

1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

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

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

Argument

[1.A.1] Development and adoption of the mission statement and its relationship to statutory enabling legislation.

As a regional public institution of Colorado higher education, two statements provide the context for Colorado Mesa University's long-term development and operational decision-making: the statutory enabling legislation and the University's mission statement. Known formerly as Mesa State College, the enabling legislation authorizes Colorado Mesa University to deliver a wide range of academic and technical programs through a four- and two-year role and mission that has the primary regional responsibility for serving the residents of 14 counties in Western Colorado. The Colorado General Assembly reenacted the legislation in 2010 when the institution raised its baccalaureate admissions standards to be selective and amended the statute again in 2011 when Mesa State College was renamed Colorado Mesa University (CMU). The current legislation reads as follows:

There is hereby established a university at Grand Junction, to be known as Colorado Mesa University, which shall be a general baccalaureate and graduate institution with selective admission standards. Colorado Mesa University shall offer liberal arts and sciences, professional, and technical degree programs and a limited number of graduate programs. Colorado Mesa University shall also maintain a community college role and mission, including career and technical education programs. Colorado Mesa University shall receive resident credit for two-year course offerings in its commission-approved service area. Colorado Mesa University shall also serve as a regional education provider. ([C.R.S 23-53-101](#))

Following the name change, the CMU Board of Trustees appointed representatives from the Trustees, academic administrators, and faculty to develop an institutional mission statement that

was consistent with and elaborated on the revised enabling legislation. The statement was [adopted by the Board of Trustees](#) in 2012 and reads as follows:

Committed to a personal approach, Colorado Mesa University is a dynamic learning environment that offers abundant opportunities for students and the larger community to grow intellectually, professionally, and personally. By celebrating exceptional teaching, academic excellence, scholarly and creative activities, and by encouraging diversity, critical thinking, and social responsibility, CMU advances the common good of Colorado and beyond.

Thus, the mission statement follows from the statutory enabling legislation, was adopted by the Board, and is suited to the nature and culture of the institution.

[1.A.2] Academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile reflective of mission.

CMU's mission statement and enabling legislation provide the framework for the institution's current and future academic and technical programs, its academic and student support services, and the students it recruits. Through its four-year division, CMU offers [nine baccalaureate degrees](#) (column 3) awarded across a wide range of [liberal arts and sciences and professional studies programs](#). Graduate degrees are awarded in Nursing, Education, and Business. Through its two-year division, Western Colorado Community College (WCCC), the institution supports its two-year role and mission through [career and technical education programs](#) and also offers developmental education coursework. This differentiation of program by the four- and two-year divisions is one of the steps taken by the institution to more clearly define the community college from the University. Regardless of level, new programs must align with the University's mission and undergo a rigorous internal review process prior to submission to the Board of Trustees and the Colorado Department of Higher Education. Later, as part of the program review process, [consistency of programs](#) with institutional mission also is evaluated by an external reviewer.

Further, the University is continuously evaluating potential programs that support regional needs, affirming CMU's commitment to the section of the mission statement that the University "is a dynamic learning environment that offers abundant opportunities for students and the larger community to grow intellectually, professionally, and personally." This is illustrated most recently by the implementation of [three graduate certificates](#) designed primarily to strengthen the credentials for regional high school teachers delivering CMU coursework for dual (or concurrent) credit.

Because of its 30,000 square mile [service region](#), spanning 14 Western Colorado counties, the University delivers its programs at multiple locations and in multiple formats: the main CMU campus, along with Western Colorado Community College, are located in Grand Junction and offer the full array of academic and technical programs referenced above. The service region for its [community college responsibility](#) is defined as Mesa, Delta, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel Counties, while delivery of vocational programs is limited to Mesa County. Another CMU campus is located in Montrose, 60 miles southeast of Grand Junction, which focuses

largely on lower division courses with a limited number of [programs fully available at that location](#). Dual credit (concurrent) courses are delivered in an average of [12 high schools](#) across the service region. Finally, more than 150 sections are offered online each semester, along with [five academic programs](#) that are available fully via distance delivery. Each of these locations and delivery modes contributes to fulfilling CMU's legislative expectation as a regional education provider.

