies the criterion by establishing and making public the requirements for its degree programs, which are offered through a single campus and a single mode of delivery: the small, intensive courses of the Block Plan. The Catalog of Courses 2017-2018 presents the requirements to complete the degree, including the Critical Perspectives General Education Program requirements, and the requirements for each major and minor. Point III in the Bachelor

of Arts degree requirements describes learning goals or focuses for courses in the specific Critical Perspectives subcategories, and a supporting document entitled "Critical Perspectives Information" covers the procedures for a course to receive a CP designation. The learning outcomes, measurement procedures, and rubrics developed by the Assessment Office for assessment of the Critical Perspectives courses are presented in updated assessment information. According to the document, this work was, in part, a response to the prior team's finding regarding assessment.

• Effective assessment of general education is occurring. The Committee on Instruction supervises a procedure in which about a third of the faculty teaching in The West in Time, Social Inequality, Global Cultures, and Scientific Investigations of the Natural World each year work in pairs to examine and reflect upon the student work in each course, using the appropriate rubric, and the faculty submit a report to the COI regarding their conclusions. Rubrics are tailored to each category's learning outcomes and the Quantitative Reasoning rubric, for example, integrates material from AAC&U's VALUE Quantitative Literacy Rubric. Learning goals, or outcomes, for each program are established by each individual program, and listed in a document entitled "Learning Outcomes." Each department designates a liaison to the Assessment Committee.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

- Since a 2012 update of degree requirements, Colorado College requires thirty-two (32) units of academic credit for the B.A. No more than fourteen (14) of these units can come from any one department, and each graduate must complete the Critical Perspectives requirements, which include: The West in Time (2 units), Global Cultures (1 unit), Social Inequality (1 unit), Scientific Investigation of the Natural World (2 units), and Quantitative Reasoning (1 unit). Testimonials from multiple students indicated that the focused intensity of the Block Plan requires them to move out of their academic comfort zone and to master new skills. This curriculum and delivery structure successfully ensure a student experience of broad learning and skill acquisition to complete a degree.
- The documents in the evidence file reveal a pattern of sustained attention to establishing and assessing the learning outcomes for the general education requirements. The "Summary of Critical Perspectives" provides a 255-page compilation of various faculty paired-assessment reports ranging from 2012 through 2016. The Committee on Instruction reviews faculty paired-assessment reports and recommends potential changes in the assessment of critical perspectives. Evidence in "Assessment: Closing the Loop" shows that many departments and programs have made changes in response to assessment during the two previous academic years.
- The last revision to the Critical Perspective requirements occurred in 2011–2012. In Spring

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2016, the faculty voted to examine and "possibly modify" the Critical Perspectives and other general education requirements, and it charged the Curriculum Executive Committee with the task of this review. The review, now in its second year, was a primary topic of conversation during the Fall 2016 and August 2017 faculty forums. Working with the CEC, the faculty have identified four important learning goals to guide any revisions to the Critical Perspectives. Currently, the Curriculum Executive Committee is bringing a proposal to the faculty to create more "team-taught, critical and creative inquiry courses that would illuminate how knowledge is constructed and engage students in different modes of inquiry." In the open forums on Criterion 3 and on engaged teaching and immersive learning, the team heard clear evidence of a robust discussion about potential improvements to the First-Year Experience courses and the possible addition of a required writing course.

- Student and faculty achievements in scholarship are numerous and confirm that students are acquiring knowledge and skills and that faculty are practicing the disciplines they teach. In 2017, the college held its fourth annual Faculty-Student Summer Collaborative Research Symposium, featuring the work of dozens of students. Information on student capstone and thesis projects, copies of student publications (e.g, *Leviathan* and *The Catalyst*), and updates on the Arts and Crafts program show students mastering a broad range of skills. The evidence file includes a 24-page document that summarizes many faculty and student creative achievements in the fine and performing arts, a 41-page summary of the research interests and scholarly achievements of many tenure-line faculty, and an eight-page summary of recent faculty publications. The institution also provides research funding for students in college-level and program-level grants.
- Colorado College's current strategic plan, "Building on the Block," prioritizes diversity initiatives, and there is evidence of substantial progress in this work. The College prioritized this work in its quality initiative entitled "Diversity and Inclusion: The Promise of a Liberal Arts Education," a plan it has been aggressively acting upon. The Butler Center, with its focus on inclusion, the Board of Trustees' Diversity Commitment, and the Diversity and Equity Advisory Board are working at not only enhancing the quality of the education the college provides but also increasing access and safety for faculty, staff, and students. Faculty, staff, and students indicated that the college had made great progress in these areas in recent years, while still acknowledging that more work needed to be done. Several faculty and students advocated for an expansion of the Bridge Scholars program, with at least three students praising the program as a primary reason for their successful experience at the College.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

- Colorado College hires a highly qualified faculty and staff, and it deploys significant resources to ensuring quality performance. With 225 full-time faculty (183 in tenure-track lines), Colorado College maintains a 10:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Ninety-six percent of its faculty hold the highest degree in their fields, and the college reports that many staff members also hold such degrees. In third- and sixth-year reviews, faculty performance is assessed by the department, the personnel councils that represent the divisional and faculty executive committees, and the dean of the college/dean of the faculty. Staff performance is assessed annually by department supervisors and division heads, and all staff have access to the professional development support provided by the THRIVE@CC and EXCEL@CC programs. Multiple staff members praised these programs at the open session on institutional effectiveness.
- The process for evaluating faculty teaching and faculty performance is multifaceted, formative, and appropriate. It includes self-reviews, three required peer reviews, department chairs' recommendations, and divisional executive committee recommendations. The Faculty Handbook and the form for annual self-reports for faculty establish "academic advising" and "intensive engagement outside of the classroom mentoring students" as professional expectations for faculty and as standards considered in decisions regarding merit raises, third-year reviews, and tenure and promotion decisions. Since a majority of the Block Plan courses meet during mornings, most faculty are available during the afternoons for office hours,

mentoring, and a mandatory advising appointment in Block 7. Numerous testimonials from students confirm the existence of a strong campus culture of mentoring and instructor availability. The Faculty Handbook (Part IV) also explicitly requires faculty members to give students the opportunity to complete an evaluation of each course, using the all-college survey instrument. The institution provided a copy of the chairs evaluation form, which requires the chairs to evaluate the quality of the faculty member's "teaching and student advising." Evidence in a document entitled "Personnel Decisions from 2012-2013–2016-2017" confirms that the College tenures and promotes faculty members who meet its faculty handbook's standards for teaching, scholarship, and service and denies tenure or promotion to faculty members who do not meet the standards in any of the three areas.

• The team sees substantial evidence of strong support for faculty and staff development. The Crown Faculty Center provides regular programming and sessions during new faculty orientation to help faculty members remain current in their pedagogy and to help new faculty adjust to the structure of the Block Plan, although we did hear comments from several faculty expressing a wish for more disciplinary-specific advice for how to adapt to the delivery structure and for a larger conversation about workload equity. The Center supports "scholarly accountability groups" to help faculty remain active in their disciplines and for professional development, and in the open meeting on Criterion 3, several faculty members shared success stories about their work with colleagues in these groups. During Focus Area 2 on engaged teaching and immersive learning, the director of the Crown Center reported that 55 percent of the faculty had participated in professional development programs during the Fall 2017 semester, and the team heard from the director and other staff members about ongoing work to establish more programs of faculty development.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

- Colorado College staffs and supports an extraordinary array of student support services, and it is successfully meeting the heavy demand for those services. After a reorganization in 2011, the Colket Center for Academic Excellence, with ten professional and two support staff, serves as a hub for many support services, including the Writing Center, the Quantitative Reasoning Center, the English as a Second language specialist, the director of the First Year Experience program, and the Sophomore Jump Program. The Center's combined services provided support for over 63 percent of the Colorado College student body last year, with the Writing Center serving over 41 percent and the Quantitative Reasoning Center serving over 47 percent. A Utilization Report from the Counseling Center shows that 34 percent of the student body used the center's services, that utilization is trending up, and that \$5,775 in scholarship aid were provided to students who could not afford to pay for continuing care beyond the annual allotment of free sessions. The College is working with the JED foundation on improving student emotional health and on suicide prevention.
- Cohorts of students who may need additional support to achieve academic success receive highquality support from targeted programs, including the Bridge Scholars Program, Global Scholars Program, and Accessibility Resources. The Accessibility Resources office, for example, is staffed by two professionals, a director and an assistant director. In conversation on campus, one student self-disclosed a diagnosis of ADD and praised the available support as well as the one-course-at-a-time structure of the Block Plan as perfect for her learning needs. Colorado College provides substantial guidance regarding research and information literacy to its students. The College relies heavily on two required blocks of FYE courses in its First-Year Experience Program to educate new students about the "structures, processes, and contexts of academic research and scholarship, and its faculty and staff are currently debating potential

enhancements to this area, such as the potential addition of a required first-year writing course. Departments and programs in their courses provide further disciplinary-specific instruction, and the Thesis Writing Specialist in the Colket Center for Academic Excellence coordinates a series of thesis-focused courses for juniors and seniors. The College also provides additional research support for students through a Fall symposium for faculty-student research, and the Colorado Springs Undergraduate Research Forum.

