

Colorado State University - CO

HLC ID 1046

OPEN PATHWAY: Reaffirmation Review

Review Date: 9/18/2023

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Context and Nature of Review

Review Date

9/18/2023

Review Type:

Reaffirmation Review

Scope of Review

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

There are no forms assigned.

Institutional Context

Colorado State University is the flagship campus of the Colorado State University system located in Fort Collins and with 4 other sites - Spur Campus, Sturm Collaboration Campus at Castle Rock, Adams State University, and the University of Alaska at Fairbanks. With more than 30,000 students, 8 academic colleges and a wide range of academic support units, it is the state's land grant institution and holds R1 and Engaged Community Carnegie Classifications. It has a strong record of commitment to student success, to diversity, equity and inclusion, and it embeds a commitment to sustainability in all that it does - in 2015 the first university in the world to secure a Platinum STARS rating and has now done so four consecutive times. It has undergone considerable institutional leadership change since the HLC 4-year update, and there are key positions with Interim leadership status. But searches are coming to closure and the University is now engaged in multi-level planning efforts to move forward.

It had a successful 10-year HLC reaffirmation of accreditation in 2014, and successful 4-year update in 2018. No follow-up actions were needed. The university produced a strong assurance document for this review with a particularly helpful introduction that outlined major initiatives since the last reviews, and succinctly summarized progress on challenges identified then. Additional materials were provided to the Team quickly and completely upon request. The site visit provided important supplemental information.

Interactions with Constituencies

3 Board of Governors members and System Chancellor's Office

President

Interim Vice Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Interim Vice President for Research

Vice President for Student Affairs

Interim Vice President of Engagement and Extension

Vice President of Operations and Chief Financial Officer

Director of Budgets

Controller

Vice Provost for Interantional Affairs

Assistant Vice Provost

Deans: Libraries, Natural Resources. Agriculture, Engineering (Interim), Natural Resources (Interim), Business, Liberal Arts, Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, Health and Human Sciences, Graduate School

Director of Collaborative Campuses

Director of CSU Online

3 (one Senior) Online Instrucitonal Designers

Manger of Learning and Development

Professor and Chair of University Curriculum Committee

Assistant Vice President Enrollment and Access

Executive Director, Housing and Dining

Vice President for Inclusive Excellence

Director of institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness and 3 Research Analysts

Analyst, Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness

Vice President for Inclusive Excellence

2 College Assistant Deans for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Associate Vice President for Engagement and Extension and Deputy Director of Extension

Interim Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs

Assistant Vice President for Research Administration and Operations

Assistant Vice President for Safety and Risk Services

Biomedical IRB Chair

Director of Admissions

Director of Financial Aid

Vice President of University Marketing and Communication

Interim Assistant Vice President for Research Integrity and Compliance

Policy Program Manager

Vice President of Human Resources

Director of Athletics

Director of Talent Development

Executive Director, and Associate Directors of Faculty Talent, Student Success, and of Assessment, TILT

Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

Assistant Vice President for Inclusive Organizational Practice

3 Graduate School Student Services Coordinators

Co-Presidents Graduate Student Council

Academic Director INTO CSU

Graduate Admissions Analyst

Assistant Dean, Graduate School and Director of CSU Writes

Associate Dean, Graduate School and Director, Graduate Center for Inclusive Mentoring

Chair, Faculty Council Scholarship, Research and Graduate Education

Chair, Faculty Council Committee on Teaching and Learning

Director of Assessment

Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness

Director of Education Abroad

Director of Talent Management, Human Resources

Director of Workplace Inclusion and Talent Management

Associate Vice President for Inclusive Excellence

Vice President for Information Technology and CSU System CIO

Vice President for University Advancement

President and CEO of the CSU Foundation

Director of Institutional Research

Director of Assessment - Student Affairs

Educational Support Manager

Director of Learning Production

Director of Workplace Inclusion

Assistant Vice President for DoIT Experience and Collaboration

Director of Academic Technology

Director of Information Systems

Chair and Vice Chair Administrative and Professional Council

Director Financial Aid

Associate Vice President for Student Affairs

Director of Operations and Assessment, Career Center

Senior Student Success Manager

Chair Classified Personnel Council

Open session with faculty - 4 participants including Faculty Council Chair

Open session with Staff - 4 participants

Open session with Students - no participants

Campus Tour

Additional Documents

Fish_Wildlife_Conservation_Biology_-_Program_Review_FY23.pdf

Human_Dimensions_of_Natural_Resources_-_Program_Review_FY23.pdf

Physics_Program_Review_Self_Study_FY23.pdf

Political_Science_Public_Policy_and_Service_Concentration_Program_Proposal.pdf

Psychology_Addictions_Counseling_Concentration_Program_Proposal.pdf

Policy Title: Violence in the University Community

Policy Title: Bullying in the Workplace

Policy Title: Discrimination and Harassment

Policy Title: Policy Title: Retaliation and Whistleblower Protection

Policy Title: Title IX Sexual Harassment

Sites visited

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

<https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/>

<https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/all-university-core-curriculum/aucc/>

<https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/all-university-core-curriculum/aucc/#Fundamental-Competencies>

<https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/colleges/liberal-arts/anthropology-geography/anthropology-major>

<https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/graduate-bulletin/>

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

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

https://green.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2020/02/CSU_Institutional_Learning_Outcomes.pdf

<https://hr.colostate.edu/events/>

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

<https://lib.colostate.edu/about/strategic-plan/>

<https://nces.nsf.gov/surveys/higher-education-research-development/2021#data>

<https://tilt.colostate.edu/events/>

<https://tilt.colostate.edu/faculty/>

<https://tilt.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/TILT-Annual-Report.pdf>

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

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

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 articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference 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 and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The mission of Colorado State University (CSU) reflects its distinct role as the land-grant university of Colorado. The university serves a comprehensive teaching, research, service, and extension mission with an array of bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs, particularly with exclusive authority in areas of interest to the state: agriculture, forestry, natural resources, and veterinary medicine. The mission is delineated in the Constitution of the State of Colorado and the Colorado Revised Statutes. The university keeps the mission statement current by reviewing it within the institutional strategic planning process, and it is reaffirmed by the Board of Governors of the Colorado State University System every five years. Through this process, the university regularly affirms its statutory role and mission.

The mission is articulated publicly and reinforced in various university documents. The mission statement serves as the foundation for these supporting documents, including the values and vision statements, the Principles of Community, and the Land Acknowledgment. The mission and related documents are made public on the CSU System website, within the General Catalog, and on specialized webpages (for example, the Land Acknowledgment webpage). The distinction between Colorado State University System and the Fort Collins campus, as a university within the CSU System, is at times unclear. For example, the university's distinct mission is prominently displayed on the System website but only appears to be publicly available on the university's website within the

General Catalog (seen within the evidence provided). Given that the university has a distinct role and mission within the System, particularly vis-a-vis other System institutions, the university should consider additional places to prominently and publicly display its distinct mission on the university website.

The university has identified crucial methods for ensuring that key aspects of the mission are operationalized within the university and cascaded down from the mission to related documents. For example, the values statement emphasizes the university's comprehensive mission by "supporting excellence in teaching and research" and its land-grant heritage by "provid[ing] opportunity and access." As another example, the evidence provided for the University Policy Office demonstrates that the university's values and its Guiding Principles are directly articulated to its work and responsibilities. The evidence demonstrates that the university has intentionally considered how to bring the mission forward through key supporting documents, statements, and operational structures. This ensures that the university embodies and promotes its mission with conscious intention.

The statutory mission of Colorado State University is clear about the nature and scope of its constituents and services, particularly as a public research university with land-grant heritage that exists first for the benefit of the State of Colorado. The growth in quantity and types of research activity particularly reflect Colorado State University's vision as a 21st century land-grant university. In the Criterion 1 open session during the site visit, attendees thoughtfully connected current activities in community engaged research, large-scale interdisciplinary research, sustainability-related research, and undergraduate research activities as ways that CSU aligns its R1 identity with its land-grant and comprehensive missions.

The university's academic offerings, student support services, and enrollment profile collectively demonstrate that the university continues to operate in a consistency with the mission established by the Colorado General Assembly. The Official List of Colleges, Departments, Degrees, Majors, and Minors shows degree levels that are consistent with a comprehensive research university and a variety of disciplines, particularly with significant programming in Liberal Arts, Health and Human Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Natural Resources (which align with the university's areas of expertise within the Colorado Revised Statutes).

The Principles of Community, which trace back to the mission, vision, and values statements, can also be traced forward to key student support services - for example, those focused on inclusion (needed housing accommodations provided by the Student Disability Center), service (nearly 64,000 leadership or service hours completed by students in 2021-22), and social justice (the DEIJB work of the Lory Student Center and creation of the Rams Against Hunger Food Pantry).

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.B - Core Component 1.B

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

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
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 external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The mission of Colorado State University, a public research university with land-grant heritage that serves the citizens of Colorado, the United States, and the world calls the university to demonstrate a commitment to the public good. The university strategic plan also directs its efforts toward specific priorities that are focused on the public good, including:

- Supporting a university community that strives for shared goals of a sustainable thriving planet and flourishing humanity,
- Pursuing innovative practices in learning, research, discovery, and knowledge transfer that support the university's global leadership for the future,
- Serving as a national model for land-grant universities that translate innovation into impact, and
- Aligning operational and financial practices to support these priorities.