In achieving growth "intellectually, professionally, and personally" as per the mission statement, CMU faculty, administrators, and staff clearly understand that student support requires the provision of assistance inside as well as outside of the classroom. Staff in support units are committed to actively engaging students of all backgrounds with intentional and purposeful on- and off-campus services and activities, reflecting a [core value](#) (line 230) of "a staff committed to the highest quality of service to the college community." [Academic and student support services](#) offered by CMU include Tomlinson Library, Student Life, Residence Life, Registrar's Office, Financial Aid, Advising Center, Tutoring, Career Services, Educational Access Services, Veteran's Center, Diversity, Advocacy and Health, Campus Safety, Campus Recreation, TRiO, and Student Health and Counseling Services, in addition to the Student Success and the Greater Opportunity for Academic and Life Success (GOALS) programs. More details on support services for students are highlighted in Sections 3.D.1, 3, and 5.

As shown in the [Student Profile](#), the Fall 2016 headcount totaled 9,735 (line 35), of which 9,586 (line 14) were undergraduates, with the remainder enrolled at the graduate level. While continuing to grow, recent annual increases have been more modest following a three-year period (Fall 2008 to 2009, Fall 2009 to 2010, and Fall 2010 to 2011) of adding approximately 1,000 students each year. Of the Fall 2016 undergraduates, 56.3% originated from the University's 14-county service region (line 95), consistent with CMU's role as a regional education provider as specified in the enabling legislation. Very few applicants are denied admission. Those who are baccalaureate-seeking students, but less prepared academically, can be admitted provisionally. Those students who are even less academically prepared are notified that they are being redirected to enter through the institution's community college division.

The diversity of the student body has increased dramatically since Fall 2012 as shown in the profile. Approximately 21% of the undergraduate student population self-identified as being from an under-represented racial or ethnic group, compared to 27.6% in Fall 2016 (line 79). The percentage of undergraduate Hispanic students (any race) grew from 12.9% in 2012 to 18.4% in 2016 (line 76). This is in direct support of the institutional mission statement's "encouraging diversity." Diversity is discussed further in Section 1.C.2. Finally, a significant share of CMU's student population is Pell-eligible (line 97).

[1.A.3] Alignment of planning and budgeting priorities with mission.

Colorado Mesa places a strong emphasis on the alignment of its mission, planning goals, and the priorities for resource allocation. See Section 5.C.1 for a more detailed description of the budget request.

1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

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

Argument

[1.B.1] Mission statement articulated through vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.

CMU clearly and publicly articulates its mission, vision, and values statements in a mix of print and electronic documents that include the University [website](#), [Catalog](#) (column 3), and the [Strategic Plan 2020](#) (beginning line 166). The mission statement also appears on the [agenda page](#) for each meeting of the University's Board of Trustees, while each academic [program proposal](#) made to the Trustees includes the enabling legislation.

[1.B.2] Mission statement is current and explains institution's emphases.

The current *Strategic Plan 2020* was approved by the Board of Trustees in January 2016 and includes CMU's mission, vision, values statements as well as future directions expressed through strategic goals. The mission statement is current, having been updated in 2012, and clearly states that the University's priority is on [excellent teaching](#) (beginning line 169) along with offering an array of opportunities to students and the larger community "to grow intellectually, professionally, and personally." The vision statement addresses the institution's priorities of teaching, academic program development, faculty quality and diversity, and community support, as well as underscore the University's primary commitment to Western Colorado. [CMU's core values](#) (line 220) reflect the emphasis on instruction and outreach, illustrated by the following excerpts:

- *a learning environment that develops and promotes the skills of inquiry, reflection, critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation, teamwork, and communication in students;*
- *student choice in academic programming that prepares future leaders to function as productive and responsible members of a global society;*

- *a faculty recognized for their professional expertise and quality of instruction;*
- *an attainable, accessible post-secondary experience for students in and outside of Western Colorado;*
- *a culture committed to integrity and academic and intellectual freedom; and a diversity of students, faculty and staff that promotes a balanced exchange of ideas.*

[1.B.3] Mission statement identifies intended constituents of programs and services.

CMU's [enabling legislation](#) clearly states that the institution has multiple roles at the graduate, baccalaureate, and community college levels. The [mission statement](#) (beginning line 169) elaborates on these responsibilities by emphasizing the intellectual, professional and personal growth of students and in the larger community, primarily focused on the 14-county service region, but extending across Colorado and beyond.

1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

Argument

[1.C.1] Institution's role in a multicultural society.