• The College's facilities provide high-quality office and work spaces for the numerous support services, and these facilities are being updated on a regular basis. The Colket Center, for example, located in the Tutt Library, was renovated during the period from Summer 2016 through Summer 2017. The library renovation included modern features like a GIS lab and many open collaborative spaces specifically designed to be appropriate for Block courses. Each building tasked to support particular academic divisions possesses modern options for teaching and learning spaces: Armstrong Hall includes the Keck Multimedia Laboratory for the Humanities, the Packard Hall of Music and Art includes an Electronic Sound Studio, Palmer Hall devotes the west wing of one floor to multiple spaces for the geology department, and the El Pomar Sports Center, which was renovated in 2013, includes "modern exercise-physiology and biomechanics labs." Conversations with staff and a tour through these facilities confirmed the quality of many of these spaces and the thought invested in where best to cluster support services. The Worner Campus Center, for example, includes a hub on the second floor that brings the Butler Center, the Wellness Center, and the student government office into close proximity, with shared open space for programming. The alliance with the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center significantly augmented the opportunities for learning in the fine arts, and the July 2017 strategic plan for this partnership indicates the serious intention to support innovation and creativity in the arts. Although the College's facilities are excellent and well maintained, the team did hear a keen desire among the science faculty that a higher priority be given to the proposed new science building.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

- Colorado College offers its students an exemplary array of co-curricular programs in athletics, student government and activities, and community engagement/outreach, and the students participate in large numbers in the various activities. For example, in 2016, the college reports 306 varsity athletes, 260 club sport athletes, and 1,367 intramural participants, and the fitness center averages over 600 unduplicated users per day. Other examples came from multiple students in several open sessions, the student trustee during a lunch conversation, and the student tour guide, all of whom listed activities and experiences that helped to shape them as people and to identify what they wanted to do after college.
- What distinguishes the College's efforts in these areas is the intentional focus on maximizing the advantage of the College's location. The Office of Sustainability provides opportunities for student interns and volunteers to participate in its work and in larger conversations about issues affecting the Rocky Mountains. The Office of Field Study supports faculty and students engaged in innovative block courses that take students off campus and around the world, and the Field Study journal (Vol. 1, 2017) reports on numerous projects and courses. The Quad Innovation Partnership connects Colorado College's faculty, staff, and students to their peers at the three other higher-education institutions in Colorado Springs as well as the local business community. The Priddy Experience and the Outdoor Education program offer new and continuing students many opportunities to learn how to participate in the types of outdoor activities best supported by the local environment. The fitness center, when renovated in 2012–2013, was expanded to include "one of the best climbing gyms in the country"; the climbing gym often attracts over 100 users per day. One student enthusiastically described her experiences with Outdoor Education and Gear House as great builders of her self-confidence.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

- The team concludes that Colorado College offers a high-quality education through a distinctive mode of delivery. It finds ample evidence that the College's Critical Perspectives general education requirement combined with the program requirements and the flexibility and innovative learning experiences made possible by the Block Plan require students to master a broad skill set and use those skills to complete challenging and creative performances or projects. The resources that Colorado College devotes to facilities, instruction, and support are impressive and steadily growing. The team observes that the unique mode of delivery requires this level of expenditures to maintain quality because it places extraordinarily high demands on classroom facilities, faculty, and students. During the open forums and individual conversations, the team heard many examples of both deep satisfaction and pride in the levels of support provided to students as well as many constructive suggestions about how to improve the functioning of the Block Plan, to help more students be successful, and to support faculty and staff in their work.
- The team offers this brief list of suggestions that, in fact, came from Colorado College's own people during open forums and individual conversations. In the team's judgment, these suggestions merit further conversation on the campus: 1) examine ways to improve first-year advising for students as they adapt to the unique challenges of the Block Plan, such as the bid system for scheduling, 2) consider ways to expand and enhance the Bridge Scholars program, 3) consider ways to open broader conversations about the efficacy of the Block Plan and workload equity that provide safe options for all ranks of faculty to speak frankly, and 4) bring to consensus and completion the timely conversation about potential updates to the Critical Perspectives. The team's judgment is that exploring these internal suggestions are actions that align well with the College's current strategic plan and may further the college's goal of providing "the finest liberal arts education in the country."

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

• The academic departments/programs at Colorado College undergo program review every 8-10 years. There are three major components to academic program review: a thorough self-study; a visit by external reviewers resulting in a report, and a review of the findings during which departments identify areas to devote attention and resources. The assurance argument provides the external reviews for 12 programs/departments. These reviews identified both strengths and areas for improvement, as well as suggestions for changes. In the open forum for Criteria 4 and 5, faculty were able to provide examples of changes that arose from the program review process. While the Dean of the College recognized that follow up from the review process may not always be as engaged as would be ideal, the college's academic programs benefit from the

process. As part of the academic program review process, the development of expectations for data collection, assessment, evaluation of initiatives arising from the process, and ongoing measures for the years between program review would enable departments to both better track their outcomes in the intervening years, and be better prepared for the larger review.

- With regard to support services, administrative offices, and non-academic departments, the College's Assurance Argument states that these offices and programs undergo program review on a 7-8 year cycle. In the open forum for Criterion 5, the team was told that this cycle is five years. However, the documentation provided in support of the Assurance Argument indicates that the cycle ranges between 9-12 years, with notably longer gaps for some areas. For example, enrollment management last completed a review in 1998, financial aid is completing its first program review this fiscal year, and admissions will do so next fiscal year. It was not clear to the team that there is shared understanding among the administrative offices about the program review process, its frequency, and form. Non-academic departments and offices could benefit from the development of a regularized process that extends beyond a calendar to include purpose, data needed, narrative components, timelines, external evaluation process, and development of initiatives stemming from the program review process.
- The College has in place policies and procedures to ensure appropriate awarding of credit and transfer credit. Colorado College follows the federal credit hour definition. The Transfer Credit Guidelines clearly stipulate how transfer credit is awarded for credit earned at other institutions, and policies for Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate coursework. The college does not award CLEP credit or for prior experience. The credit policies are in accord with standards of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. Colorado College does not offer dual credit or other high school programs that award credit. Guidelines for awarding credit for independent studies can be found on the registrar's website (www.coloradocollege.edu/basics/welcome/leadership/policies/academic-policies).
- Colorado College authorizes departments to determine courses requiring prerequisites, course sequencing, and authorizes faculty to determine course content and appropriate level of rigor for courses. Course prerequisites and sequencing are included in the college catalog. Faculty hiring processes ensure that members of the faculty are appropriately qualified. The formal evaluative processes for faculty provide multiple opportunities to examine and ensure that courses are appropriately rigorous. These policies and practices ensure that the college is exercising appropriate authority over the educational process.
- There are several lines of evidence available indicating the success of the education at Colorado • College. As seen on the website, the college maintains specialized accreditation for its MAT degree program and for two certification programs in education. The College completes two graduate surveys, a one year out and a five year out survey. The five year out survey is supplemented by data from LinkedIn and the National Student Clearing House. Review of the 2011 five year out survey indicated that the survey tracked metrics relevant to the success of the college's graduates. These include employment status, salary, graduate education, and volunteer activities. In addition to graduate outcomes, respondents to the class of 2011 identified skills developed during their undergraduate education, and identified skills that they would have liked to have developed, which indicates potential areas of improvement. Additionally, most departments undergoing program review gather information regarding alumni through alumni surveys. Preparation for graduate programs and employment was incorporated in varying degrees within the external reviews of programs provided in the assurance document. Finally, during the open forum for Criteria 3 &4, faculty identified several informal (e.g. Facebook contacts) and formal ways (e.g. departmental newsletters) of gathering and disseminating

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information regarding alumni outcomes.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

- Colorado College's academic departments and programs have articulated learning goals and departments and programs engage in regular assessment of these. Recognizing that the assessment process could better engage departments and result in more meaningful assessments, Colorado College revised its program assessment process in 2015 to create a four semester cycle. The revised process is detailed, and includes suggested ways to engage effectively in the process. In 2017, 33 of 34 programs submitted assessment reports. While the transition to the new reporting process resulted in lower levels of reporting in 2016, both previous and subsequent years indicate good participation. The examples of assessment provided to the review team are detailed, thorough, and informative. In the open session for Criteria 3 & 4, faculty articulated ways that they had used assessment representative and the Academic Assessment Committee provides support for academic assessment. The College's practice of and participation in assessment at the academic program level is indicative of best practices, engages participation from a significant number of faculty, and has resulted in program changes.
- The Committee on Instruction developed and implemented an assessment of the Critical Perspectives requirements, involving pairs of faculty reading work from the other's course and completing an assessment rubric. This process began in 2011. Summaries of assessment reports provide data from pairs of faculty completing assessments. The Global Cultures examples provided indicate differing degrees of faculty interest in the process; ranging from not completing the assessment because they perceived the process as flawed to engaged conversations regarding the courses. However, the collective documents regarding the paired assessments across all Critical Perspectives indicate that participating faculty are carefully considering the learning outcomes, the assessment methods, and student learning. In open fora, members of the College's Curriculum Executive Committee indicated that planned curricular revision will focus on skill areas. As the College develops the revised curriculum, the intention

is to build assessment into the curricular structure. Thus, the current general education assessment process will end.