The university's role in public/private partnerships and its contributions to the Fort Collins community and beyond have garnered several recognitions for universities contributing to the public good by the Association of Public Land Grant Universities and the Carnegie Foundation. The university leverages the Continuum of Engaged Scholarship as an organizing framework for research, teaching, and service activities that serve as outreach and engagement to external constituencies for the public good. In the future, the university may consider extending the Continuum of Engaged Scholarship from an organizing framework to also an evaluative framework that helps identify gaps and redirects its considerable external engagement efforts to new areas of focus.

During the comprehensive evaluation visit, particular emphasis was placed on the university's Rural Initiative as a demonstration of its educational role in service to the public. In the Executive Leadership session, the Rural Initiative was framed as a renewed means to deliver the university's land-grant heritage. As a result of concerns that the university was losing ground with Colorado students, the Rural Initiative seeks to increase enrollment and retention of students from each corner

of the state. It also deploys accessible education specialists from the local community to create P-20 educational pathways, support recruitment and outreach, inform students of local scholarships, and connect to them within local organizations like 4-H and Future Farmers of America. The Board of Governors allocated more than \$8.5 million to the Rural Initiative and, in their meeting with the Team, Board members reflected upon the Initiative as a core commitment to being a modern land-grant university, and to place-based learning that deepens the university's connections to the students and communities it serves. The Rural Initiative is just one example of the university's fulsome dedication to engagement and outreach, which was validated in each of its comprehensive areas (teaching, research, service, and extension) throughout the visit.

The university's activities demonstrate that it serves several external constituencies in alignment with its mission. Beneficiaries of its research activities include corporate and industry partners, federal labs and agencies, federal governing bodies (e.g., the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources and the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry), the public (e.g., front-line workers in the COVID-19 pandemic), and the military (e.g., activities of the Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands).

Beneficiaries of its teaching activities include advisory boards and disciplinary organizations (e.g., input during environmental scanning for curriculum development), researchers and practitioners through its external training (e.g., the James L. Voss Veterinary Teaching Hospital), and the public (e.g., the distinctive CSU Spur campus). Beneficiaries of its extension, engagement, and outreach activities include the public (e.g., FEMA training in disaster recovery and emergency management for all Extension agents and lifelong learning programming through CSU Extended Campus).

Together, these activities demonstrate that the university has identified comprehensive efforts that extend the benefits of its educational role to an array of public constituencies.

Colorado State University's ability to cultivate comprehensive activities that serve an array of external constituencies is due, in part, to deep engagements that help bring forward and respond to public needs. The university provides evidence of several longstanding external partnerships that align with its particular statutory mission. For example, the State of Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station oversees eight research centers across the state and supports over 100 research projects in 2022. Cooperative Extension Services has field offices in each of the state's 64 counties to address community issues with science-based resources. All Extension agents now have faculty status, and their efforts are directed by a statewide community needs assessment and county-level program plans. The Warner College of Natural Resources houses and helps staff the Colorado State Forest Service.

The ability for Colorado State University to connect university expertise and resources with community needs is driven, in part, by the longevity of these activities and partnerships, in some cases for over 100 years. In addition to the breadth of the university's external activities, depth is also evidenced, as an example, by collaborations fostered by the Colorado Water Center (CoWC). CoWC cites outreach activities with other university centers, CSU Extension, the Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station, the Colorado State Forest Service, and the Colorado Climate Center in its 2022 Annual Report. This evidence of the university's engagements demonstrates that it seeks to understand and engage in a breadth of community needs and leverages its comprehensive mission to deeply respond to these needs.

Finally, Colorado State University's mission and related activities - including accompanying statements and documents, operating units, and internal and external beneficiaries of its

comprehensive activities - demonstrate that the university primarily upholds its educational purpose over other responsibilities. The university provides several examples of the centrality of education to different types of activities, from the importance of undergraduate education to its research activities (evidenced by its founding role in the national Association for Undergraduate Education at Research Universities) to its support for the remarkable CSU Spur campus in Denver, that, in part, teaches the broader community about food, water, human, and animal health. More broadly, CSU is organized as a public not-for-profit institution, and its IPEDS Finance Survey demonstrates that its core revenues are generated for the university and its contributions to the CSU System. The university's activities, structure, and finances demonstrate that its educational responsibilities are a foundational principle for how the university embodies its mission.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Colorado State University provides a vast array of activities and actions that are focused on preparing students and the university community for a diverse, multicultural society. The university provides comprehensive evidence over the past ten years of efforts to embed diversity within its educational activities, including: teaching and learning, such as the Teaching Effectiveness Framework and the ADVANCE Adaptation Grant and other grant funding; curricular requirements, such as new required diversity and dialogue courses; student supports, such as the First Generation University Initiative, the First Scholars Initiative, and offerings of the CSU Health Network; and training and professional development, such as the Everfi Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion module, Students Empowering & Engaging in Dialogue workshops, and inclusive excellence symposia, institutes, and modules for students, faculty, and staff.

A focus on diversity further extends into university operations as evidenced by the: revision and implementation of codes, policies, and systems, such as the CSU Student Conduct Code, Bias Reporting System, and Pronoun Statement; development of committees and teams, such as the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Caucus in ASCSU; new surveys and plans, such as the Employee Climate Survey, the CSU Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Campus Climate Blueprint, and unit-level diversity plans; and new human and physical resources, such as reorganization of the Office for Inclusive Excellence and a new Assistant Vice President for Indigenous and Native American Affairs role.

The scale of the university's activities and actions extend into curricular and cocurricular activities that prepare students for engagement in globally-connected workplaces and civil society. The university demonstrates that it works to ensure students have sufficient and reliable information about issues of public concern and have the knowledge and skills to make reasonable judgments and decisions about them, from key Institutional Learning Objectives (e.g., reasoning and personal and social responsibility) to specific activities like the Center for Public Deliberations' student training in community conversations and productive dialogue. Key outcomes include the American Civic Collaboration Award, Gold and Platinum Seals for student voter participation in midterm and

presidential elections, increasing student voter registration and voting rates, and high levels of student participation in community service and social, economic, and political events.

Just as the university cites early efforts to prepare students for civic engagement, it also provides evidence of early efforts to cultivate workplace successes for students. These include a continuum of career services from student through alumni status (offered by the CSU Career Center and the Alumni Association), platforms for students to demonstrate experiential learning and scholarly work (for example, through the Office of Undergraduate Research and Artistry and the Multicultural Undergraduate Research Art and Leadership Symposium), and high-impact capstone requirements in every undergraduate major that reflect upon each student's undergraduate education, in part, with a view toward their future goals. Key outcomes include a substantial proportion of undergraduates who completed an internship prior to graduation and secured plans for employment or further education prior to graduation, although lower rates reported by racially minoritized and first-generation undergraduates demonstrate a need for more leading interventions for these populations that can positively impact the lagging indicators of post-graduation employment and education.

To ensure inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations, Colorado State University pursues a multifaceted approach that includes both compliance strategies and active, elective strategies. The active strategies have been evidenced extensively in the form of codes, policies, systems, committees, plans, and initiatives. To add to these fulsome efforts, the university complies with a number of diversity-related rules and regulations. For example, CSU aspires to meet and exceed the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act through its Inclusive Physical and Virtual Campus Policy, and the Supplier Inclusion Program complies with applicable federal regulations through relationships with small and diverse suppliers and businesses. Regular guidance, training, and intervention offered by Human Resources also ensures compliance, at a minimum, with employment regulations. The university demonstrates a recognition of not just the value of serving diverse populations and preparing students to positively contribute to a diverse, multicultural society but also ensuring that the university's processes and operations also positively contribute to advancing our commitment to stewarding an inclusive world.

The university's critical efforts within this core component extend from specific active strategies to promote DEI to nurturing a campus climate that values respect within the university community for diverse ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives. Despite the scale and scope of the university's strategies and activities, in 2010 and every five years thereafter, students have provided the president with demands and recommendations for further action to foster a more inclusive and respectful campus climate. The university cites evidence of the seriousness with which they have regarded these demands and the sense of accountability that brought it to take actions to address several of the student demands/recommendations.

The campus visit validated the substantial DEI-related activities that are taking place at the university. The university's DEI focus is longstanding, and it has built an impressive array of initiatives, plans, committees, and investments. During the visit, the Team heard of several areas of growth and opportunity for the university in its DEI priorities, including the need to create consistent departmental practices that decrease feelings of exclusion, continue disaggregating data to deepen focus on populations whose outcomes necessitate greater focus and support, and understand the role of culture and climate (not just cost of living, for example) on employee recruitment and retention.

Most important, perhaps, the university should continue to grant attention to the recommendation from the Year 4 Assurance Review to measure the effectiveness and impact of its DEI considerable efforts. Particular areas of focus may include: frameworks to intentionally design and connect vast

efforts, similar to the value of the Continuum of Engaged Scholarship to organize external outreach and engagement; and ensuring that the goals in the CSU Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Campus Climate Blueprint drive a core selection of deep, targeted efforts; and developing an evaluation plan that helps the university deeply invest in what is working and courageously discontinue what is not. In addition, CSU is striving for structural change that does not over-rely on the labor of diverse populations (as in the First Generation University Initiative) and builds more systematic, campus-wide engagement outside of the populations that tend to self-select into DEI initiatives and trainings. It is continuing to create clear channels for communication and collaboration that may transform the current practice of demands from student and community members.