Encouraging diversity is not only part of CMU's mission statement, it is also one of its core values. The [mission statement](#) (beginning line 169) states that "By celebrating exceptional teaching, academic excellence, scholarly and creative activities, and by encouraging diversity, critical thinking, and social responsibility, CMU advances the common good of Colorado and beyond." The importance of diversity is also demonstrated by the following:

- Two [values](#) highlight CMU's commitment to diversity and inclusion: (1) "A vibrant and varied campus setting that values diversity and diverse activities. . . ." and, (2) "A diversity of students, faculty, [and] staff that promotes a balanced exchange of ideas." Similarly, the [vision statement](#) declares that CMU will be an institution that " . . . prepares students from diverse backgrounds for lives of career and service anywhere in the world" and that CMU " . . . will be respected as a learning community that embraces diversity of students, faculty, staff, ideas, and degree levels. . . ."
- The [Trustees' commitment](#) to diversity is shown in its 2013 statement that was updated in 2016 following a discussion on campus [diversity and inclusion](#). The statement reads, in

part, that CMU ". . . embraces its role as the cultural hub of Western Colorado, bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds and interests to participate, foster, and promote a balanced exchange of civil dialogue."

- A [statement](#) adopted by CMU faculty members promoting respect for diversity is found in the *Catalog* (column 1):

Colorado Mesa University is a community of scholars in the liberal arts tradition. As faculty we believe that all people, regardless of age, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation, have something worthwhile to contribute and that these contributions benefit us all. Therefore, we intend that within our academic community all cultural differences will be treated with equal respect and tolerance. We desire that our students have the opportunity to appreciate the diversity of our modern world, and we encourage them to partake of the resources available within our community. As faculty we pledge ourselves to provide as many divergent cultural experiences for our students as the resources of the college and the needs of our disciplines allow.

- The student-led [Cultural Diversity Board](#) serves as the educational liaison to Colorado Mesa University campuses and the regional community regarding culturally diverse issues and sponsors [Unityfest](#) each year. See more below in Section I.C.2.
- A [message](#) on institutional values was sent from the CMU President to the campus.
- An array of educational opportunities through curriculum and training programs are available to CMU faculty, staff, and students and described in the following section.

[1.C.2] Diversity processes and activities appropriate to mission and constituents.

In addition to embracing diversity among the student body, CMU has also continued its efforts to increase diversity among its faculty and staff. Each [position announcement](#) contains the Affirmative Action Statement. [Advertising](#) for faculty positions has expanded to include more specialized venues, and members of search committees have contacted graduate programs in fields where CMU is hiring so as to recruit a more diversified applicant pool. Based on self-reported information between Fiscal Years (FY) 2013-14 and 2016-17, the percentage of full-time female faculty increased slightly, from 43.6% to 44.8%.

Full-time faculty from under-represented groups grew modestly, 4.4% to 6.0%. Full-time staff hiring has fared about the same. The number of administrative staff from under-represented groups was 13.6% in FY 2013-14, dropping slightly to 13.1% by FY 2016-17, while classified staff showed a nominal gain from 12.1% to 13.6%.

As described in Section 1.A.2, [CMU's student body](#) has become much more diverse in recent years - 27.6% were from under-represented groups in Fall 2016 compared with 21% in Fall 2012 (line 79). Overall, students are very satisfied with the campus climate as documented by the [2016 Student Climate Survey](#)

The University has reaffirmed that hiring a more diverse faculty is an on-going priority in its [Strategic Plan 2020](#) (Goal 1, Objective 1E) which states: "Increase efforts to recruit and retain faculty, staff, and students who reflect geographic, racial, ethnic, and age diversity." Underscoring that priority were the results of the [Climate Survey](#) reporting that CMU students are "less satisfied with visible faculty and staff diversity" than are students in the survey's comparison groups.

In addition to hiring processes, CMU engages in a wide range of activities that support diversity and inclusion education and awareness as well as offer educational opportunities for students to experience other cultures. Activities begin at the earliest stages of CMU's student experience with Orientation, followed by a [presentation](#) as part of Freshmen Year Initiative (FYI), with the [Date Safe](#) program offered during Opening Weekend and periodically throughout the academic year.

Many activities are planned by the Cultural Diversity Board (CDB) which strives to promote and support the ethnic and cultural groups on campus by providing educational resources and support services. The CDB is made up of representatives from the Black Student Alliance, the Gay Straight Alliance, the Latino Student Alliance, the International Student Alliance, the Native American Student Alliance, and the Ho'olokahi Polynesian Club Alliance. These student organizations serve to educate peers through programming, as well as serving as a support group for students of color or other vulnerable populations, such as students who identify as LGBTQ.

Examples of academic support services available to assist students include:

- [TRiO Student Support Services](#), with a mission "to assist participants in achieving their academic potential and expanding cultural horizons through one-on-one interactions and group activities."
- [Educational Access Services](#) (EAS) "recognizes disability as an aspect of diversity and an integral part of society."
- The Veterans Lounge supports the [Student Veterans Association's](#) mission of providing student veterans with the resources, support, and advocacy to succeed in higher education and post-graduation.