- While not as well developed as the academic assessment, the College has some co-curricular areas in which assessment is ongoing, and is developing processes and procedures to extend the assessment practice. Co-curricular assessment includes a Residential Life Survey, Outdoor Education assessment, Fellowship and Grants Advising, and FYE Library Workshop. As indicated in conversations with the Director of Assessment, there are several other areas of the College where assessment is being planned or developed (e.g. summer programs). The College is looking for ways to extend and enhance assessment practice beyond the academic side, including the planned creation of a staff assessment committee, with a similar charge and function to that of the academic assessment committee. This is intended to provide ownership and buy-in for the staff as they engage in developing assessment processes.
- The College has demonstrated its commitment to understanding the impact of its signature block program. Through a grant from the Mellon Foundation, the College has undertaken a deep look at the efficacy of the block plan. The College hired a pedagogy researcher to examine the impact of the block plan on students' learning. The resulting report is an excellent source of information that the College can use to improve the educational experiences of the students.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

- Colorado College has defined its goals for retention, persistence and completion relative to a set of peer institutions. The College's goals are to be at or above the median for 15 top liberal arts colleges who best match Colorado College. Given that Colorado College first year retention rate for 2012-2016 ranges from 93.9% to 96.3%, exceeding the peer average for four of the five years reported here. it is clear that Colorado College is very successful with regard to first to second year retention. The six year graduation rate for the same period is two to three percentage points below the peer group. Thus, setting the median as the goal is ambitious. By selecting comparable high performing liberal arts institutions, the college's goals are attainable. The College relies on IPEDs definitions of retention, persistence, and completion. The use of IPEDs definitions is appropriate for Colorado College as almost all of the students come to the college as first time, full time fall students. Additionally, using IPEDs allows the comparisons to other colleges that use the same measures.
- Data on retention, persistence and completion by demographic groups are shared publicly on the website, The Board of Trustees also receives this information, and comparable information for the College's peer group in a dashboard. The College tracks demographic subgroups, including first generation students and US Students of Color.
- There are places where the College utilizes its retention and graduation data. The academic program review process includes data on graduates. The Bridge Scholar program has been developed as a means of ensuring that first generation students are prepared for the rigors of Colorado College. In response to concerns about the rate of retention, the College revised its

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Student Time Off Policy.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

- Colorado College has demonstrated responsibility for the quality of its educational programs and learning environments. Offices of Assessment and Program Review, and Institutional Effectiveness provide support and leadership. The academic programs engage in both program review and ongoing assessment of program learning goals. Non-academic program review and assessment processes do not appear to be as mature as those on the academic side. The College acknowledges this, and is working toward improving these practices.
- The College collects retention and graduation data overall and for various subgroups. The College reports on US Students of Color. Given the differences in educational attainment for African Americans, Asian Americans and Latinx students, the College should be careful to disaggregate their data in a way that provides the most information possible regarding student success.
- There are additional opportunities to use retention data as part of the evaluative process for programs for specific student populations and for the effectiveness of the support services. In order to better evaluate the effectiveness of support programs, the College may consider tracking retention of participants in programs such as the Bridge Scholars Program, the Sophomore Jump Program, students accessing and utilizing various support services such as the Writing Center.
- Given the level of commitment of the College to the block plan, the College has an excellent opportunity to build upon the information gathered through the Mellon Foundation grant through careful consideration of the report of the pedagogy consultant. The College can use this information to better understand the benefits of the block program and to address opportunities for improvement.
- The Program Review process for offices and non-academic programs would benefit from a shared calendar and clarity of what is expected of that process.

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

• Colorado College has a solid resource base to support current educational programs. The College has planned and allocated resources to create a foundation for its strategic plan and support the mission. Audited financials show that the College's total operating expenses have increased by about 31% in the previous five years and revenue has also increased by about 35%.

The College's primary revenue stream is from tuition and fees. The process for setting tuition considers benchmark data from 15 peers with a target to be at the group median. The Board of Trustees approves basic expenses annually in February for the following academic year. The College has increased endowment resources by about 86% between 2009 and 2017, while also increasing enrollment by about 6.2%. Endowment payout is restricted to 5% and serves as a secondary revenue source. The enrollment management strategy allows the college to be able to project with a level of certainty the amount of tuition revenue that will be available in its budgeting processes.

Financial indicator trends documented in the Institutional Update show that Colorado College has operated consistently "above the zone," indicating that the institution has a

sustained pattern of having sufficient resources to carry out its mission and aligned activities.

Colorado College has added human resources to support the Block plan, additional academic programs, and increases in enrollment, and maintains a low student to faculty ratio (10:1). Faculty reported that maintaining low class sizes was a priority. The number of full time staff and administrators has also increased by about 16 people per year from FY2012 to FY2017. Conversations with College administrators indicate that the College has the human resources to carry out its plans, programs, and mission.

Significant investments in facilities and the technological infrastructure move the strategic plan initiatives forward. The Associate Vice President for Facilities Services confirmed the prioritization process for deferred maintenance and equipment improvements. Minutes indicate that the Board reviews the extended facility condition indices to approve funding for major projects.

The 2015-2016 ITS Division annual report showed that work was progressing on a major network upgrade and other technology enhancements. Staff members mentioned that Banner and Canvas were well equipped to handle the Block Plan schedule.

The College's physical infrastructure is currently adequate for serving students and employees though to sustain and improve the quality of the educational program the Campus Master Plan calls for several new building projects and upgrades in grounds. Where current resources do not exist for Campus Master Plan projects, the College raises the remaining funds through capital campaigns. The evidence shows that goal statements are realistic and attainable using the institutions resources.

• Colorado College includes a summary description, job responsibilities, required qualifications, and preferred qualifications on all job descriptions ensuring staff understand and are qualified for their respective positions. A review of several job descriptions shows that these elements are used in the job posting and hiring of candidates for specific positions. Staff members reported that the on-boarding process, THRIVE@CC, was critical to their introduction to and understanding of college policies and institutional culture, which includes a copy of the *Building on the Block* strategic plan.

Staff frequently reported that the EXCEL@CC professional development program was valuable for the work they do in building leadership, communication, and wellness skills, while also learning institutional processes such as annual budgeting.

• The annual incremental budgeting process is well-developed based on the evidence. The Senior Budget Analyst confirmed that the process is proactive, collaborative, and inclusive. Beginning in September, committee minutes show that the Campus Budget Committee works from the President's charge to develop a budget recommendation for the subsequent fiscal year. Departmental requests are submitted by November. The Board of Trustees approves the final budget parameters annually in February.

The Business Office tracks revenue and expenses for the current fiscal year and reports twice a year to the Board of Trustees. In November, the Board reviews the college's final audited financials.

A review of the FY17 and FY18 Adjusted Budgets show that Colorado College ended or

will end with a surplus. A five-year budget projection model indicates a balanced bottom line for FY19 through FY23. This evidence demonstrates that the institution plans for strengthening its quality in the future.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

• Colorado College's Board of Trustees is guided by Responsibilities and Expectations and the Amended and Restated Bylaws. The November-February-June meeting schedule and board orientation procedures assure that members are knowledgeable about the college. The Board operates with five standing committees, though matters of Student Life and Academic Policy are considered by the entire board. Board minutes available publicly on the college website show committees regularly meet twice a year, with a year end retreat in June. Minutes show that the Board considers its legal and fiduciary responsibilities through the topics discussed by the Budget and Finance committee.

Strategic Project Teams made up of Board members, college employees, and some community members are designated by the President to provide feedback on projects deemed of strategic importance. Functional area leaders update the Board and ensure that the Board maintains oversight for financial and academic policies. A high proportion of alumni on the Board further promotes understanding of and engagement with the institution. Some board members co-teach in the Block program providing a unique internal perspective about the experiences of faculty and students. Several Trustees reported the President provides monthly updates between meetings, the President's blog, and in emails and phone calls as required. The Board members reiterated that in this shared governance system they delegate day-to-day operations to the President.

• The internal governance structure of the College includes the President's Cabinet, the Faculty Executive Committee, the Curriculum Executive Committee, and the Staff Council. The college-wide committee structure is documented on the website and faculty led committees with specific responsibilities are outlined in the Faculty Manual. A policy on policies provides guidance on crafting, proposing, and implementing specific policies. For instance, academic policy is crafted by the Faculty Executive Committee, the Dean, and other appropriate faculty

committees. Faculty and staff reported that they have adequate input into institutional processes and decision-making. Students are also included through membership on some faculty governance committees and through the Student Governance Association.

A Staff Council represents staff in policy development and in communicating with and advising the President. Staff are represented on the Compensation Committee (both exempt and non-exempt) along with faculty members. Staff reported that the Council was effective in advocating on their behalf.

It should be noted that the College is transitioning to a Provost model to allow the President to focus on other strategic priorities of the college including fundraising. The efficacy of this change will need to be assessed post-implementation.

• While the Board of Trustees maintains oversight for academic policies, the main mechanism the college uses in setting academic requirements is the Curriculum Executive Committee. Faculty members confirmed that the faculty maintained responsibility for and held primacy over the curriculum and academic policy. Board of Trustees supported faculty responsibility in conversations with the team during the campus visit. This shared governance and committee structure promotes and supports collaborative processes, and enhances communication between these constituencies.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

• Colorado College's mission statement is to provide the finest liberal arts education in the country. Audited financial reports and IPEDS Finance data show that 42% of core expenses in FY16 was spent on instruction and 9% on academic support indicating that over half of the expenses are directly related to student learning. This emphasis attests that the institution's resource allocation is aligned with its educational mission.

Colorado College has made several key strategic investments that support progress on the strategic goals. For instance, the college renovated the Tutt Library including a Center for Immersive Learning and Engaged Teaching. Additionally, the Campus Master Plan operationalizes the strategic plan goals with 36 projects, which focus on building with environmental stewardship and sustainability as design principles.

The *Building on the Block* plan also calls for the creation of an Innovation Institute. The College allocated resources in 2016 to hire a director of innovation and has raised \$14.6 million toward its \$40 million goal for the innovation project. The Board confirmed that a focus on innovation was a priority for the college to support 21st century learning.

• The current President began her tenure with a comprehensive strategic planning process, a Year of Listening followed by a Year of Planning. The Year of Planning was an inclusive process that included five committees collecting feedback from campus constituencies. The Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness updates the campus on progress on strategic plan goals continually on the website and twice a year at start of term conferences.

The Campus Master Plan, a Master Communications Plan, and an IT Master Plan stem from objectives articulated in the strategic plan and guide action in those functional areas. College

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administrators mentioned that the final strategic plan, *Building on the Block*, guides operational planning. Staff units reported that operational goals are developed in departmental meetings and retreats. The evidence was mixed on whether annual planning conversations in academic departments occurred at all and if they did whether they were guided by the strategic plan. The Director of Human Resources indicated that individual level goals are documented for the coming year within the staff performance evaluation process.