Recommendations to evaluate the quality and outcomes of diversity-related activities may also instill confidence that collective efforts are focused on a shared perspective of what matters most to the university mission, priorities, and issues of concern to the communities it serves.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Rationale

The mission of Colorado State University is foundational to its educational activities, services, operations, and resource allocation. The mission is regularly reviewed and affirmed, it is shared publicly in mission and related statements, and it clearly identifies who the institution serves and how. The Assurance Argument and comprehensive evaluation visit both validated the broad recognition of the university's educational role in service to the public and how university and system leaders, employees, and others embody the mission in ways that are reflective of a large, comprehensive university.

Amidst external pressures (for example, the demographic cliff, decreased state funding, and increased cost of living in the Fort Collins area), it is important that the university builds a clear path through these pressures by remaining steadfast in the mission and identity: land grant, comprehensive, service to the state and beyond, and commitments to student success and DEI. Members of the Colorado State University community authentically embrace these institutional identities in compelling ways, and remaining steadfast within them can help carry the university through this transitional period.

An area of opportunity for the future is for the university to connect its array of DEI efforts into a clear and connected constellation of activities. Having greater clarity about the desired outcomes and an evaluation plan that measures how current activities lead to these desired outcomes can allow the university to deepen its focus and investment in what is working and then deliver it systematically and at scale.

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 establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The university draws on several sources to guide the integrity of its daily operations, and to create an environment that is fair and just to its various constituencies. As a member of the Colorado State University system, the university adheres to the guidelines established by federal and state legislation, CSU system governance, and university policies and statements that guide the philosophical and operational direction of the university. The CSU Principles of Community developed in 2015 emphasize integrity and inclusivity. These values are operationalized by a robust infrastructure that makes policy information readily available. Adherence to policy is supported through well-established training and review systems, along with mechanisms for accountability.

The University Policy Office provides a repository for members of the CSU campus to locate policies pertaining to the institution, the CSU system or the Board of Governors. All institutional policies, manuals and guides, and policy by subject matter are linked on the office's website. In addition, the office offers resources on how to develop and propose new policies. Policy renewal is expected on a 1 to 3 year cycle. An expansive Human Resources manual references the policy library and contains information on employment matters. Additional university, system and employee material is found in the Academic Faculty and Administrative Professionals Manual that includes information on academic and legal matters, institutional governance and employment provisions. An Agendas and Minutes link (referenced in 2.B) provides transparency in operations by displaying records on standing university committees. IPEDS financial information is reported annually.

Of note is the vice president for operations and chief financial officer's efforts to create transparency in the financial operations of the university. The VP/CFO shared information on the deployment of a series of financial forums offered across campus, that were live streamed and open to all. Revenue and expenditure information was shared at these sessions. Follow-up sessions offered the campus community insights into the particulars of revenue and expenditures of colleges and divisions. Those

attending various on-campus sessions expressed appreciation for the openness involved in sharing insights into, and details of, the university's financial profile and operations.

Fairness in opportunity for employment is exemplified by efforts made through the Affirmative Action plan which is updated annually. The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (OEO) represents these efforts through an infographic of hiring goals, and progress towards achieving set goals. OEO works closely with Human Resources and university departments throughout the hiring process. Hiring managers present in the Criterion 2 session affirmed that the OEO provides welcomed support for compliance in, and encouragement of, diverse talent recruitment, part of the "People and Culture" goal in the CSU strategic plan.

The Colorado State University Financial Rules publication provides general principles and procedures for the financial operations of the institution. Budget controls and oversight come from various sources. Rules and financial resources are clearly listed on the Business and Financial Services website. The Quali Financial software for which CSU was a design partner provides guides, forms and training resources on financial transactions, while also creating audit trails. Faculty input on elements of the budget comes from the Faculty Council Committee on Strategic and Financial Planning, as confirmed in a campus session. Regular audits are performed under the auspices of the CSU system. An Audit and Finance Committee is one of five standing committees in the CSU system Board of Governors. The Board reviews budget requests, audit findings and overall institutional financial performance. Auxiliary enterprises are audited annually, and a review of FY 23 Q3 statements shows a return to financial health, post-pandemic.

Conditions for a safe and respectful workplace are established through policies reviewed on topics such as violence in the university community, bullying in the workplace, discrimination and harassment, retaliation and whistleblower protection, and Title IX sexual harassment. The legal foundation, compliance statements and reporting directions were explicit in these policies. Expectations for student comportment are defined in the Student Code of Conduct, which offers strictures for individuals and student organizations, including Title IX guidance. Compliance with regulations is met through various reporting mechanisms, as outlined in the student code and the Academic and Legal Matters section of the faculty manual. The CSU System Compliance Reporting Hotline allows for communicating financial, safety or other concerns. The Student Complaint Policy directs students to the appropriate campus resources for resolving concerns. Student concerns are reviewed annually to ascertain if there are patterns in the issues reported. A 2020 investigation report recommended a special student-athlete reporting mechanism be set up, which has been achieved as confirmed by a Criterion 2 session attendee.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Transparency and a well-developed system of information sharing are exemplified by the many ways that CSU presents policy and data to its students and the public. The General Catalogue provides information to prospective students and families on information including advising, registration, degree requirements and institutional accreditation. More accreditation information is available through the catalogue's link to CSU's schedule and comprehensive list of program accreditations.

CSU's Consumer Information and Disclosures website contains a wide range of information for current and prospective students, including a link to transfer credit guides and financial aid, and the most recent federally mandated safety reports. A cost of attendance calculator available online provides a sense of educational expenses, and a net price calculator gives students and families an estimate of financial aid allocations. A Career Center team member outlined the efforts that lead to the publication of salary and post-graduation plans by college and majors in the First Destinations report.

As noted in the information section of the argument, CSU has made noteworthy investment in providing a campus-wide mechanism for collecting and displaying faculty credentials. This challenge has been met since the 2013 evaluation report. Human Resources has overseen this process, resulting in a publicly available link to credentials, updated each year.

CSU's evidence of supporting its commitment to land-grant priorities of research, extension and access was frequently articulated throughout the campus visit. A record \$498 million in FY 23 expenditures are a testament to the research productivity of CSU. The quality of community engagement was validated by receiving a 2015 Carnegie Community Engagement reclassification (Criterion 1B). The information section of the argument notes that CSU is a Top 25 institution for producing Peace Corps volunteers. An \$8.58 million investment in 2021 by the Board of Governors provided CSU with the means to have an increased presence in rural communities for access to education, healthcare, economic development and thriving communities initiatives, a testament to the impacts of extension.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

Rating

Met

Rationale

As stipulated by the state constitution, Colorado grants control of the CSU system to the CSU Board of Governors. The Board of Governors delegates to the President of CSU-Ft. Collins the authority over institutional hiring decisions, salary and other personnel decisions as stipulated in section B.1.4 of the Faculty and Administrative Professionals Handbook. The president's authority is further delegated to other officers of the university, as stated in both the faculty handbook, and the bylaws for the board.

The CSU Board of Governors is appointed by the Governor of Colorado for 4-year terms and may serve two terms. Members are provided onboarding at the time of appointment. The Board of Governors Bylaws document contains a section on conflict of interest. Several directives on financial accountability and oversight are presented in the Board of Governors policies and procedures. Another example of financial controls is the designation of the CSU Foundation and as a private, not-for-profit corporation. The STRATA group which has oversight of real estate and other assets of the institution, is also classified as a private, not-for-profit group.

Board members meet on a quarterly basis at various system campuses. Members of the board chair the five standing committees, including executive, audit, governance, investment and compensation. Board members hear from a variety of voices from the campus including reports from alumni, advancement and athletics. Campus meetings conveyed some of the ways in which the Board and CSU community exchange information about issues of interest. A faculty member confirmed that both a faculty and student advisory representative provide input to the board. The assistant vice president for student success will present the Board with information on the student success quality initiative at an upcoming meeting. Board members shared that the CSU Chancellor is a frequent point of contact for updates and interactions regarding CSU-Fort Collins.

The Board of Governors expresses and demonstrates dedication to the success and future of CSU. A review of the May 2023 Board Book reported recent involvement of board members in external matters at the state and federal level, as well as consideration of internal matters such as leave policy and tuition rates. Board members meeting with the review team conveyed strong support for the land-grant mission of CSU. Members were instrumental in the hiring process of the new president. A firm commitment to educational access through affordability, and a transformational presence in both rural and metropolitan areas are among the pledges the Board makes as it determines to invest in the success of communities and the future of the citizens of Colorado.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

CSU demonstrates commitment to academic freedom and freedom of expression in teaching and learning in its statements of principles as well as the documents and programs designed to protect and promote these rights. A statement on the importance of academic freedom is prominent in the preface of the faculty manual. Section E.8 of the faculty manual outlines concepts regarding faculty free speech in teaching and research. This section is referenced in an April 2022 Faculty Council resolution calling for protections in K-12 education, that declares the main purpose of university administration as being the protection of academic freedom. Participants in the open faculty session noted that CSU has a long history of supporting academic freedom.

In alignment with SB17-062 (2017), to equip students with an understanding of the First Amendment and free speech, a Talk, Talk, Talk guide was included as an insert in the school newspaper at the beginning of the fall 2022 semester. Students may enroll in a Freedom of Speech course that has been offered since 1999. Staff members at a Student Support session shared that the Student Resolution Center convenes a campus First Amendment Committee which involves faculty, students and staff representatives. Panel presentations, campus signage and events related to the thematic year topic of Democracy and Civic Engagement were offered as examples of informing students and others of rights and responsibilities regarding freedom of expression during the visit.