CMU understands the value of extending learning experiences to other domestic and international locations as part of multicultural education and provides opportunities for students through a multi-pronged set of opportunities:

- the [International Student Exchange Program](#) (ISEP) enables CMU students to pay CMU tuition while studying abroad for a semester or an academic year;
- the [National Student Exchange Program](#) arranges for CMU students to attend a different school in a different part of the United States for a semester or an academic year, again while paying CMU tuition;
- faculty regularly lead students, alumni, and community members on tours/research opportunities to various locations, coordinated through the [Extended Studies Program](#). In recent years, groups have traveled to China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ireland, Scotland, and Spain;

- the [Outdoor Program](#) offers experiences that range from local activities to excursions to Panama, Ecuador, New Zealand, the Philippines, and southeast Asia;
- Tomlinson Library staff have implemented a [Cultural Cafe](#) to promote conversations among faculty and staff; and
- the [Alternative Spring Break](#), which supports student trips for philanthropic purposes during the week-long spring break.

Faculty-sponsored events also contribute to the campus' education and awareness of diversity. [Holocaust Awareness Week](#) is held annually. Faculty and students from the Departments of [Music](#) and [Theatre Arts](#) produce more than 70 events each year, while the Department of [Art and Design](#) now exhibits its work to the public in an [Art Gallery](#) located in downtown Grand Junction. [Curricular options](#) are available from nearly every academic department. More information is found in Section 3.B.4.

Focusing on inclusion education, Student Services has scheduled activities that center around the topics of inclusion, sexual consent, mental and emotional health, and substance abuse prevention, all key components that promote a safe, healthy, and inclusive campus and include:

- a [Sexual Assault Response Team](#) (SART) is the campus' comprehensive approach supporting [Title IX sexual misconduct issues](#). CMU also participates on a community SART Coordination Committee whose membership is comprised of representatives from law enforcement, hospitals, and non-profits.
- the [Date Safe Project](#) focuses on sexual assault prevention;
- [Safe Zone training](#) supports LGBTQ students;
- the [Equity Project](#) promotes inclusion of students of color;
- [You Can Play](#) addresses LGBTQ experiences in NCAA athletics; and
- the [Domestic Violence Prevention Academy](#) is a practitioner workshop offered annually by a local community partner that is hosted by the University.

Finally, as required by the Jeanne Clery Act, CMU annually discloses [crime information](#) on and around its campuses.

In closing, CMU offers abundant opportunities to its constituents, both in educating students in the area of inclusivity and supporting its vulnerable student population. Evidence of student satisfaction in the campus climate and commitment to inclusion can be found in results from the [Campus Climate Survey](#) and the [Student Satisfaction Survey](#) (SSI), both administered in 2016. The 739 student-respondents to the SSI rated the institution on its responsiveness to diverse populations based on six groups that ranged from part-time students to those with disabilities. All groups averaged 5.43 or higher on a 7 point scale with 7 being the best score, and all 2016 averages were higher than those reported in the 2014 administration.

1.D - Core Component 1.D

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

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

Argument

[1.D.1] Actions and decisions reflect an understanding of educational role as a public obligation.

As reported in the [2015 Progress Report on the Colorado Mesa University 2010 Strategic Planning Goals](#), CMU has served the "public good" for the past 90 years through program delivery, research, volunteerism, and "other activities that contribute to the intellectual, social, cultural, and economic life of Colorado." This on-going commitment is evidenced by awarding over 1,800 degrees/certificates in 2015-2016, contributing to the [State's goal](#) (line 663) to "[i]ncrease the attainment of high-quality post-secondary credentials across the academic disciplines and throughout Colorado by at least 1,000 new certificates and degrees each year to meet anticipated workforce demands by 2025." CMU also contributes to the public good as an economic anchor for the regional economy, documented in a [recent study](#), with an estimated dollar impact that has increased from \$144 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2003-04 to \$447 million in FY 2015-16.

The [Redifer Institute](#) serves as the administrative umbrella for numerous outreach projects including the [Ruth Powell Hutchins Water Center](#), which serves as a center to promote active debate and collaboration on water resources. Also housed in the Redifer Institute is the [Unconventional Energy Center](#) which, in conjunction with the Mesa County Federal Mineral Lease District, awards funding for applied research projects on the best use of natural resources in Colorado and for workforce development initiatives. The most recent addition is the [Social Research Center](#) that conducts surveys on topics of regional interest. CMU also partners with community organizations through joint appointments. As examples, the principal oboist and the conductor for the Grand Junction Symphony also are faculty members at CMU. A paleontologist was jointly hired by the Museum of the West and CMU's Geosciences program, making courses and summer internships opportunities available to undergraduates.