The College stated that the evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting are not directly linked to the assessment of student learning. Linking assessment results will help the College plan and budget for resources that would directly impact improving student learning.

- Budget documents indicate that Colorado College's understanding of fluctuations in the market and in revenue sources is comprehensive. The College is in a sound enrollment position which allows some flexibility with market fluctuations. Admissions uses data to monitor its applicant pool and enrollment funnel. Monthly reports on enrollment in the Block plan give student demand for courses and inform action in enrollment management and course scheduling.
- An Addendum to the *Building on the Block* strategic plan was recently approved by the Board of Trustees. Its development shows that the College engages in dynamic strategic planning that considers the external operating environment. The network upgrade plan and updates to the student learning/course management systems indicate that Colorado College anticipates emerging technological factors.

The development and renovation of the Tutt Library represents a successful example of integrating planning, budgeting and fundraising. The congruence between the educational mission of the College, the strategic plan, and resource allocation is strong evidence of the commitment of the senior leadership and the board to advancing projects that position the institution well for the future.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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

- The College uses 29 metrics to inform the selection of the 15 peer institutions against which it benchmarks itself. The Board of Trustees receives dashboards on 13 metrics three times a year. The 13 metrics show not only how the College compares with its 15 peer institutions, but also Colorado College's trends for each metric CC Facts the College's online Facebook that is publicly available, and its diversity dashboards show data on 58 metrics in an interactive online tool that allows users to see current and past information. Additionally, College administrators indicated that these metrics inform decision-making at the College, specifically related to faculty salary benchmarking.
- Individual offices collect and evaluate data to improve operations. For instance, the Facilities and Grounds area uses benchmark data from the Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA) to compare operational performance with peer institutions.

The Dean of the College requests annual information sheets from the academic departments. A review of a sampling of information sheets shows comprehensive effort in providing these reports. Individual faculty performance is assessed by the Dean on a biennial cycle for tenured faculty and annually for pre-tenured faculty. Sample self-reflection reports show meaningful self-reflection regarding strengths and challenges. Department chairs use this information to make merit pay recommendations. The Dean of the College and department chairs believe the process to be effective in guiding improvement at the individual level.

Staff members are also evaluated on an annual basis on multiple factors. Staff members reported that during the process individual goals linked to the unit goals are identified for the coming year.

• The College uses nationally-normed standardized surveys to indirectly measure institutional effectiveness and to create divisional action plans available publicly on the website. On the employee side, the College administered a Campus Climate Survey in 2013 and 2015.

On the student side, multiple examples of collecting data to inform improvements include course evaluations, the formal collection of student complaints, a Student Experience Survey, Alumni Surveys, and internal point of service surveys.

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• The College learns from multiple sources of data and information and applies that learning for continuous improvement. Positive performance outcomes are reported for Advancement, Office of Communications, and Information Technology Services. The Admission Office shows that a more aggressive recruitment strategy has led to an increase in applicants, especially students of color, and has allowed the college to be more selective in its enrollment management tactics.

Gathering feedback from internal constituencies on what could be improved, analyzing data in such a way as to inform future decision-making, and developing action plans reviewed by Cabinet and implemented in unit annual plans all serve to provide evidence that the College works systematically to improve its performance.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

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 College demonstrated that the institution plans for strengthening its quality for the future. The evidence shows that goal statements are realistic and attainable using the institutions resources.

It should be noted that the College is transitioning to a Provost model to allow the President to focus on other strategic priorities of the College including fundraising. The efficacy of this change will need to be assessed post-implementation.

With mixed evidence from faculty and staff on whether operational planning conversations occur or use the strategic plan, a more deliberate engagement in annual planning within all departments and units would help the college operationalize strategic goals in an inclusive way. Lateral discussions across departments and units would ensure the alignment of operational plans and encourage collaboration in advancing strategic plan goals.

The College stated that the evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting are not directly linked to the assessment of student learning. The College would benefit from using the results of program review and the assessment of student learning outcomes to inform budget requests from departments for the purpose of improving student learning. As the College strengthens the connections between strategic planning goals, program planning, budgeting, assessment and evaluation, it could consider how academic and operational program evaluation and prioritization can inform decisions about resource allocation. Otherwise, the congruence between the educational mission, the strategic plan, and resource allocation is strong evidence of the commitment of the senior leadership and the board to advancing projects that position the institution well for the future.

Many of the strategic plan goals can be measured with qualitative process indicators, however, the use of some quantitative measures might help the College understand more fully its relative progress on the plan.

Offices and academic programs take part in a program review on a 7-8 year cycle. In order to have the results of program review and the assessment of student learning impact budget requests in an aligned planning and budgeting process, the College may benefit from a shorter review cycle. In this way, more timely feedback could also be garnered on the impact of actions taken on improving student learning.

Overall, it was clear in the evidence and through conversations that Colorado College has the resources, structures, and processes to fulfill its mission and sustain or improve the quality of its educational offerings. Its planning processes and the ways the college measures institutional effectiveness respond to future challenges and opportunities in a systematic way.

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

Two key factors have influenced the recommendation for the choice of Pathway in the coming decade; both are centered on the Colorado College's clear and aspirational mission, and its human and fiscal capacity to fulfill it.

The first and primary factor is Colorado College's unquestionable embrace of the history and traditions of their longstanding mission. The mission has guided both long term strategic, and short term operational decisions. A preponderance of evidence revealed that the College, over the past decade, has faithfully advanced mission-driven initiatives intentionally enhancing student learning and advancing the public good. The aspirational element of the mission inspires and challenges the College to achieve levels of excellence.

Second, Colorado College has the resources, structures, and processes to fulfill its mission as well as to sustain and improve the quality of its educational offerings. Over the past several years its financial condition has maintained a positive Composite Financial Indicator rating, and growth in endowment continues appropriate for liberal arts colleges among the benchmark institutions they have identified. Clearly, resources are available to meet the aspirations of the College. Further, the College measures institutional effectiveness and responds to future challenges and opportunities in a systematic way by linking mission with resources.

In the summary sections for each criteria suggestions were offered for consideration. The following statements highlight key suggestions/observations made by the team. It is noteworthy that several of the suggestions are related to the Block Plan.

- (Criterion 1) The team encourages the College, in light of the centrality of the Block Plan to mission achievement, to continue to seek quantifiable measures to provide assurance of the efficacy of the block plan and discover ways to maximize learning with this pedagogical system. Since the Block Plan is the College's unique and signature delivery modality and key to student learning, special attention should be given during on-boarding for new faculty who are unacquainted with it.
- (Criterion 3) The team offers these suggestions for further conversation: 1) examine ways to improve firstyear advising for students as they adapt to the unique challenges of the Block Plan, such as the bid system for scheduling, 2) consider ways to expand and enhance the Bridge Scholars program, 3) consider ways to open broader conversations about the efficacy of the Block Plan and workload equity that provide safe ways for all ranks of faculty to speak frankly, and 4) bring to consensus and completion the timely conversation about potential updates to the Critical Perspectives. The team's judgment is that exploring these internal suggestions are actions that align well with the college's current strategic plan and may further the college's goal of providing "the finest liberal arts education in the country."
- (Criterion 4) Given the level of commitment of the college to the block plan, the college has an excellent opportunity to build upon the information gathered through the Mellon Foundation grant through careful consideration of the report of the pedagogy consultant. The college can use this information to better understand the benefits of the block program and to address opportunities for improvement.
- (Criterion 4) Colorado College should continue to build capacity in the area of student learning outcomes assessment, finding a plan that best fits their unique needs for the Block Plan. It will be important to ensure that all programs have data that are internally useful.

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• (Criterion 5) The College stated that the evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting are not directly linked to the assessment of student learning. The College would benefit from using the results of program review and the assessment of student learning outcomes to inform budget requests from departments for the purpose of improving student learning. As the College strengthens the connections between strategic planning goals, program planning, budgeting, assessment and evaluation, it should consider how academic and operational program evaluation and prioritization can inform decisions about resource allocation.

While some of the above suggestions and observations may warrant institutional attention, overall the team found that the College has continued over the past decade to advance important initiatives that enhance the public good for the constituencies it serves. Colorado College has maintained a stable identity, enjoys strong financial resources, and remains a connected, important educational influence in higher education.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation Met

Sanctions Recommendation No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation Eligible to choose



Federal Compliance Worksheet for Evaluation Teams

Evaluation of Federal Compliance Components

The team reviews each item identified in the *Federal Compliance Filing by Institutions* (FCFI) and documents its findings in the appropriate spaces below. Teams should expect institutions to address these requirements with brief narrative responses and provide supporting documentation where necessary. Generally, if the team finds in the course of this review that there are substantive issues related to the institution's ability to fulfill the Criteria for Accreditation, such issues should be raised in the appropriate parts of the Assurance Review or Comprehensive Quality Review.

This worksheet is to be completed by the peer review team or a Federal Compliance reviewer in relation to the federal requirements. The team should refer to the *Federal Compliance Overview* for information about applicable HLC policies and explanations of each requirement.

Peer reviewers are expected to supply a rationale for each section of the Federal Compliance Evaluation.

The worksheet becomes an appendix in the team report. If the team recommends monitoring on a Federal Compliance Requirement in the form of a report or focused visit, the recommendation should be included in the Federal Compliance monitoring sections below and added to the appropriate section of the Assurance Review or Comprehensive Quality Review.