The rights of others to express themselves on campus is stated in the Student Conduct Code. A statement on students' rights in the 2023-2024 catalog describes freedom in inquiry and discussion as an essential element of learning. Freedom of expression is mentioned in the Principles of Community which are standard on the CSU syllabus template. Participants in the Student Support campus session mentioned the ways in which the Office of Inclusive Excellence provides support and guidance for expressing student activism.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Rating

Met

Rationale

As a Research 1 institution, Colorado State University has an expansive system in place to support compliance and accountability in its research endeavors. Under the leadership of the vice president for research, a framework of offices, boards, committees and other resources provides the guidance for compliance and standards of conduct in academic pursuits. Recent investments have begun the efforts to lift the burden of compliance for faculty researchers.

An example of institutional supports is the Office of Research Collaboration and Compliance (ORCC) that focuses on research safety, security and animal care. The International Animal Care and Use Committee has oversight of CSU's Animal Care and Use Program and regulates animal welfare in research. The quality of animal research facilities and other factors garnered full AAALAC reaccreditation in 2021.

The Institutional Biosafety Committee represents another arm of the ORCC. An agenda from argument materials showed discussion on the committee's role in oversight of projects that contain potentially hazardous biological agents. Safety and security in classified research is led by the office of Secure and Global Research, which provides management of Controlled Unclassified Information and export controls.

The Institutional Review Board acts as part of CSU's Human Research Protection Program. The IRB provides templates, worksheets, and guidance documents for researchers. Training programs include the online CITI program, as well as clinical practice training. Separate structures exist for biomedical research proposals, renewal and training.

Technology is utilized to ensure compliance with financial and research regulations through Quali Financials and Quali Research software platforms referenced in Criterion 2.A. All CSU faculty and Administrative Professionals are expected to complete a conflict of interest annually to provide transparency in employee research and business dealings.

The Office of Sponsored programs works to review, approve and submit research proposals. With the renewed preeminence of research in CSU's 2022-2026 strategic plan, additional support for staffing and support to further the efforts of Sponsored Programs is a need reported by faculty researchers to manage an ever-increasing volume of proposals.

Students are provided with resources in the guidance of research pursuits through the list of courses found on the Office of Research Integrity's website. All undergraduate and graduate research trainees are required to take the ORI's research integrity training. Academic Misconduct information is available to students through the Student Conduct Code. CSU's Honor Pledge is listed on all course syllabi, and the Honor Pledge policy stipulates that instructors outline elements of academic integrity in classwork. Expectations for adhering to the academic integrity policy and link to the Student Code of Conduct are written into each syllabus (Criterion 2A). The Institute for Learning and Teaching provides Academic Honesty and Integrity resources for students and faculty, including recommendations for syllabus academic integrity statements. A participant at the Student Support open session shared how the Student Resolution Center provides academic misconduct workshops, most recently on the topic of artificial intelligence language processors.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Rationale

The institution meets the obligations to provide the information and infrastructure that guide ethical and responsible actions. The transparency with which prospective students and families may access information regarding admissions, academic programs, financial support and safety is readily displayed in publications and online, as exemplified by the Consumer Information and Disclosures website.

Investment has been made in the resources dedicated to the responsible acquisition of research and scholarly practice, as evidenced by the expansion of supports and services through the Office of the Vice President for Research. The Office of the Vice President for Human Resources provides operations resources in matters related to personnel. Areas such as The Institute for Learning and Teaching (TILT) provide ample assets to student and faculty in understanding and communicating academic integrity.

The Office of Equal Opportunity works with campus departments to promote compliance and also a more representative talent pool by assisting in the hiring process. The VP for Operations/CFO oversees units that provide financial compliance through policy, training and audit coordination. Of particular note is the VPO/CFO's initiative to provide the campus community with insights into the financial picture of CSU through open forums on revenue and expenditures. These are all commendable actions. Through conversation with campus members, the hope that additional investment in human resources (software and personnel), and research (Office of Sponsored Programs/Colleges for personnel) will emerge, and that participation in budget model formulation will be participatory.

CSU demonstrates exemplary efforts in its research performance, and lives its land-grant mission in a commitment to access and extension that was expressed frequently on campus and substantiated by the investments that have been made in student success and extension. These achievements are realized in part through the strong foundation offered by transparent resources such as the Office of Policy. An atmosphere conducive to academic freedom and freedom of expression are supported by areas such as the Student Resolution Center and the Office of Inclusive Excellence at CSU, and is championed by Faculty Council among others. All of these efforts demonstrate an institutional commitment to integrity and ethical conduct.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

CSU has well established policies and procedures to guide curriculum development. The Curriculum Policy and Procedures handbook (and additional handbooks for certificates, graduate, and professional programs) provided as evidence, outlines requirements for programs and courses. Faculty drive the development and review of programs and courses, as evidenced by the 2022 annual report of the University Curriculum Committee. The new Academic Master Plan guides the direction of curriculum and program offerings. Program proposals provided in the addendum for a new major in Psychology, Addictions Counseling Concentration and new major in Political Science, Public Policy and Service Concentration demonstrate that the curriculum processes are followed and that justifications for programs, levels, and outcomes are provided for new programs.

In addition to their internal curriculum processes, during on-campus discussions it was confirmed that advisory boards and specialized accreditations are also used to ensure that programs are current and appropriate for their levels. Aligned with the new strategic plan, the institution is looking to expand their interdisciplinary offerings at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. During the site visit, faculty and staff acknowledged that some of their traditional structures and processes would need to be revisited to successfully grow interdisciplinary programs.

As a comprehensive research university, CSU offers bachelor's, certificate, master's and doctoral programs. As evidenced in the general catalog, graduate and professional bulletin and program websites, CSU follows standard practices of requiring 120 credits minimum for bachelor's degrees, 30 credits post-baccalaureate for master's degrees, and 72 credits post-baccalaureate for doctoral degrees.

Program learning outcomes are included in the proposals for new programs. A review of the General Catalog confirmed that learning outcomes are included for bachelor's degree programs. As evidence, the Anthropology program has identified five learning outcomes for its program, including these two: "Employ anthropological theory and qualitative/quantitative research methods to describe and analyze human biological and cultural variation over time and across space" and "Synthesize anthropological theory, methods, and data to formulate arguments both orally and in written format."

The graduate and professional bulletin outlines the standard requirements and expectations of graduate programs (including differentiating between professional and research-based master programs). While not readily available online, section "2B Program Quality" of academic program review templates in the addendum for the departments of Fish, Wildlife & Conservation Biology and Human Dimensions of Natural Resources provide evidence that program outcomes are identified for master, doctoral and certificate programs. It was confirmed during the site visit that the institution is working towards a more robust development of outcomes at the graduate level. It was also confirmed on campus that syllabi contain course learning outcomes.

The program and course proposal forms indicate both the modality of instruction and course outcomes. Discussions with staff from CSU Online and with the chair of the University Curriculum Committee during the visit confirmed that outcomes expectations for courses and programs are the same across modalities. CSU Online provides a very structured process for developing online courses that includes consultation with an instructional designer and a Quality Matters review. Development of an online program includes a very structured review process that includes a market analysis and enrollment projections to ensure the viability of new on-line programs. During the site visit, it was raised that there is not always consistency on the implementation of funding models, support and even intellectual property rights for faculty, depending on how online courses are developed and administered. As CSU continues to explore the expansion of online learning, a holistic review of all online processes, funding models and support structures across CSU Online, online courses offered as Resident Instruction, and CSU Global would be beneficial.

Faculty employ a variety of strategies to ensure the quality and outcomes of online courses aligns with face-to-face courses. The section *2C Modality and Location* of program review documentation requires departments to "*Describe the unit's incorporation of online and/or hybrid instructional delivery including the extent to which they are present, how active and engaged learning is promoted, and provide evidence of equivalent student learning (outcomes and attainment) as compared to traditional face-to-face experiences. Do the same for instructional activity delivered off of main campus at an additional site location.*" The program review documentation for the department of Human Dimensions of Natural Resources provides evidence of department employing strategies to ensure the quality of their online Natural Resources Tourism - Tourism concentration degree program.

CSU teaches high school students through dual enrollment and concurrent programs, that are governed by Memoranda of Agreements and state code. High school students are enrolled in regular sections of courses with other CSU students, ensuring outcomes and learning experiences are equivalent to regular CSU undergraduate students.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. 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. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The General Education program, All University Core Curriculum (AUCC) at CSU is based on the AACU essential learning outcomes framework and follows the expectations set out by the Colorado Department of Higher Education in the GT Pathway. The AUCC has the following components:

- Fundamental competencies – 1A – intermediate writing, 1B – quantitative reasoning, 1C – diversity equity and inclusion, 2 – advanced writing
- Foundations and perspectives – 3A – biological/physical science, 3B – arts/humanities, 3C -social and behavioral science, 3D – historical perspective
- Depth, application, and integration – at least 2 courses and at least 5 credits - 4A – applying fundamental competencies, 4B – integrating foundations and perspectives, 4C – capstone experience

To complement the General Education program, the institution has developed Institutional learning objectives (creativity, reasoning, communication, responsibility, and collaboration). Evidence provided with the assurance argument included a document that maps Institutional Learning Outcomes (and associated knowledge domains) with the AUCC components.

The general catalog documents that the AUCC meets the expectations of the state and the university for general education. As stated in the catalog "*The AUCC promotes the acquisition and effective practice of essential competencies within areas of learning stipulated by the state of Colorado. These include math, writing, arts and humanities, social sciences, and history. Courses approved for*

inclusion in the AUCC at CSU collectively satisfy all of the requirements of the state with regard to subject area and guaranteed transfer agreement (GT Pathways) content, competencies, and student learning outcomes. Essential competencies include the ability to write clearly, speak effectively, recognize diverse perspectives, understand and apply quantitative reasoning, make sense of abstract ideas, reason analytically, and read critically." A review of the catalog confirmed that undergraduate programs incorporate the AUCC. For example, the courses used to meet the AUCC are clearly visible on the "Requirements" and "Curriculum Map" tabs of the catalog for the "Anthropology" program.