CMU has developed numerous [academic programs](#) that support the region's economic development, and WCCC serves the interests of business and industry by offering [workforce training certificate programs](#) . . . tailored to industry specifications and job demands in Technology Integration, Mechanical Engineering Technology, and Welding

Technology." Moreover, WCCC works with high school students through concurrent enrollment programs and middle school students through summer camps. Participation in camps has grown significantly from 41 registrations in 2011 to 887 in 2016.

As described in the CMU [Professional Personnel Employment Handbook](#) (beginning line 195) faculty are expected to serve in some capacity within the community and are evaluated on community service, defined as "unpaid public service to the community and/or professional organizations which benefits the University." Faculty members regularly lend their expertise as guest speakers, music clinicians, and consultants to the public and engage with a wide range of local community groups, such as the League of Women Voters, the Grand Junction Chamber of Commerce, the Arts Center, the Grand Junction Symphony, and Mesa County Public Library. The University also provides facilities as the host site of the [Colorado Special Olympics](#), yet another indication of how CMU recognizes and fulfills its public obligation as an institution of higher education.

[1.D.2] Primacy of educational responsibilities over other purposes.

CMU is a public university with no superordinate entity to which it is accountable.

[1.D.3] Engagement with and response to external constituencies and communities of interest in support of mission.

CMU engages with and responds to its external constituencies' needs as its mission allows in a variety of ways. The most recent [Regional Impact Study](#) details multiple constituencies with whom CMU currently engages, based upon the relationship to those groups. In response to the nursing shortage nation-wide, especially more acute in rural areas, CMU, in conjunction with St. Mary's Medical Center, Community Hospital, Montrose Memorial Hospital, and Delta County Hospital as well as the Colorado Health Foundation and the San Juan Healthcare Foundation, collaborated to expand CMU's offerings in the nursing area, ranging from Practical Nurse certificates to the Doctorate of Nursing Practice. This partnership has increased the number of nurses at various levels of expertise across the Western Slope and the State.

Creation of the Western Colorado Peace Officers Academy was based upon a partnership between CMU, the Grand Junction Police Department, the Mesa County Sheriff's Office and the 21st Judicial District Attorney's office with 95% of the graduates employed in law enforcement. The Rural Jump Start Program is a partnership between the Grand Junction Economic Partnership and CMU that focuses on increasing the region's competitiveness in attracting high-paying jobs to assist economically distressed areas on the Western Slope. Through this partnership, seven businesses have located in Mesa County. These are just a few of the many examples of how CMU has responded to its constituencies as part of its mission. More examples are included in the [Regional Impact Study](#).

Tomlinson Library's collections, databases, space, events, and services, such as research help, are [available to the public](#). The Library also partners with outside organizations such as the local public library, museum, and the school district. WCCC's [Community Education Center](#) supports lifelong learning for the community through opportunities for personal enrichment and professional development. These are offered in a variety of formats and times convenient for community members.

Finally, the University recently has responded to the relatively low rates of educational achievement by Western Colorado students not pursuing education after high school. [CMU is working with the local school district](#) to house a full-time counselor/admissions staff member in each high school who will focus on encouraging students to enroll in some form of post-secondary education after high school, be it at CMU or elsewhere.

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Summary

The institution's enabling legislation and mission statements guide its operations and are clearly and publicly articulated. These documents establish the University as a regional education provider, primarily at the undergraduate level that includes a community college responsibility. Its focus on intellectual, professional, and personal growth is achieved through majors awarded in nine baccalaureate degrees, three masters, and one doctoral degree, in addition to technical certificates and associate degrees delivered by Western Colorado Community College.

The University's mission helps guide planning for the future. The *Strategic Plan 2020* has goals to strengthen educational attainment of the region's residents, maintain sustainable funding, recruit excellent faculty and staff, and broaden the educational experiences for students. The University's budget priorities reflect these goals. The plan's vision and values statements have been consistent over time. One core value is to encourage diversity throughout the campus, a commitment that continues as the student body has become much more diverse. The University also provides extensive support services to students to help ensure their success.

Colorado Mesa University has strong ties across Western Colorado and contributes to improving the intellectual, social, cultural, and economic life of Colorado through its academic programs and development of students in areas of personal and social responsibility, civic engagement, and intercultural/global learning. The University is an active partner with regional businesses, industries, alumni, and residents and is a major economic anchor. Its various forms of public outreach enhance the lives of residents of Western Colorado.