Institution under review: Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Please indicate who completed this worksheet:

- Evaluation team
- Federal Compliance reviewer

To be completed by the Evaluation Team Chair if a Federal Compliance reviewer conducted this part of the evaluation:

Name: Dr. Henry Smith, Indiana Wesleyan University

I confirm that the Evaluation Team reviewed the findings provided in this worksheet.

Assignment of Credits, Program Length and Tuition

(See FCFI Questions 1–3 and Appendix A)

- 1. Complete the <u>Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Assignment of Credit Hours and</u> <u>Clock Hours</u>. Submit the completed worksheet with this form.
 - Identify the institution's principal degree levels and the number of credit hours for degrees at each level (see the institution's Appendix A if necessary). The following minimum number of credit hours should apply at a semester institution:
 - Associate's degrees = 60 hours
 - Bachelor's degrees = 120 hours
 - Master's or other degrees beyond the bachelor's = At least 30 hours beyond the bachelor's degree
 - Note that 1 quarter hour = 0.67 semester hour.
 - Any exceptions to this requirement must be explained and justified.
 - Review any differences in tuition reported for different programs and the rationale provided for such differences.
- 2. Check the response that reflects the evaluation team or Federal Compliance reviewer's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - \boxtimes The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Colorado College's program lengths are consistent with the minimum number of credit hours (120) for Bachelor degrees and Graduate degrees (30). Colorado College uses a Block Plan which was implemented in 1970. One block or unit is determined by one course taught at a time for 3.5 weeks. Each unit equals 4 credits. Eight units or 32 credits are scheduled per year. Bachelor degrees are 32 units or 128 credits. The two graduate programs; Experienced Teacher Master of Arts Program are 8 units or 32 credits and the 5th year Master of Arts in Teaching Program are 13.5 units or 54 credits.

A review of the Block Plan indicated students have an in depth study of curriculum and immersion of topics within this plan. The College has defined instructional time for each unit. Classroom and outside learning equates to 63 hours per unit. Colorado College addresses the block plan, course descriptions, and tuition costs on the college's website which was reviewed and verified in Appendix R – Student Handbook Online.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None

Institutional Records of Student Complaints

(See FCFI Questions 4–7 and Appendixes B and C)

- 1. Verify that the institution has documented a process for addressing student complaints and appears to by systematically processing such complaints, as evidenced by the data on student complaints since the last comprehensive evaluation.
 - Review the process that the institution uses to manage complaints, its complaints policy and procedure, and the history of complaints received and resolved since the last comprehensive evaluation by HLC.
 - Determine whether the institution has a process to review and resolve complaints in a timely manner.
 - Verify that the evidence shows that the institution can, and does, follow this process and that it is able to integrate any relevant findings from this process into improvements in services or in teaching and learning.
 - Advise the institution of any improvements that might be appropriate.
 - Consider whether the record of student complaints indicates any pattern of complaints or otherwise raises concerns about the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or Assumed Practices.
- 2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - \boxtimes The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Colorado College's Student Life Division maintains a student complaint log. Students have access to the Policy and Process thru the Student Life website at: <u>https://www.coloradocollege.edu/offices/studentlife/what-we-do.html</u>

The current complaint policy as published on the Website directs students to make an appointment with the appropriate staff member in the Office of Student Life to log a complaint.

In the Federal Compliance Review meeting with the HLC team on site, the Special Projects Coordinator in the office of Student Life informed the team that complaints brought to staff are entered into the complaint log based on the judgment of the staff member. The rule of thumb for identifying those complaints rising to the level of "high level complaints" are those complaints that would involve that staff members' supervisor. In practice, staff consult with the Office of Student Development when there are questions regarding whether a particular complaint should be entered into the complaint log.

To be able to record complaints that come to other offices or without a formal request to log a complaint, the College should develop policies and procedures for determining how complaints that lack a formal request to be logged are entered into the system.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None

Publication of Transfer Policies

(See FCFI Questions 8-10 and Appendixes D-F)

- 1. Verify that the institution has demonstrated it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public. Policies should contain information about the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions.
 - Review the institution's transfer policies.
 - Review any articulation agreements the institution has in place, including articulation agreements at the institution level and for specific programs and how the institution publicly discloses information about those articulation agreements.
 - Consider where the institution discloses these policies (e.g., in its catalog, on its website) and how easily current and prospective students can access that information.
 - Determine whether the disclosed information clearly explains any articulation arrangements the institution has with other institutions. The information the institution provides to students should explain any program-specific articulation agreements in place and should clearly identify program-specific articulation agreements as such. Also, the information the institution provides should include whether the articulation agreement anticipates that the institution (1) accepts credits from the other institution(s) in the articulation agreement; (2) sends credits to the other institution(s) in the articulation agreement; (3) both offers and accepts credits with the institution(s) in the articulation agreement; and (4) what specific credits articulate through the agreement (e.g., general education only; pre-professional nursing courses only; etc.). Note that the institution need not make public the entire articulation agreements so that they can better plan their education.

- Verify that the institution has an appropriate process to align the disclosed transfer policies with the criteria and procedures used by the institution in making transfer decisions.
- 2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Transfer policies were reviewed and verified in Appendix D. They are published in a number of sites located on the college webpages and the college catalog.

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/basics/welcome/leadership/policies/academic-policies

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/offices/registrar/transfer-students/

Information pertaining to the Office of the Registrar is located at: <u>https://www.coloradocollege.edu/offices/registrar</u> Students may access timely information regarding course scheduling, registration, transfer policies and procedures, transfer credit guidelines, FEPRA, etc.

Colorado College does not have any articulation agreements.

A review of Appendix F verified data is being collected pertaining to transfer.

Transfer decisions are aligned between the Office of the Registrar and the Academic Departments providing a consistent flow with the institutions policy and guidelines.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None

Practices for Verification of Student Identity

(See FCFI Questions 11–16 and Appendix G)

1. Confirm that the institution verifies the identity of students who participate in courses or programs provided through distance or correspondence education. Confirm that it appropriately discloses additional fees related to verification to students, and that the method of verification makes reasonable efforts to protect students' privacy.

- Determine how the institution verifies that the student who enrolls in a course is the same student who submits assignments, takes exams and earns a final grade. The team should ensure that the institution's approach respects student privacy.
- Check that any costs related to verification (e.g., fees associated with test proctoring) and charged directly to students are explained to the students prior to enrollment in distance or correspondence courses.
- 2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - \boxtimes The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Colorado College does not offer courses at a distance or via correspondence. Costs for test proctoring is non-applicable.

In the Federal Compliance meeting on campus with the HLC team, the Registrar provided a summary of the college practice with regard to secure login and access to student data. Student, faculty and staff access require a user ID and password that is changed at least once every six months. There is a single sign in system to access the college's systems. Access to student information is limited according to need, and FERPA designations are available to faculty and staff accessing student records. Students set FERPA designations at the start of fall semester and can update these at any time.

College's website at: <u>https://www.coloradocollege.edu/ssi</u> a number of portals can be accessed with a username and password for email, course registration (SSB), Canvas, Summit, Financial aid, etc.

The visiting team reviewed the process and determined that the College has meet HLC's requirements regarding student privacy.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None

Title IV Program Responsibilities

(See FCFI Questions 17–24 and Appendixes H–Q)

- 1. This requirement has several components the institution must address.
 - The team should verify that the following requirements are met:

- General Program Requirements. The institution has provided HLC with information about the fulfillment of its Title IV program responsibilities, particularly findings from any review activities by the Department of Education. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department has raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities.
- Financial Responsibility Requirements. The institution has provided HLC with information about the Department's review of composite ratios and financial audits. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department has raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion 5 if an institution has significant issues with financial responsibility as demonstrated through ratios that are below acceptable levels or other financial responsibility findings by its auditor.)
- Default Rates. The institution has provided HLC with information about its threeyear default rate. It has a responsible program to work with students to minimize default rates. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department has raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. Note that for 2012 and thereafter, institutions and teams should be using the three-year default rate based on revised default rate data published by the Department in September 2012; if the institution does not provide the default rate for three years leading up to the comprehensive evaluation visit, the team should contact the HLC staff.
- Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures. The institution has provided HLC with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations.
- **Student Right to Know/Equity in Athletics.** The institution has provided HLC with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The disclosures are accurate and provide appropriate information to students. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion 2, Core Component 2.A if the team determines that the disclosures are not accurate or appropriate.)
- Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance Policies. The institution has provided HLC with information about its policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The institution has demonstrated that the policies and practices meet state or federal requirements and that the institution is appropriately applying these policies and practices to students. In most cases, teams should verify that these policies exist and are available to students, typically in the course catalog or student handbook and online. Note that HLC does not necessarily require that the institution take attendance unless required to do so by state or federal regulations but does anticipate that institutional attendance policies will provide information to students about attendance at the institution.
- Contractual Relationships. The institution has presented a list of its contractual relationships related to its academic programs and evidence of its compliance with HLC policies requiring notification or approval for contractual relationships. (If the team learns that the institution has a contractual relationship that may require HLC approval and has not received HLC approval, the team must require that the

institution complete and file the change request form as soon as possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Substantive Change Application for Programs Offered Through Contractual Arrangements on HLC's website for more information.)