Component 1C of the AUCC is a three-credit course requirement for "Diversity, equity and inclusion" as a Foundational Competency of the general education program. Faculty confirmed on-campus that this relatively new requirement was added based on feedback from students and a diligent review process by the faculty. The 2023-24 General Catalog lists 32 courses students can choose from to meet this requirement. The core student learning outcome for this component has been stated as to "*Make connections between the world-views, power structures, and experiences of individuals, groups, communities, or cultures, in historical or contemporary contexts*". In addition to the general education requirement, the institution supports the diversity, equity, and inclusion experiences for students in a variety of ways, including faculty participation in inclusive pedagogy experiences offered by The Institute for Learning and Teaching, and numerous programming initiatives offered through the Division of Student Affairs and the Office of Inclusive Excellence.

As an R1 institution, research and scholarly pursuits by the institution/faculty is core to CSU's mission. CSU faculty are engaged in significant research and scholarly efforts. In the 2021 NSF HERD survey, Colorado State ranked 61st in the country for research expenditures. During the site visit, the University shared that their research expenditures for the most recent year were \$498 Million. As documented in the Graduate and Professional Bulletin, graduate students are engaged in research and scholarly activities as a part of their educational experience through their research, theses, and dissertations. During discussion on-campus, faculty and staff confirmed that undergraduate student research was happening across campus; however, information about those experiences is not always captured in a systematic way.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. 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, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.
3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.
4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
5. 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.
6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

Rating

Met

Rationale

CSU is proactively working towards having its faculty and staff diversity reflect the diversity of its student body. As documented in the institutional Fact Book, over the past decade the university has increased the percentage of employees identifying as racially minoritized and percentage of tenure and tenure-eligible faculty members who are female. Discussions on campus highlighted the efforts of the institution's NSF Advance program that aims to increase the diversity of faculty.

As noted in Criterion 3A, faculty are engaged in all aspects of curriculum development and approval. The faculty to student ratios at each level provide sufficient faculty for the educational needs of the students. Not uncommon for R1 institutions, CSU has seen a trend towards having more non-tenure eligible faculty members. The institution's online Fact Book documents that the percentage of faculty members who were tenured/tenure-eligible dropped from 61% in 2014 to 56% in 2023. The undergraduate student credit hours taught by tenured/tenure-eligible faculty has declined from 36% in FY15 to 26% in FY23. During on-campus discussions, concerns were raised about whether in some departments the decrease in the percentage of tenured/tenure-eligible faculty might be negatively impacting the academic programs or having impacts on graduate education.

The University has policies that allow non-tenure-eligible faculty members to advance in rank and have contract lengths of up to 5 years. These provide a level of continuity for non-tenure-eligible

faculty members. Data provided with the assurance argument, reveal that typically 80% of tenured/tenure-eligible faculty members are retained at CSU six years after hire. In discussions on campus, there were concerns raised about the institution's on-going ability to recruit and retain faculty due to salary budget constraints and the high cost of living in the Fort Collins area.

As outlined in Academic Faculty and Administrative Professional Manual, faculty members are involved in evaluating faculty hires to ensure faculty members have the appropriate qualifications. All faculty are hired through the same process; there are no special hiring procedures for faculty teaching online and/or students in dual credit. 97% of tenured/tenure-eligible faculty members have a terminal degree. Since the HLC 4-year assurance review, CSU has established a centralized repository of faculty credentials and disciplines. The data are publicly available from <https://www.ir.colostate.edu/data-reports/employees/>. Discussions during the site visit clarified that the vetting of qualifications for non-faculty staff who teach is handled by the course offering department. Similarly, the responsibility of ensuring that a specific faculty member is qualified to teach a specific course happens at the department/program level.

The Academic Faculty and Administrative Professional Manual outlines the regular review process (section C.2.5) and promotion and post-tenure review (section E). As provided in evidence, summary reports of those evaluations go to the Board. Per the manual, the annual review should be based on "quantitative and qualitative assessments." Tenured faculty members in the department weigh in on the non-tenure eligible faculty reviews which inform reappointments (section C.2.5). In addition to the formal review processes, faculty receive feedback from students through a mandatory course survey used for all sections of courses.

Faculty stay current with their discipline through a variety of methods, including through their research and engagement with professional organizations. As evidenced by its online calendar and the "For Faculty" tab on its website, The Institute for Learning and Teaching (TILT) provides an array of teaching and learning professional development opportunities for faculty and instructors. The significant level of faculty engagement with TILT offerings was confirmed during the site visit. The University also has a strong sabbatical program that is used to support faculty professional development.

The expectation that faculty members are accessible for their students is outlined in E.5.3 of the Academic Faculty and Administrative Professional Manual. Compared to their Large Land Grant peer group in the National Survey for Student Engagement, students at CSU reported an above average satisfaction with the "Quality of interactions" with faculty, academic advising, and student services. Hiring policies and practices ensure that staff meet the advertised experience and qualifications needed for the position.

Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development. The University provided examples of professional development opportunities available for staff members, including monthly meetings for academic advisors and student success coordinators. The calendar on the Human Resources website provides evidence of employee/staff development opportunities, such as a September 21, 2023 webinar on Effective Communication.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and resources for 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 offerings 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 and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

Rating

Met

Rationale

The Division of Student Affairs provides a breadth of services to support students in areas such as health, case management and basic needs. CSU recently reorganized its support structures, to move eight student diversity programs and centers from Student Affairs to the Office of Inclusive Excellence. Recognizing that 1 in 5 of their undergraduate students is a first-generation college student, CSU has a First-Generation University Initiative that engages faculty and staff from across campus. The assurance argument stated that a new position is being added in fall 2023 to support first generation students. The university this fall opened a new Adult Learners and Veteran's Center in the Lory Student Center. CSU is also embarking on a new transfer partnership initiative with community colleges looking for ways to improve the transfer student articulation process and transfer student experience. The Academic Advancement Center supports the needs of "institutionally minoritized students," through TRIO programs.

The HLC Student Survey included some comments/issues from students with disabilities. Discussions during the site visit confirmed that while the campus meets all legal accessibility requirements, that as an institution with several historic buildings the institution has room to continue to improve to make the campus welcoming to individuals with physical accessibility issues. During the site visit, staff also indicated that they are struggling to keep up with the growing needs for students with learning disabilities and neuro-divergent students. To address their ability to meet growing student needs for time intensive student interactions, such as 1:1 financial aid counseling, key student facing offices such as the Registrar and Financial Aid that have cyclic workloads are collaborating to establish a One Stop service center. The One Stop will use cross-trained staff to better meet student demands during the differing peak times.

The expanding need to provide support to graduate students was raised during the site visit. Offices such as career services, student legal services, and others confirmed that graduate and professional students do use many of the central support services. In addition, in the focused Graduate Student

meeting, specific initiatives and supports for graduate students were mentioned. These include the Graduate Student Council (GSC), which recently advocated for pay raise, fee reduction, and benefits for TA's and GA's. The GSC has worked with the Associated Students of CSU to gain funding for social activities. Other examples of support include professional travel funds, graduate student specific student organizations, and faculty and peer mentoring. Professional development opportunities are offered by the Graduate College; and the graduate student showcase provides space for students to display research works of creativity and entrepreneurship. The site visit also revealed that there is work to be done on supporting post-docs who are classified as employees, not students, but have some of the same needs as graduate students.

CSU has course placement policies and processes for core subjects, such as Mathematics and English. The university provides developmental course opportunities and support for students as needed. In addition to supporting faculty, TILT coordinates undergraduate student academic support. TILT provides tutoring, group learning sessions, academic success workshops, and study skill resources. TILT also facilitates the Learning Assistant Program, where trained peer educators are embedded into large classes to facilitate active learning. The 2022-23 TILT annual report provides evidence of student engagement and success with TILT initiatives. TILT is a highly visible and respected unit on campus.

CSU has an Academic Advising Strategic Plan to guide the success of undergraduate academic advising. Between academic advisors and success coordinators, the average student caseload is 240 which is reasonable for an R1 institution. Graduate students are assigned a faculty advisor and, with the exception of non-thesis/dissertation programs, most students have a committee of faculty members to guide their program.

As a large research institution, CSU has an extensive list of infrastructure and resources to support the teaching and learning mission of the university. Information Technology has a strategic plan to guide its operation. The University has a technology student fees to support student needs. Distribution of that revenue is guided by a committee that includes student representation from each college. The institution has two physical libraries (Morgan Library and the Veterinary Teaching Library), in addition to providing online access to resources. The library strategic plan progress (available online) provides specific examples of actions being taken to provide resources to meet student and faculty needs and advance information literacy and lifelong learning. The Library Homepage has an "Off-Campus Access" tab to easily connect online learners with information to meet their needs. Laboratories, studio spaces, and off-site learning spaces are all available to meet the varied curricular needs of CSU's academic programs. The most significant current capital project for CSU is a new Veterinary Teaching Hospital. CSU, through Collaboration Campuses, additional locations, and via extension offices, provides learning spaces throughout the state.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Rationale

CSU provides undergraduate, graduate and professional programs that align with its status as an R1, land grant institution. It has extensive policies and procedures in place to ensure program quality, consistency of outcomes, and faculty engagement opportunities are comparable for all modalities and locations of instruction.