- Consortial Relationships. The institution has presented a list of its consortial relationships related to its academic programs and evidence of its compliance with HLC policies requiring notification or approval for consortial relationships. (If the team learns that the institution has a consortial relationship that may require HLC approval and has not received HLC approval, the team must require that the institution complete and file the form as soon as possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Substantive Change Application for Programs Offered Through Consortial Arrangements on HLC's website for more information.)
- Review all of the information that the institution discloses having to do with its Title IV
 program responsibilities.
- Determine whether the Department has raised any issues related to the institution's compliance or whether the institution's auditor has raised any issues in the A-133 about the institution's compliance, and also look to see how carefully and effectively the institution handles its Title IV responsibilities.
- If the institution has been cited or is not handling these responsibilities effectively, indicate that finding within the Federal Compliance portion of the team report and whether the institution appears to be moving forward with the corrective action that the Department has determined to be appropriate.
- If issues have been raised concerning the institution's compliance, decide whether these issues relate to the institution's ability to satisfy the Criteria for Accreditation, particularly with regard to whether its disclosures to students are candid and complete and demonstrate appropriate integrity (*Core Components 2.A and 2.B*).
- 2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - \boxtimes The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

• General Program Requirements - No information on Title IV Program Review was provided since the last comprehensive visit. The college has submitted an application for recertification (3-24-2017). No information was available on the determination of the recertification.

Audited findings from May 2, 2012, May 4, 2016 and April 28, 2017 Department of Education - A 133 correspondence was reviewed. A repeat finding was noted by the reviewer in the 2017 correspondence. The Department of Education asks CC to implement a process to ensure that all rosters are accurately uploaded and corrected in a timely manner to NSLDS. Colorado College concurred with all of the findings and is addressing the concerns raised.

No fines or monitoring by the Department of Education or HLC is issued, however, the visiting team should determine the progress the Financial Aid department is making toward addressing compliance requirements for NSLDS.

During the Federal Compliance meeting with the on campus HLC team, the Director of Financial Aid confirmed that the college has not yet received from the Department of Education a decision regarding recertification.

The Registrar and the Director of Financial Aid described the means by which the college is addressing the A 133 correspondence concerns (all rosters are accurately uploaded and corrected in a timely manner to NSLDS). Errors for 2016 have been corrected, the college has moved toward a faster submission for mid-year graduates, and are currently checking their data in the National Student Clearing House for accuracy. The college stated that these measures should correct the issues identified in the A 133 correspondence.

- Financial Responsibilities Colorado College Financial Indicators documents were verified in the evidence file. The total composite financial indicator scores are within the "no review grid".
- Default Rates After review of the 2017 Institutional Update Survey and the NCES website at: <u>https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/?q=Colorado+College&s=all&id=126678</u> the most recent 3 yr. default rates provided regarding student loans are listed below. No concerns have been raised by the Department of Education.

FY2012 0.9% FY2013 0.9% FY2014 0.5%

- Campus Crime The Office of Institutional Planning & Effectiveness and Campus Security provide access to policies and procedures regarding the Jeanne Cleary Disclosures. Students and staff have access to reports, crime logs, definitions, and statistics. Campus Safety and Annual Security Reports are available. A good example of security notification and timely warnings is offered to students at: <u>https://www.coloradocollege.edu/offices/campussafety/security-notifications-timelywarnings/</u>
- Student Right to Know Information and disclosures are listed on the college's website at: <u>https://www.coloradocollege.edu/admission/financialaid/handbook/student-right-to-know.html</u> as well as other links are provided. A Title IX Coordinator for the college coordinates investigation and disciplinary processes, and looks for patterns or systematic problems with compliance to ensure federal obligations are met.
- Students Right to Know Equity in Athletics The Student's Right to Know page found at <u>https://www.coloradocollege.edu/admission/financialaid/handbook/student-</u> <u>right-to-know.html</u> directs students to the Department of Athletics for

information regarding athletic participation. Additionally, the webpage <u>https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/heoa/index.html</u> provides direct links to NCAA Graduation Rate Report and the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) Report.

- Academic Progress & Attendance Students have access to the Student Financial Aid Policies Handbook and Academic Policies on the college's web site. A review of Appendix O verified the accessibility.
- Contractual Relations (NA)
- Consortial Relations (NA)

Additional monitoring, if any:

None

Required Information for Students and the Public

(See FCFI Questions 25–27 and Appendixes R and S)

- 1. Verify that the institution publishes accurate, timely and appropriate information on institutional programs, fees, policies and related required information. Verify that the institution provides this required information in the course catalog and student handbook and on its website.
- 2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

- The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
- The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
- ☐ The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Colorado College publishes and provides timely information regarding the block system, courses and programs, tuition and fees, policies and guidelines via the student handbook, advertising brochures, and the college web pages.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None

Advertising and Recruitment Materials and Other Public Information

(See FCFI Questions 28-31 and Appendixes T and U)

- 1. Verify that the institution has documented that it provides accurate, timely and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students and the public about its accreditation status with HLC and other agencies as well as about its programs, locations and policies.
 - Review the institution's disclosure about its accreditation status with HLC to determine whether the information it provides is accurate, complete and appropriately formatted and contains HLC's web address.
 - Review the institution's disclosures about its relationship with other accrediting agencies for accuracy and for appropriate consumer information, particularly regarding the link between specialized/professional accreditation and the licensure necessary for employment in many professional or specialized areas.
 - Review the institution's catalog, brochures, recruiting materials, website and information provided by the institution's advisors or counselors to determine whether the institution provides accurate, timely and appropriate information to current and prospective students about its programs, locations and policies.
 - Verify that the institution correctly displays the Mark of Affiliation on its website.
- 2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - \boxtimes The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - ☐ The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

A review of Colorado College's webpages and documents provided verified the college provides access to disclosure information. A reporting calendar outlined the various filings needed both on a local and national level. These can be found at:

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/policies

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/basics/welcome/leadership/policies/reporting-disclosure-filingcalendar.html

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/basics/welcome/leadership/policies/records-policy-retentionanddisposition-of-records Colorado College has responded to the Higher Education Opportunity Act by making information available to current and prospective students on the college's webpage at: https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/heoa/

Colorado College correctly displays the Mark of Affiliation on its website at: https://www.coloradocollege.edu/basics/welcome/overview/

Additional monitoring, if any:

None

Review of Student Outcome Data

(See FCFI Questions 32–35 and Appendix V)

- 1. Review the student outcome data the institution collects to determine whether they are appropriate and sufficient based on the kinds of academic programs the institution offers and the students it serves.
 - Determine whether the institution uses this information effectively to make decisions about planning, academic program review, assessment of student learning, consideration of institutional effectiveness and other topics.
 - Review the institution's explanation of its use of information from the College Scorecard, including student retention and completion and the loan repayment rate.
- 2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - \boxtimes The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

The Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness is responsible for providing student outcome data and making it accessible to the public. Colorado College uses the data to not only inform the public but to also make decisions and changes within the institution. Examples of Student Outcome documents were reviewed and verified that retention, graduation rates and non-returning student data was available. The college conducts alumni surveys and uses outside survey information to gather data regarding post graduate statistics.

A review of the 2011 Monitoring Report, "Knowing What Our Students Learn" emphasized the strong stance that the college takes on direct measures of assessment of student learning and the use of data for decision making.

Consumer information is accessible and provided on the college's webpages. Pass rates of the Teacher Education Program is accessible for 2015-2016. The College has detailed information for the consumer and has made additional links available for deeper searches and use of data.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None

Publication of Student Outcome Data

(See FCFI Questions 36-38)

- 1. Verify that the institution makes student outcome data available and easily accessible to the public. Data may be provided at the institutional or departmental level or both, but the institution must disclose student outcome data that address the broad variety of its programs.
 - Verify that student outcome data are made available to the public on the institution's website—for instance, linked to from the institution's home page, included within the top three levels of the website or easily found through a search of related terms on the website—and are clearly labeled as such.
 - Determine whether the publication of these data accurately reflects the range of programs at the institution.
- 2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - \boxtimes The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Student Outcomes data is provided by the Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness on the College Website, various brochures, recruiting materials, program pages, etc. Graduation information regarding teacher education programs is listed at: <u>https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/heoa/annual-heoa-disclosures/graduation-matters.html</u>

Links and data are easy to find reflecting that the institution has taken considerable discipline to make information accessible to the public.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None

Standing With State and Other Accrediting Agencies

(See FCFI Questions 39-40 and Appendixes W and X)

1. Verify that the institution discloses accurately to the public and HLC its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditors and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence.

The team should consider any potential implications for accreditation by HLC of a sanction or loss of status by the institution with any other accrediting agency or of loss of authorization in any state.

Note: If the team is recommending initial or continued status, and the institution is now or has been in the past five years under sanction or show-cause with, or has received an adverse action (i.e., withdrawal, suspension, denial or termination) from, any other federally recognized specialized or institutional accreditor or a state entity, then the team must explain the sanction or adverse action of the other agency in the body of the assurance section of the team report and provide its rationale for recommending HLC status in light of this action.

- Review the list of relationships the institution has with all other accreditors and state governing or coordinating bodies, along with the evaluation reports, action letters and interim monitoring plans issued by each accrediting agency.
- Verify that the institution's standing with state agencies and accrediting bodies is appropriately disclosed to students.
- Determine whether this information provides any indication about the institution's capacity to meet HLC's Criteria for Accreditation. Should the team learn that the institution is at risk of losing, or has lost, its degree or program authorization in any state in which it meets state presence requirements, it should contact the HLC staff liaison immediately.
- 2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - \boxtimes The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Colorado College has two teacher preparation programs. Both programs, undergraduate and Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) are reviewed, authorized and accredited by the Colorado Department of Higher Education and Colorado Department of Education. A review of Appendix W verified Colorado College is in good standing with the state agencies. The appendix also reviewed included the official reauthorization letter which Colorado College received in September of 2017.

Colorado College partners with the Colorado Literacy and Learning Center to offer the Literacy Intervention Specialist Certification Program. Information regarding the curriculum, the partnership with the Center, and the accreditation that the Center carries is accessible at: https://www.coloradocollege.edu/academics/dept/education/graduate-programs/literacy-intervention-specialist-certification-program-(liscp)/accreditations.html

Colorado College does not have any relationships with national specialized accrediting bodies.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None

Public Notification of Opportunity to Comment

(FCFI Questions 41–43 and Appendix Y)

1. Verify that the institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third-party comments. The team should evaluate any comments received and complete any necessary follow-up on issues raised in these comments.

Note: If the team has determined that any issues raised by third-party comments relate to the team's review of the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation, it must discuss this information and its analysis in the body of the assurance section of the team report.

- Review information about the public disclosure of the upcoming visit, including copies of the institution's notices, to determine whether the institution made an appropriate and timely effort to notify the public and seek comments.
- Evaluate the comments to determine whether the team needs to follow up on any issues through its interviews and review of documentation during the visit process.
- 2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - \boxtimes The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Colorado College complies with public disclosure by requesting 3rd party comments. The comments did not raise any concerns. These were made available from the HLC prior to the visit.

A review of the Student Opinion Survey located in the evidence file did not raise any issues. The survey provided the institution with student data to review and to make any determination of the results, etc.

Additional monitoring, if any:

None

Competency-Based Programs Including Direct Assessment Programs/Faculty-Student Engagement

(See FCFI Questions 44-47)

- Verify that students and faculty in any direct assessment or competency-based programs offered by the institution have regular and substantive interactions: the faculty and students communicate on some regular basis that is at least equivalent to contact in a traditional classroom, and that in the tasks mastered to assure competency, faculty and students interact about critical thinking, analytical skills, and written and oral communication abilities, as well as about core ideas, important theories, current knowledge, etc. (Also, confirm that the institution has explained the credit hour equivalencies for these programs in the credit hour sections of the Federal Compliance Filing.)
 - Review the list of direct assessment or competency-based programs offered by the institution.
 - Determine whether the institution has effective methods for ensuring that faculty in these programs regularly communicate and interact with students about the subject matter of the course.
 - Determine whether the institution has effective methods for ensuring that faculty and students in these programs interact about key skills and ideas in the students' mastery of tasks to assure competency.
- 2. Check the response that reflects the team's conclusions after reviewing this component of Federal Compliance:
 - \boxtimes The institution meets HLC's requirements.
 - The institution meets HLC's requirements, but additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The institution does not meet HLC's requirements and additional monitoring is recommended.
 - The Federal Compliance reviewer/evaluation team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Rationale:

Not Applicable

Additional monitoring, if any:

None

Institutional Materials Related to Federal Compliance Reviewed by the Team

Provide a list of materials reviewed here:

Websites

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/basics/welcome/overview/

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/heoa

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/admission/tuition/

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/offices/studentlife/what-we-do.html

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/offices/sarp/how-to-report-a-sexual-assault.html

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/basics/welcome/leadership/policies/gender-based-discriminationsexual-harassment-and-sexual-violence-policy-and-

procedures%22title=%22Sexual%20Misconduct%20Policy%20link%22%20target=%22_blank

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/offices/registrar/transfer-students/transfer-creditguidelines.html

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/offices/registrar/ap-and-ib-credit.html

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/basics/welcome/leadership/policies/academic-policies

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/ssi

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/admission/financialaid/handbook/student-right-to-know.html

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/policies

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/basics/welcome/leadership/policies/reporting-disclosure-filingcalendar.html

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/basics/welcome/leadership/policies/records-policy-retentionanddisposition-of-records

https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/?q=Colorado+College&s=all&id=126678

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/offices/campussafety/security-notifications-timely-warnings/

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/heoa/annual-heoa-disclosures/graduation-matters.html

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/academics/dept/education/graduate-programs/literacy-interventionspecialist-certification-program-(liscp)/accreditations.html

Documents Reviewed

Institutional Update 2016-2017

Quality Initiative Report & Panel Analysis Report

Colorado College Student Opinion Survey

Department of Education – A-133 Review (3)

Evidence File - Financial Indicators Student Handbook Online Catalog of Courses 2017-18 Transfer Credit Guidelines Transfer Data Example & Transfer of Academic Credit Document College Counselor Report 2017 International Brochure Financial Aid Policies Handbook Campus Safety and Fire Safety Annual Security Report – 2016 Colorado Dept. of Education Report for Colorado College Reauthorization of Educator Preparation Unit Document Site Team Review Document Various 3rd Party Requesting Comments Publications – Appendix Y



Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours

Institution Under Review: Colorado College, Colorado

Review the *Worksheet for Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours*, including all supplemental materials. Applicable sections and supplements are referenced in the corresponding sections and questions below.

Part 1. Institutional Calendar, Term Length and Type of Credit

Instructions

Review Section 1 of Appendix A. Verify that the institution has calendar and term lengths within the range of good practice in higher education.

Responses

A. Answer the Following Question

1. Are the institution's calendar and term lengths, including non-standard terms, within the range of good practice in higher education? Do they contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

\boxtimes	Yes		No
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Comments:

Colorado College follows a block system. Calendars and schedules are accessible to students on the college website. The block system's definition and practices are available to students through a variety of materials allowing them to make timely decisions regarding the learning environment and if it is "right for them".

B. Recommend HLC Follow-Up, If Appropriate

Is any HLC follow-up required related to the institution's calendar and term length practices?

🗌 Yes 🛛 🖾 No

Audience: Peer Reviewers Form Published: 2016 © Higher Learning Commission Rationale: None Identify the type of HLC monitoring required and the due date: None

Part 2. Policy and Practices on Assignment of Credit Hours

Instructions

Review Sections 2–4 of the *Worksheet for Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and Clock Hours*, including supplemental materials as noted below. In assessing the appropriateness of the credit allocations provided by the institution the team should complete the following steps. The outcomes of the team's review should be reflected in its responses below.

- 1. Format of Courses and Number of Credits Awarded. Review the Form for Reporting an Overview of Credit Hour Allocations and Instructional Time for Courses (Supplement A1 to the Worksheet for Institutions) completed by the institution, which provides an overview of credit hour assignments across institutional offerings and delivery formats.
- 2. Scan the course descriptions in the catalog and the number of credit hours assigned for courses in different departments at the institution (see Supplements B1 and B2 to *Worksheet for Institutions*, as applicable).
 - At semester-based institutions courses will be typically be from two to four credit hours (or approximately five quarter hours) and extend approximately 14–16 weeks (or approximately 10 weeks for a quarter). The descriptions in the catalog should reflect courses that are appropriately rigorous and have collegiate expectations for objectives and workload. Identify courses/disciplines that seem to depart markedly from these expectations.
 - Institutions may have courses that are in compressed format, self-paced, or otherwise alternatively structured. Credit assignments should be reasonable. (For example, as a fulltime load for a traditional semester is typically 15 credits, it might be expected that the norm for a full-time load in a five-week term is 5 credits; therefore, a single five-week course awarding 10 credits would be subject to inquiry and justification.)
 - Teams should be sure to scan across disciplines, delivery mode and types of academic activities.
 - Federal regulations allow for an institution to have two credit-hour awards: one award for Title IV purposes and following the federal definition and one for the purpose of defining progression in and completion of an academic program at that institution. HLC procedure also permits this approach.

- 3. Scan course schedules to determine how frequently courses meet each week and what other scheduled activities are required for each course (see Supplement B3 to *Worksheet for Institutions*). Pay particular attention to alternatively structured or other courses completed in a short period of time or with less frequently scheduled interaction between student and instructor that have particularly high credit hour assignments.
- 4. Sampling. Teams will need to sample some number of degree programs based on the headcount at the institution and the range of programs it offers.
 - For the programs sampled, the team should review syllabi and intended learning outcomes for several courses, identify the contact hours for each course, and review expectations for homework or work outside of instructional time.
 - At a minimum, teams should anticipate sampling at least a few programs at each degree level.
 - For institutions with several different academic calendars or terms or with a wide range of academic programs, the team should expand the sample size appropriately to ensure that it is paying careful attention to alternative format and compressed and accelerated courses.
 - Where the institution offers the same course in more than one format, the team is advised to sample across the various formats to test for consistency.
- 5. **Direct Assessment or Competency-Based Programs.** Review the information provided by the institution regarding any direct assessment or competency-based programs that it offers, with regard to the learning objectives, policies and procedures for credit allocation, and processes for review and improvement in these programs.
- 6. **Policy on Credit Hours and Total Credit Hour Generation.** With reference to the institutional policies on the assignment of credit provided in Supplement A2 to *Worksheet for Institutions*, consider the following questions:
 - Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution?
 - Does that policy address the amount of instructional or contact time assigned and homework typically expected of a student with regard to credit hours earned?
 - For institutions with courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy also equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the time frame allotted for the course?
 - Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that HLC will expect that credit hour policies at public

institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

- If so, is the institution's assignment of credit to courses reflective of its policy on the award of credit?
- Do the number of credits taken by typical undergraduate and graduate students, as well as the number of students earning more than the typical number of credits, fall within the range of good practice in higher education?
- 7. If the answers to the above questions lead the team to conclude that there may be a problem with the credit hours awarded the team should recommend the following:
 - If the problem involves a poor or insufficiently detailed institutional policy, the team should call for a revised policy as soon as possible by requiring a monitoring report within no more than one year that demonstrates the institution has a revised policy and provides evidence of implementation.
 - If the team identifies an application problem and that problem is isolated to a few courses or a single department, division or learning format, the team should call for follow-up activities (a monitoring report or focused evaluation) to ensure that the problems are corrected within no more than one year.
 - If the team identifies systematic noncompliance across the institution with regard to the award of credit, the team should notify the HLC staff immediately and work with staff members to design appropriate follow-up activities. HLC shall understand systematic noncompliance to mean that the institution lacks any policies to determine the award of academic credit or that there is an inappropriate award of institutional credit not in conformity with the policies established by the institution or with commonly accepted practices in higher education across multiple programs or divisions or affecting significant numbers of students.