The University provides a broad range of services to meet the needs of all students and continues to monitor and implement innovative solutions to meet expanding needs. A more comprehensive review of graduate student needs and services could benefit the university, as it works to serve that student population, and is clearly aligned with the roles of graduate students in a strong research university.

CSU has articulated a desire to increase interdisciplinary programs. CSU as a system has online offerings at CSU Global (a separate entity), CSU online and online courses offered as Resident Instruction, which are all handled differently. As CSU continues to expand both interdisciplinary programs and online programs, it could benefit from review of institutional structures, policies, and processes to identify any changes that might benefit these expansion efforts and support their success and sustainability.

Recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty is an institutional priority. Fiscal constraints have led to a trend of increasing numbers/percentage of non-tenure faculty members. These percentages vary dramatically by department and college. The Team would encourage an institutional discussion/review of the balance of tenured/tenure-eligible and non-tenure faculty, considering any potential impacts on the institution's ability to fulfill its academic mission in way that aligns with its values and priorities.

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 ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
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 ensure 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 ensures 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 ensures that the credentials 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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

CSU has a policy that all Academic Programs are reviewed at least once every seven years. Each year a schedule of upcoming reviews is submitted to the board for review and approval. The schedule was presented as evidence and is available online. The Team asked for samples of recent Academic Program Reviews (APR) that were subsequently provided as supplemental material. The APRs were detailed and clearly addressed progress made since the previous review. During the site visit, the team was able to confirm that documentation for APRs were stored for the past several years in the Anthology system and that those reviews were following the standard template/topics the institution has established for reviews. The APR is summarized in an annual report to the board that outlines actions to be taken by the unit under review. This suggest that the review recommendations are followed up on as described above. The summaries sent to the CSU board from FY23 were presented as evidence. The Division of Student Affairs also conducts a review every five years. The Career

Service unit was recently reviewed and was submitted to demonstrate the components of such a review that all appeared appropriate.

CSU is in the process of fully adopting a cloud-based repository system, Anthology, for its program reviews that will assist with compliance in this area. This system was also demonstrated at the on site visit and provides a template that units can use for their reports. The system is still being fully implemented and CSU is encouraged to continue the full use of the system in future years.

CSU has clear transfer policies stated in their General Catalog and on the Web. Courses older than ten years are reviewed by the academic unit. The policies seem standard for the typical transfer process. During the site visit, it was confirmed that decisions on transferrability of courses are made by faculty members in the discipline. CSU uses an online system to facilitate students understanding of the course transfer process. The statewide site and CSU's Transferology web-based system were presented as evidence and covers all types of course transfer offered by many institutions. The courses in the general education that meet the state GT requirements are transferrable across all public higher education institutions in the state.

CSU has a University Curriculum Committee (UCC) that reviews and approves all prerequisites. Curricula and learning outcomes are developed by the faculty in academic units. The curricula policies were provided as evidence, as were minutes from a recent UCC meeting. As also mentioned in Criterion 3A, there are no CSU courses delivered face-to-face in high schools. Students are enrolled in courses with other CSU students so that course rigor, learning outcomes, and faculty qualifications are identical for all students enrolled in the course. Agreements are in place with multiple school districts in Colorado. A list of agreements is provided as evidence.

CSU confirmed during the site visit that the institution maintains 34 specialized accreditations. The schedule of accreditations that is available online does not have more than 20 programs listed. We would suggest that CSU maintain a complete and updated list of specialized accreditations online in future years.

Student success post graduation is summarized in the "First Destination and Satisfaction" report from 2021- 2022, which was provided as evidence that student success is tracked beyond graduation. During the site visit, career services staff provided details on the three-step process that includes data from institutional surveys and the use of institutionally validated data scraped from LinkedIn by a third-party contractor. The institution attempts to gather outcomes data from as many graduates as possible. The Colorado Department of Higher Education also maintains a public facing dashboard by Institution and Program that was also presented as evidence that student success is effectively tracked.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Institutional learning objectives are in place and were finalized in 2020 and provided as evidence. They provide a clear framework for assessing the curricular and co-curricular outcomes. The institutional learning outcomes scaffold to program level and course level learning outcomes, and align with learning outcomes in the Division of Student Affairs.

Assessment of learning outcomes within academic affairs is decentralized and managed at the instructor and department level. CSU has added staff centrally to support those local efforts and The Institute for Learning and Teaching provides programming to assist faculty in understanding the development and assessment of learning outcomes. CSU continues to work to develop stronger assessment of learning outcomes. It shared examples of pockets of excellence and also areas for growth. At several points during the site visit it was stated that learning objectives and assessment of outcomes for graduate programs are less well developed but are being worked upon. CSU is encouraged to continue to explore aspects of graduate student assessment and learning outcomes so that it can be better explained in a future review of the institution.

CSU has an All-University Core Curriculum (AUCC) for general education that was submitted as evidence. It follows many principles laid out by the AACU and dictated by the Colorado Department of Higher Education and appears appropriate for a general education core. Course learning outcomes are submitted for approval following a detailed process in the policy handbook. The institution is in the early stages of identifying how to assess in a systematic way the general education, and recently adopted institutional learning outcomes. Two assessment initiatives for the AUCC, one for assessing AUCC 3B-3D that focuses on enhancing assignments to help students build oral and written communication skills while learning disciplinary content and another that will focus on AUCC 1C Diversity Equity and Inclusion are both beginning in Fall 2023.

In 2019, the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) adopted learning domains to help students understand that learning is initiated and reinforced in co-curricular spaces. During the site visit, staff provided examples of how direct, indirect, quantitative and qualitative assessment are used in

assessment of co-curricular activities. An example of using results from CIRP survey data to then dive deeper into understanding the student experience and what gets in the way of success and achieving learning outcomes using focus groups, was shared during the site visit. Annual reports from DSA units all include assessment information and action plans for at least one learning outcome. Staff shared that while they are making progress, there is still work for them to be able to measure the impact on learning outcomes for many institutional DEI initiatives.

Several hires in 2018 and 2020 have assisted institutional leadership with assessment. In 2022 a director of assessment was hired. This shows institutional commitment to the assessment exercise. During the site visit, staff explained how the assessment directors in academic affairs and student affairs collaborate on assessment activities. A document summarizing plans for assessment for FY 24 was provided, showing how CSU is continuing to plan for this important process. It is important that CSU continues its efforts in this area. A student guide to taking pre-calculus was provided as evidence to demonstrate how adaptive learning is applied to a course at CSU.

Departments and colleges use assessment results and student success data to inform changes in curriculum and academic support. The engineering education initiative together with their first four weeks initiative and the College of Liberal Arts' student success discussion kit were submitted as examples.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve 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, 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

Rationale

The university has been working hard to improve its goals in retention. CSU was a finalist for the APLU Degree Completion Project and a news report highlighting this accomplishment was presented as evidence. During the site visit, the institution shared that their most recent data show that their first-year retention had increased by over one percentage point. They attributed this at least partially to their recent focused efforts on student success. CSU has wide range of student success initiatives, in academic affairs, student affairs, and under the diversity, equity and inclusion offices. As an example, CSU obtained a McNair Scholars program grant to help with the retention process.

The office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness provides institutional faculty, staff and students access to a wide array of undergraduate student success data. The data can be disaggregated such as by college, major, demographics. These data are used to inform where to focus efforts and to track progress. A demonstration of the student success dashboards was provided during the site visit for team members. Student success parameters are reported to the Board; an example of the 2022 report was submitted as evidence.

Student Success was the focus of CSUs successful Quality Initiative and the report was submitted as evidence. The QI was a very broad-based, institutional effort to improve undergraduate student success for retention and graduation rates and included specific targets. The Board of Governors dedicated \$9M (over three years) in one-time money to support these student success initiatives. These funds have been used across campus to support projects that based on data and research will have impact on student success and professional development of staff to support student success. Assessment of success of these efforts uses both leading and lagging indicators. Faculty are integrally

involved in these success initiatives, co-leading the implementation teams. Leadership has identified at least \$1M that in permanent budget funding to continue these efforts when the one-time funds end. The institution has also hired an assistant vice president for student success to provide coordination and drive the broad institutional student success agenda. CSUs Quality Initiative helped develop several practices and tools that other institutions should find useful and these were presented as evidence.

CSU retention and persistence data analysis and approaches clearly reflect good practice. The institution makes student success data available for use by faculty and staff and also publicly shares select data on institutional websites.

During the site visit, the institutional commitment and focus on undergraduate student success permeated many discussions, including the meeting with the Board of Governors. However, similar to the outcomes discussions, the assessment of student success for graduate students is limited and in the early stages. CSU is not alone in this, as there are no national benchmarking data collections associated with graduate student success. A data dashboard is currently under development and there is interest from the Graduate College for the institution to begin graduate student success efforts. The team encourages CSU to continue their discussions and take action as appropriate to move forward with assessment of graduate student success.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

Rationale

Overall, CSU at Fort Collins has a system in place for teaching and learning evaluation and improvement. CSU acknowledges that as a decentralized campus there are units that are doing exemplary work in assessment and units where there is still room for improvement. The university is aware of areas needing additional attention, such as graduate student assessment. It is in the early stages of more systematically assessing general education. It is assessing programs and outcomes across both academic and student affairs. CSU provides support and training opportunities for faculty and staff to advance their assessment efforts.

Evidence is provided that the results of academic program reviews and assessment are followed up on by appropriate unit personnel and that the board is adequately apprised of each process. It was noted that the online schedule for specialized accreditation appeared incomplete and should be updated before the next review.