Worksheet on Assignment of Credit Hours

A. Identify the Sample Courses and Programs Reviewed by the Team

AN 215 Anthropological Theory AN 219 Archaeology of the American Southwest AN 306 Primatology AS 201 Studio Foundations - Drawing AH 112 Introduction to Art History CH 366 Physical Chemistry I CL 101 Greek for Beginners EC 110 Social Entrepreneurship EC 110 Decision Making ED 513c Literacy Seminar I ED 513e Advanced Reading Intervention Course

ED 479 Handbook Document – Teacher Candidate MAT Guidebook

B. Answer the Following Questions

- 1. Institutional Policies on Credit Hours
 - a. Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution? (Note that for this question and the questions that follow an institution may have a single comprehensive policy or multiple policies.)

\boxtimes	Yes		No
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Comments:

Colorado College provides access to an institution-wide policy site located on the college's webpage at:

https://www.coloradocollege.edu/basics/welcome/leadership/policies/academic-policies

The policies are approved by the Faculty Executive Committee. Credits/Units are addressed as well as grades and attendance. The college does not provide courses on an alternative format, therefore different definitions are not defined. Departmental policies such as the Teacher Candidate (MAT) Guidebook was reviewed which provides policies that students need to be aware of set by the Colorado State Board of Education.

No documentation or individually numbered policy relating to the block plan or credit policy was provided in the report under Appendix A2 Supplemental information. It would benefit the college to ensure these policies are identified individually with dates and revisions.

b. Does that policy relate the amount of instructional or contact time provided and homework typically expected of a student to the credit hours awarded for the classes offered in the delivery formats offered by the institution? (Note that an institution's policy must go beyond simply stating that it awards credit solely based on assessment of student learning and should also reference instructional time.)

\boxtimes	Yes		No
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Comments:

Course attendance, grades and amount of time spent during regular classroom activities were present on the policies website and catalog. The college embraces outside activities, guest speakers, etc. Again, the college should ensure these formats of education and learning environments are also identified on course syllabi and within a credit/unit policy.

c. For institutions with non-traditional courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the time frame and utilizing the activities allotted for the course?

🛛 Yes

🗌 No

Comments:

Audience: Peer Reviewers Form Published: 2016 © Higher Learning Commission N/A - Colorado College does not offer courses beyond the classroom. No evidence of out of class/homework time was reviewed or verified.

d. Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that HLC will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

🛛 Yes 🗌 No

Comments:

Colorado College follows a block system. The block system's definition and practices are available to students through a variety of materials allowing them to make timely decisions regarding the learning environment and if it is "right for them".

The Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) is approved by the Colorado State Board of Education and meets the Colorado Department of Education standards.

- 2. Application of Policies
 - a. Are the course descriptions and syllabi in the sample academic programs reviewed by the team appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit? (Note that HLC will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

Yes 🗌 No

Comments:

Review of course descriptions and awards of credits/units were evaluated and verified in the course listings provided in Appendix H. Course descriptions were also reviewed within the sample syllabi provided. Course descriptions were consistent within the syllabi.

b. Are the learning outcomes in the sample reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit?

Yes 🗌 No

Comments:

Sample syllabi were reviewed. Not all of the syllabi reviewed were consistent outlining learning outcomes. Various language was used such as goals, learning outcomes, and objectives. A syllabi template would help define what language the institution would suggest for building syllabi.

c.	If the institution offers any alternative-delivery or compressed-format courses or programs,
	are the course descriptions and syllabi for those courses appropriate and reflective of the
	institution's policy on the award of academic credit?

\boxtimes	Yes		No
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Comments:

Colorado College does not offer courses at a distance. Course attendance, grades and amount of time spent during regular classroom activities were present on the syllabi reviewed. The college embraces outside activities, guest speakers, etc. Again, the college should ensure these formats of education and learning environments are consistent on course syllabi and within a credit/unit policy. It would benefit the college to use a syllabi template to ensure consistency throughout the college learning environment.

d. If the institution offers alternative-delivery or compressed-format courses or programs, are the learning outcomes reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit? Are the learning outcomes reasonable for students to fulfill in the time allocated, such that the allocation of credit is justified?

🗌 No

Comments:

NA - no alternative delivery or compressed format courses were reviewed.

e. Is the institution's actual assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution reflective of its policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

\boxtimes	Yes		No
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Comments:

Programs are within range of accepted practice in higher education. Sample courses were reviewed upon request. It is noted by the reviewer that Colorado College does not have a central file or database to house archived and current syllabi for accessibility to administration, faculty, and staff. The college should consider making it a priority to assemble a central repository.

C. Recommend HLC Follow-up, If Appropriate

Review the responses provided in this worksheet. If the team has responded "no" to any of the questions above, the team will need to assign HLC follow-up to assure that the institution comes into compliance with expectations regarding the assignment of credit hours.

Is any HLC follow-up required related to the institution's credit hour policies and practices?

🗌 Yes 🛛 🖾 No

Audience: Peer Reviewers Form Published: 2016 © Higher Learning Commission Rationale:

None

Identify the type of HLC monitoring required and the due date:

None

D. Systematic Noncompliance in One or More Educational Programs With HLC Policies Regarding the Credit Hour

Did the team find systematic noncompliance in one or more education programs with HLC policies regarding the credit hour?

Yes	🖾 No
Identify the findings:	
None	
Rationale:	
None	

Part 3. Clock Hours

Instructions

Review Section 5 of *Worksheet for Institutions*, including Supplements A3–A6. Before completing the worksheet below, answer the following question:

Does the institution offer any degree or certificate programs in clock hours or programs that must be reported to the Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs?

🗌 Yes 🛛 🖾 No

If the answer is "Yes," complete the "Worksheet on Clock Hours."

Note: This worksheet is <u>not</u> intended for teams to evaluate whether an institution has assigned credit hours relative to contact hours in accordance with the Carnegie definition of the credit hour. This worksheet solely addresses those programs reported to the Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes.

Non-degree programs subject to clock hour requirements (for which an institution is required to measure student progress in clock hours for federal or state purposes or for graduates to apply for licensure) are not subject to the credit hour definitions per se but will need to provide conversions to semester or quarter hours for Title IV purposes. Clock hour programs might include teacher education, nursing or other programs in licensed fields.

Federal regulations require that these programs follow the federal formula listed below. If there are no deficiencies identified by the accrediting agency in the institution's overall policy for awarding semester or quarter credit, the accrediting agency may provide permission for the institution to provide less instruction so long as the student's work outside class in addition to direct instruction meets the applicable quantitative clock hour requirements noted below.

Federal Formula for Minimum Number of Clock Hours of Instruction (34 CFR §668.8):

- 1 semester or trimester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction
- 1 quarter hour must include at least 25 clock hours of instruction

Note that the institution may have a lower rate if the institution's requirement for student work outside of class combined with the actual clock hours of instruction equals the above formula provided that a semester/trimester hour includes at least 30 clock hours of actual instruction and a quarter hour includes at least 20 semester hours.

Worksheet on Clock Hours

A. Answer the Following Questions

1. Does the institution's credit-to-clock-hour formula match the federal formula?

Yes	🗌 No
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Comments:

- 2. If the credit-to-clock-hour conversion numbers are less than the federal formula, indicate what specific requirements there are, if any, for student work outside of class.
- 3. Did the team determine that the institution's credit hour policies are reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that if the team answers "No" to this question, it should recommend follow-up monitoring in section C below.)

Comments:	
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4. Did the team determine in reviewing the assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution that it was reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

🗌 Yes 🗌 No

Audience: Peer Reviewers Form Published: 2016 © Higher Learning Commission Comments:

- B. Does the team approve variations, if any, from the federal formula in the institution's credit-to-clock-hour conversion?
 - Yes No
- C. Recommend HLC Follow-up, If Appropriate

Is any HLC follow-up required related to the institution's clock hour policies and practices?

🗌 Yes 🗌 No

Rationale:

Identify the type of HLC monitoring required and the due date:



Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

INSTITUTION and STATE: Colorado College, CO				
TYPE OF REVIEW:	Open Pathway Comprehensive Evaluation			
DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:	Evaluation to include a Federal Compliance reviewer.			
DATES OF REVIEW:	2/26/2018 - 2/27/2018			
No Change in Institutional	Status and Requirements			
Accreditation Status				
Nature of Institution				
Control:	Private NFP			
Recommended Change: no change				
Degrees Awarded:	Bachelors, Masters			
Recommended Change: no char	ıge			
Reaffirmation of Accreditation:				
Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accr	editation: 2007 - 2008			
Year of Next Reaffirmation of Acc	reditation: 2017 - 2018			
Recommended Change: 2027-20	28			
Accreditation Stipulations				
General:				
Accreditation at the Master's level is limited to the M.A.T.				
Recommended Change: no change				

Additional Location:

Prior HLC approval required.

Recommended Change: no change



Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs:

The institution has not been approved for distance education. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.

Recommended Change: no change

Accreditation Events

Accreditation Pathway

Open Pathway

Recommended Change: no change

Upcoming Events

Monitoring

Upcoming Events None

Recommended Change: no change

Institutional Data

Educational Programs Undergraduate		Recommended Change: no change
Certificate	0	
Associate Degrees	0	
Baccalaureate Degrees	50	
Graduate		
Master's Degrees	1	
Specialist Degrees	0	
Doctoral Degrees	0	

Extended Operations

Branch Campuses

None

Recommended Change: no change



Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Additional Locations

None

Recommended Change: no change

Correspondence Education

None

Recommended Change: no change

Distance Delivery

None Recommended Change: no change

Contractual Arrangements

None

Recommended Change: no change

Consortial Arrangements

None Recommended Change: no change