CSU has the disaggregated data available to make informed decisions related to student success initiatives and to track progress of student success. The University has a strong commitment to student success and is putting staffing and institutional support in place to advance towards their goals.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The university has undergone considerable senior leadership change over the past 5 years including the president, and the provost and vice president for academic affairs. Yet it has worked through established structures and processes to ensure that its mission will be fulfilled. Included, externally, are the Board of Governors, that, as a review of Minutes and site visit discussion with Board members reveal, operates in a transparent manner on behalf of the institution, and internally, through a well-defined leadership hierarchy with the president, currently an executive vice president, and 10 vice presidents including the provost. There is strong adherence to its Academic Faculty and Administrative Professional Manual, defined as a "co-operative compact" that very clearly specifies policies and procedures for a wide array of institutional activities.

Detailed decision making occurs through an inter-related and collaborative set of groups: President's Cabinet, Executive Leadership Team, Council of Deans, a University Curriculum Committee, and Enrollment Council, and leadership groups of staff and students. Evidence provided and site visit discussions, show that all were instrumental in recent major planning processes that resulted in the new Strategic Plan and Academic Master Plan as prime examples. Shared governance seems evident and expected at this institution, and discussions with faculty and staff confirmed it.

The university is committed to a data-driven actions. Indeed, it became clear during the site visit that there is a data analytic culture at the University, and the Office of Institutional Research and

Planning Effectiveness, is an important academic support unit. Representatives from that Office attended several of the site visit sessions to elaborate on their inclusion in current processes, and other colleagues in attendance confirmed that role. The university documents institution-wide activities as evidence. One highlights the ongoing effort to monitor, in detail, aspects of student progress/success. One shows commitment to providing and analyzing data to help with the ongoing university commitment to salary equity across faculty and staff, that has led to salary adjustments. A third shows the use of data for its ongoing work on climate and sustainability.

The university used its Quality Initiative (see Criterion 4C) to help with advancing its strong commitment to student success, following designation as a 2017 finalist for APLU Project Degree Completion. It had ambitious goals - 80% six-year graduation rate for the first-time full-time entering cohort; 60% four-year graduation rate for the same cohort; and close equity gaps absolutely. Simultaneously efforts to create an equitable educational environment inside and outside the classroom were addressed: increase focus on the first 4 weeks; develop readiness in foundational skills; scale up proven approaches; strengthen identity and inclusion in the major; develop and expand faculty/staff professional development activities; reform general education; and focus on affordability. The Covid pandemic obviously disrupted the process, and the university provided a candid assessment of progress on each goal, but it remains committed to the goals and the ongoing efforts.

Overall, it is clear to the Team that the University leadership, through its structures and collaborative processes, and the data-driven approach being adopted, is working to fulfill its mission. Two documents currently are central to mission fulfillment and are playing out within the existing administrative/governance structure - the Strategic Plan and the Academic Master Plan (see Criterion 5C).

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The university currently operates with \$1.4 billion in annual expenditures. The academic mission is supported primarily through tuition and state support (now less than 10% of the total). In addition, there are fees for services provided. Some units such as the student union and the CSU Online are self-supporting. Research expenditures have increased to \$498 million. Total current endowed assets are \$532 million. The University recently (2020) completed its most successful campaign ever, that raised \$1.28 billion in eight years. The Colorado State System is in a strong financial position and CSU Fort Collins operates with a balanced budget and maintains a \$3.5 million reserve for special immediate needs. Evidence provided, and discussions with institutional leaders, including Board members, confirmed this scenario.

The University assures that it has qualified personnel to implement its educational mission. With its set of detailed operational documents, including the Human Resources Manual, a Search Manual, and its elaborate Academic Faculty and Administrative Professional Manual, it specifies a set of search, orientation, and performance management policies and procedures that apply systematically to its faculty, staff and graduate student employees. Moreover, it provides professional development opportunities, educational programs for leaders, and tuition benefits within the University and with other state institutions. There is a regular Employee Climate Survey. The Team asked for a special session during the site visit to address personnel matters such as these, and confirmed that such activity exists and is supported.

There is ample evidence to show continuing attention to infrastructure. Its land grant mission means that it has physical infrastructure not only at the Fort Collins campus but at agricultural experiment stations, cooperative extension sites and notably with the Colorado State Forestry. It plans/functions at the state level on ten-year cycles and a new plan will begin in 2024. A list of physical changes over the past decade was seen, and a campus tour to show recent/ongoing activity was provided for the entire Team. Particular attention is given to its commitment to sustainability, and it currently is assessing the pattern of space use following the pandemic. Commitment to, and planning for, IT

represents an important aspect of all modern universities. Colorado State University has a strong Division of Information Technology that had a \$13.6 mi budget for FY23. It has its own Strategic Plan that aligns directly with the ongoing university Strategic and Academic Master Plans. This Division was especially relevant and important during the pandemic as it adopted, and helped the University maintain, a "keep teaching, learning, working and engaging" philosophy.

Efforts are underway to address reductions in spending. Currently the Vice President of Operations and Chief Financial Officer, to ensure transparency and inclusion, is holding budgeting information sessions - what is the current status, how does it currently work - across the institution. This approach is appreciated and seems to be well received. It also provides the opportunity to continue discussions of the development and possible adoption of a new budget model.

The University provided detailed examples of its FY23 priorities. Included were student-based activities, attention to salary equity, the reorganization of the research enterprise, and of particular importance, a commitment to rural-Colorado students and communities through a state-supported (\$8.6 million) initiative, that includes a role for CSU Online, and the wonderful new CSU Spur facility in Denver that that will be home to 37 projects (Criterion 1C).

The University, in alignment with the State, and its Board of Governors, follows a routine staged calendar of steps in the budgeting process each year that are widely known within the University.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
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, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Much of the current planning revolves around two major documents - The Strategic Plan 2022-2026 and the Academic Master Plan 2023-2027. The new University Strategic Plan 2022-2026 was developed, following an extensive, inclusive process. It specifies the mission, vision and values of the university and focuses on four strategic imperatives: people and culture - cultivating a thriving and inclusive community; operational and financial excellence - ensuring a sustainable foundation for growth and inspiration; innovation - driving innovation in learning, research discovery, and engagement; and impact - serving our community locally and globally. Each has a set of priorities. Throughout the site visit, in virtually all sessions, positive, unsolicited reference was made to this Plan, its importance, and alignment with ongoing work. It appears to be well-embedded in ongoing efforts. The new president and interim provost addressed its current status openly with the Team.

The process for the Academic Master Plan 2023-2027 was also thorough and inclusive and led through the Office of the Provost. It outlines 5 aspirations and a set of set of actions to realize them. The aspirations are: elevate our mission; foster interdisciplinarity and collaboration; enhance applied learning; cultivate diversity and inclusion; and advance academic themes. Across the five, 18 action items were identified as the highest priority and 6 of them were identified for immediate action, and are being monitored. Clearly this is a work in progress and will be an important priority for the new president and new provost going forward, but there appears to be a seriousness of purpose evident.

The Assurance Argument provided updated documentation on Plan implementation, and the site visit sessions supported those examples. There is growing attention to interdisciplinary activity (see below), and administrative positions, such as the vice president of marketing and communication, to support it. With regard to access and state needs, a new Construction Engineering degree program

has just been implemented and attention is being given to new forms of credentialing (micro-credentials), flexible programing, and participation in the Colorado Department of Higher Education's Colorado Re-Engage Initiative and reverse transfer activity. Graduate education is being given increased attention in enrollment modeling and graduate student research and teaching support - confirmed in a special session on graduate education during the site visit that the Team requested,

Of particular importance in the Academic Master Plan are the 7 interrelated academic themes: arts and culture; communication, public discourse and democracy; data and information science; human, animal and environmental health; inclusive excellence; science, technology and innovation; and sustainability, climate and resilience. Identifying focus areas is common in major research universities today and there is considerable breadth in these that reflects the land grant mission. Immediate attention is being given to cluster hires. Going forward strong collaborative working relationship between and among the provost, the deans and vice president for operations and chief financial officer will be important. The University will be able to provide an update on progress at its 4-year update to HLC in 2027.

The University is justifiably proud of its advances as a major research university, notably the consistent growth of research expenditures to its current nearly \$500 million level, but also use of its Quali Research platform, aligned with the Quali Financial System and the Huron eCRT, to enhance monitoring aspects of the research mission. Numerous examples of research facilities upgrades were provided, for example, a new Chemistry Research Building, and the addition of the JBS Global Food Innovation Center to the Animal Sciences building. A campus tour revealed considerable recent/ongoing work. A strong Office of the Vice President for Research provides institutional leadership for this component of the University's mission. Enhanced attention to the graduate education mission will complement this work.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Rationale

Despite considerable leadership change in recent years, the university has the structures and processes in place to ensure that it is fulfilling its mission for its faculty students, and staff at 5 main locations, and for the State it serves as a land grant institution. It is a data driven University and operates in an inclusive and transparent manner. It operates with \$1.4 billion in annual expenditures, with increased endowment and research expenditures, and is part of a state system that is fiscally sound. It recently has taken on several distinct leadership initiatives including attention to the State's rural areas and the SPUR location in Denver. There is clear evidence of support for infrastructure including Information Technology.

The University Strategic Plan and the Academic Master Plan, along with many academic support unit plans that align with them, provide the foundation on which to build over the next few years. It will be important that the full university leadership team, notably the Provost and Deans work together on implementation. Discussion of a potential new budget model will be central to that process.

FC - Federal Compliance

Rating

Met

Federal Compliance Filing Form

- CSU_Federal_Compliance_FINAL

Rationale

1. ASSIGNMENT OF CREDITS, PROGRAM LENGTH AND TUITION

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

Courses from seven educational units at the Colorado State University across all educational levels were reviewed and compared to the institutional credit hour policy found on page 56 of the Federal Compliance filing. The detailed Office of Financial Aid web page listed undergraduate tuition by credit hour with discounts, additional fees, and costs for online courses, separate costs for differentiated tuition, graduate education, and how in-state residency was determined for tuition status. Program length at the undergraduate level is defined as 120 credit hours with a minimum of 42 at the upper division. Thirty of the 42 upper-division credit hours need to be taken in residence and 15 of the last 30 credits need to be taken in residence at CSU. Consistency in graduate credit hour requirements - 30 credits post-baccalaureate for master's degrees and 72 credits post-baccalaureate for doctoral degrees- was confirmed during the site visit.

2. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR HANDLING STUDENT COMPLAINTS

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

Colorado State University clearly defines mechanisms for handling student complaints for students in residence on its campus and those enrolled in distance education programs where the mechanisms would be handled through the institutional relationship with the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA).

Review of the following institutional documents verified handling of student complaints in compliance with HLC documents and Federal Compliance statements: Policy ID#: 8-8004-004 Student Complaint Policy, first written 2/19/2013 and last revised 2/17/2020; linked documents in the Office of Financial Aid related to financial issues for tuition and fees; linked issues in the Office of Equal Opportunity and the CSU policies on harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, and sexual discrimination; copies of policies on domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and retaliation were reviewed during the site visit; the General Catalog section defining student rights found at: <https://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/policies/students-rights/>; and the SARA document describing the roles and responsibilities of students and CSU in distance education.

PUBLICATION OF TRANSFER POLICIES

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

Policy ID#: 10-1063-002 titled Transfer Policies developed 8/1/1995 and last revised 5/1/2022 clearly defines the transfer policies for Colorado State University: including quarter credits to semester credits, 100 and 200 level courses taken at Community Colleges, Associate Degree completion as waiver of the CSU core curriculum, international student transfer credits, and numerous other situations involving transfer situations. Contact information to access resources is provided and sources of information for students' to get clarification of credits that will transfer for them individually are on the policy page along with a credit hour transfer form as a worksheet for students to use.

4. PRACTICES FOR VERIFICATION OF STUDENT IDENTITY

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

CSU assigns students a NETID that is individually unique. This ID along with a user established strong password that must be changed annually are used to access University computer resources including the Canvas Learning Management System used for the online educational courses. In addition, the University has implemented a two-factor verification system requiring external verification of identity before a student can log into regulated systems. Students are reminded not to share passwords with anyone. For testing the University uses Respondus Lockdown to assure that students are not able to bring in outside resources and that after verification of identity no one else can substitute for the enrolled student.

5. PROTECTION OF STUDENT PRIVACY

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

Policy I.D#: 4-1018-009 Colorado State University's overall IT policy was most recently updated 4/12/23 to reflect all of the threats to the protection of the vast amount of private information collected by the University in the course of its interaction with students. This policy and the other numerous policies cited by CSU in its Federal Compliance document provide compelling evidence that the institution takes seriously the rights of students to protection of their privacy. The policies and procedures and discussions of employee training are evidence of this attention. Policy ID#: 4-1018-007 This policy was developed to provide information security and personal privacy in compliance with Federal and State legislation to protect student privacy.

6. PUBLICATION OF STUDENT OUTCOME DATA

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

CSU maintains a single web page identified in its Federal Compliance document at: <https://www.colostate.edu/disclaimer/>. From this page a potential student or consumer can link to any outcome data they may desire. This includes the data from the National Center for Educational Statistics; the link to the institutional pages on accreditation, tuition calculator, student privacy information, withdrawal and refund of financial aid, all of the academic resource policies, Clery Act data, academic integrity data, Equity in Athletics Act Disclosure Data, graduation rates for student athletes, and additional outcome data that may be relevant to selected populations.

7. STANDING WITH STATE AND OTHER ACCREDITORS

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

CSU has identified a list of all of its accredited programs in its Federal Compliance document. These programs are listed on the University web site and in the University online Catalog. Although CSU indicated that all of its programs were fully accredited, the Federal Compliance Reviewer did a spot check of 3 of the accredited programs to verify the statements and validated compliance.

8. RECRUITING, ADMISSIONS AND RELATED ENROLLMENT PRACTICES

Conclusion:

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

The Office of Admissions uses the National Association of College Admissions Counseling Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission as its code of conduct. The Office of Financial Aid developed its Code of Conduct in alignment with that of the National Association of Student Financial Aid

Administrators Statement of Ethical Principles. Training of employees in these areas occurs regularly to ensure compliance with these standards. Annual training of all relevant employees occurs and new employees are trained at orientation..

APPENDIX A: TITLE IV PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Complete this section **only if** the institution has submitted an Appendix A. Review any negative actions taken against the institution since HLC's last Federal Compliance review and identify any implications for the institution's current compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or other HLC requirements. Provide a detailed rationale for any Core Components identified as Met with Concerns or Not Met.

Rationale:

-

MANDATORY REPORTING: FRAUD, ABUSE OR FAILING TO MEET TITLE IV RESPONSIBILITIES

Federal regulations require HLC to notify the U.S. Department of Education related to the following item. Do not skip this section.

In the course of the peer review team's evaluation of this institution, have the reviewers encountered any reason to believe that (i) the institution is failing to meet its Title IV, Higher Education Act program responsibilities (if the institution participates in Title IV, HEA programs) or (ii) that the institution may be engaged in fraud or abuse?

Answer:

No

Rationale (If the team responded "Yes," explain the reasons for concern in detail. Otherwise, leave this section blank.):

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

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.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.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	Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning	
5.A	Core Component 5.A	Met
5.B	Core Component 5.B	Met
5.C	Core Component 5.C	Met
5.S	Criterion 5 - Summary	
FC	Federal Compliance	Met

Review Summary

Conclusion

As the Summary sections for each of the Criteria indicate, the institution has successfully met all core components. Its mission is well defined and aligned with The Colorado State System and especially with recent efforts such as the Rural Initiative and the distinctive SPUR activities in Denver. There is continuing and enhanced commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. It demonstrates that it operates with ethical and responsible conduct, and does so with transparency and inclusion. There is growing support for its distinguished research mission and there is clear commitment to academic freedom. It has a supportive Board of Governors. The teaching and learning mission is carried out with rigorous curricular requirements, qualified instructors at all levels, a support infrastructure designed for student success, and robust program review process. It operates with strong, sound fiscal review and management, and coordinated planning is underway.

The Team believes that CSU is at an important stage of its development. With detailed plans in place (vetted goals and activities) and faculty, students and staff who are deeply committed to the institution, the leadership team will have a strong foundation on which to build. The 4-year update to HLC in 2027 will provide it an opportunity to show evidence on two levels.

First, it presumably can show continued work: on its commitments to sustainability - meaningful ways to live out this central area of its statutory mission; on diversity, equity and inclusion, with stronger coordination. and especially evaluation of ongoing work; on concerted efforts for student success, following up with its impressive Quality Initiative; on new forms of engagement, from the Rural Initiative and SPUR, to the collaboration campuses, extension agents, the role of CSU Online, and precollegiate pathways; and on continued attention to the salary issues for faculty and staff.

Second, it can comment on its reactions to /progress on some of the issues raised in this review. Included are: increased attention to learning outcomes assessment in selected programs - an institutional commitment to do so exists; efforts to enhance aspects of graduate education, especially given the growing research mission that is aligned with graduate students, and the role many of those students play in the instructional mission; online education - is it a growth strategy for the university and if so, is there clear alignment among key stakeholders about the precise strategy?; and an institutional discussion/review of the balance of tenured/tenure eligible and non-tenure faculty, considering any potential impacts on its ability to fulfill its academic mission in a way that aligns with its values and mission.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation

Met

Sanctions Recommendation

No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation

Eligible to choose

Federal Compliance

Met

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

INTERNAL



Institutional Status and Requirements (ISR) Worksheet

Review Details

Institution: Colorado State University, Colorado

Type of Review: Open Pathway - Comprehensive Evaluation Visit

Description:

Review Dates: 09/18/2023 - 09/19/2023

No Change in Institutional Status and Requirements

Accreditation Status

Status: Accredited

No Change

Recommended Change:

Degrees Awarded:

No Change

Recommended Change:

Reaffirmation of Accreditation:

Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2013 - 2014

Year of Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2023 - 2024

No Change

Recommended Change: **2033 – 2034**

Accreditation Stipulations

General:

No Change

Recommended Change:

Additional Locations:

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs:

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Competency-Based Education:

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Pell-Eligible Prison Education Program:

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Accreditation Events

Pathway for Reaffirmation of Accreditation: Open Pathway

- No Change
- Recommended Change: **Eligible to Choose**

Upcoming Reviews:

No Upcoming Reviews

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Upcoming Branch Campus or Additional Location Reviews:

No Upcoming Reviews

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Monitoring

Upcoming Monitoring Reviews:

No Upcoming Reviews

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Institutional Data

Academic Programs Offered:

Contractual Arrangements:

No Contractual Arrangements

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Off-Campus Activities

Branch Campuses:

No Branch Campuses

- No Change
- Recommended Change:

Additional Locations:

No Additional Locations

- No Change
- Recommended Change: