



COLORADO MESA
UNIVERSITY



ACHIEVING A HIGHER DEGREE

Self-Study November 2013

Report to the Higher Learning Commission of the
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools



coloradomesa.edu

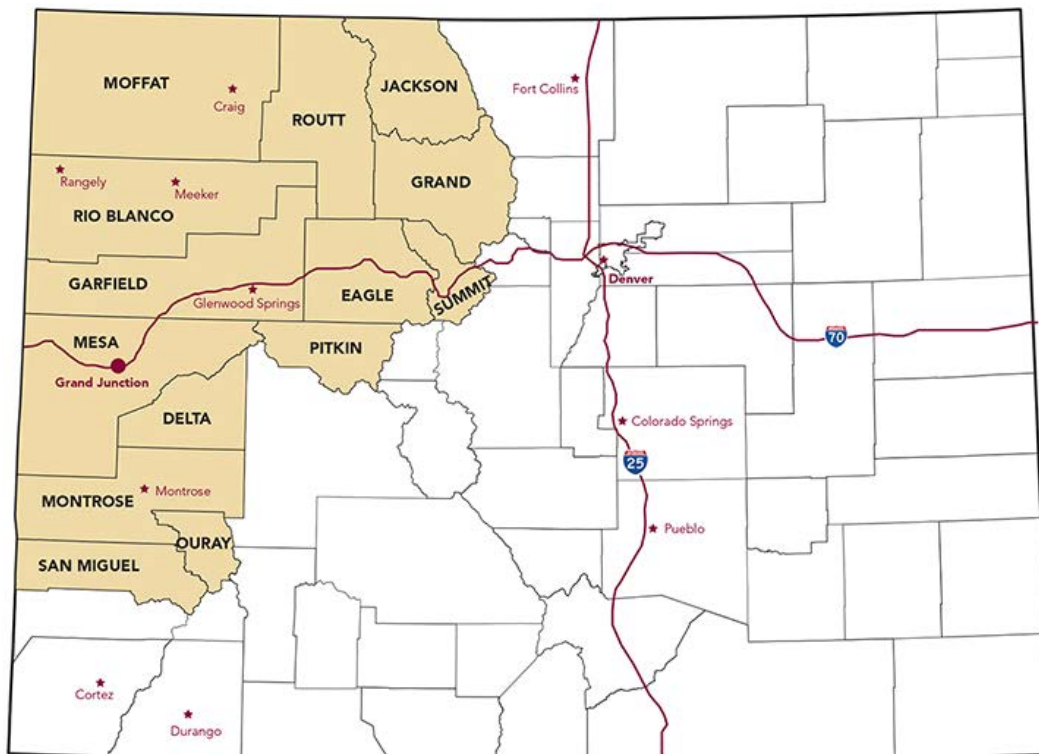
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Introduction

An Overview of Colorado Mesa University

Located on Colorado's Western Slope of the Rocky Mountains, Colorado Mesa University (CMU) is in a largely rural and rather sparsely populated region of the state. Lying midway between Denver and Salt Lake City, the University is located in Grand Junction, surrounded by the Grand Valley, a type of oasis of 120,000 residents in an area otherwise made up of small communities scattered across vast, open spaces. While the University provides cultural, educational, and research opportunities, the city provides access to quality health care, national parks, and world-famous outdoor recreation. Newer residents have moved to the area, attracted by its climate and natural beauty, and the region is developing as an alternative to retirement centers found in hotter climates of the Southwest U.S. The region's economy is based on a mix of traditional ranching and smaller farms that produce fruits and vegetables as well as mineral extraction that experienced boom and bust cycles over the past few decades.

CMU is [legislatively mandated](#) in Colorado Revised Statutes 23-1-127 to meet the educational needs of 14 counties in Western Colorado. Spanning 30,000 square miles, CMU's service region is a challenge, not only because of its vastness, but also because of the mountain features and winter weather that make it difficult for many of the region's residents to travel to the main campus.



14 County Region Served by CMU

The University has responded to this legislative requirement through programming offered at two off-campus sites, as well as through the expansion of courses delivered via a distance format. In fall 2012, 62% of the University's headcount of 9,482 enrolled exclusively on the main campus, but students enrolled either exclusively on the main campus or in combination with other locations or formats generated 80% of the student credit hours. More than one-third of CMU's student count, however, enrolled in an off-site location, in coursework offered largely online, or as a high school concurrent student. The main campus proportion of the total headcount has remained fairly stable in recent years despite the significant institutionwide growth from academic years 2009-10 through 2011-12 shown below.

COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY STUDENT HEADCOUNT BY LOCATION AND FORMAT

Location/Format Where Students Enrolled	Student Headcount -					
	Fall 2010		Fall 2011		Fall 2012	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Main Exclusively	5,111	62.9%	5,625	62.5%	5,864	61.8%
Online Exclusively	360	4.4%	419	4.7%	456	4.8%
Bishop (WCCC) Exclusively	257	3.2%	287	3.2%	283	3.0%
Montrose Exclusively	197	2.4%	212	2.4%	184	1.9%
High School exclusively	365	4.5%	527	5.9%	697	7.4%
Main and Online	1,176	14.5%	1,228	13.6%	1,321	13.9%
Main and Bishop	418	5.1%	437	4.9%	416	4.4%
Main and Montrose	16	0.2%	17	0.2%	14	0.1%
Online and Montrose	94	1.2%	102	1.1%	94	1.0%
Online and Bishop	32	0.4%	29	0.3%	44	0.5%
Other Campus/Combination*	104	1.3%	122	1.4%	109	1.1%
Total	8,130	100.0%	9,005	100.0%	9,482	100.0%

*Includes students taking courses exclusively at locations such as Telluride, or Edwards and students taking courses at multiple locations not listed above. i.e. Main, Bishop, and Online

Source: Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY STUDENT CREDIT HOUR SUMMARY BY LOCATION AND FORMAT

Location/Format Where Students Enrolled	Student Credit Hours -					
	Fall 2010		Fall 2011		Fall 2012	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Main	78,922	80.3%	87,101	79.9%	91,658	80.2%
Online	8,113	8.3%	8,819	8.1%	9,276	8.1%
Bishop	6,471	6.6%	6,646	6.1%	6,726	5.9%
Montrose	2,475	2.5%	2,728	2.5%	2,475	2.2%
High School	2,208	2.2%	3,655	3.4%	4,115	3.6%
Other**	132	0.1%	117	0.1%	100	0.1%
Total	98,321	100.0%	109,066	100.0%	114,350	100.0%

**Includes locations such as Edwards, Telluride, and Outreach Centers

Source: Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

The University supports a second regional presence sixty miles southeast of Grand Junction, in Montrose, Colorado. The Montrose site focuses primarily on lower division coursework in general education, Nursing, Business, and Teacher Education, along with selected offerings at the upper division. Because it has both a two- and four-year role and mission, CMU also offers career and technical education programs, as well as developmental education, through its open admissions division, Western Colorado Community College (WCCC). This division is located on the Bishop Campus in Grand Junction, approximately three miles from the main campus, and Grand Valley Transit offers service five days a week between the two campuses. Academic programming at both sites, as well as online delivery, is under the responsibility of faculty on the Grand Junction main campus, while technical offerings are delivered through WCCC. All awards or degrees, however, are conferred by CMU's main campus.

The University takes seriously its mission to be a regional education provider for Western Coloradans and, as a result, has moved aggressively to expand distance learning opportunities and support for traditional and non-traditional students alike. At the same time, CMU also recognizes the need to provide for a more diverse group of students. Over the past decade, CMU has invested heavily in the delivery of courses via distance technologies to make education more accessible to Western Coloradans, with approximately eight percent of the University's credit hour generation delivered in an online format in fall 2012 as shown in the above table.

In general, two-thirds of CMU students are from the 14-county region, CMU is attracting an increasingly larger share of students from the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains, along the I-25 corridor and centering on Denver. Additionally, more than 10 percent come from outside Colorado, with notable numbers coming from western states including Hawaii. Student profiles for students enrolled on the [main campus](#), in [Montrose](#), at [Western Colorado Community College](#), and in [online](#) coursework vary by venue and format. New programs on campus reflect attention to the needs of employers in the region, and student services are being expanded to support the increasingly diverse learners on the campus.

History: CMU Past, Present, and Future

CMU's past, as well as its present, is characterized by growth, responsiveness to the needs of the community and region, and adaptability to changing times.

- Past

The founding of Grand Junction Junior College in 1925, with 39 students enrolled in seven classes, provided the Western Slope of Colorado with its first institution of postsecondary education. A name change occurred in 1932, with Grand Junction State Junior College soon enrolling more than 200 students. Enrollment grew to 270 students by fall 1937, when the college was again renamed as Mesa Junior College. These early name changes reflect demographic, societal, and educational changes of the times.

In 1940, Houston Hall was constructed, and the site of the current campus began emerging. The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) awarded full accreditation to the college in 1957, and by 1963, enrollment had increased to 1,300. During that same period, the range of programs expanded steadily, leading to the addition of an area vocational school in 1967. In that same year, Lowell Heiny Hall was built to house the first dedicated library on campus. By July 1974, the college had evolved into a baccalaureate-granting institution, and enrollment had tripled from its 1967 numbers to reach a student population of nearly 4,000 by fall 1979.

By 1986, the library holdings had expanded enough that another new construction on campus was dedicated as Tomlinson Library. Soon thereafter, in 1988, there was another renaming, and the institution came to be known as Mesa State College.

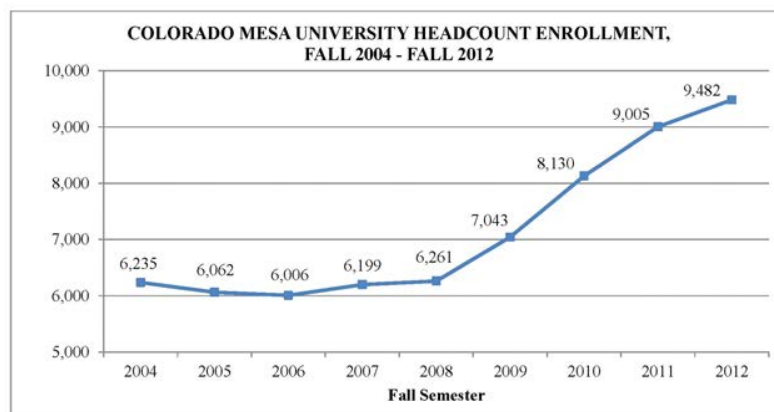
As the college recognized the need to provide educational opportunities around the larger region, alternatives to traditional on-campus programs began to flourish. A regional campus in the neighboring town of Montrose was opened in 1991. The next year, two-year vocational programs were officially moved from the main campus to the Bishop Campus, which was then named the Unified Technical Education Campus (UTEC). This remains the current primary location of Western Colorado Community College.

In 1994, the Colorado legislature authorized Mesa State College to offer select graduate degrees in response to growing regional needs. With this, Mesa State College became the only institution in Colorado to offer a full range of programming spanning vocational certificates to associate degrees (both academic and vocational), baccalaureate degrees, and master's degrees. In July 1996, with an enrollment of over 5,400 students, Mesa State College was authorized to offer courses leading to a graduate degree in business administration. At this point, distance learning was incorporated into course offerings. While the University had experimented with delivering courses via various distance formats as early as the late 1990s, the movement to online course offerings began around 2005. As of fall 2012, approximately 140 sections were offered via distance learning, largely online with limited videoconferencing.

Since 2000, several significant changes have helped shape the identity of the institution. In 2003, Colorado House Bill 03-1093 [changed the governance structure for then-Mesa State College](#). The former system that oversaw four state colleges, including Mesa State, was dissolved, and a Board of Trustees was created whose primary focus was governance of a single institution. While the main campus delivers two-year (primarily transfer), baccalaureate, and graduate programming, the two-year technical division of the college – formerly UTEC – was restructured in 2005 into WCCC. In 2011, the Colorado General Assembly passed legislation that transitioned the institution to university status and its current name, Colorado Mesa University, and in academic year 2012-13, the University delivered the initial coursework in its first doctoral program.

- Present

With a total enrollment approaching 9,500 in fall 2012, CMU is a mid-sized university that offers the best of both worlds in terms of maintaining a personal touch and individual attention while providing dynamic opportunities more commonly associated with larger schools (such as numerous cultural, athletic, and educational events and exchanges).



There are 217 full-time faculty members serving three campuses, and CMU now offers 63 programs extending from the certificate through the doctoral level. Six baccalaureate and two associate degree programs, as well as a technical certificate, are available entirely online. The student to faculty ratio is 23:1. Faculty are effective teachers, reflected in part through student evaluations, and they keep up-to-date in their fields through scholarly and creative activities.

About two-thirds of CMU students are pursuing baccalaureate degrees, and nearly a fourth are seeking associate degrees. Fewer than three percent are pursuing certificates or a master's or doctoral degree. Approximately three-fourths of the students are enrolled full time, with about 41 percent who are Pell-eligible and first generation. More than one-fourth of CMU's students are considered non-traditional age, nearly 55 percent are female, and the percent of students self-reporting from underrepresented groups has grown to 21 percent. Two of every three enrollees are from the University's 14-county service region (Fall 2012 Student Profile, p.2). Last year, CMU awarded approximately 1,150 degrees, 60 percent of which were at the baccalaureate level (Degree Profile). The most popular majors are Biological Sciences, Business, Criminal Justice, Education, Kinesiology, Nursing, and Psychology. In terms of facilities, the extensiveness of the construction of new buildings and remodeling of existing buildings has been remarkable, and the campus currently covers approximately 80 acres. Smart classrooms and wireless access technologies have become the standard around campus.

- Future

The future holds great potential for continuing development in response to the needs of the region and beyond. More than ever before, CMU is becoming a first-choice university for students beyond the local region. In fall 2013, the admissions index for baccalaureate-seeking students will increase as the University moves into the admissions ranking of selective. As the academic preparation of entering students improves, the implications for retention and successful completion of degrees are exciting. Continued land acquisition is planned to meet the needs of a campus still in expansion. New ideas abound for increasing diversity, improving assessment processes, and expanding program offerings. Campus leaders are planning strategically to enable CMU to continuously strengthen the relevance and quality of program offerings. They are proactively engaged in envisioning ways to move CMU forward in a fiscally responsible manner, and they are responding to the constantly evolving needs of the larger society and the correspondingly evolving role of institutions of higher education in meeting those needs.

Distinctiveness of CMU

What is CMU? What does the University stand for? While the entire self-study report will answer these questions, a brief preview is provided here. One of the themes used in marketing the University has been "Achieving a Higher Degree," and three areas in which CMU is distinctive in helping students to achieve a higher degree are: quality of the student experience (small classroom size, personal interaction, developing well-rounded citizens of society); the relevance of programs to the needs of society and the professions; and educational access in the broadest possible context.

- Quality of the Student Experience

CMU has an institutionwide, holistic commitment to student success through continuous quality improvement in all facets of the University. Faculty are chosen for their focus on excellent undergraduate instruction. All CMU classes are taught by faculty, with no use of teaching assistants. At the same time, there is increased hiring of faculty who bring credentials appropriate for teaching at the graduate, as well as the undergraduate, level. Faculty at CMU are dedicated to staying informed about pedagogical best practices, and they engage regularly in professional development and research. Maintaining small class size and providing academic support are significant priorities in University planning and decision-making. Student experiences beyond the classroom are supported through a number of cultural, athletic, and social events and opportunities. CMU helps students achieve a higher degree by supporting quality learning and working to develop the student as a "whole person." At CMU, the relatively lean administration and the culture of conservative budgeting and strategic growth initiatives continue to provide resources to focus on and support instruction, technology, and high quality personnel.

- Relevance of CMU Programs

CMU has consistently partnered with the region's organizations, agencies, local governments, and businesses, as well as with other universities, in order to better leverage resources and to expand opportunities for students. One important aim of CMU's programs is to remain responsive to the business community and workforce needs and to guide students in directions that will lead to their professional success. Innovation and flexibility are key aspects of CMU's willingness to explore new program areas, and these qualities have enabled CMU to move quickly in a sector that at times can be slow-moving and risk-averse.

- Educational Access

A strong commitment to educational access at CMU is obvious in a number of areas:

- Academic access is achieved by maintaining small class size, which allows for more individualized attention, and by delivering a wide range of support services that can improve academic success regardless of the individual challenges

students may face.

- Geographic access is ensured by providing distance learning options for students who live in the widespread rural region that the University serves.
- Financial access is prioritized and accomplished through a variety of support systems, including a significant, growing commitment to MavWorks, CMU's institutional work-study program; implementation of the NCAA DII approach to student athletes; support for first-generation and low-income students; community college options; and "good buy" policies that keep student costs at a reasonable level.

Accreditation History

In its various incarnations, CMU has been accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association (NCA) for 56 years. The NCA initially accredited Mesa College as a junior college in 1957. Accreditation at the baccalaureate level was granted in 1974 and reaffirmed in 1979, 1989, 1993, and 2003. The 2003 review for HLC, [Change with Excellence: A Self Study of Mesa State College](#), resulted in continued accreditation, with the requirement of a focused visit in 2006 that was satisfactorily completed. Change requests that have been made and approved for CMU since 2003 include:

- addition of the M.A. in Education (2005);
- initial implementation of two degree completion programs delivered by distance learning technologies: the A.A.S./R.N. in Nursing and the B.A. in Liberal Arts supporting elementary education licensure (2006);
- addition of five programs delivered by distance technologies: Technical Certificate in Business; Associate of Arts; B.S. in Sports Management; B.A.S. in Radiologic Technology; and B.A.S. in Public Administration/Public Safety (2009); and
- expansion of the Nursing program to include the M.S.N., the third master's level program to be offered at CMU, and the Doctor of Nursing Practice, CMU's first doctoral level program (2010).

Response to the 2003 Evaluation and 2006 Focused Visit

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the NCA last conducted a comprehensive evaluation and site visit to then-Mesa State College in November 2003. At the time of the visit, the institution's Board of Trustees had been in existence for fewer than six months, and the administrative leadership was in transition. This situation, along with several factors, led to the Commission's decision to undertake a focused visit during 2006 to examine the three key issues discussed below.

- **Institutional Leadership**
The campus had been negatively affected by a series of interim leadership teams and a dispersed organizational chain of leadership. Actions during the ensuing three years resulted in substantial progress in each of the areas of concern. In large part, this progress reflects:
 - the new trustees' experience with issues associated with higher education in Colorado, particularly in the area of governance;
 - the stability in institutional leadership brought about by the hiring of the President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services; and
 - restructuring of the system of deans and academic department heads.
- **Assessment of Student Learning**
Assessment initiatives were in their incipient stages in 2003. In the area of student assessment since that time, the University has made significant strides in the collection, examination, and use of assessment data to enhance academic programs. Progress is being made each year to further develop both general education and program assessment strategies. In 2012, an Office of Assessment of Student Learning was created with a full-time director working to coordinate all assessment efforts on campus. Currently, a curriculum-mapping initiative is underway that aligns student learning outcomes at the course-level with those at the program level. Similarly, program-level outcomes are parallel to those articulated for the institution for each degree level.
- **Budget Planning and Allocation**
The greatly improved financial situation of the University today contrasts sharply with the context for budget planning and allocation that the visiting committee found in 2003. The 2005 Strategic Plan set explicit goals for CMU to broaden the financial base of the institution, to expand programs, and to better help under-prepared students. Significant progress was made toward achieving those goals by 2010 when the next strategic plan was being developed. That plan reinforced the

importance of continuing retention initiatives and attention to economic threats. It also pointed out the continuously improving nature of assessment on campus. Both of these plans underscore the seriousness with which CMU has worked to address issues pointed out in the 2003 self-study and in the 2006 follow-up, [Report to the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association Regarding its Focused Visit to Mesa State College](#). They also reflect the University's commitment to linking the planning and budgeting processes.

The 2003 self-study report also contained recommendations for improvement in areas listed below that did not merit HLC follow-up:

- **Communication**
The report identified that there was poor communication of the institution's mission and of the role of general education. Steps were taken to improve the clarity and communication of these aspects of the University to its constituents in both the CMU Catalog and on the CMU website. Further, concrete steps were taken to improve and increase avenues for engagement and participation of both faculty and staff in shaping policy that offer greater opportunity to be heard by the administration in the form of committees, working groups, regular meetings with administrators, and representatives serving on Faculty Senate and the Board of Trustees.
- **Faculty Salaries**
The report also identified low faculty salaries as an issue in need of attention. Since then, the Board of Trustees and administration have shown a commitment to increasing faculty salaries to competitive levels. Based on the philosophy that inflationary adjustments be funded before addressing other salary issues, a two percent salary increase was adopted in January 2006, and in each of the subsequent years, faculty and staff have seen varying levels of base increases. As part of a study by staff from the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) initiated by the CMU administration in 2005, faculty salaries were compared with regional and national groups. The initial goal was to bring salaries up to the average of faculty in the Western regional peer group and, subsequently, to national peers. Since then, a merit, non-base-building system for faculty has also been implemented to reward excellent performance. Currently, CMU faculty salary averages at all ranks meet or exceed those for CMU's western regional and national peer institutions.
- **Western Colorado Community College**
One recommendation of the 2003 self-study report was that a firm commitment to understanding the role and future of the community college division of the institution was needed. While some steps have been taken to better coordinate the relation between the main campus and the community college, further work is needed. Certain branding issues continue to exist, and the identity of WCCC has still not been completely clarified.
- **Minority Students**
CMU's location in an area of relatively low diversity has presented challenges for improving diversity on campus. Since the 2003 self-study report recommendation was made to continue to work on improving in this area, diversity figures have remained somewhat static in terms of administrative personnel, staff, and faculty working for the campus. In terms of students, recruitment and retention efforts have focused on underrepresented groups as one of the subsets within the broader undergraduate population. Diversity numbers, particularly those for entering undergraduates, have grown significantly. The 14-county region has about a 20 percent minority population, and the University is at about 21 percent of its total headcount. This is a significant improvement over previous years, reflecting progress by the University, and efforts are ongoing to continue that trend.
- **General Education Goals and Curriculum**
A review of general education was undertaken in academic year 2005-06, with minor changes made to the curriculum's goals. Most modifications to CMU's general education have come about due to requirements specified by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) in 2005. In addition to limiting the general education core to CCHE's specified distribution requirements of 31 credit hours, the institution has been successful in having nearly 80 general education courses approved for statewide guaranteed transfer to other Colorado public institutions. This issue will be discussed in significant detail in criteria 3 and 4.
- **Link between Planning and Budgeting**
"Closing the loop" between planning, assessment, and budgeting was one of the areas mentioned in the 2003 self-study report. More on the progress of these activities is found in the chapter on criterion 5.

Significant Developments Since 2003

Tremendous growth and remarkable improvement are key factors in the metamorphosis that has taken place in all areas of CMU's operations in the past 10 years. Some of the most obvious developments are:

- the institution's move to autonomy;

- greater status as a university;
- expansion of programs and infrastructure;
- fulfillment of CMU's mission as a regional educational provider; and
- maintenance of optimal quality as an educational provider for the western region of Colorado.

In 2003, the institution moved from governance by the Trustees of State Colleges in Colorado to oversight by a governing board whose primary focus was the well-being and success of the University. The current CMU Board of Trustees includes 11 voting members appointed by the governor of Colorado and confirmed by the State Senate. There are also two non-voting members, one elected from the CMU faculty and one from the student body. Having a Board of Trustees that focuses on a single institution has enabled the University to more effectively and rapidly address issues specific to the CMU campus.

The University has made notable additions to its undergraduate offerings and initiated degree programs at the master's level (August 1997, 2006, and 2011) and one at the doctoral level (January 2011). It also has evolved into a university, and along with that, the name of the institution changed from Mesa State College to Colorado Mesa University (June 2011). Additionally, in 2005, the institution has expanded its technical division from an industrial, technical, and trade school to one that provides a greater number of career options. Taken as a whole, these programs have consistently targeted fields that are most relevant to society's, and more specifically the region's, current needs.

COMPARISON OF CMU/WCCC ACADEMIC AND TECHNICAL PROGRAMS, 2003 AND 2012

Level of Award	Number of Programs	
	AY 2003 - 04	AY 2011 - 12
Certificates (all UG levels)	8	33
Associate Degrees	28	40
Baccalaureate Degrees	62	73
Master's Degrees	1	5
Doctoral Degree	-	1
Total	99	152

Sources: University catalogs

Note: Count distinguishes program specializations (e.g., B.S., Mathematics with two concentrations is recorded as two programs).

In the area of physical plant expansion, there have been extensive campus renovation and heavy investment in technology and green technology. The total square footage of buildings on the campus has essentially doubled, using funding from a combination of state funds, bonds, gifts, and University reserves. In 2003, campus buildings accounted for 876,261 square feet. By 2012, the University's facilities had expanded to 1,722,264 square feet.

Moves toward sustainability and support have also been manifold in CMU's 10-year development. Intentional restructuring of institutional finances has enhanced self-sufficiency and decreased reliance on state support. Investment in institutional aid for students has increased dramatically – more than quintupled since 2004 – even in the face of significant cuts to student aid from the State of Colorado and the federal government.

SOURCES OF CMU FINANCIAL AID AWARDS, FY 2003-04 AND FY 2011-12

Source of Financial Aid	FY 2003-04 (in dollars)	FY 2011-12 (in dollars)	% Change
Institutional	\$699,232	\$4,311,948	516.6%
State	\$2,676,882	\$3,715,622	38.8%
Federal	\$22,003,846	\$63,007,375	186.3%
Total	\$25,379,960	\$71,034,945	179.8%

Source: Office of Financial Aid

Since 2003, and as legislation established the mission of this institution as a regional educational provider, there has been enhanced outreach to the 14-county area through the adoption of distance learning technologies, targeted off-campus instruction, and the establishment of agreements with Colorado Mountain College and other institutions located at a distance from the main campus.

One aspect of CMU that has remained consistent throughout this period of dramatic change is its focus on maximizing the quality of learning for students. While enrollments have increased 62 percent, CMU has maintained small class sizes, with 66 percent of site-based classes having fewer than 30 students. A relatively low student-to-faculty ratio, 23:1, is also a point of pride. CMU has continued throughout the 10-year period to recruit and develop a student-accessible teaching faculty whose main priority is student learning, whether it be at the certificate or doctoral level. In sum, academic program additions, an excellent faculty, enhanced status as a university, increased financial aid, high quality teaching facilities and technology, along with financial restructuring, have established a solid base for CMU as it moves into the future.

Self-Study Goals and Processes

The main goal of the 2013 CMU self-study is to objectively examine and comprehensively evaluate the University in order to identify its areas of strength, as well as its areas of weakness so that processes of continuous quality improvement can be driven by data rather than by reflection alone. By engaging in a deep and expansive self-study, CMU is reinforcing a culture of improvement based on evidence, analysis, and documentation that will serve not only as a current reference, but also as a guide for future directions.

Obtaining re-affirmation of CMU's accreditation from the HLC is, of course, a main outcome of the self-study; however, unless the University uses the self-study for continued improvement, only parts of its goals have been met. The primary goal has been to conduct the process with transparency, integrity, and intellectual honesty, making all relevant information publicly available to stakeholders and engaging all stakeholders in the process to achieve a perspective inclusive of multiple constituencies. A final goal of this self-study is to position CMU for an effective transition to the new Pathways accreditation model, which will lead to further development of continuous improvement goals on the campus.

The current self-study began in spring 2011 with the appointment of a Self-Study Steering Committee that included broad representation from the CMU community. Five Criterion Committees were also formed with members representative of both staff and faculty from as many departments as possible. The first meetings of the Steering Committee took place in April and May 2011. At those meetings, the Steering Committee examined the then available Beta Version of the HLC Criteria and began identifying sources of information related to the criteria.

During fall 2011, the Steering Committee and the Criterion Committees met regularly, gathering data and interpreting the November-released Gamma Version of the five criteria. The subcommittees created chapter plans to guide them in the research required for their respective chapters of the self-study report. Throughout academic year 2011-12, extensive collections of data were organized into an electronic resource room and analyzed by the working groups as they began the writing process in response to the final Delta Version of the HLC Criteria in February 2012.

The Steering Committee co-chairs began meeting with the Criterion Committee chairs in fall 2012 to work toward integrating chapter drafts into a working self-study report document in preparation for circulating the draft through various constituencies. These constituencies included CMU students, faculty, staff, administration, and the Board of Trustees. During this period, revisions and refinements to the document continued as responses from the campus were incorporated. A semi-final draft was completed in May 2013, and the Steering Committee worked over the summer to finalize the self-study report. The Board of Trustees approved the document in late summer in preparation for submission of the self-study to the Commission.

Organization of the Self Study Report

"Achieving a Higher Degree" is a tag line used in recent years by CMU, and this slogan aptly describes this institution's work as a regionally significant center of quality learning over the past 10 years. Throughout this self-study report, evidence of CMU's dedication to achievement will be clear and abundant.

Through this introductory chapter, a brief overview of the history and distinctiveness of CMU, together with a list of some of the outstanding developments of the CMU campus since 2003, has already begun to show the multitude of achievements made by the University. Throughout the following chapters, this theme will continue to be reinforced as each of the five HLC Criteria for Accreditation is addressed, showing not only the accomplishments of the University but also providing evidence of how important it is to CMU to assure that students achieve higher degrees in their education and, more important, throughout their lives in the greater world. The narrative also documents steps taken by the institution to plan for, and adapt to, its changing economic, social, and technological environments, and as part of that, the numerous processes it has implemented over the last decade to continuously improve how it serves its students.

Within the five criteria, each core component section begins with a short introduction that will key readers in to what they can expect in the component section. Responses to each component (and sub-component) are summarized as evidence items, with narrative following each statement. Links to data sources, documents, and other types of supporting evidence are found in the narratives for each component. Academic year 2011-12 served as the snapshot year for criterion committee members on which to base their evaluations, but where relevant, updates to activities/reports/data extending into academic year 2012-13 are included. A survey of CMU/WCCC employees was administered through the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment as part of the self-study process. The responses from the 208 [faculty](#) and 158 [staff](#) are reported throughout the self-study.

All criterion chapters conclude with a brief summary of findings, with reference to specific core components, and a discussion of the key strengths and weaknesses, challenges, and/or opportunities for improvement that were identified by the study. The document ends with an overall summary that paints a picture of where the University currently stands, and how it plans to move forward as it continues to achieve ever higher degrees of excellence for its students and community. Finally, the appendix contains responses on CMU's compliance with expectations of the U.S. Department of Education.

Criterion 1: Mission

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

CMU Response

Introduction: The Mission Statement, Vision Statements, and Values Statements as a Vital Context Assess CMU Success and Progress

The [legislation](#) that created Colorado Mesa University – Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) 23-53-101– defines the University's current role and mission and serves as the centerpiece of the institution's commitment to its service region. The mission statement was revised in 2010 by the Colorado General Assembly and updated again in 2011 when Mesa State College was renamed Colorado Mesa University. The statutory statement was revised, yet again, in 2012 when CMU was approved by the Colorado Department on Higher Education to move to the selective admission standards category. The role and mission statement guided the 2010 development of the [2011 Strategic Plan \(p. 8\)](#), and the current version that reflects the updates is found in both the [Catalog \(p. 7, col. 2\)](#) and [CMU website](#), reads:

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.

The necessarily brief legislative statement provides CMU with the statutory language required to define the guiding values of the institution as well as its vision for progress. The most recent articulation of CMU's Mission, Vision, and Values Statements comes from the institution's 2011 Strategic Plan and directs one's attention to the institution's public commitment to its students and other stakeholders. The University's academic programs, assessment processes, planning, and governance provide the necessary framework for successfully fulfilling the concepts expressed in these statements. Additionally, this framework is supported through institutional policies and procedures that encourage diversity of thought, cultural awareness, and a commitment to the public good. Collectively, the enabling legislation and the Mission, Vision, and Values statements define Colorado Mesa University and provide a vital context from which to assess its success and progress.

Sources

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- [Catalog 2012-2013 \(Page 9\)](#)
 - [Legislation_CRS 23 53 101_Enabling Legislation](#)
 - [Strategic Plan 2011 \(Page 14\)](#)
 - [Strategic Plan_Vision, Values and Mission_Web Page](#)

Core Component 1.A

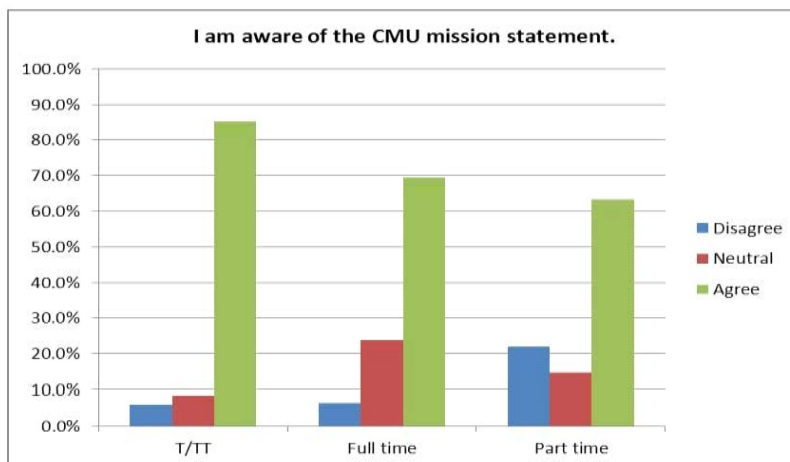
The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and 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.)

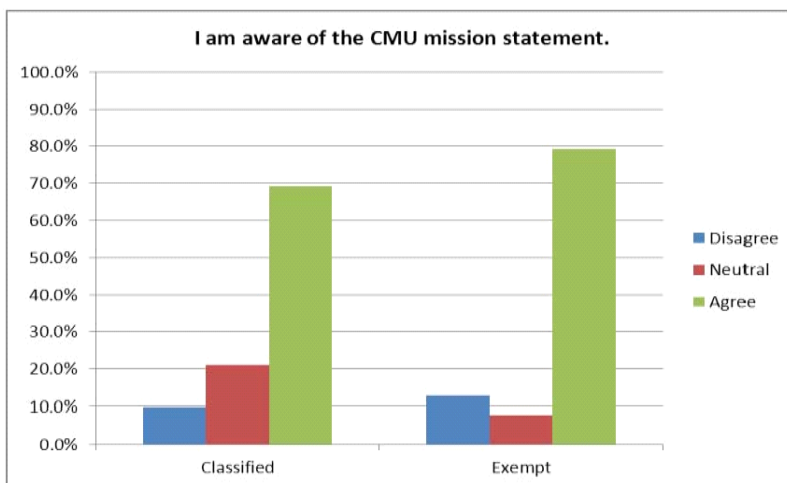
CMU Response

Introduction

The legislation that created Colorado Mesa University (CMU) is the foundation that defines the University's current role and mission and provides direction for all other associated statements. These documents have been developed systematically according to University procedures and formally adopted by the Board of Trustees. All University programs, along with academic and student support services, implement the commitments articulated in the [Mission Statement](#) and in the [Vision, and Values Statements](#) (2011 Strategic Plan, p. 8 and p. 13). Responses from faculty and staff surveys, conducted as part of the self-study process, point to an awareness of the University's Mission Statement.



Graph based on data from survey taken by faculty in 2012.



Graph based on data from survey taken by staff in 2012.

CMU's articulated goals, objectives, and visionary documents provide a solid foundation for coordinating the efforts of each division and department within the University. These documents, however, are also flexible enough to allow faculty, staff, and students to adapt as circumstances change.

Sub-component 1.A.1. The Mission Statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and adopted by the governing board.

Evidence Item 1A1-1. The Mission Statement is legislated by the Colorado General Assembly and provides direction for the CMU Board of Trustees.

CMU is a public institution under the jurisdiction of the Colorado General Assembly. As is typical of public institutions, the University has a Mission Statement that is the result of legislation enacted by the General Assembly and carried out by the institution's Board of Trustees. The Mission Statement has recently been amended through collaboration with the CMU Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and students in each case. In fact, the Mission Statement has been revised three times since 2009 at the institution's request. [The first revision](#) (2010) modified the scope of CMU's undergraduate and graduate programs. The [second revision](#) (2011), after nearly a year of research and input from various institutional stakeholders, changed the name of the institution from Mesa State College to Colorado Mesa University. The [third revision](#) (2012) changed the University's admission status from moderately selective to selective and expanded the size of the Board of Trustees. These revisions better reflect the identity of the institution and its stakeholders in the 21st century.

Evidence Item 1A1-2. Institutional Vision and Values statements were developed collaboratively by a campus committee with broad representation from all areas of the institution.

As referenced above, the legislative Mission Statement is supported by the institutional [Vision and Values Statements](#) specified in the University's 2011 Strategic Plan (p. 13). These statements were developed by a representative ad hoc group, the Strategic Planning Committee, as part of a larger effort to plan for the University's future. Members of this committee, convened by the University's President, included representatives of the faculty, staff, students, alumni, administrative personnel, community leaders, and local business owners. After development and discussion, the Strategic Plan was approved by the Board of Trustees, culminating a process that illustrates the consensus-driven approach the University typically utilizes to develop solutions to problems/issues and implement University projects.

Sub-component 1.A.2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.

Evidence Item 1A2-1. CMU degree offerings and statements on philosophy and goals of education are consistent with the Mission, Vision, and Values statements of the institution.

In response to the educational needs of the region's residents, the University offers certificates and degrees at multiple levels, all of which are consistent with its role and mission. Through its graduate division, CMU offers three master's and one doctoral degree. Through its four-year division, CMU offers six baccalaureate degrees in liberal arts and sciences and professional studies programs. Through its two-year division, Western Colorado Community College (WCCC), CMU supports its two-year role and mission by offering career and technical education programs. Because of its large [service region](#) (approximately 30,000 square miles), the University offers its programs in a variety of formats and locations. [CMU's programs](#), often developed in collaboration with the University's community and regional partners, fill both the needs of the Western Slope of Colorado and the expectations of a traditional liberal arts education, thereby offering a wide array of educational opportunities for residents of the CMU service region. This regional commitment applies to all campuses.

Other statements that are consistent with the Mission, Vision, and Values statements include:

- the [Philosophy and Goals of a Baccalaureate Education](#) (Catalog, p. 47, col. 1),
- the [Ten Goals of General Education](#) (Catalog, p. 47, col. 2),
- the [Mission Statement for Graduate Education](#) (Graduate Studies Manual, p. 1).

In each of these items, the narratives reference several Mission, Vision or Values statements in their goals. In all cases, the overarching goal is for CMU to have well-rounded graduates who think critically and creatively, and become responsible, productive members of an increasingly diverse society.

Evidence Item 1A2-2. CMU programs are consistent with its stated mission.

Colorado Mesa University has a rich history of offering traditional degree and certificate programs that relate to the institution's mission. Further illustrating the responsiveness of CMU to the needs of Western Colorado is the recent addition of new academic programs that are especially relevant to this region. The list below is representative of the program expansion:

- Doctor of Nursing Practice, Master of Science in Nursing, Associate of Applied Science/Registered Nurse, and Practical Nurse, Nursing;
- Master of Arts, Education: cognates in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Education Leadership, Exceptional Learner, and Teacher Leader;
- Bachelor of Applied Science in Business, Computer Information Systems, Hospitality Management, Public Administration/Public Safety, and Radiologic Technology;
- Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice;
- Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design;
- Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training, Construction Management, Mechanical Engineering Technology, Sport Management, and Exercise Science;
- Associate of Applied Science in Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic, Hospitality Management, Mechanical Engineering Technology, and Sustainable Agriculture;
- Professional Certificate (upper division undergraduate) in Energy Management, Entrepreneurship, Geographic Information Science and Technology, and Insurance;
- Technical Certificate (lower division undergraduate) in Decision Support Systems, Emergency Medical Technician, Police Officer Standards & Training (POST), Manufacturing Supervision, and Sustainability Practices.

Additionally, several academic minors and numerous concentrations have been implemented in the past ten years.

A unique program implemented in 2008 is a [partnership program](#) between CMU and the University of Colorado Boulder in mechanical engineering. It enables students to enroll in CMU courses at the lower division, usually in the first two years, and then complete CU-Boulder courses in Grand Junction for the final two years. Subsequently, CMU developed its own Bachelor of Science in [Mechanical Engineering Technology](#) for those students with an interest in engineering who might not have the preparation to succeed in an engineering program. Both were developed with significant input from community business leaders.

Serving the Western Slope, especially those who reside outside the Grand Junction area, requires flexibility in scheduling and willingness to offer courses and programs via nontraditional means. CMU has utilized current technologies to meet the educational goals of the residents within as well as outside of its service area. As the table below indicates, the use of alternative delivery modes has increased significantly since 2006.

**COMPARISON OF CMU ALTERNATIVE COURSE DELIVERY
FALL 2006 AND FALL 2011**

Alternative Delivery Mode or Location	Fall 2006	Fall 2011
Hybrid courses on main campus	1	34
Hybrid courses on WCCC campus	0	1
Montrose campus	45	54
Courses in high schools	36	67
Interactive Video	0	13
Online	41	116
Total	123	285

Source: Office of Institutional Research

Evidence Item 1A2-3. CMU's wide variety of student support services is in alignment with its mission to improve student success.

As reflected in CMU's Vision and Values statements, educating students is the institution's greatest priority. University personnel understand that achieving this goal often requires the provision of assistance inside and outside of the classroom. CMU student services include the Offices of Student Life, the University Center, Residence Life, Registrar, Financial Aid, Diversity and Advocacy, Campus Safety, Campus Recreation, Mentoring, and Student Health/Counseling Services. Academic support services

also contribute to the success of CMU students through the Offices of TRiO Student Support Services, Tutorial Learning Center, Testing Center, and Educational Access Services.

Evidence Item 1A2-4. Enrollment data reflect CMU's attention to its 14-county service area.

CMU is fulfilling its role of serving as a regional education provider, with [two-thirds of its undergraduate headcount](#) coming from the 14-county region (Fall 2012 Student Profile (p. 2). Led by Mesa, Delta, Montrose, and Garfield Counties, these enrollments reflect the priority CMU places on Western Colorado in its recruitment efforts. In more recent years, CMU has attracted undergraduates from a broader geography that includes other parts of Colorado and selected states in the western U.S., but these out-of-region enrollments are in addition to, not in place of, Western Colorado students. Clearly the University's strongest commitment for educating students continues to be to those from the 14-county region.

Evidence Item 1A2-5. Increasing numbers of ethnically diverse students support the ongoing mission of the institution.

The University values diversity among its students, faculty, and staff and promotes a balanced exchange of ideas and reflects the diversity of the region. A comparison of CMU's undergraduates for fall 2004 with data reported in the Fall 2012 Student Profile (p. 2) shows a [growing share of these students self-reported as a member of an underrepresented group](#). This growing diversity is the result of a variety of factors that include an increase in the number of Hispanic residents in western Colorado. Also relevant to this item was the decision by CMU to hire a Diversity Manager whose responsibilities include building networks with schools and community groups that develop a foundation for recruiting high school students to CMU. It also is an expectation of admissions staff that they become more aggressive in recruiting students of color.

Evidence Item 1A2-6. Student demographics indicate CMU's attention to increasing greater participation of male students in higher education.

As part of CMU's performance contract with the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the definition of underrepresented groups includes males, given the lower rates of participation by them when compared to females both nationally and locally. CMU has made progress in enrolling a [larger share of males](#) in its entering undergraduate cohorts, as documented in the Fall 2012 Student Profile (p. 2). As is the case for racial/ethnic minorities, the data show a shift in the male-female percentage by three percentage points over the eight years. This increase in the proportion of men has come about, in part, due to the nation's economic downturn, but also due to CMU significantly expanding its intercollegiate athletic teams and adding selected fields of study that are more attractive to male students (e.g., Construction Management, Mechanical Engineering).

Sub-component 1.A.3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.

Evidence Item 1A3-1. Annual budget requests by unit administrators must demonstrate how the request relates to CMU's strategic plan and goals.

The CMU [Vision](#) statement lists the specific goal of fostering "an administration that uses human and natural resources wisely."

The University's annual [budget request packet](#) requires a narrative that links any planned funding request to the accomplishment of one or more goals from the University's strategic plan. Additionally, guiding principles for budgeting are included in the budget packets and call for employees to "budget conservatively . . . protect the gains achieved to date . . . and identify and eliminate the unnecessary."

The decrease in state funding in recent years has necessitated creative resource-building strategies that support CMU's delivery of quality education to enhance student success. Recent effective budgeting initiatives include:

- implementing a more efficient fee system for student credit hours;
- partnering with the city and county to expand campus facilities;
- acting upon the goals of improving student retention rates and graduation ratios;
- improving the physical facilities and technology systems throughout the main and outlying campuses;
- increasing classroom and living space because of student population growth and increasing faculty and staff accordingly.

The above statements provide a brief summary for this sub-component. Detailed responses are found in Components 5.A and 5.C.

Sources

	Budget Instructions FY14
	Budget Request Packet_FY 2013
	Catalog 2012-2013 (Page 13)
	Catalog 2012-2013 (Page 49)
	CMU 14-County Service Area_Map

-  [CMU-CU-Boulder Mechanical Engineering Partnership Program](#)
-  [Enrollment_EOT_Fall12_All Student Profile_2004 and 2012 \(Page 2\)](#)
-  [Graduate Policies and Procedures Manual_2012 \(Page 6\)](#)
-  [Legislation_House Bill 12-1324-Admissions Standards](#)
-  [Legislation_Senate Bill 10-079-CMU Prog Role and Scope](#)
-  [Legislation_Senate Bill 11-265-MSC-CMU Name Change](#)
-  [Mechanical Engineering Technology _ Engineering](#)
-  [Strategic Plan 2011 \(Page 14\)](#)
-  [Strategic Plan 2011 \(Page 19\)](#)

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, 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.

CMU Response

Introduction

The age of information is booming with seemingly daily innovations and improvements to technology. No longer must parents drive their children to visit college campuses in order to find out what a campus has to offer. Instead, most prospective and current students utilize the internet to access information about academic possibilities, college life, and admissions. Therefore, it is vital that CMU has relevant information electronically available to the public.

Sub-component 1.B.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.

Evidence Item 1B1-1. CMU provides clear access to its mission, vision, values, goals, and the 2011 Strategic Plan via its website and University Catalog.

The current Mission, Vision, Values statements of the University are clearly and publicly articulated on the CMU [website](#) and in the [Catalog](#) (p. 7, col. 2). The most recent strategic planning documents, including the accompanying progress report, identify both the [goals for higher education for the State of Colorado higher education](#), as well as [proposed goals and objectives for CMU](#).

Sub-component 1.B.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, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.

Evidence Item 1B2-1. The CMU Mission, Vision, and Values Statements are current.

CMU's legislative [mission](#) is current, having been amended by the Colorado General Assembly in 2010 to allow for a greater number of undergraduate and graduate offerings. It was subsequently updated in 2011 to reflect the name change to Colorado Mesa University from Mesa State College and in 2012 to signify the reclassification from a moderately selective enrollment to a selective enrollment for the baccalaureate programs.

In fall 2012, the CMU Board of Trustees adopted an institutional Mission Statement that clearly articulates CMU's purpose beyond the enabling legislation:

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.

The statement was developed collaboratively by representatives of the Board of Trustees, the academic department heads, Faculty Senate, and the administration.

The University's Vision and Values Statements also are current and are articulated in the [2011 Strategic Plan](#) (p. 13), approved by the trustees in January 2011. The plan serves as the backbone of the University's aspirations.

Evidence Item 1B2-2. Institutional documents explain the emphasis of the University.

The 2011 Strategic Plan describes the progress of the institution in accomplishing its seven goals from 2004. A [summary](#) of those accomplishments as of 2010 served as context for development of the current plan:

- CMU has raised the level of educational attainment in the 14-county region by supporting students with diverse levels of academic preparation. Two supporting pieces of data are the increased number of CMU students coming from the 14-county area – from 3,067 in 2004 to 4,859 in 2009 – and the number of racial/ethnic minority students rising from 16.5 percent in 2004 to 20.3 percent in 2009. (Phase I Goal #1)
- CMU supports activities that enhance student learning, e.g., implementation of the Early Alert System, increased use of the Tutorial Learning Center and TRiO mentoring program, increased financial aid, and implementation of the Student Showcase event for academic projects to be displayed. (Phase I Goal #2)
- CMU focuses on quality faculty who are great teachers with a passion for teaching. Supporting data include the University's commitment to (and success in) bringing faculty salaries to the averages of its peers. Survey results show that CMU faculty score higher averages on the ACT Student Opinion Survey than those for faculty at public colleges and a national sample of faculty at comparable institutions. Separately, a high proportion of CMU faculty were reported as holding the terminal degree in their respective field. (Phase I Goal #3)
- CMU has improved the quality and utilization of campus facilities. Square footage nearly doubled from 2004 to 2010, and construction continues. Instructional space increased about 50 percent in that same time period, and virtually all classrooms now have current instructional technology. (Phase I Goal #4)
- CMU has reviewed and prioritized academic programs. The Academic Program Quality, Priorities, and Productivity (APQPP) study completed in 2009 prioritized academic programs, and re-allocations have been made; and 38 academic programs and one partnership have been added to the curriculum since 2004. (Phase I Goal #5)
- CMU has more fully developed and implemented its community college role at WCCC. The Unified Technical Education Center (UTEC) became Western Colorado Community College (WCCC) in 2005. It offers admission and application assistance, advising services, financial aid, registration and payment services on site. (Phase I Goal #6)
- CMU manages its resources efficiently, as seen by utilizing independent insurance providers, completing a facilities energy audit with Chevron, reducing food service operational costs, implementing a Health IQ program for employees, and streamlining fiscal, student, and academic administrative services since 2004. Each of these examples has resulted in reduced costs to the University. (Phase I Goal #7)

The 2011 Strategic Plan (p. 13) [Vision Statement](#) addresses many aspects of the institution, including teaching and academic programs, faculty strength and diversity, and community support. Five of these aspects are discussed below.

• **Colorado Mesa University will leverage:**

An adaptable, flexible approach to learning that allows students to choose from multiple and potentially integrated pathways to achieve certification, associates, bachelors, and graduate degrees.

CMU offers several approaches to learning through a variety of programs. There are full semester courses, late-start courses, module (half-semester) courses, evening-hours courses, summer courses, and January term courses. [Mesa@Night](#) highlights evening classes for students who work daytime business hours. CMU offers courses in several locations: the main campus and WCCC (in Grand Junction) and in Montrose, plus area high schools (for concurrent high school students). The University also provides online and hybrid distance learning options through the [Extended Studies Program](#).

• **Colorado Mesa University will leverage:**

A curriculum, often bridging liberal education and professional programs, that successfully prepares students for the 21st century in the areas of personal and social responsibility, civic engagement, ethics, and intercultural/global learning.

The [University's curriculum](#), as summarized in the Catalog (p. 11), encompasses liberal arts and/or professional program offerings. This is evidenced by a sampling of degrees offered, including Associate of Arts, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Master in Business Administration, and Doctor of Nursing Practice. An example of a program

that bridges both the liberal education and professional programs is the Music Department's Bachelor of Arts in Music. This is a professional program embedded in a liberal arts framework. A second example is provided by a program that spans liberal arts and professional curricula. The Colorado Mesa University-University of Colorado Boulder Mechanical Engineering Partnership Program is structured such that students receive their first two years of coursework from CMU, largely in the liberal arts and sciences, and the second two years of professional education from CU-Boulder.

- **Colorado Mesa University will leverage:**

A wide array of academic programs that are improved on an ongoing, continuous basis for quality and relevance to Western Colorado's needs in the context of an ever-changing world.

Numerous certificates and degrees provide a wide array of academic programs. These programs are revised and improved upon regularly via several systems put in place by the University:

- An internal [six-year cyclical review of programs](#) provides continuous quality improvement within the University. The process is outlined in the Academic Program Review Manual.
- The Academic Program Quality, Priorities, and Productivity (APQPP) Report was completed in 2009 by a working group of faculty and academic administrators. An objective of the year-long study was to examine how each program fit within the University's role and mission, and the working group's findings were based on each program's centrality to the role and mission of the institution, student demand, program characteristics, financial information, and faculty. The majority of programs matched the criteria for continuing, but the working group recommended that 12 programs be totally or partially phased out ([APQPP Report, p. 8, col. 3](#)).
- Part of the CMU Mission Statement designates its community college division as having a five-county service region as well as being the vocational program provider for Mesa County. This [role](#), specified for Colorado Mesa University/Western Colorado Community College in [CCHE Policy N: Service Areas of Colorado Public Institutions of Higher Education](#) (note: referenced erroneously in the policy as Mesa State University), underscores the division's relevance to Western Colorado's workforce training.
- CMU's [Vision Statement](#) calls for academic programs that are current for today's changing society and reflect a significant need in Western Colorado.
- The [Combined Curriculum Committee Policies and Procedures Manual](#) (for WCCC, CMU undergraduate, and CMU graduate committees) outlines the process whereby the appropriate committee considers course and program additions, modifications, and deletions. Justifications for these changes often reflect the changing needs of Western Colorado.

- **Colorado Mesa University will leverage:**

A highly qualified faculty that excels in teaching and interacting with students.

The University believes it is important to have highly qualified faculty who are able to successfully teach at the university level. This is made evident in the institution's hiring practices and evaluative tools, and is covered later in this document under Sub-component 3.C.1.

CMU is committed to the success of its students by being committed to the academic preparation of its faculty. In fall 2011, 149 of 217 full-time CMU faculty members held one of the [Board-approved terminal degrees for their discipline](#), and another 66 are qualified in their areas (i.e., earned a degree at least one level higher than the level at which he or she was teaching and was in a relevant field). Only two full-time faculty did not possess a master's degree or higher but were hired because of their professional experience and expertise in their respective fields.

Another indicator of excellence in teaching are the results of full-time faculty evaluations. CMU faculty members are evaluated yearly in a process ([Professional Personnel Employment Handbook \(PPEH\), p. VI-8, line 318](#)) that measures success in four areas: teaching, scholarship, service, and advising. Of the four categories, teaching carries the most weight (at least 60 percent but no more than 75 percent) for the composite score. They ultimately receive an overall rating of Below Standard, Proficient, Highly Proficient, or Excellent. A select few may be given an Exemplary rating. In 2012, 71 percent of faculty members received exemplary (13 percent) or excellent (58 percent) ratings. Additionally, if faculty members are evaluated as proficient or lower, they must develop a professional development plan to guide their work in becoming a more effective instructor.

It is also accurate to state that CMU is committed to student success through strong faculty-student interactions. That commitment is shown in the following expectations ([PPEH, p. VI-3, line 91](#)):

- All faculty members must schedule and hold office hours of at least five hours per week (over a span of at least four days).
- Advising is not simply part of faculty members' job descriptions; it is part of faculty members' annual evaluations.
- It is a commitment of CMU to employ only faculty to teach courses, not graduate teaching assistants.

Some faculty, in addition to teaching in certificate and degree programs, teach continuing education courses covering topics of interest to the community. Examples are found in this chapter under Sub-component 1.D.1.

• **Colorado Mesa University will leverage:**

Community support from businesses, industries, alumni, and residents of the region.

This Vision Statement underscores the University's commitment to its relationships with the community and region. Examples are shown below:

- The City of Grand Junction and Mesa County contribute \$500,000 and \$100,000 annually for property acquisition that enables the long-term expansion of the campus.
- Many organizations, businesses, alumni and other friends of the institution in the 14 Western Colorado counties contribute greatly to the success of CMU. For the period 2003 through 2011, businesses and organizations gave approximately \$14 million, alumni gave nearly \$3 million, and individual friends of the University gave \$3.7 million for a combined total of [nearly \\$21 million cash donations](#). Additional in-kind donations include buildings, sponsorships of athletic teams, radio advertising, sports equipment and supplies, medical services, equipment/vehicle repair services, trips, music scores or CDs, videos/DVDs, jewelry, artwork, and discounts on/donations of food.
- The [CMU Foundation/Development Office](#) assists the entire University by providing additional dollars for scholarship and program support. This office is a nonprofit organization under Internal Revenue Service 501(c)(3) designation and retains fiduciary responsibility for the investment of the funds entrusted to the Foundation. In this context, the Foundation administers over 300 academic scholarships established by many generous donors.
- Several auxiliary organizations support various departments on campus. Examples include the [Maverick Club](#), [Friends of Music](#), [Bravo! Club](#), and [Friends of the Library](#).

Sub-component 1.B.3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Evidence Item 1B3-1. The University's Mission Statement, Strategic Plan, and Performance Contract identify what the institution achieves, the depth of its accomplishments, and who benefits from the institution's services.

CMU's [legislative Mission Statement](#), reads in part:

Colorado Mesa University . . . 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.

The University's primary stakeholders are defined repeatedly in its Mission, Vision, and Values statements as “students and the residents of Western Colorado.” The statutory mission is defined as “regional” and the Vision and Values statements clearly define the region as “Western Colorado.” These two phrases appear within the Mission, Vision, and Values statements, in some form, eight times. The statutory mission further directs that the Colorado Commission on Higher Education is to specify “its commission-approved service area.”

In accomplishing its mission, CMU's service area is approved by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) through its [Regional Education Provider Policy](#), based on [C.R.S. 23-1-127](#), as stated by the following:

- *For its role as a baccalaureate and graduate institution – the 14 counties for which it has been designated the regional education provider.*

As noted in Evidence Item 1B2-2 above, service regions for community colleges are specified in [CCHE Policy N](#). For Colorado Mesa University/Western Colorado Community College, the following geographic boundaries apply:

- *For its role as a community college – Mesa, Delta, Montrose, San Miguel, and Ouray counties;*
- *For its role in providing vocational programs – Mesa County;*
- *The University cooperates with Adams State College [now University] in providing two-year programs for Gunnison and Hinsdale counties.*

Two items below from the institution's Vision Statement indicate the depth of CMU's curriculum:

- **Colorado Mesa University will leverage:**

A curriculum, often bridging liberal education and professional programs, that successfully prepares students for the 21st century in the areas of personal and social responsibility, civic engagement, ethics, and intercultural/global learning.

- **Colorado Mesa University will leverage:**

A wide array of academic programs that are improved on an ongoing, continuous basis for quality and relevance to Western Colorado's needs in the context of an ever-changing world.

The following is from the conclusion to the institution's [Vision Statement](#), (2011 Strategic Plan, p. 14) and identifies the desired outcomes of the University:

As it assumes an expanded leadership role, CMU will expand its public engagement of the region's stakeholders by serving as the primary intellectual and cultural center and promoting the exchange of ideas that are of regional, national, and international importance.

The [2011 Performance Contract Report \(p. 6\)](#), the agreement between the CMU Board of Trustees and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, focuses on four main goals: Access; Quality and Success in Undergraduate Education; Efficiency of Operations; and State and Regional Needs. As documented in the institution's response to the goals, objectives, and corresponding data, CMU is in compliance with the state's expectations. Examples include accreditation opportunities, evaluation and assessment of student learning, diversity studies, and vocational workforce training.

The 2011 Strategic Plan offers supporting data on the seven points in Phase I (see above in Evidence Item 1.B.2-2) and further goals for the University in Phase II. Thus, given all the goals and objectives developed by the University, the nature, scope, and intended constituents of its programs and services are adequately described.

Evidence Item 1B3-2. Institutional mission documents do not clearly articulate differences in role, scope, and intended constituents between Colorado Mesa University and Western Colorado Community College.

Because of its broad role and mission, Colorado Mesa University, has long been challenged to meet all of the expectations associated with having both a two- and four-year role and mission. Nonetheless, the institution has attempted to address the many and diverse opportunities and obligations that come with this dual responsibility. Most recently in 2005, the institution established a community college that built on the former MSC School of Technology and the Grand Valley Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). Western Colorado Community College was formalized as the open enrollment division of its parent university and structured so as to minimize costs resulting from potential duplication of programs and services. In that regard, CMU has been successful.

To date, the community college concept, however, has not been fully realized, in part because of the limited resources that CMU is attempting to leverage to support both divisions. As a result, neither WCCC's creation nor any mission-related documents have brought true clarity to the distinction between the two institutions. Discussions centering on the two institutions' relationship would enhance on- and off-campus constituents' understanding of the expectations, responsibilities, effort, and resources needed to meet the challenges of CMU's broad mission.

Sources

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- [Academic Program Quality, Priorities, & Productivity \(APQPP\) 2009 Report \(Page 8\)](#)
 - [Academic Program Review Manual 2012 \(Page 4\)](#)
 - [Catalog 2012-2013 \(Page 13\)](#)
 - [Catalog 2012-2013 \(Page 9\)](#)
 - [CCHE Policy I-N \(Service Area - Role\) \(Page 6\)](#)

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-  CCHE-CMU Performance Contract Report 2011 (Page 6)
-  Colorado Mesa University Foundation
-  Donations to CMU 2003-2011
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-  Legislation_CRS 23 1 127_Regional Education Provider
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-  Library Friends of the Library
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-  PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation (Page 1)
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-  Theatre Bravo Club

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.

CMU Response

Introduction

In fall 2012, CMU administration, faculty, and staff welcomed [nearly 9,500 students from across the United States](#) (Fall 2012 Student Profile (p. 1)) as well as [25 foreign countries](#). Adding to the diverse geographic mix is the percentage of students who are the first person in their family to attend college and Pell eligible (41 percent). Nearly 25 percent of CMU students are 25 years of age or older; 45 percent are males. [One-fifth of undergraduates reported themselves to be from an underrepresented racial/ethnic group](#) (Fall 2012 Student Profile, (p. 2)). Developing and sustaining diversity is an important component of the University, and institutional goals address this challenge.

Sub-component 1.C.1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.

The University's [commitment to address its role in a multicultural society](#) is clearly grounded in, and reaffirmed by, the institution's Values Statement in the 2011 Strategic Plan (p. 15, bullet 6). This guiding document, which is built from the University's statutory mission as well as its Performance Contract with the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, clearly articulates the institution's commitment to the diversity of its learners and the constituencies it serves in [Goal 1](#).

Evidence Item 1C1-1. The institution has clearly articulated that it values diversity.

The following [diversity statement](#) is found in the CMU Catalog (p. 8, col. 3):

Colorado Mesa University is a community of scholars in the liberal arts tradition. . . . 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. . . . 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. To further tolerance and appreciation of our society's diversity, Colorado Mesa University requires that all graduates fulfill General Education requirements. In doing so, we honor the validity of a liberal education. We hope that the experience will help our students understand how to appreciate the true diversity of the world. Because diversity promotes multiple opinions, techniques, viewpoints and approaches, it is not the individual courses within the General Education program which we believe will further the above stated goals, but the whole experience of the program itself.

Evidence Item 1C1-2. The University's Strategic Plan and the 2011 Performance Contract emphasize CMU's commitment to underserved populations.

Colorado Mesa University's 2011 Performance Contract Report (p. 6, goal 1) with the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) [commits the University](#) to:

ensure widespread access to Colorado's public colleges... with particular emphasis on increasing the participation and success of underserved students and . . . provide learning experiences that foster the development of skills and abilities that prepare students for the global economy . . . [and] establish critical thinking and logic skills essential to full participation in a democratic society.

Moreover, the 2011 Strategic Plan (p. 13, para 1) outlines the [University's vision that CMU will be "an institution of higher education that successfully prepares students from diverse backgrounds for lives of career and service anywhere in the world"](#) and that, among its values, are:

- student choice in academic programming that prepares future leaders to function as productive and responsible members of a global society;
- a vibrant and varied campus setting that values diversity and diverse activities and encourages involvement and interaction outside the classroom;
- 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.

Goal four in the 2011 Strategic Plan (p. 16) further expresses [CMU's commitment to human diversity](#), stating that the University will "actively engage students of all backgrounds in on- and off-campus activities which broaden their educational experiences and enhance their successes," with specific objectives addressing the diversity of learners including first-time students, returning students, adult learners, and commuter students.

Colorado Mesa University further communicates an understanding of the relationship between its mission and the diversity of U.S. society in the Catalog (p. 3, top section). The institution's general policy statement includes its Affirmative Action program, stating, "Colorado Mesa University is committed to providing admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its educational endeavors, consonant with applicable laws and without regard to race, creed, color, religion, sex, disability, age, national origin, veteran status, marital status, or sexual orientation."

Evidence Item 1C1-3. CMU seeks to be reflective of the racial/ethnic composition of Western Colorado.

CMU has demonstrated a commitment to increasing student diversity, and its student enrollment profile has changed since 2004 to better reflect the racial/ethnic composition of its service region, as can be seen in the table below. In fact, with the exception of those who self-identify as Hispanic (of any race), the University's 2012 enrollment data exhibit a student population that is more racially/ethnically diverse than the 14-county region that CMU serves. This is particularly true for first-time entering undergraduates. Despite this achievement, the institution recognizes the need to continue efforts toward this end and works aggressively to recruit and retain students of color.

COMPARISON OF CMU ENROLLMENTS (FALL 2012) WITH THE 14-COUNTY SERVICE REGION BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Race/Ethnicity	14-County (%)	CMU Total Undergraduate Enrollment (%)	CMU First-time Undergraduate Enrollment (%)
Hispanic (of any race)	17.0%	12.9%	17.1%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.5%	1.2%	1.2%
Asian	0.7%	1.4%	1.2%
Black, Non-Hispanic	0.5%	2.1%	3.4%
Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.5%	0.5%
Two or More Races	1.2%	2.9%	4.9%
Subtotal	20.0%	21.0%	28.3%
White, Non-Hispanic	79.9%	74.1%	68.6%
Unknown/Other/Not Reported	0.1%	4.9%	3.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

CMU's 2011 Performance Contract Report (p. 12, Section 3) with the CCHE further [identifies objectives](#) to address [C.R.S. 23-5-129](#) which requires that "increasing enrollment of underserved students, including low-income individuals, minority groups, and males where underserved, shall be addressed in each performance contract." Specifically, CMU has identified objectives of increasing the number of first-generation graduates by three percent annually and increasing the number of high-need (or up to 150 percent of Pell) graduates by four percent annually.

The 2011 Strategic Plan (p. 5) states, "[More than 40 percent of the faculty are female, eight percent come from an underrepresented group, and approximately 29 percent fall in the age range of 55-64 years.](#)" The Plan (p. 16) further reflects the [University's commitment to faculty and staff diversity](#) in goal 3 which states CMU's intent to:

recruit, support, and retain excellent: a) faculty from diverse backgrounds who have teaching as their highest priority as well as a commitment to scholarly activity, advising, and service to the [University] and community, and b) administrative staff and classified staff from diverse backgrounds who are

enthusiastic and share the vision and desire to improve the [University] and community. . . . [An objective under this goal is to] increase the number of employees from underrepresented groups and increase retention of all employees.

Thus the Vision and Values statements in the plan extend into clearly defined goals and objectives as shown by the above goal. Since 2003, however, the [percentages](#) of the institution's faculty, administration, and staff (as reported to the Office of Human Resources) as being from a underrepresented group have varied from year to year. The number of Black (non-Hispanic), Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and multiracial personnel has grown. However, only nine percent of full-time faculty, administration, and staff self-report as being a member of an underrepresented group. Recruiting a more diverse employee composition remains a challenge for the University, even though CMU has expanded its advertising of positions in outlets specific to a racial or ethnic group (e.g., *Hispanics in Higher Education*; *Hispanic Outlook*; *Blacks in Higher Education*) and placed greater emphasis on experience with diverse populations as part of its criteria for position announcements. All job postings include the following statements:

- *Colorado Mesa University is particularly interested in candidates who have experience working with students from diverse backgrounds and who have a demonstrated commitment to improving the levels of access and success for underrepresented students within higher education.*
- *Colorado Mesa University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer, committed to a culturally diverse faculty, staff and student body.*

Sub-component 1.C.2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Evidence Item 1C2-1. The University's governing board affirms a public commitment to a safe and diverse campus culture inclusive of all backgrounds.

In spring 2012, there were a few public incidents of violence off-campus involving one or more CMU students that were perceived at the time to be bias-related. While the facts learned later did not support the bias-related claims, the issue led the Vice President for Student Services to hold "town hall" meetings with students to address concerns and questions. As a result of this student feedback, along with concern expressed by representatives of the CMU trustees and faculty, the University sought to better communicate resources and expectations for a safe and healthy campus culture by passing and publishing a clear and definitive resolution. The following [resolution](#) was approved by the Board (Trustees Meeting Agenda, August 17, 2012, p. 31) and shared with the campus community by the University President:

A Resolution Concerning Expectations Regarding Safety, Violence, Intimidation, Abuse and Discrimination at Colorado Mesa University

WHEREAS Colorado Mesa University values the free exchange of ideas among students, faculty, staff, and members of the community on each of its campuses; ***AND***

WHEREAS Colorado Mesa University 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; ***AND***

WHEREAS Colorado Mesa University constantly strives to nurture a respectful, inclusive, physically and emotionally safe campus culture free of violence, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation, or discrimination, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation; ***AND***

WHEREAS victims and witnesses of violence, intimidation, abuse, and discrimination may be reluctant to seek assistance or report such instances for fear of retaliation or further discrimination; ***AND***

WHEREAS students enrolled at Colorado Mesa University share a responsibility with faculty, staff and other members of the campus community to uphold the highest possible standards of civil and ethical conduct, promote a culture of respect and inclusiveness, and model thoughtful approaches to difficult issues by protecting free and open discussion, the right to due process, and an expectation that all members of the campus community will be held accountable for both words and actions;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES condemns in the strongest terms possible any act of violence, intimidation, verbal or physical

abuse, or discrimination on each of its campuses and in the communities which we serve. Further, the Board of Trustees calls upon each member of the campus community – students, faculty, and staff – to embrace a culture of respect and inclusiveness and to report immediately, through the Crime Stoppers hotline for confidentiality if deemed necessary, any acts of violence, intimidation, abuse, or discrimination, suffered or observed, immediately in accordance with the CMU employee handbook, the CMU student code of conduct, and/or applicable local, state, or federal laws.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED on this the 17th day of August, 2012.

Evidence Item 1C2-2. Attention to diversity is apparent in the focus, support for, and actions of student services.

The University exhibits attention to diversity by actively identifying and responding to campus needs in this area and by seeking opportunities to promote a diverse campus. CMU provides student and staff training and development opportunities that align with the University's stated value of support for students from diverse backgrounds and a safe and healthy campus culture. This is exemplified through various programs, processes, and activities, including:

- A "Safe Zone" program was implemented with three trainings in summer 2013 to promote non-bias & non-judgmental environments across campus. Trainees of the program display a sticker in their office to identify themselves to students as a positive and safe resource.
- The University utilized a grant to secure a nationally-renowned healthy relationships training program –The Date Safe Project – for first-time entering students and student-athletes in the fall of 2012. The University also partnered with community organizations in spring of 2013 to provide domestic violence prevention education (A Call to Men). A grant was awarded to the Office of Diversity, Advocacy, and Health for academic year 2013-14 to further promote healthy relationships across campus.
- In fall 2012, the campus offered the program A CAMPUS OF DIFFERENCE with assistance from the Anti-Defamation League's A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE Institute. Also, the campus participates in Holocaust Awareness Week each spring.
- Student Life staff, Residence Life staff, and the University Center staff have been trained to respect diversity, build an inclusive community, and deal with harassment and discrimination.
- In spring 2012, CMU hosted two workshops for School District 51 students focusing on cultural awareness.
- Despite relatively few reported incidents, CMU proactively created a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) informed by national best practices to coordinate and improve services and support for victims of sexual assault and/or harassment.
- The [TRiO Student Support Services](#) provides the following to approximately 140 first-generation, low-income, and/or disabled students:
 - tutoring and study strategies;
 - career counseling, advising, and class registration;
 - financial aid advising;
 - mentoring for personal concerns and health issues;
 - graduate-professional school advising and preparation; and
 - cultural and academic enrichment activities.

Through this program, staff provide ongoing and continuous advising and mentoring of qualified students throughout their academic careers at CMU that increases the likelihood of students achieving good academic standing and improved retention and graduation rates. In academic year 2010-11, 93 students participated in the TRiO program. More [students have been added each year](#), and in academic year 2012-13, the number participating in this program grew to 135.

- The [Tutorial Learning Center](#) (TLC), which helps to address the needs of students who have diverse learning styles, provides free walk-in tutoring for a wide variety of subjects to all CMU students. The goals of the TLC are to create opportunities for student success and to help students become more independent with their learning. In academic year 2007-08, the total TLC contacts for 2,928 students were 2,073 hours. By academic year 2011-12, these numbers had grown to 11,754 contacts and 7,146 hours.
- [Educational Access Services](#) (EAS) recognizes disability as an aspect of diversity and an integral part of society. EAS staff collaborate with students, faculty, other staff, and community members to create an accessible higher education community. EAS provides academic accommodations and promotes universal design principles, enabling students with disabilities the opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of the educational environment as successful and independent learners.

Examples of assistance include test-taking accommodations, help with taking notes, alternative format texts, assistive technologies, and classroom assistance.

In academic year 2007-08, EAS served 166 students, and by academic year 2011-12, the number of students had increased to 301. Even more striking is the growth in the number of accommodations, increasing by 84% over the same timeframe. Digital scanning and editing technology became more available beginning in academic year 2005-06, thereby greatly increasing EAS's capacity to produce audio books on CD rather than on tape.

- A student-led [Cultural Diversity Board](#) (CDB) engages the diverse populations on campus by promoting cultural awareness and hosting events that further inclusiveness and equity of all cultures. It provides educational resources and support services and serves as the educational liaison to CMU campuses and the regional community regarding culturally diverse issues. The CDB is open to anyone who would like to promote diversity on campus and in the Grand Valley. The CDB contributes to the process of dismantling the destructive power of prejudice and intolerance. It is the umbrella organization for several student organizations.

Evidence Item 1C2-3. CMU faculty are engaged in teaching and researching diversity.

Students are learning about diversity through a variety of experiences:

- [Four Corners Conference on Globalization](#) has been an annual event at CMU since 2009, involving faculty from multiple disciplines hosting a conference and dialogue on current issues that affect society. The last two conference themes have been Globalization and the Media (2011) and Culture and Ethnicity (2012). The conference has attracted scholars from Latin America and the U.S.; sessions are conducted in Spanish and English, and proceedings of the scholars' works have been published by the Universidad de Costa Rica and the Universidad de Medellin in Colombia.
- CMU understands the value of extending learning experiences to other domestic and international locations and provides opportunities for students to obtain these experiences:
 - Faculty regularly lead students, alumni, and community members on [tours/research opportunities](#) to various locations, coordinated through the Extended Studies Program. In recent years, experiences have included China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Greece, Guatemala, Germany, Japan, and Spain. In total, 23 international travel courses were planned between 2001 and 2012, with 11 faculty members taking 210 students abroad.
 - Leaders from the [Outdoor Program](#) have conducted international education and excursion trips to Vancouver Island, Denali, the Haute Route, Southern Africa, Java, Bali and Borneo, Belize, Southern India, the Middle East, Jamaica, Nepal, Tibet and China, East Africa, Peru, Bolivia and Chile. In the past nine years Outdoor Program leaders have guided 19 expeditions to 41 countries, spending a total of 89 weeks abroad with 194 students and 30 staff and faculty members.
 - CMU's baccalaureate nursing program offered its first international course – Global Health: Nicaragua – during summer 2012. Four faculty and 12 students participated; included was an 11-day trip to Nicaragua. Students participated in pre-trip seminars and in-country clinicals totaling about 700 hours, served in leadership positions for the group, participated in reflective journaling and debriefing, and presented their experiences to the community in a formal slide show.
 - Being members of the [International Student Exchange Program](#) (ISEP) enables CMU students to pay CMU tuition while studying abroad for a semester or an academic year. This program provides students with the opportunity to immerse themselves in global academic experiences in one of 50 countries around the world. The program coordinates university-level student exchanges in a network of over 300 universities in those countries. CMU joined the ISEP network in 2009, with students first participating in exchanges during academic year 2010-11. Four students were placed in academic year 2010-11; 10 were placed the following year. Additionally, 12 incoming international students joined the CMU campus community during that same time period.
 - Through the [National Student Exchange program](#), CMU students can attend a different school for a semester or an academic year, in a different part of the United States, while paying CMU tuition. Exchange opportunities are available from the combined resources of more than 190 campuses, including exchange locations in three U.S. territories, the District of Columbia, and six Canadian provinces.
- Twenty-seven [faculty colloquia](#) have been presented from academic year 2003-04 through academic year 2011-12 addressing various countries, curriculum, and cultural aspects of diversity.
- Between 2003 and 2012, 71 public [theater and dance performances at CMU](#) have addressed society and societal concerns. The types of diversity represented include religion, sexuality, race, gender, and economic status.

- All teacher education candidates have at least one field placement in a Title I school so they have and can demonstrate dispositions open to all kinds of diversity. Additionally, the Center for Teacher Education, through a Title III grant, has sponsored three national speakers presenting on the topic of language, race, and diversity from 2009 to 2012. These presentations were open to other educators as well as CMU students and faculty.
- Through internships and field experience hours, faculty and students in the Master of Arts in Education (English for Speakers of Other Languages cognate) make a direct impact on English language learners (ELL) who reside within the University's 14-county service region. Between 2005 and 2011, more than 116 teachers completed CMU's master's degree program, while 2,811 ELL students have been served by teachers in these programs. [Improved ELL Colorado Student Achievement scores](#) are being reported for that period.

Sources



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- Catalog 2012-2013 (Page 5)
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- Diversity_Ethnicity-Gender of Full-time Staff
- EAS_Educational Access Services
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- Strategic Plan 2011 (Page 11)
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- Strategic Plan 2011 (Page 22)
- Theater Performances CMU 2003-2012
- TLC_Tutorial Learning Center_Web Page
- TRIO Participants
- Trustees Resolution on Violence 8.17.12

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.

CMU Response

Introduction

For the purposes of this self-study the term "public good" is defined as outcomes that benefit the public rather than a purely private or profit interest of the University. The public good can be experienced by the local community of Grand Junction, in which the University is located, the larger 14-county region defined in the Mission Statement, the state of Colorado, and beyond. Serving the public good in this context means that CMU should and does contribute to the various communities in the region it serves. The University's Mission, Vision, and Values statements demonstrate a commitment to the public good through the mandates to be a regional education provider and the primary intellectual and cultural center of the region, the mandate to provide a wide variety of certificates, undergraduate and graduate degrees, and the commitment to a liberal arts education aimed at building up the capacity for a thriving civic society in the region.

Sub-component 1.D.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.

According to the [2011 Performance Contract Report \(p. 26, goal 4\)](#), the Board of Trustees, Mesa State College [Colorado Mesa University] and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education agree that it is a priority for public higher education to be a primary partner in educating a workforce that contributes to the economic development and growth of Colorado:

CMU has the designation of being a regional education provider for the 14 western Colorado counties. . . [T]he Commission has determined that Colorado's future competitiveness in the global economy depends on having an educated and skilled workforce. Colorado must have workers with high-level skills required for jobs in high-demand fields, such as teacher education, health care, and business, as well as workers with basic workplace vocational skills to obtain the most desirable jobs and to adapt to the changes that will continue to affect our evolving economy.

Evidence Item 1D1-1. CMU plays a major role in the region's economy.

The [2013 Regional Economic Impact Study \(p. 4\)](#) reported on CMU's role as an economic driver in the Western Colorado economy. In 2012, Colorado Mesa employed more than 1,800 full- and part-time individuals with an annual payroll in excess of \$33 million, making it the third largest employer in the region. Because of CMU's commitment to purchase locally whenever possible, nearly 80% of CMU's capital expenditures were with businesses in the 14-county service region. Taking into account all aspects of the institution's spending, CMU accounted for \$195 million in direct expenditures, and when coupled with an output multiplier of 1.8 to calculate indirect spending, the total addition to the 2012 regional economy was \$351 million. Similarly, when a labor multiplier of 1.4 was applied to University employment, CMU accounted for 2,554 full- and part-time jobs in Western Colorado.

Evidence Item 1D1-2. CMU demonstrates its commitment to the public good by remaining an accessible institution for higher education in the state of Colorado, particularly in its 14-county service area.

According to the [2011 Performance Contract Report \(p. 11, item 2.3\)](#) between CMU and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the University is to meet the educational needs of residents in its Western Colorado 14-county service region. Western Colorado continues to be the primary area served by the University, with two-thirds of its undergraduates from one of the 14 counties and more than 4,000 students from Mesa County alone ([Fall 2012 Student Profile \(p. 2\)](#)). While the proportion of undergraduate enrollees from the service region has declined by six percentage points since 2004, the total number of enrolled Western Coloradans has grown by 45% between fall semesters 2004 and 2012. As the institution has grown, the number of undergraduates coming to CMU from outside the service region also has increased significantly, but no student from outside the

service region is being admitted at the expense of an applicant from Western Colorado.

CMU also is committed to serving its growing underrepresented and first-generation students, particularly from its service region, now at 21 percent and 40 percent of all undergraduates, respectively ([Fall 2012 Student Profile \(p. 2\)](#)). A full-time Student Services position was created in 2006 to provide leadership in improving enrollments among first-generation students, as well as providing students with opportunities for engagement and transitional support once they enrolled. The number of first-generation undergraduates and those from underrepresented populations grew significantly during this time period, in part as a result of these concerted efforts.

Evidence Item 1D1-3. CMU's Office of Extended Studies and the WCCC Office of Community Education offer a diverse mix of programs to the public.

The Extended Studies Program is one of CMU's two outreach units. Extended Studies staff collaborate with faculty in academic programs to enhance students' educational experiences by offering students the option to [study and learn as they travel](#) elsewhere in the United States as well as in other countries. This office also makes continuing education available to teachers and partnering agencies in Western Colorado.

CMU also serves the public good through its [WCCC Community Education programming](#), offering programming in areas such as Arts & Crafts, Business & Personal Development, Caregiver Support, Cooking, Dance, Equine Health Care, Event Planning, Financial Planning & Retirement, Landscaping, Languages, Music, Personal Safety, Photography, and Writing, Math and Writing Refresher Workshops.

Summer camp opportunities, open to the public and developed by [CMU](#) and [WCCC](#), have included Baby Sitting Camp, Chef Camp, Multi-Media Graphic Film and Animation Summer Camp, ProtoCamp, MASH Camp, and Music Camp. The combination of camp offerings varies by year.

[Sports camps](#) are provided by CMU coaches and their assistants for young athletes in the following activities: baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross-country, football, lacrosse, soccer, softball, strength and conditioning, swimming, volleyball, and wrestling.

Evidence Item 1D1-4. The CMU Tomlinson Library is a resource used by the public.

The public often turns to the [John U. Tomlinson Library](#) for information. The library building and collections are open to the public, and community members may check out library material and use all library databases. Library staff estimate that 14,640 visitors used the library's resources in fiscal year 2011-12.

Computers with Internet access are available to the public, and Wi-Fi for laptop computers is available upon request. Reference help is available to the public in the library and via chat, email, and telephone. Librarians provide instruction in library resources and usage to individuals, high school and university classes, and local business organizations. Library material is sent to patrons at other institutions of higher education and public libraries through resource-sharing programs such as interlibrary loan.

Traveling exhibits hosted by the library are free and open to the public. Additionally, CMU's Montrose Campus shares facilities with the Montrose Regional Library.

Evidence Item 1D1-5. CMU demonstrates its commitment to the public good through cultivating an environment where faculty, staff, and students engage in community service.

The CMU [Vision Statement](#) for 2020 (2011 Strategic Plan, p. 14, para 1) states, in part, that CMU will maintain a quality educational environment that "focuses on serving its many constituents. It assumes an expanded leadership role . . . by serving as the primary intellectual and cultural center and promoting the exchange of ideas that are of regional, national, and international importance." By volunteering in the community, CMU faculty, staff and students create opportunities for the exchange of ideas and cooperative engagement in meaningful work.

Three values statements can be linked to faculty, staff, and students volunteering in the community. One such statement reads, "[CMU values] student choice . . . that prepares future leaders to function as productive and responsible members of a global society." A second reads that the University values "opportunities that engage students in applied learning," and the third states that CMU values "a vibrant and varied campus setting that values diversity and diverse activities, and encourages involvement and interaction outside the classroom."

The [Professional Personnel Employment Handbook \(p. VI-4, line 157\)](#) specifies that CMU faculty members are evaluated on two types of service: professional or university service and community service. Thus, faculty are expected to serve in some capacity within the community. Students, staff, and faculty take an active role as volunteers in the community. Numerous examples can be

found in the faculty vitae, collected as part of the self-study process. In fall 2011, CMU faculty members were asked to provide information regarding their service activities. The following table summarizes their activities.

**CMU FACULTY PARTICIPATION IN
COMMUNITY SERVICE, 2011**

Activity	% of Faculty Participating
Professional consultation in community	52
K-12 outreach	49
Serving on boards of community organizations	40
Service to professional association	39
Presentation/performance for community	39
Professional association member	31
Serving as resource for local media	14
Service club member	12
Community service activity that does not fit in one of the above categories	49

Source: Faculty Vitae, 2011

The [2013 Regional Economic Impact Study \(p. 9\)](#) reported that 3,028 students engaged in 355,188 hours of community service during academic year 2011-12, time valued at \$7.8 million. Additionally, CMU's faculty and staff members served as volunteers in community organizations, and in many instances, played a major leadership role within these groups. In honor of such continuing efforts, the [University] was named to the 2012 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll – the highest federal recognition a college/university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service learning, and civic engagement. CMU is one of three Colorado institutions to be named to the Honor Roll for all six years in which the program has existed.

Examples in which faculty, students, and staff regularly volunteer for the good of the community are illustrated by the following.

- CMU faculty, staff, and students engage in philanthropic acts throughout the community.
- Classified Staff Council, in cooperation with Sodexo Food Services, has sponsored food drives.
- An active campus Relay for Life Team raises thousands of dollars each year for cancer research through grass-roots efforts such as bake sales and homemade jewelry sales.
- CMU employees generously donate to the Colorado Combined Campaign and United Way through payroll deductions.
- Various people and departments sponsor families in need at Christmas time.
- The St. Mary's Hospital and Regional Medical Center Bloodmobile regularly collects blood and plasma from campus donors.

Evidence Item 1D1-6. CMU serves the public good by providing a venue for many different meetings, speakers, and performances.

The University routinely hosts public speakers, sponsors forums and conferences, and facilitates themed days on campus for various local and regional student groups as the following illustrates:

- The Advanced Tax and Research class provides a [Tax Assistance Program](#) clinic annually on campus to prepare income tax returns and answer tax questions.
- CMU is host to several regional scholarly forums including the [Upper Colorado River Basin Water Forum](#) and the [Four Corners Conference on Globalization](#). These conferences serve the public good because of their commitment to connect the community with the conferences.
- Theme days for high school and university student groups include [Media Day](#) for journalism students, [History Day](#), [Entrepreneurship Day](#) for business students, the Writer's workshop, and Math Extravaganza. The Best of the West Music Festival began in 2000 as a one-day event when 40 high school seniors joined CMU's Wind Symphony for a concert. It has developed into a two-day affair featuring two bands with over 180 talented high school musicians. Each year the University also sponsors a [Capital Conference](#) in which students, faculty, and community members travel to Washington, D.C., to engage in participatory democracy.

- In 2011, the Art Department held 10 major [exhibitions and events](#) at the University Center Art Gallery and Western Colorado Center for the Arts.
- The Theater Department gave 11 major [performances](#) in 2011.
- In 2011, the Music Department reported that its groups, collectively, perform [35 to 40 concerts](#) per year, including 10 to 15 presented by faculty, 20 to 25 presented by students, and several concerts presented by guest artists. Thirty-four guest artists performed between 2003 and 2011.
- The CMU Music Department's [guest artist program](#), in cooperation with the Western Colorado Chorale, presents traveling artists from around the globe. The guest artist program cooperates with regional entities to the benefit of the community by providing musical arts that would not otherwise be offered in Western Colorado.

Evidence Item 1D1-7. CMU embraces its obligation to the public good through a cooperative strategy with regional agencies to share facilities and to host events.

CMU's intercollegiate football and baseball games are played on city-owned facilities that are shared with several area high school teams. Spring commencement ceremonies also take place at the city's football stadium, while School District 51 utilizes Brownson Arena (in the Maverick Center) for one of its commencements. Other shared facilities include the Grand Junction High School track (for the University) and the CMU lacrosse/soccer and softball fields. The El Pomar Natatorium (in the Maverick Center) is used by local high schools and has hosted state high school swimming competitions.

CMU's commitment to the public good through our role as a regional education provider for many diverse groups is also demonstrated by the following uses of CMU facilities:

- The [Monfort Family Human Performance Lab](#) is a state-of-the-art, multi-use integrative research/rehabilitation facility at CMU. It houses some of the most technologically-advanced physiological and bio-mechanical performance-testing equipment, wellness testing equipment, and specially trained personnel west of the Denver/Colorado Springs area. These services are not currently available elsewhere at the undergraduate level in this geographic region of the United States. The laboratory accepts clients from within the student body, area athletic teams, CMU faculty and staff, and the community at large. Examples of testing services include gait analysis, maximal oxygen uptake testing, and body composition analysis.
- [Career fairs](#) are regularly scheduled and open to all job-seekers, including CMU students and alumni as well as community members. These fairs are free for job-seekers and provide opportunities for them to learn about employment and career options, both locally and nationally. The fairs also provide employers with a venue to meet and interview prospective candidates.
- [Teacher Education fairs](#) provide an opportunity for teachers and teacher candidates to learn about employment opportunities in various school districts. This fair also provides a venue for administrators from school districts near and far (e.g., Alaska) to interview CMU students, alumni, teacher candidates from other colleges, and community teachers.
- The Annual [Entrepreneurship Day](#) (E-Day) is a collaborative effort between CMU's Entrepreneurship program in the Department of Business and employers in the Grand Junction area to promote education about running a business and providing networking opportunities.
- Ute Water Company assembles over 2,000 fifth graders every spring on CMU's campus for the annual two-day Children's Water Festival, the largest children's water symposium in the state. Students learn about water rights, the origins of the water in this valley, water safety practices, and the importance of water conservation.
- CMU hosted the 2013 Colorado Summer Special Olympics, with local businesses assisting with various donations.

Sub-component 1.D.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.

Evidence Item 1D2-1. There are no external interests that CMU supports.

CMU is a nonprofit organization, so it has no need to generate financial returns for investors. The parent organization of CMU is the State of Colorado, and although CMU contributes to the wealth of Coloradans, it does so by educating them. The [2011 Performance Contract Report](#) (p. 4, item 12) states, "Nothing in this Performance Contract shall be construed or implied to confer third-party beneficiary status on any person or entity."

Sub-component 1.D.3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and

responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

CMU is the largest institution of higher education in Western Colorado and, as such, has commitments to the surrounding communities. CMU responds to the needs of its many constituencies.

Evidence Item 1D3-1. CMU works with local groups and governing bodies to provide services responsive to regional needs.

CMU's Mission Statement declares that CMU shall be a provider of education services to several geographical areas in the western part of the state. CMU has fulfilled this obligation in a number of ways:

- To address the needs of local governments, CMU has utilized funding to provide consulting services to the community. For example, funding has been obtained to support the [Redifer Institute](#) at CMU. The Institute is designed to work closely with local, state, and federal governments and stakeholders to develop better public policy through analysis and data gathering. There are several branches to the Institute, including the Natural Resource Center, the Water Center, the Public Policy Center and the Center for Unconventional Energy. Among the grant-funded projects completed by the Institute have been economic analysis of public lands, resource management plans, surveys and focus groups on public lands recreation, an annual water user's conference, mediation of stakeholder groups for energy and public lands development, course offerings and public presentations on resource issues, and many other consultations for government agencies at all levels. The Water Center also acts as a basin-wide repository for information on the Colorado River Basin.
- CMU faculty members regularly offer expertise as guest speakers, music clinicians, and consultants to the public. The Visiting Scholars program provides faculty expertise to the local school district and a wide variety of other 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.
- Many academic programs at CMU utilize [community advisory boards/committees](#) for annual curriculum consultations. The outcomes of these meetings provide satisfaction to both sets of contributors: The community participants have positive feelings that their suggestions are being heard and acted upon, while the University participants are able to make positive changes in their curricula based on current procedures and the needs of their constituents.

Evidence Item 1D3-2. CMU understands its responsibility to provide education that supports the economic and cultural needs of Western Colorado and responds by offering new programs.

The responsibility to provide such programs is outlined in Goal 4 of the [2011 Performance Contract Report \(p. 26, goal 4\)](#) between the Colorado Department of Higher Education and CMU:

Whereas, the Board of Trustees, [CMU] and the Commission agree that it is a priority for public higher education to be a primary partner in educating a workforce that contributes to the economic development and growth of Colorado. . . . Whereas, [CMU] has the designation of being a regional education provider for the 14 western Colorado counties.

CMU's responsibility includes the delivery of Business, Teacher Education, Nursing and Criminal Justice programs, the development of baccalaureate degree completion programs in fields that meet the needs of regional employers, and completion of vocational workforce training. The University has created a series of programs in the past ten years that address these goals (see Evidence Item 1A2-2). The following is a list of programs by certificate, associate, baccalaureate, or master's degree that directly support the regional economy.

**CMU ACADEMIC AND TECHNICAL PROGRAMS
SUPPORTING THE REGIONAL ECONOMY**

Program Category	Academic/Technical Program
Manufacturing & Technology	Electric Lineworker (Certificate)
	Manufacturing Technology Certificate Associate of Applied Science
	Technology Integration Cluster (Associate of Applied Science)
	Process Systems Technology (Associate of Applied Science)
Health Sciences	Nursing Nurse Aide (Certificate) PN (Certificate) Registered Nurse (Associate of Applied Science) Nursing (Bachelor of Science) Nursing (Master of Science) Doctor of Nursing Practice
	Emergency Medical Services Basic Associate of Applied Science
	Radiologic Technology (Associate of Applied Science) Associate of Applied Science Bachelor of Applied Science
Education	Initial Licensure Master of Arts/Graduate Certificate/graduate endorsement
Business	Business Bachelor of Business Administration/Bachelor of Applied Science Hospitality Management Associate of Applied Science Bachelor of Applied Science Master of Business Administration
Law Enforcement	Criminal Justice POST (Certificate) Criminal Justice (Associate of Applied Science) Criminal Justice (Bachelor of Arts)
Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics	Environmental Science & Technology (Bachelor of Science) Computer Science (Bachelor of Science) Mathematics (Bachelor of Science) Mechanical Engineering Technology Associate of Applied Science Bachelor of Science Physical Sciences (Bachelor of Science)

08/26/13

Sources

-  [Art Exhibits 2003-2012](#)
-  [Career Fairs_Education Fair](#)
-  [Career Fairs_Web Page](#)
-  [CCHE-CMU Performance Contract Report 2011 \(Page 11\)](#)
-  [CCHE-CMU Performance Contract Report 2011 \(Page 26\)](#)
-  [CCHE-CMU Performance Contract Report 2011 \(Page 4\)](#)
-  [Colorado Capital Conference](#)
-  [Economic Impact Study 2013 \(Page 4\)](#)
-  [Economic Impact Study 2013 \(Page 9\)](#)
-  [Enrollment_EOT_Fall12_All Student Profile_2004 and 2012 \(Page 2\)](#)
-  [Entrepreneurship Day](#)
-  [Extended Studies FY 13 Report](#)
-  [External Advisory Boards by Academic Program](#)
-  [Facilities_Monfort Family Human Performance Lab](#)

-  [Fours Corners Conference- 2010-2012](#)
-  [History Day](#)
-  [Library Web Page](#)
-  [Media Day](#)
-  [Music Dept_Best of the West](#)
-  [Music Dept_Concerts](#)
-  [Music Dept_Guest Artist Series](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 4\)](#)
-  [Redifer Institute_Web Page](#)
-  [Strategic Plan 2011 \(Page 20\)](#)
-  [Summer Camps \(CMU\)](#)
-  [Summer Camps \(WCCC\)](#)
-  [Summer Sports Camps](#)
-  [Tax Payer Assistance Program](#)
-  [Theater Performances CMU 2003-2012](#)
-  [Water Center_Forum Announcement](#)
-  [WCCC_CEC_Catalog_Spring_1213](#)

Criterion 1: Conclusion, Strengths, and Recommendations

CMU Response

Conclusion

Criterion 1 addresses the mission of the University. Questions are answered regarding the clarity, the development process, the availability, the utilization, and the consistency of CMU's mission and related statements within its academic processes, diversity, the University's role in this multicultural society, and its commitment to the public good. Portions of the body of evidence for this criterion come from the Vision and Values statements, the 2011 Strategic Plan, and the 2011 Performance Contract Report.

The list below summarizes some key University strengths and recommendations for improvement related to this criterion.

Strengths

- CMU's Mission, Vision and Values Statements and all other supplemental statements and documents are clear, vital to the institution and available to the public and provide a framework for the University's planning and budgeting processes.
- CMU offers accessible regional higher education for the public, is flexible in using alternative course delivery methods, and provides a diverse set of programs and certificates at the undergraduate and graduate levels, reflecting its responsiveness to the needs of Western Colorado.
- CMU is committed to its relationship with the community as a full and active partner with various businesses and government agencies.

Recommendations

- CMU should establish and clearly articulate the mission, role, scope, and intended constituents of its two-year division, Western Colorado Community College. Additionally, CMU should make clear how its two-year and four-year divisions are differentiated and integrated within the context of accomplishing the institution's overall mission.
- CMU should build on its current efforts and processes to actively recruit and retain faculty, staff, and students from all backgrounds to further enrich the diversity of the campus community. As CMU makes additional full-time faculty and staff hires, continued efforts should be made to find candidates from diverse backgrounds. The University should also move forward with setting goals for increasing enrollments from underserved populations and ensuring greater student success rates among the same. The University recognizes the value of enriching the campus community with increased diversity, and while there are active efforts to promote diversity at CMU, continuous attention is needed. In this regard, the University should direct additional efforts toward supporting a campus culture of respect and understanding among students, faculty, staff, and the community at large.

Criterion 2: Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

CMU Response

Introduction

Colorado Mesa University provides quality education and offers students opportunities to learn while operating in ethical and responsible ways. The institution conscientiously seeks to provide full disclosure of information to prospective and current students and to make explicit its requirements that all members of CMU's community shall act ethically. Full disclosure of information is provided to students and their families before students make commitments to CMU. Ethical practices and behaviors are expected at CMU, and infractions are handled according to institutional policies. Trustees govern in ways that enhance the well-being of the University, and CMU staff, faculty, administration, and students demonstrate accountability as they follow guidelines that are prescribed for the entire institution and/or specific programs. As a public institution, CMU follows additional guidelines provided by the State of Colorado.

Members of CMU's community endeavor to strengthen the institution, improve the clarity and flow of communications, and update policies that will help the University avoid misleading statements or practices. Ongoing efforts are made to recognize areas for improvement in the ways CMU fills its mission, in the ways it makes clear requirements for ethical practice by all members of the institution, and in the ways CMU represents itself to the public. This chapter shows that CMU, while embracing innovation, growing rapidly, maturing within its physical capacities, and embracing the identity of a university, continues to operate with fairness, accountability, and integrity.

Core Component 2.A

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

CMU Response

Introduction

CMU operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions. Auxiliary functions are defined by the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO). CMU has well-established policies for overall governance and for each of the functional areas. CMU establishes policies for staff, faculty, administrators, and the governing board to operate with integrity. In addition, various external agencies require that fair and equitable policies be followed to meet their requirements for entities such as auxiliaries.

Evidence Item 2A-1. CMU's policies for the governing board, administration, and faculty clearly emphasize institutional integrity.

CMU's governing board creates, maintains, and follows policies that require it to act in ethical ways while governing the institution.

- The governing board of CMU must follow the [Colorado State Code of Ethics](#) for board members of educational institutions. This code addresses conflicts of interest and the handling of confidential information, significantly limits the receiving of gifts and honoraria, and requires the board to follow legal standards. The ethical guidelines help to ensure public confidence in the integrity of the educational processes and accomplishments.
- The governing board of CMU creates and maintains institutional policies that embrace ethical and responsible behaviors. For example,
 - *It shall be Colorado Mesa University's policy on conflict of interest and code of ethics to be the same as that required by the State of Colorado for governing board members, administrators, faculty and staff (Trustees Policy Manual, p. 14, line 325).* Specifics are detailed in [C.R.S. 24-18-101 through 105](#) and [24-18-108 through 110](#).
 - *It is the policy of the Trustees to provide substantial administrative authority, to guarantee a minimum of external involvement in the affairs of the University, to encourage the development of the distinctive role of the University, and to support the University in its efforts to maintain and enhance academic excellence. At the same time, however, the Trustees' policies and procedures, administered by the President and staff, are designed to ensure effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability. (Trustees Policy Manual, p. 6, line 45)*

Written [expectations for administrators and faculty](#) at CMU include requirements for ethical and responsible behavior, as evidenced in the responsibilities listed in CMU's Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. XII-1, line 15).

Evidence 2A-2. CMU requires integrity within the institution's financial functions.

Audits

Audits show that the institution follows ethical guidelines and engages in responsible financial behavior. [Annual audits](#) are conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in the Government Auditing Standards (issued by the Comptroller General of the U.S.). The purpose and scope for annual audits are to: 1) perform financial and compliance audits and to express opinions on the fairness of the financial statements, including reviews of internal controls; 2) review the institution's compliance with state and federal laws, regulations and controls; 3) evaluate the institution's progress in implementing prior audit recommendations, if any; and 4) report on the institution's compliance and internal control over financial reporting in accordance with Government Auditing Standards.

While auditors reported one finding that was characterized as a significant deficiency in the past five years, [Colorado Mesa has had the fewest audit findings over the past 10 years](#) when compared to other Colorado institutions of higher education. In the fiscal year 2011-12 report, auditors recommended that controls over the institution's procurement card program be improved. The finding was a result of the University's tightening controls over the program by adding post-purchase supervisory review procedures. Auditors found three instances where the additional approval procedures were not performed in accordance with the procedures. There is no indication or evidence that public funds were spent inappropriately, only the recommendation that established procedures need to be observed. Since then, CMU administrative staff have offered additional training and review procedures to address the auditor's comment, as well as to further strengthen controls over procurement card transactions. In four of the past five years, auditors reported that they did not note any material weakness or any material instances of non-compliance

with legal or regulatory requirements.

Budgets

The budgeting process is detailed in various sections of Criterion 5.

Purchasing and Contractual Agreements

CMU's contracts and purchasing are overseen by the Assistant Vice President for Auxiliary Services. Section 5 of the [Purchasing Department Policies & Procedures](#) states:

All parties involved in the negotiation, performance, or administration of University Contracts are bound to act in good faith. Any person employed by the University who purchases Goods and Services, or is involved in the Procurement process for the University, shall be held to the highest degree of trust and shall be bound to the Colorado Mesa University Procurement Code of Ethics included with these Rules as Appendix A.

CMU utilizes several contract types including cost reimbursement contracts and multi-year contracts. CMU follows the requirements for contracts in the State of Colorado Fiscal Rules, where specific guidelines are in place to remedy contract disputes. The [Procurement Code of Ethics \(Appendix A\) of the Purchasing Department Policies & Procedures](#) must be followed by any person who purchases goods or services on behalf of the University.

Setting and Collecting of Tuition and Fees

Setting rates and collecting tuition and fees is performed systematically and equitably. Tuition-setting involves the President, who consults with elected student leaders and makes an initial recommendation to the Board of Trustees, which then decides the tuition rates. Course-specific fees are posted for public viewing in the University Center and in public viewing areas at the Montrose and WCCC campuses for a specified period of time during which students may protest any of the fees, potentially affecting the Board's decisions on setting those rates. The general fees are recommended through the student government's Fee Advisory Council, brought forward to the administration, and ultimately to the Board for determination.

The [process for setting tuition rates and fees](#) is described in the Trustees Policy Manual (p. 26, line 662). [Tuition rates and fees](#), based on the number of credit hours, as well as information about other college expenses are made public in the University's Catalog (p. 26) each year and on the [Financial Aid website](#). The Catalog (p. 24) also explains the [reduced tuition rates](#) for students from states in the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE), the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), and the Mountains and Plains. Additionally, future and ongoing students can find multiple links on CMU's website to estimate total college costs including meals and housing (see example of [web page for future students](#)).

The CMU administration has worked closely with students through the student government to determine appropriate fee setting. In one case, the students at CMU, in 2008, originated and passed a [referendum](#) with an approval rate of 80 percent asking that the student fees be increased by \$5 to assist with faculty salary increases. As described to the trustees, [the increase generated \\$740,000](#) and salaries were increased by over \$855,000 in response to this student-initiated action (Trustees Meeting Agenda, March 5, 2008, p. 31).

CMU follows [Collection Rules and Procedures](#) based on Colorado law.

Awarding of Financial Aid and Scholarships

CMU uses the processes followed by most institutions of higher education to endeavor to treat every student fairly and equally when determining financial aid awards. Students and their parents provide information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Award decisions are based on this information. Students can get assistance with [frequently asked questions](#) and [scholarship](#) information through the Financial Aid Office.

[Scholarship award criteria](#) are followed to choose recipients in keeping with the intent of the donor(s), as scholarships are provided through a variety of organizations. Academic departments and athletic coaches often have committees that determine which students meet the criteria for specific departmental scholarships. Examples from [several departments](#) show that departmental committees follow different procedures since scholarships might be need-based, performance-based (such as for music) or merit-based (such as for earned grades). Departmental decisions must also be coordinated with financial aid. To make the scholarship distribution and coordination efforts more efficient and consistently structured, software designed for this purpose (AcademicWorks) has been acquired for CMU. The University plans to implement this software for making scholarship decisions starting in fall 2013.

Evidence Item 2A-3. CMU requires integrity within the institution's academic functions.

Academic Policies

The [Student and Academic Policies Guide \(p. 21\)](#) clearly outlines the obligation of the student to adhere to CMU's academic

policies prohibiting intentional misrepresentation or fabrication and defining academic dishonesty as “forgery/fabrication/falsification/plagiarism of academic documents.” Consequences for academic dishonesty are also clearly described in this document, including potential penalties and repercussions. Institutional policies on computer use, software copyright and compliance, and network use are outlined as well.

Research

See Evidence Item 2E1-1 for CMU's requirements related to integrity of research and policy on human subjects.

Student Recruitment, Admission, and Transfer

The institution establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for the recruitment and admission of students. Standards and criteria for eligibility for admission to CMU are established by the Colorado Commission for Higher Education. The Admissions Office is responsible for receiving applications for admission, evaluating the information provided by the applicant, and making admissions decisions. The Admissions Office at CMU is the primary entity responsible for recruiting students to the institution. To ensure that the institution uses fair and ethical practices in the recruitment of students, the Admissions Office follows the [Statement of Principles of Good Practice](#) from the National Association for College Admissions Counseling. All admissions staff members receive training on these principles.

Transfer students are treated equitably according to established transfer policies. To ensure fairness in the admissions process and guard against unnecessary expenses, the Registrar's Office staff evaluates an applicant's transcript(s) and prepares a Transfer Equivalency Report of the courses that will transfer. CMU accepts academic credits from regionally accredited institutions of higher learning including two-year community or junior colleges, as well as in- and out-of-state colleges and universities.

Copyright Law and Intellectual Property Issues

CMU supports compliance with copyright law, as exemplified by the following documents:

- [Policy on Intellectual Property](#) (Trustee Policy Manual, p. 46, line 1075);
- [Policy and Plan to Combat Unauthorized Distribution of Copyrighted Material and Peer-to-Peer File Sharing](#);
- [Student Responsibilities and Expectations](#) (Student and Academic Policies Guide, p. 21);
- [Summary of Copyright Law and Fair Use Provisions and Agreement on Guidelines for Classroom Copying](#) (Trustee Policy Manual, p. 48, line 1426).

For faculty and other employees, as noted above, there is a substantial statement on intellectual property in the Trustee Policy Manual. In summary, the Board encourages the dissemination of copyrightable work produced by members of the CMU community as teachers, scholars, and employees while working for the University. The University allows these employees to retain copyright in order to encourage activities except in the cases of assigned tasks, outside agreements, patentable works, online and distance learning, or special circumstances.

Uses of Software and Computer Networks

The CMU Student and Academic Policies Guide describes computer network use and software copyright and compliance. All first-time students are given a University network account, email address, and campus web portal (MAVzone) account that provide them with access to authorized services and information across the institution. In addition, students have access to the University website, library, departments and courses that enables access to other computer programs, while academic departments have software policy statements and access information in their information. A general [statement against computer-related violations](#) is included in the list of actions subject to disciplinary action in the Student Code of Conduct. More specifically, the Policies Guide describes CMU's expectations related to unauthorized use and abuse as it relates to [email](#), [computer use](#), [software copyright and compliance](#), and [network use](#) as well as sanctions for violating policies.

CMU's [Policy and Plan to Combat Unauthorized Distribution of Copyrighted Material and Peer-to-Peer File Sharing](#) complies with the Higher Education Opportunity Act's copyright infringement provisions. The policy and plan cover all components required by law and include detailed steps for managing network access, monitoring Internet traffic, responding to any notices based on the Digital Millennium Copyright Act Notice of Claimed Infringement, peer-to-peer file sharing copyright awareness programs, information on legal alternatives to unauthorized downloading, and procedures for handling unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material. End users (including students, faculty, and staff) face sanctions for copyright infringement activity and/or the misuse of the University-owned systems. Information is emailed by Information Technology staff each semester to faculty, staff, and students to communicate the policy and to promote awareness of the risks associated with copyright infringement. The information is also available on the website.

Curriculum Development Processes

In general, curriculum changes are initiated by individual programs and must gain approval through an evaluation process by the relevant curriculum committee (graduate, undergraduate, or WCCC), each of which is made up of faculty members representing the departments across campus. Each is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate and therefore is subject to its [Policy and Procedure Manual for Standing Committees](#). All recommendations made by the Curriculum Committees must be approved by the Faculty Senate. The Curriculum Committees also maintain a [Combined Curriculum Committee Policy and Procedure Manual](#). Faculty Senate minutes consistently include evidence of discussions and votes on curriculum committee minutes.

Potential Conflict of Interest with Faculty-Created Course Materials

The [Professional Personnel Employment Handbook](#) (p. XII-2, line 48) addresses a faculty member's responsibility to students and recognizes that assigning instructional materials of which a member of the faculty is the author and from which he or she receives royalties or other income may potentially violate faculty duty to students. Before assigning materials to students from which the faculty member would profit, approval must be obtained from the department head and Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). To date, few CMU faculty members have sought approval pursuant to this policy; all requests have been approved by the VPAA.

Grading and Grade Requirements

The Professional Personnel Employment Handbook lists as one of the [responsibilities to the students that professional personnel](#) shall "Ensure that each student's evaluations reflect his or her actual performance" (Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. XII-1, line 4). Faculty are required to specify grading criteria for each course and to maintain grade records for each course for two years. The Catalog (p. 39) sets out the [grading system, academic standards, required minimum GPA, and calculation procedures](#) in the General Undergraduate Academic Policies section. Additionally, academic program sheets describe course and grade requirements and specify those in which graduates must earn at least a grade of C (see p. 2 under general education of [Studio Art](#) and [Environmental Science](#) program sheets as examples).

Evidence 2A-4. CMU follows clear policies when performing the institution's personnel functions.

Faculty and Exempt Staff

The CMU Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. VI-1, line 1) addresses [policies and procedures on the annual performance review, tenure, and promotion of faculty](#). The Handbook specifically states that, for faculty, "teaching is the most important responsibility" and articulates the purpose and process of evaluation and criteria for tenure and promotion.

The Office of Academic Affairs provides a [calendar of dates](#) corresponding to the tenure and promotion process so that all interested parties have the opportunity to submit applications on a timely basis. Additionally, the Office of Academic Affairs provides candidates with guidelines and expectations pertaining to [documentation](#) and formatting of applications for tenure and promotion as well as cover sheets for both [Colorado Mesa University](#) and [Western Colorado Community College](#) faculty.

Section III of the Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. III-1, line 1) states that [CMU's policies will be created "to comply with all applicable federal and state antidiscrimination laws."](#) Additionally, the campus community, when providing opportunities for employment, is prohibited from engaging in unlawful discrimination because of race, religion, gender (including pregnancy), age, national origin, color, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation in providing employment opportunities. The same section points out that the:

process of position announcement, screening, interviewing, appointment recommendation and hiring must adhere to the College's Affirmative Action Plan which is on file in the Office of Human Resources, the Anti-Discrimination Policy in this Handbook, and any anti-discrimination policies in the Trustees' Policy Manual [p. 16, line 363].

The Faculty and Administrative Search Procedures Manual, maintained by human resources staff, describes the [required procedures for conducting a search to fill a faculty or exempt administrative staff position](#). The manual provides instructions to make search processes consistent between candidates, to include affirmative action representatives throughout any search, and to document the progress and outcomes of each search.

Section XI of the Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. XI-5, line 176) details policies regarding the [possible reasons for termination of faculty and administrative staff, the appeal procedures available when applicable, and intermediate sanctions](#). The Handbook (p. VI-20, line 807) sets out the [procedures for faculty promotion](#), while a separate section addresses [policies and procedures related to faculty tenure](#) (Handbook, p. VI-12, line 480). Finally, the same section of the Handbook (p. VI-24, line 1001) describes the process of [transferring between faculty and administration status and seniority](#).

Policies in the Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (PPEH) and oversight of the evaluation process by the Office of Academic Affairs provide structure for the institution overall in terms of evaluating faculty in equitable ways. CMU values are

prioritized in the processes described in the policies. The PPEH (p. VI-1, line 3) sets out the [procedures for evaluating faculty](#). That section clearly communicates that teaching is “the most important responsibility” (VI-1), an overview of the purpose, process, basic responsibilities, and evaluation criteria of the faculty and a comment on expected differences in departmental evaluation criteria.

The section specifies minimum criteria for the four areas of evaluation: teaching effectiveness (with the greatest weighting), advising, scholarly activities, and service. The section defines the four possible performance ratings: excellent, highly proficient, proficient, below standard. The [evaluation process is set out in additional detail](#) in subsection A.8. of the Handbook (p. VI-5, line 191). The [definition and procedures of the comprehensive evaluations](#) are set out in the following subsection of the PPEH (p. VI-6, line 226). The Handbook's subsection A.10. (p. VI-8, line 318) describes the [annual performance review](#), while subsection A.11. of the PPEH (p. VI-9, line 384) summarizes the [evaluation of non-tenure track faculty](#). A separate [form](#) is used for lecturer evaluation. Finally, the PPEH (p. VI-10, line 391) sets out the [faculty evaluation outcomes](#) in subsection A.12. More detailed information is provided regarding the faculty evaluation processes in the Criterion 3.C.3 portion of this self-study.

Full-time CMU faculty members are eligible for consideration for exemplary faculty awards each year if they meet the eligibility criteria established in the CMU [Exemplary Faculty Award Eligibility and Nomination Criteria](#). CMU requires an annual evaluation of faculty members to help them continue to improve their contributions to CMU. These yearly evaluations are used for determining promotions and making tenure decisions as well.

CMU's Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. VI-12, line 480) sets out the [procedures for evaluating faculty applicants for tenure](#). That section includes a discussion of the nature of the privilege of tenure, the tenure criteria, the makeup of the Promotion and Tenure Committee, the procedures for recommending or not recommending tenure, and the notification process. Also provided is information for faculty not offered tenure and an entry concerning tenure and academic rank for administrators.

[Faculty Evaluation Criteria by Department](#) summarizes the requirements and expectations for faculty. The criteria are comparable across departments, differing primarily in the examples provided as ways to show effectiveness in teaching, advising, scholarship, or service. Full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty are required to contribute as teachers, scholars, and advisors and to provide service to the institution, profession, and/or community. [Course evaluations](#) are to be administered to students in every class, and results are consistently part of the evaluation of teaching, underscoring the University's commitment to excellent instruction as faculty's highest priority. Availability to advisees and participation in campus-wide orientations and advising sessions are consistently required for effective advising across campus.

The [Performance Planning and Evaluation for Exempt Staff](#) implements the performance planning and evaluation process for administrative employees and serves the University and community by achieving the University's mission and vision through a performance pay program. Colorado Mesa University administration recognizes that CMU operates in a highly competitive environment and employs multiple resources to assist in attracting and retaining qualified professionals for CMU's professional staff. The University's compensation policy is defined in the Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. VIII-2, line 44; p. VIII-3, line 127). The Board and the President possess the authority to determine whether, when, and by what amount or percentage salaries will be adjusted. The President is delegated the authority to establish and negotiate competitive starting salaries for newly hired professional personnel, to award annual performance-based salary increases based on salary administration and performance evaluation systems, and to recommend base salary increases on a case-by-case basis as approved by the Board.

In making these determinations, the Board and the President rely on annual compensation surveys in which the University participates, such as those conducted by the Colorado Department of Higher Education and CUPA-HR's Administrative Compensation Survey and Mid-Level Administrative and Professional Salary Survey, as well as targeted regional surveys conducted by the CMU Human Resources Department for specific positions as requested by department heads. In addition to salary adjustments, [exempt staff may be eligible for performance-based distributions](#) as outlined in the Handbook (p. VIII-4, line 135) and in the procedures of the [Performance Planning and Evaluation for Exempt Staff](#).

Department Heads

Department heads serve dual roles as faculty and academic administrators. They are generally not considered full-time “exempt staff” but rather as faculty because they are appointed by the President (generally from faculty positions) and they often teach at least a few courses each year. They are individually evaluated by the VPAA and the President of the institution. The [review form](#) used to evaluate department heads includes separate sections associated with their faculty and administrative responsibilities.

Classified Staff

Classified staff are hired and terminated under rules enacted by the State of Colorado. Classified staff performance is evaluated

following the guidelines set out by the Colorado State Department of Personnel in Chapter 6 of the Personnel Board Rules adopted by the State Personnel Board on April 19, 2005. To best implement this process, CMU developed a [Performance Management Program \(CMUPMP\) for Classified Staff](#), issued in May 2006, based on the guidelines described in this document.

The handling of personnel complaints and appeals at CMU is also governed by the Colorado State Department of Personnel, 4 CCR 801 Personnel Board Rules and Personnel Director's Administrative Procedures under Section 8. The Colorado State Department of Personnel provides a consolidated appeal/dispute [form](#) that is available for classified staff members who have a complaint or appeal. Additionally, CMU has adopted a [grievance process](#) for classified staff.

Colorado's Department of Personnel's Personnel Board Rules and Personnel Director's Administrative Procedures, 4 CCR 801, particularly Chapters 6 and 7, provide policies and procedures regarding disciplinary actions and separations involving classified staff. The University's [Classified Staff Compensation Policy](#) is based on policy created by the State of Colorado through the Colorado Department of Personnel and Administration. By law, employees covered by the state personnel system are to be compensated with salaries and other benefits comparable to those found in the public and private labor markets. State law provides that the state personnel director conduct annual surveys of the competitive labor market to determine comparable salary and benefits levels. The Department of Personnel and Administration conducts an annual compensation survey that results in yearly recommendations for compensation adjustments. These annual recommendations are then subject to the agreed upon funding by the Colorado legislature. The University then takes action based on this legislative action. Additionally, the DPA publishes the [State Personnel System Employee Handbook](#). Section II of this handbook outlines the state's policies on salaries, achievement pay, recognition and incentives, and performance pay.

Handling Personnel Complaints and Appeals from Faculty and Exempt Staff

The Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (PPEH) establishes specific complaint and appeal policies regarding a variety of situations including:

- [unlawful discrimination or harassment](#) (PPEH, p. II-1, line 1);
- [denial of sabbatical leave](#) (PPEH, p. V-1, line 2);
- [unsatisfactory evaluations or post-tenure review of faculty](#) (PPEH, p. VI-10, line 391);
- [denial of tenure](#) or [denial of promotion](#) (PPEH, p. VI-14, line 584; PPEH, p. VI-21, line 850);
- [unsatisfactory evaluations of administrative personnel](#) (PPEH, p. VII-2, line 76);
- [disciplinary procedures](#) (PPEH, p. X-1, line 1);
- [termination](#) (PPEH, p. XI-5, line 176).

Section IX of the Handbook (p. IX-1, line 1) addresses [grievances that fall outside the scope of the above scenarios](#). Informal discussion between affected personnel and administrators is the stated preferred method of resolution. Should this not lead to satisfactory results, the grievance can be taken to a Grievance and Hearing Committee. Decisions regarding committee size, method of selection, replacement of members, and committee function are made by the President and approved by the Board. The formal grievance process has policies regarding timeliness, non-response, precedent, burden of proof, costs, and retaliation.

Evidence Item 2A-5. CMU addresses integrity within policies and procedures involving auxiliary enterprises.

CMU's auxiliary functions must also be accountable and act in ethical ways. Auxiliary functions are defined by The National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO). Auxiliary enterprises are self-supporting entities that exist to furnish goods or services to students, faculty, or staff and that charge fees directly related to, although not necessarily equal to, the cost of the goods or services. The distinguishing characteristic of auxiliary enterprises is that they are managed as essentially self-supporting activities. Examples of accountability evidenced in auxiliaries at CMU include the following.

Reserving and Using Institutional Facilities

Information regarding the availability and reservation of meeting rooms, a detailed list of AV equipment, and catering options available for the University Center, including menus and pricing, are provided on the University Center website for meeting room information. The website also provides information regarding [meeting room configurations, capacity and pricing](#). Room reservation [policy](#) allows campus constituents to use the rooms for different rates than non-campus constituents. Otherwise there are no discriminatory policies that would limit someone reserving a room in the University Center.

The Campus Recreation website provides information on [Equipment Checkout and Facility Rentals](#) as well as the [Facilities Use Agreement](#).

Parking

Parking Office staff conduct a yearly assessment of parking rates at other representative institutions of higher education in Colorado. Increases to parking rates are proposed as part of the annual budget request process, and if approved, revised rates are posted on the parking services website. Parking attendants photograph vehicles found violating parking regulations to provide evidence to those facing fines regarding their infractions.

Parking transactions have undergone yearly cash handling audits conducted by the Office of the University's Controller. All findings and recommendations made as a result of the audit are incorporated into Parking's cash handling processes for the next year. Parking staff also conduct an annual utilization study of the campus parking lots. A fall semester representative week is used to count parking usage in all the lots. The parking department uses these data to determine peak utilization and lots that are underutilized. The Parking Office publicly posts its [procedures](#).

Bookstore

The bookstore hires a third-party company to take a yearly inventory and work with the University's Business Office in developing a report for over-and-short inventory. The Business Office makes adjustments based upon the report. The Business Office staff, the bookstore manager and the Controller have these findings in their records. The Controller is responsible for the yearly assessment of the bookstore's costs of goods sold.

The bookstore belongs to the National Association of College Stores (NACS), which has a broad member base and is key for the bookstore's best practices and benchmarking. The bookstore recently completed a comprehensive student survey through NACS.

Food Services

The food service provider for CMU is Sodexo, USA which operates the University's resident dining, retail, conferences, and catering. CMU belongs to the National Association of College and University Food Services (NACUFS), a national group of college and university staff involved in the management of these operations. Among the resources available through NACUFS are results from national surveys that can be used for benchmarking all facets of food service in higher education. CMU has participated in these national surveys and, along with student comments, information on trends in the food service industry, and University expectations, used the results to identify improvements to CMU's food service operations. Pricing information is available for those who wish to purchase food plans.

Testing Center

CMU's Testing Center provides [testing services to CMU students, alumni, and community members](#) of western Colorado. The center provides online testing services and proctors national tests such as the ACT, GED, PRAXIS, and LSAT. Additionally, the Testing Center complies with the expectations of its contract with Prometric, a test development and delivery provider, which has strict procedures and requires that staff be certified and professionally trained.

Housing

CMU Residence Life is a member of the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International (ACUHO-I), a professional organization that creates performance and ethical standards for housing programs. Residence Life has participated in national benchmarking surveys (ACUHO-I Educational Benchmarking Inc.) as well as other assessments used to evaluate student learning and identify potential areas for improvement of the overall student experience. Student learning and much of the residential student experience is guided by the Residence Life Learning Plan.

Policies and procedures are internally reviewed annually, with proposed updates and changes reviewed by the Vice President for Student Services. Final changes are posted to the Residence Life website. Students are notified of current policies/procedures through assignment letters and emails sent over the summer and during the academic year, newsletters, and notifications posted in the residence halls. Residence Life conducts a yearly assessment of on-campus housing rates collecting data from representative institutions of higher education in Colorado. Room rates are developed in collaboration with the Vice President for Student Services and the Vice President for Finance and Administration. Final rates are published on the Residence Life website and included in marketing materials sent to potential students.

Intercollegiate Athletics

CMU Athletic Department personnel are held accountable in several ways. They must follow State of Colorado policies and procedures with regard to procurement and travel. They must adhere to the rules found in the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference Operations Manual, and they must be certified annually according to NCAA policies and procedures. Coaching staff members have supervisory authority over their individual programs with additional program oversight by associate athletic directors and the Athletic Director, who reports directly to CMU's President.

Sources

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-  [Catalog 2012-2013 \(Page 26\)](#)
-  [Catalog 2012-2013 \(Page 28\)](#)
-  [Catalog 2012-2013 \(Page 41\)](#)
-  [Classified Performance Plan Policy and Documents](#)
-  [Classified Staff Appeal-Dispute Form 2009](#)
-  [Classified Staff Compensation Policy](#)
-  [Classified Staff Grievance Process for Classified Employees](#)
-  [Classified Staff State Personnel System Employee Handbook](#)
-  [Evaluation Policy_Performance Planning and Evaluation-Exempt Staff](#)
-  [Facilities_Use Agreement 8-1-13](#)
-  [Faculty and Administrative Search Procedure Manual](#)
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-  [Faculty Evaluation_Lecturer Form](#)
-  [Faculty Senate Combined Curriculum Policies and Procedures Manual 2013](#)
-  [Faculty Senate Standing Committee Policy and Procedures Manual](#)
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-  [PPEH-CMU-Section III-Recruitment and Hiring \(Page 1\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section IX- Grievance Policy \(Page 1\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 1\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 10\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 12\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 14\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 17\)](#)
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-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 23\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 24\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 5\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 6\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 8\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 9\)](#)
- [PPEH-CMU-Section VII-Administrator Evaluation \(Page 2\)](#)
- [PPEH-CMU-Section VIII-Salary Administration \(Page 2\)](#)

-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VIII-Salary Administration \(Page 3\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VIII-Salary Administration \(Page 4\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section V-Leaves \(Page 1\)](#)
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-  [PPEH-CMU-Section XII-Professional Conduct \(Page 1\)](#)
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-  [Trustee Policy Manual - 2013 \(Page 14\)](#)
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-  [University Center_Meeting_Rooms](#)
-  [University Center_User Fee Structure](#)
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-  [Western Undergraduate Exchange \(WUE\)_Home Page](#)

Core Component 2.B

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

CMU Response

Introduction

This component is about transparency, about complete and clear information being provided for students and the public with regard to CMU's programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships. The word "completely" includes the utilization of multiple media tactics to deliver relevant and timely information that develops and maintains mutually beneficial relationships with the public. "Completely" also requires a communication style that is straightforward and inclusive, avoiding jargon or abbreviations, and acronyms. While conciseness is beneficial to help students and the public avoid information overload, no information can be missing that is needed for full disclosure.

CMU endeavors to ensure that anyone seeking information on CMU's website encounters user friendly and intuitive navigation tools. CMU communicates with an internal audience (on campus) inclusive of current students, faculty and staff, and an external audience composed of prospective students and parents, alumni, community members, vendors, and others interested in CMU. The University, through its media relations department, disseminates campuswide information in the form of press releases to inform the public of events, opportunities, and issues that either originate with the institution or may affect the institution or public. Social media platforms are utilized by departments and student groups to distribute information and to engage in interactive dialogue with the public.

CMU presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships. Further, CMU continues to improve the effectiveness of communications to internal and external audiences. CMU's website contains a wealth of readily accessible information.

Evidence Item 2B-1. Institutional and program requirements for students are easily accessed.

Each academic year, new students are provided with a Colorado Mesa University Catalog which is available in [print](#) and [online](#) as well. In addition to the information provided in the catalog, each academic department maintains a website with information on its programs, requirements, and faculty. Other hard-copy materials, such as departmental brochures on specific programs, may also be obtained by any prospective or current student who requests them. Additionally, students and members of the public may access the information for all academic programs by visiting the CMU website. A detailed description and the requirements of every program of study at CMU are provided on program sheets available on the website and are referenced in the catalog, as are each program's faculty and contact information.

Students are able to obtain electronic degree audits through their advisors who can go through the University's web portal, MAVzone, for information related to student advising on the faculty tab. Among the options is a listing of courses completed by an advisee that can be compared with courses needed for various other programs. This capability proves particularly useful when students consider switching to a different major.

Evidence Item 2B-2. The institution does not always present itself clearly and completely with regard to the relationship between the programs offered by Colorado Mesa University's four-year division and those by Western Colorado Community College.

As stated above, CMU presents itself clearly and completely to students and the public with regard to the type and number of academic programs it offers. Further, CMU continues to improve the effectiveness and accessibility of its communications to these audiences. However, whether specific programs are actually offered by CMU's four-year division or the community college division is not always entirely clear. There are a number of programs listed on the WCCC website or in WCCC marketing materials which are actually provided on the main campus through the four-year division. There is a need to clearly identify for students which programs are associated with which division. One way to improve clarity regarding institutional requirements is to make more explicit the connections and differences among CMU four-year and graduate programs and the WCCC two-year and certificate programs.

Evidence Item 2B-3. The institution presents itself clearly and completely with regard to information about the credentials of faculty and staff.

A [listing](#) of full-time CMU faculty, administrators, and staff, including their titles and educational credentials/qualifications, is available in the catalog and on the website, updated annually by the Office of Human Resources. CMU's Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. III-1, line 33) regarding [faculty recruitment and hiring](#), addresses the institution's requirements. All educational credentials must be earned from an institution whose accreditation is recognized by the U.S. Department of

Education. The educational and experiential qualifications are also described for technical faculty and special-appointment faculty. Additionally, [terminal degrees](#) for full-time faculty by academic program have been approved by the Board of Trustees and posted on the Academic Affairs website. Staff in the Office of Human Resources maintain the records of requirements for each position and post open position announcements to enable prospective employees to review job descriptions and apply for a position on the Human Resources website.

Evidence Item 2B-4. The institution presents itself clearly and completely to students and the public with regard to costs to students.

The website for CMU's [Accounting/Business Services Office](#) provides clear and complete information about expenses at CMU, including student fees, matriculation fees, and additional fees, such as lab fees. Expense information is provided through features such as a net price calculator that enables students to input information and estimate their expenses. CMU's Catalog (p. 26) also includes [information on expenses](#) as well as a chapter on financial aid that addresses tuition payment plans, scholarships, Colorado student aid, the CMU Foundation programs, federal student aid, the Western Undergraduate Exchange, and Mountains and Plains program tuition and fees.

In October 2005, CMU's Board of Trustees approved a "[Truth in Tuition](#)" concept to restructure the assessment of tuition and fees, making a clearer delineation between services and programs paid for from tuition and those paid from student fees (Trustee Meeting Agenda, October 28, 2005, p. 11). This action was revenue neutral but helped make the costs of education at CMU more transparent for parents and students. The funding for services and programs that more appropriately fit under tuition, such as drama, computer labs, and tutoring, became part of tuition while several items that seemed appropriately funded from student fees, such as the Outdoor Program and the student newspaper (The Criterion), were designated to be funded by student fees.

Evidence Item 2B-5. The institution presents itself clearly and completely regarding institutional control.

The [authority of the Board of Trustees](#) is described in the Trustees' Policy Manual (p. 6, line 26), based on [Colorado Revised Statutes \(C.R.S.\) 23-53-101](#), [C.R.S. 23-53-102](#) and [C.R.S. 23-53-104](#). Senate Bill 11-265 was introduced in the Colorado legislature in 2011 to [authorize the name change](#) from Mesa State College to Colorado Mesa University. The bill clearly states the charter of CMU and outlines the roles and responsibilities of the institution as well as the Board of Trustees and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education.

Evidence Item 2B-6. The institution presents itself clearly and completely regarding accreditation relationships.

CMU's [accreditation status](#) is readily found in the University Catalog (p. 8, col. 2) and on the website. Links at the site cover [history](#), [vision, values and mission](#), ["fast facts"](#) and [accreditation](#), among other topics.

In addition to accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, programs that have additional approval by specific state and national agencies are listed. For example, the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education accredits the [Athletic Training Program](#). Other programs at CMU with specialized accreditation/approvals are the [Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic](#), [Music](#), [Nursing \(B.S.N., A.A.S./R.N., and P.N.\)](#), [Radiologic Technology](#), and [Teacher Education](#). Additionally, two WCCC programs have external approval. The Colorado Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board's has approved the [Western Colorado Peace Officers Academy](#), while the [Transportation Services](#) program meets the requirements of the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation.

Evidence Item 2B-7. Accessibility to information for all is a priority at CMU.

In compliance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act, CMU provides clear, readily accessible information disclosing numerous aspects of the University through its [Higher Education Opportunity Act Disclosures](#) web page. Information provided at this site includes the availability of institutional and financial aid, privacy, diversity, prices of attendance, refund policies, educational programs, facilities, faculty, transfer of credits, accreditation and licensure of programs, computer use and file sharing, career and job placement, various survey results, and other information of interest to constituents.

CMU also provides information through a variety of media. For students unable to take advantage of the usual literature or website information, various accommodations are made. CMU recognizes disability as an aspect of diversity, an integral part of society. Students, faculty, staff, and community members collaborate to create an accessible university community. CMU's Educational Access Services Office and the Marketing Office work in partnership to ensure that the institution presents itself clearly and completely to the public. These offices assist institutional staff in effectively communicating with all audiences, including individuals who have disabilities that affect hearing, seeing, speaking, reading, writing, or understanding. The Marketing Office is committed to producing institutional publications and a website that can be accessed by all visitors, with the goal of exceeding the parameters set by [Section 508 of the US Rehabilitation Act and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0](#).

Evidence Item 2B-8. CMU regularly informs the public regarding campus security.

CMU provides detailed information on the safety and security on each of its three campuses annually in [reports](#) that comply with the Jean Clery Act. Practice sessions for faculty and staff for lock-downs of campus buildings in case of major security issues

occur annually. Speakers on security issues, such as dealing with campus shootings, have provided campus-wide presentations annually for the past two years. The Office of Student Services is the focal point for faculty or staff to report any security concerns.

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	Catalog 2012-2013 (Page 10)
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	Employee Listing_2013
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	Legislation_Senate Bill 11-265-MSC-CMU Name Change
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	Trustee Agenda Book_2005_1028 (Page 11)
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Core Component 2.C

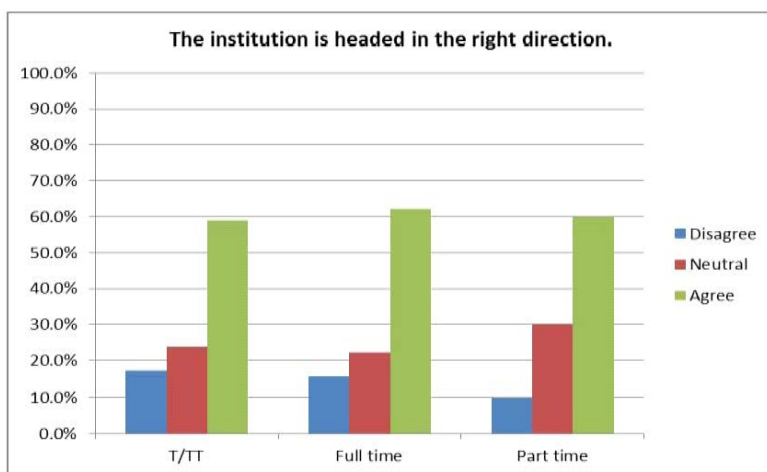
The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

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

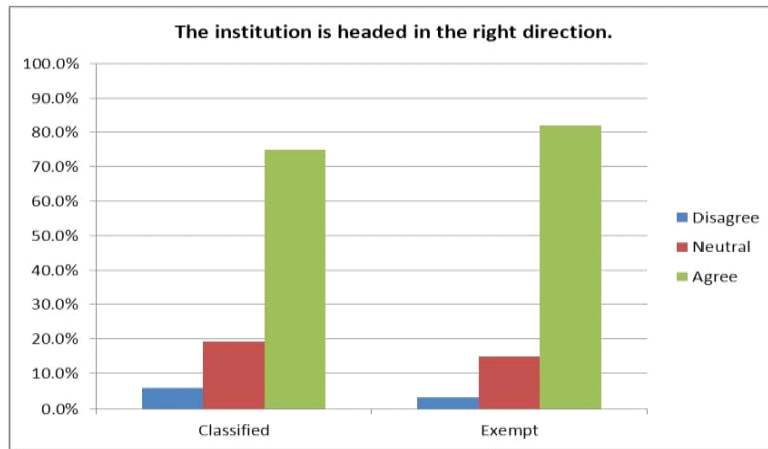
CMU Response

Introduction

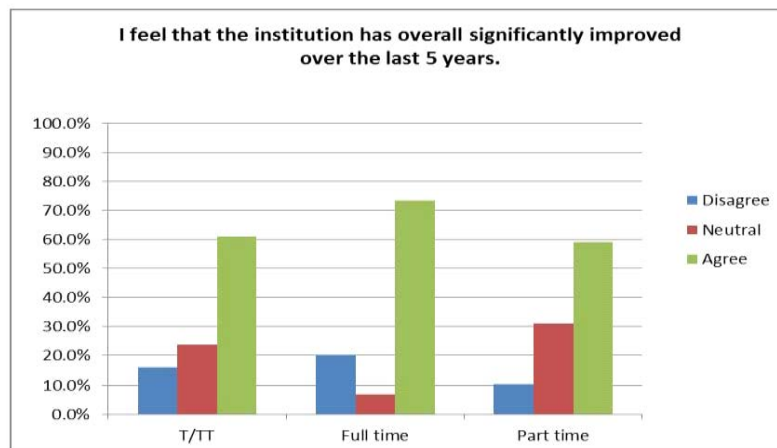
The CMU Board of Trustees is charged with acting in the best interests of the institution. Additionally, the Board has considerable autonomy when it comes to making decisions. Prior to 2003, this institution was part of a State Colleges in Colorado system with Adams State College (now Adams State University), Western State College (now Western State Colorado University), and Metropolitan State College, (now Metropolitan State University of Denver). Since having its own governing Board concerned specifically with its best interests, CMU has grown substantially and upgraded the campus significantly. In a 2012 survey of faculty and staff administered as part of the self-study process, 60+ percent of CMU faculty and 70+ percent of staff agreed or strongly agreed that the institution is headed in the right direction and has significantly improved overall in the past five years.



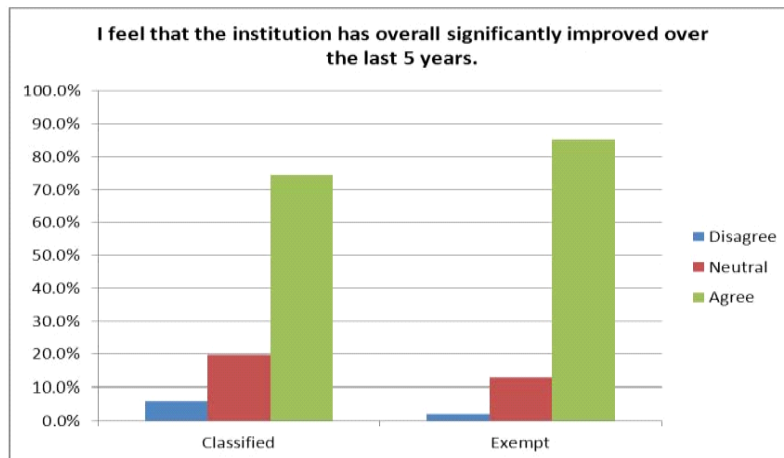
Graph based on data from survey taken by faculty in 2012.



Graph based on data from survey taken by staff in 2012.



Graph based on data from survey taken by faculty in 2012.



Graph based on data from survey taken by staff in 2012.

The Board was [expanded to 11 voting members](#), as of July 1, 2012, to give the membership greater depth and breadth, both geographically and functionally. Members are appointed by the governor of Colorado, vetted by the Office of Boards and Commissions which performs background checks, interviewed by the Department of Higher Education, and confirmed by the Colorado State Senate. They are, by definition, public members. Before they become Board members, they are advised of their fiduciary duties to the State of Colorado as well as to the institution. Trustees are chosen based on numerous factors such as sound financial background, fund-raising expertise, geographical considerations, ethnicity balance, gender balance, and a requisite political perspectives balance. The Board generally functions as a committee of the whole, but as needed, *ad hoc* working groups are convened to consider specific issues.

The CMU Board of Trustees consists of a diverse group of men and women who come with a wide range of backgrounds. Several Board members are lawyers, one is a senior judge, one is the president and CEO of Rocky Mountain Public Broadcasting Systems, two are CEOs of private firms, one is a retired accounting professional, and many have been integrally involved in public policy, particularly regarding public education. Many Board members also have substantial experience and success with fundraising. Common to all members of the Board is a dedication to community service and a wealth of leadership experience. Additionally, a non-voting faculty member, elected by the CMU faculty, serves on the Board to provide input, along with a non-voting student representative elected by the student body. [Biographies](#) of the Board members are available.

Sub-component 2.C.1. The governing Board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.

Evidence Item 2C1-1. The Board regularly engages in efforts to improve the institution.

The Board of Trustees regularly discusses ways to continue improving CMU. For example, from a Trustee meeting agenda (March 5-6, 2008, p. 19), [Board members participated in budget planning discussion](#), considering the importance given to each of the following:

- *optimally invest[ing] the College's resources to attract and retain quality faculty who can deliver excellence in the classrooms; and outstanding staff who will provide unmatched customer service in support activities.*
- *respond[ing] to regional needs by expanding and developing high need/high demand programs. Requests should focus on how to enhance, expand or modify programs that meet this initiative.*
- *investing in a diverse set of delivery systems to meet the variety of program demands ranging from technical certificates through master's degrees. And, to continue to invest in institutional financial aid to minimize the financial barriers that students may face that prevent them from having access to higher education.*

In another example, [deliberations](#) from the Trustee meeting minutes for January 21, 2009 (p. 3) included reports from administration, faculty, students, and legislators, the unanimous support of current legislation before the Colorado state legislature, and a report on capital and physical plant improvements to both preserve and enhance the institution.

The Trustee meeting minutes from April 1, 2009 (p. 3) include a [statement from the President](#) that "The budget is dominating most discussions and the likelihood of more cuts is probable. He further advised that as the institution addresses further budget cuts, everyone must be mindful to remember that students and quality come first."

A major strategic planning endeavor took place during 2010 under the Board's direction, resulting in CMU's 2011 strategic plan. The plan can be found on the web and is available to the public.

Evidence Item 2C1-2. CMU's Trustees Policy Manual establishes that all Board deliberations need to promote institutional well-being.

The following excerpts from the Trustees Policy Manual reflect the expectations of discussions by the trustees:

SECTION 1.1: Authority of the Board of Trustees:

As specified in C.R.S. § 23-53-101, et seq. (2003), ...to exercise their authority appropriately, the trustees regularly establish policies designed to enable the university to perform its statutory functions in a rational and systematic manner.

SECTION 1.2: Board Role:

The board's goals ... are to create and maintain an environment conducive to the discovery and dissemination of knowledge to all citizens who seek it, to provide necessary resources in an atmosphere that induces and honors excellence and promotes equality of access, and to develop a sense of responsibility, accountability, and ethical practice among all those who are involved in sponsoring and providing educational services. The board shall monitor the university to be certain that it is performing at the highest possible level.

Sub-component 2.C.2. The governing Board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

Evidence Item 2C2-1. The Board considers the relevant interests of constituents in their planning processes by involving a variety of internal and external stakeholders.

During the development of the current strategic plan in academic year 2010-11, wide input was solicited from [representatives](#) of the University's many stakeholders:

The 27-member Strategic Planning Committee was comprised of on-campus representatives from the faculty, administration, staff, and students as well as off-campus participants who are alumni, community leaders, and business owners.

Additionally, the Trustees Policy Manual (p. 13, line 293) calls for [input from the institution's constituents](#) on areas of mutual concern:

Institutional deliberations concerning long range planning, educational policies, personnel policies, priorities, and other matters affecting faculty and students should include opportunity for comment by representatives of the faculty and student organizations. The mechanisms for such comment, however, should recognize the rapidly changing circumstances confronting the College and the requirement for timely decisions.

A faculty member (elected every two years by full-time CMU faculty) and a student trustee (elected annually by the CMU students) sit on the Board, and reports are provided by the Faculty Senate president and student government leaders during Board meetings. Every year the Board meets with newly tenured and promoted faculty. On other occasions, the Board meets with groups representing different campus and community groups:

- Example of [Board members meeting with constituents](#) (Trustee meeting agenda, April 21-22, 2004, p. 1):

Open Meetings With Advisory Groups 10:15 a.m.-7:30 p.m.

Administrative Staff Representatives (Fletcher) 10:15 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Lunch with Community Groups (Krey-Zeigel) 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Classified Staff Representatives (Fletcher) 1:30-2:15 p.m.

Student Representatives (Fletcher) 2:30-3:15 p.m.

Faculty Senate (Fletcher) 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Foundation and Alumni Groups (Fletcher) 4:45-5:30 p.m.

Dinner with Department Chairs (Krey-Zeigel) 5:45-7:00 p.m.

- Example of [public comment on a Board agenda item](#) (Trustee meeting minutes, April 26, 2011, p. 3)

Regarding the strategic name change of the institution, “there was public, student, and faculty comment on the strategic name change.”

A perusal of Board meeting minutes indicates that, at most Board meetings, reports are given by the Associated Student Government (ASG) president and the Student Trustee. For example, in the Trustee meeting minutes for January 26-27, 2011, the [Student Trustee provided an update](#) on various club sports and reported that the ASG would be hosting various town hall meetings with the students to discuss the question of changing from a college to a university. The ASG president took a formal position in favor of becoming a university after the students held several town hall meetings.

Trustee meeting agendas also show that it is common to have reports from the Faculty Trustee and Faculty Senate president at each meeting. For example, on the Trustee meeting agenda for March 17, 2010 (p. 1), the [Board received an oral report from the Faculty Trustee and a written report from the Faculty Senate president](#). The Faculty Trustee generally reports to the faculty as a whole on the results of each Board meeting. Additionally, trustees occasionally meet with various campus constituencies such as the faculty senate, department heads, and student groups. In November 2011, trustees met with emeritus faculty members at a luncheon held in the University Center Ballroom.

The Board of Trustees receives input from the community in a variety of ways. At all Board meetings, public comment is available; a sign-up sheet is provided for those who wish to make observations or ask questions of the Board. The agenda for each meeting is publicly posted on the trustees meetings webpage approximately one week before the scheduled meeting. There are also university advisory boards that include community members (e.g., the Strategic Planning Committee and the Institutional Review Board), and these advisory boards may communicate with the Board. In addition, there are occasions when the Board will host luncheons with community leaders such as county commissioners and elected city officials. Additionally, the University President meets with community advisory groups four times annually.

Sub-component 2.C.3. The governing Board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.

Evidence Item 2C3-1. The Trustees Policy Manual requires Board members to limit external entities' involvement in the affairs of the University.

CMU's Trustees Policy Manual includes specific statements indicating that the Board is responsible for creating policies that promote institutional well-being, setting high standards for the campus community, and providing pathways for attaining these standards. Additionally, CMU's Trustees Policy Manual (p. 6, line 45) [defines the independence](#) of the Board with the following statement:

It is the policy of the Trustees to provide substantial administrative authority, to guarantee a minimum of external involvement in the affairs of the University, to encourage the development of the distinctive role of the University and to support the University in its effort to maintain and enhance academic excellence.

Evidence 2C3-2. CMU's governing Board is free from undue influence from donors to the University.

The Colorado Mesa University Foundation is a separate and distinct entity. It is a charitable non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. The Foundation has a mission centered on the generation and distribution of gift assets. It has its own distinct governing board and is subject to its own yearly audit.

Evidence 2C3-3. The Trustees are empowered to act in numerous ways on behalf of the University and are prohibited from engaging in conflicts of interest.

In the state of Colorado, the governing boards of the state institutions of higher education, whether established by constitution or law, are given the general supervision of their respective institutions and the exclusive control and direction of all funds and appropriations to their respective institutions. Board members sign a [letter](#) stating that they will avoid conflicts of interest regarding the institution and are required to follow Colorado state laws regarding conflicts of interest. Colorado Revised Statutes 24-18-101 (see [parts I and II](#)) requires that all governing Board members, administrators, faculty, and staff follow rules of conduct that require strict attention to fiduciary duty and public trust. Colorado Revised Statutes 23-53-101 [empowers the Trustees to take action in several ways on behalf of CMU](#) without requiring external influence before decisions are made.

Sub-component 2.C.4. The governing Board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects faculty to oversee academic matters.

Evidence 2C4-1. The governing Board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration.

In the Trustees Policy Manual (p. 19, line 456), the Board [delegates day-to-day duties to the President of the University](#) and [identifies the duties and responsibilities of the University President](#) (Manual, p. 53, line 1550). For example, in the Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. III-7, line 264), the [President is given the authority to make a formal offer of employment to a candidate](#). And, "the appropriate Vice President, Department Head or Director, in consultation with the President, is responsible for conducting the selection process for positions within his or her area of responsibility." Handbook, p. III-7, line 255)

Evidence 2C4-2. The governing Board delegates the overseeing of degree programs to the faculty.

According to Colorado Revised Statutes 23-53-102, the [governing board is given the responsibility to prescribe degree programs](#) "with the advice of the faculty."

At CMU, program and course proposals are reviewed and approved by the appropriate faculty [curriculum committees](#) and then approved by the Board. Additionally, program reviews and prioritization efforts regularly include faculty. An example of this sort of faculty inclusion may be found in the [Academic Program Quality, Priorities and Productivity \(APQPP\) Report](#) (p. 13) which was presented to the Board in April 2009. The APQPP committee was composed primarily of academic department heads and included Faculty Senate representatives.

The Trustee meeting agenda for April 26, 2011 (p. 17) included an agenda item that [details the substantive curricular changes](#) that were made at CMU during the 2011-12 academic year. The information in the agenda item provides an example of the delegation of academic matters involving curriculum to faculty. The Faculty Senate serves in an advisory capacity to the administration and the governing Board regarding academic matters. The [Policy and Procedures Manual for Faculty Senate Standing Committees](#) describes the committees' membership, purposes, and specific tasks. For example, the Academic Policies Committee is charged to recommend to the Faculty Senate policies related to several academic matters in the institution, including policies that establish and review standards of ethical conduct for faculty. The Assessment Committee is involved in recommending and monitoring

assessment activities. The Faculty Senate oversees three curriculum committees: a Graduate Curriculum Committee, an Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the Western Colorado Community College Curriculum Committee. All curriculum committees share some duties, including the responsibility to review proposals from academic programs for curricular changes to determine if there is demonstrated need for the proposed change, the effects on a balanced curriculum, articulation of the curriculum with existing programs, and non-duplication with other curricular offerings in the institution.

Sources

-  [Academic Program Quality, Priorities, & Productivity \(APQPP\) 2009 Report \(Page 13\)](#)
-  [Accessibility of CMU Information](#)
-  [Faculty Senate Combined Curriculum Policies and Procedures Manual 2013](#)
-  [Faculty Senate Standing Committee Policy and Procedures Manual](#)
-  [Legislation_CRS 23 53 102_CMU BOT Creation](#)
-  [Legislation_CRS 23 53 101_Enabling Legislation](#)
-  [Legislation_CRS 24 18 101-105_Ethics Part I](#)
-  [Legislation_CRS 24 18 108-110_Ethics Part II](#)
-  [Legislation_House Bill 12-1324-Admissions Standards](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section III-Recruitment and Hiring \(Page 7\)](#)
-  [Strategic Plan 2011 \(Page 27\)](#)
-  [Trustee Agenda Book_2004_0421 \(Page 1\)](#)
-  [Trustee Agenda Book_2009_0401](#)
-  [Trustee Agenda Book_2009_0505 \(Page 3\)](#)
-  [Trustee Agenda Book_2010_0317](#)
-  [Trustee Agenda Book_2011_0323 \(Page 5\)](#)
-  [Trustee Agenda Book_2011_0426 \(Page 17\)](#)
-  [Trustee Agenda Book_2011_0620 \(Page 3\)](#)
-  [Trustee Conflict of Interest Letter](#)
-  [Trustee Policy Manual - 2013 \(Page 13\)](#)
-  [Trustee Policy Manual - 2013 \(Page 19\)](#)
-  [Trustee Policy Manual - 2013 \(Page 53\)](#)
-  [Trustee Policy Manual - 2013 \(Page 6\)](#)
-  [Trustees Biographical Sketches](#)

Core Component 2.D

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

CMU Response

Introduction

The evidence provided in this section shows that CMU has policies and procedures in place to protect freedom of expression, particularly as it involves the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. No formal grievances have been filed related to academic freedom with the Human Resources Department since the current HR Director was hired in May 2005.

Evidence Item 2D-1. The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

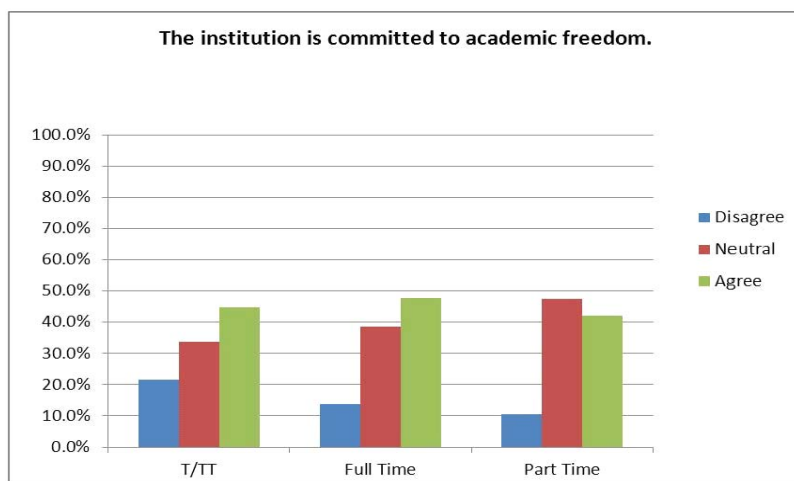
In its statement of institutional values, CMU's 2011 Strategic Plan (p. 15, bullet 3) makes it clear that [the University values and supports a culture “committed to integrity and academic and intellectual freedom.”](#) The Board [endorses the principle of academic freedom](#) in the Trustees Policy Manual (p. 38, line 1019) and recognizes the freedom of faculty to fully discuss academic subjects, engage in research, and write or speak as citizens without fear of institutional censorship or discipline. The Board further notes that academic freedom is extended to all faculty regardless of tenure status.

In its Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. XII-1, line 24), the University outlines a [series of professional personnel responsibilities to students](#). Those responsibilities identify specific statements that support and protect the academic freedom of CMU students. Students who believe their academic freedoms have been violated may initiate an appeal with the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Faculty encourage the “free pursuit of learning by students, protect their academic freedom and adhere to a professional’s proper role as an intellectual guide and counselor” Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (PPEH) (p. XII-1, line 28). Further, the faculty member's:

[primary academic responsibility is to seek and to state the truth as they understand it](#). To this end, professional personnel strive to develop and improve their competence as teachers and scholars, exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending and transmitting knowledge, and practice intellectual honesty. (PPEH, p. XII-1, line 15)

[As citizens engaged in a profession that depends on freedom for its health and integrity, faculty are to promote conditions conducive to free inquiry and further public understanding of academic freedom](#). (PPEH, p. XII-3, line 105)

Although academic freedom is a value stated repeatedly in CMU policy, the results from a recent faculty survey show that fewer than half of tenured and tenure-track faculty agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “The institution is committed to academic freedom.” Many gave a neutral response. Still, no formal complaints have been lodged regarding limits on academic freedoms. The University's Board policies express commitment to academic freedom for all CMU employees.



Graph based on data from survey taken by faculty in 2012.

Students attending CMU who completed the 2012 Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (p. 17, item 67) [perceived the campus to be committed to free expression](#) as well. Their perceptions produced an average of 5.74 (with 7 being the highest level of agreement) for the statement "Freedom of expression is protected on campus." This score was significantly higher than the average of 5.50 for the national comparison group.

Sources

-  [Assessment Survey - EBI Student Satisfaction Inventory_Fall 2012 \(Page 17\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section XII-Professional Conduct \(Page 1\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section XII-Professional Conduct \(Page 3\)](#)
-  [Strategic Plan 2011 \(Page 21\)](#)
-  [Trustee Policy Manual - 2013 \(Page 38\)](#)

Core Component 2.E

The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

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

CMU Response

Introduction

CMU provides oversight and support for academic honesty. The University ensures that knowledge is acquired, discovered, and applied in responsible and ethical ways. Evidence is provided regarding oversight and support services, relating how CMU provides students with guidance on using information resources and how the institution supports academic honesty.

Sub-component 2.E.1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice.

Evidence Item 2E1-1. CMU provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice.

The mission of the Office of Sponsored Programs is “to provide support to faculty and other University personnel in obtaining and administering external funds for research and other scholarly activities.” The Office of Sponsored Programs offers research services that include providing training to faculty and other personnel on research-related issues and regulations and ensuring compliance with all applicable federal, state, local, and University regulations, laws and policies related to research and external funding of sponsored projects.

The CMU [Misconduct in Research Policy](#) specifically addresses:

. . . maintaining the integrity of research, scholarship, and creative activities. . . . All individuals are primarily responsible for preserving the integrity of truthful research in their scholarly activities. However, this policy outlines the institution’s responsibility to:

1. *Promote exemplary ethical standards for research and scholarship.*
2. *Initiate an inquiry into any suspected or alleged misconduct.*
3. *Conduct a subsequent investigation, if warranted.*
4. *Take action necessary to ensure the integrity of all research, the rights and interests of research subjects and the public, and the observance of legal requirements or responsibilities.*

The University’s [Human Subjects Committee](#), also known as the Institutional Review Board (IRB), is charged with reviewing all proposed research involving human subjects conducted by CMU faculty, staff, and students to ensure the protections of those subjects and compliance with the University’s [Human Subjects Policy](#) and federal human subjects regulations. The committee is made up of a group of individuals with varying backgrounds, including faculty, staff, and a community member. The group is guided by [principles taken from the Belmont Report](#): respect for persons, beneficence (obligation to do no harm, maximize benefits and minimize risks), and justice (equal opportunity for subjects to receive the benefits and bear the risks of research, regardless of gender, race, and/or socioeconomic status).

CMU also adheres to all federal and state regulations regarding the humane use and care of animals for teaching and research as described on the Sponsored Programs [web page](#). This includes the Animal Welfare Act and the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

Sub-component 2.E.2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.

Evidence Item 2E2-1. Students are offered guidance and are required to engage in the ethical use of information

resources through policies provided by Student Services and academic departments.

The Student and Academic Policies Guide (p. 21) addresses [academic integrity through a statement of principle, a statement of student responsibilities and expectations, the definition of academic dishonesty, a list of sanctions, and an overview of the appeals process](#). The guide provides a list of specific expectations and also stresses in an overarching manner that:

A value fundamental to the principle of independent learning is the requirement of honesty and integrity in the performance of academic assignments, both inside and outside the classroom. By submitting work which is not your own, you may forfeit the opportunity to continue as a student. Each student accepts the responsibility of maintaining honor in all aspects of academic study and the support of this principle as it applies to others.

Additionally, faculty members often provide policy statements for students on academic dishonesty or require homework that helps students learn how to do ethical research. See, for examples, the syllabus from [Research Methods in Psychology \(PSYC 216\)](#), [English Composition \(ENGL 112\)](#), [Capstone in Radiologic Science \(RTEC 494\)](#), [Advanced Business Software \(CISB 205\)](#), or [Research Methods in Criminal Justice \(CRMJ 315\)](#).

Evidence Item 2E2-2. Students are offered guidance and are required to engage in the ethical use of information resources through policies provided and actions taken by the Information Technology staff.

Guidance to students is provided in the University's [Computer Use Policy](#) and [Electronic Communications Policy](#) regarding the ethical use of the computer systems and networks including the Internet, published on the institution's Information Technology website, referenced in the [Student and Academic Policies Guide](#) (p. 14), and as part of E-communications in the [Trustees' Policy Manual](#) (p. 24, line 615). These policies provide students detailed guidance on protecting privacy, prohibited uses and ethical uses of computers and electronic communications. It prohibits unethical actions involving computers such as electronic harassment. Violations result in such actions as students losing the rights to use the campus network.

Effective student guidance begins with faculty and staff guidance. As new employees check in with the HR department, they are required to visit both the MAVcard Office, to get their campus identification card, and the Information Technology Office to register for a University computer account. Employees receiving a network account must have a MAVcard or show a government-issued identification. Once this user is confirmed by the system, the employee is directed to the University's [Computer End-user Agreement and Notice of Computer Policies \(End-user Agreement\)](#). The end-user agreement is a synopsis of CMU's computer use policy and computer security best practices, including using secure passwords and handling private information that each user must agree to by accepting online. IT policies also are communicated at orientations for new employees. CMU provides information security awareness training to all employees annually. Mandatory training, online and one-on-one, is provided by IT professionals as a means of offering guidance in the ethical use of information resources across campus.

Students and employees registering personal computing devices for use on CMU's network must comply with CMU's [Network Use Agreement](#). The Network Use Agreement points to the individual as the responsible party for activities originating from their network connection. Illegal downloading and distributing of copyrighted materials, spreading malicious software, disrupting service of other users, and harassing others are identified as unacceptable uses. All campus guests wishing to use the University's wireless network to access the Internet must be sponsored by a registered campus end-user. The sponsor must provide network credentials, username and password to request a visitor's account. In essence, the sponsor must accept responsibility for a guest's Internet use. Additionally, visitors' Internet access is limited to avoid downloading of copyrighted movies and software.

Evidence Item 2E2-3. Students are offered instruction on the ethical use of information resources by CMU's library staff.

Additional information to guide students is provided through information offered by CMU's library, both on the website and via in-class presentations by library staff on subjects such as the Introduction to Learning or How to Study. Additional information regarding library services may be found in Criterion 3 under 3D-4 and 3D-5.

Sub-component 2.E.3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Evidence Item 2E3-1. Colorado Mesa University has clearly written policies regarding academic honesty and integrity.

The Student and Academic Policies Guide (p. 21) clearly states [expectations and obligations of students regarding academic honesty and integrity](#). The document details the institution's commitment to academic integrity, lists expected behavior norms, defines academic dishonesty, details possible sanctions, provides procedures for sanctions and appeals, and stipulates that records of academic dishonesty will be kept on file with the Office of Academic Affairs.

Colorado Mesa University recognizes its obligation to provide continuing guidance as to what constitutes

academic honesty and to promote procedures and circumstances that will reinforce this principle. U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17) recognizes that intellectual work such as software programs, data, or pictures are automatically covered by copyright unless it is explicitly noted to the contrary. According to U.S. Copyright Law, illegal reproduction of software can be subject to civil damages of \$50,000 or more on behalf of the copyright owner and criminal penalties including fines and imprisonment.

The [Catalog](#) (p. 44, col. 2) also clearly describes the University's expectations on acceptable academic conduct and the actions that will be taken for dishonest behaviors.

Evidence Item 2E3-2. The institution enforces academic integrity policies.

Academic integrity is often handled at the faculty and departmental level. Faculty members have the authority to impose sanctions for academic dishonesty and often do. These may involve failing grades for assignments or courses. Sometimes the matter is handled at a departmental level, and some departments have written policies specific to them. For example, the Department of Business has a [policy on academic integrity](#) that is tied to that of the institution but specifically details issues that tend to cause problems for students in Business courses. It stresses issues such as “self-plagiarism.” The Department of Business also defines plagiarism to include copying some or all of another student’s computer-generated assignment, with or without slight or major modifications, and submitting such assignment for a grade. If the originator of the file gives permission to the copier, both students have committed plagiarism. Further information is then provided on consequences for academic dishonesty. When a student does not follow the policy, the faculty informs the department head and a decision is made about the situation and the student. A plan of action is made and implemented by the faculty member and department head regarding each case. Depending on the event, information may be forwarded to Academic Affairs, students may be expelled from classes, or other sanctions may be imposed.

CMU’s [Student and Academic Policies Guide](#) (p. 20) includes the procedures for resolving potential violations of the Student Code of Conduct, including academic dishonesty, the format for holding hearings before the Campus Student Conduct Board, the list of potential sanctions, and the steps of the appeals process. Sanctions for academic dishonesty are described in the guide in the following manner:

Students who have been sanctioned as a result of academic dishonesty should understand that they have violated the Colorado Mesa University Code of Conduct and are subject to appropriate disciplinary actions under that Code which may include suspension from Colorado Mesa University. When acts of academic dishonesty occur, appropriate members of the academic community must understand and investigate to determine the facts and, if there has been academic dishonesty, decide on the degree of dishonesty and the sanction(s) that should be imposed.

Faculty Senate’s Academic Policies Committee developed an official form in academic year 2011-12 for faculty members to [report instances of academic dishonesty](#) to academic department heads and to the Office of Academic Affairs.

Sources

	Academic Dishonesty_Form
	Belmont Report_Web Page
	Business Department_Academic Integrity Statement August 2011
	Catalog 2012-2013 (Page 46)
	Curriculum_Syllabus-CISB 205
	Curriculum_Syllabus-CRMJ 315
	Curriculum_Syllabus-ENGL 112
	Curriculum_Syllabus-PSYC 216
	Curriculum_Syllabus-RTEC 494
	Human Subjects_Inst Review Board Members
	Human Subjects_Policy
	IT_Computer Use Policy
	IT_Electronic Communications Policy
	IT_End User Agreement
	IT_Network Use_Agreement
	Misconduct in Research
	Sponsored Programs_Animal Care and Use_Web
	Student and Academic Policies Guide_Aug 2012
	Student and Academic Policies Guide_Aug 2012 (Page 14)
	Student and Academic Policies Guide_Aug 2012 (Page 20)

Criterion 2: Conclusion, Strengths, and Recommendations

CMU Response

Conclusion

Colorado Mesa University acts with integrity and conducts itself ethically and responsibly. The institution conscientiously seeks to provide full disclosure of information to prospective and current students, makes explicit its requirements that all members of CMU's community act ethically in all activities, and provides clear and comprehensive guidelines for the encouragement and enforcement of integrity across campus. Full disclosure of information is provided to the public and to students and their families before students make commitments to CMU.

Avenues of disclosure are varied, repetitive, comprehensive, and regularly updated. The Board of Trustees follows the Colorado State Code of Ethics and has a policy manual for governing in ways that enhance the well-being of CMU and its students. Policies and handbooks are regularly discussed and updated. CMU staff, faculty, auxiliaries, athletics, administration, and students display accountability as they follow guidelines prescribed by the institution, by programs, and by accrediting organizations. As a public state institution of higher education, CMU also follows policies and guidelines that originate as State of Colorado and/or federal statutes and mandates. Many of these procedures and publications are subject to regular public discussion and revision. The members of CMU's community continuously endeavor to strengthen the institution, to improve the clarity and flow of communications, and to update policies that will help the campus community avoid misleading statements or practices. CMU has several strengths in the area of integrity, as well as opportunities for improving integrity as the institution moves forward.

Strengths

- CMU follows clearly written policies and procedures that guide its personnel, students, and business decision-making processes.
- Students take an active role in determining the purposes, roles, and rates of student fees. The fees are made transparent to the student decision-makers.

Recommendation

- CMU should make clear to potential and current students which programs are delivered by CMU's four-year division and those that are offered by WCCC in all of its marketing materials, including the CMU and WCCC websites.

Criterion 3. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

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

CMU Response

Introduction

Colorado Mesa University takes great pride in providing educational opportunities that help students succeed in today's complex and interconnected world – in the classroom, online and at multiple locations in its service region. The University offers degrees at all levels, certificates through a doctorate. CMU's general education program engages students in the acquisition of broad knowledge and in the application of that knowledge in various intellectual-, civic-, and career-focused opportunities. CMU values teaching, learning, and student-faculty interaction. Faculty are highly qualified, are dedicated to teaching, and devote the majority of their time and energy to classroom excellence. Interaction between students and faculty is commonplace and enables faculty members to involve undergraduates in challenging research. Students are supported academically by a highly qualified staff, campus facilities that enhance learning, and a full range of services designed to help them achieve a higher degree of excellence. In-class instruction is supplemented by a variety of out-of-class opportunities including internships and fieldwork in Western Colorado and study groups that travel the globe.

Core Component 3.A

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

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

CMU Response

Introduction

Colorado Mesa University is dedicated to creating and maintaining a learning community that prepares students for active and successful personal, professional, and civic lives. The University is focused on student learning to ensure achievement of student learning outcomes. CMU offers a wide array of academic programs in various modes and locations that serve not only its student body, but also the needs of the community.

Sub-component 3.A.1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.

Evidence Item 3A1-1. External evidence indicates that CMU's courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.

External program reviewers comment favorably on the comparability of CMU programs with similar offerings at other institutions. CMU undergraduate and graduate programs regularly undergo [review on a six-year schedule](#) unless the program is on a different cycle specified by an external program accrediting/approval organization. Programs that are not accredited by external professional or discipline-specific bodies are required to complete a self-study and to bring in external program reviewers to help evaluate their programs. The role of the external reviewer is to provide an unbiased review of the program. One of the most important aspects of a quality program is an appropriate and up-to-date curriculum, and thus a main responsibility of the reviewer is to evaluate curriculum. The comments these reviewers make about program comparability with other institutions of higher education are pertinent to proof of currency and rigor. A survey of [reviewer comments](#) indicates favorable evaluations of CMU programs when compared with those at similar institutions. When appropriate and/or necessary, programs at CMU are accredited by external discipline-related accrediting agencies.

CMU's students perform well on discipline-specific licensure or exit examinations. Many CMU and WCCC programs require students to take discipline-specific licensure or exit examinations. Such exams typically test knowledge of the content and skills relevant to the discipline. Lists of such [exams and average pass rates](#) are included in the CCHE Performance Contract Report (p. 19). Average pass rates attained by CMU graduates on licensure and certification examinations generally show them to be comparable to or above statewide and/or national pass rates (See also Evidence Item 4A6-2). [Thirteen programs routinely administer the Major Field Test](#) (MFT) from Educational Testing Service. Benchmarks set by the various programs have been used to determine which learning outcomes are being achieved and if any programs appear to be deficient. Data from the MFT have provided useful feedback for the programs as faculty members identify ways in which to improve student performance in the disciplines as well as on the MFT exams.

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education provides oversight of certain aspects of course and program offerings at public institutions in Colorado, including CMU. In response to Colorado Revised Statutes 23-1-125, also known as the Colorado Student Bill of Rights, CCHE staff and representatives of institutions created and implemented [policies and procedures regarding general education core courses, credit hour limits for degree programs, and transferability of coursework](#). Thus Colorado has developed a statewide guaranteed transfer – the [gtPathways Program](#) – and a [statewide transfer policy](#). The approval process for gtPathways approval is an indicator that other institutions in the state believe [CMU's approved general education courses](#) (Catalog, p. 51, col. 2) are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree awarded.

CMU's [students participate in performances and competitions](#) at local, state, and national levels and perform competitively. The level of student performance in these events provides evidence that CMU degree programs serve students well, that the

University's students perform competitively, and that their education is current, rigorous, and comparable to that offered at other institutions.

Evidence Item 3A1-2. Internal evidence indicates that CMU's courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.

Like all colleges and universities, CMU hires new faculty regularly. New faculty typically enter a position with current research and professional expertise and thus contribute to the currency of the institution's offerings. Between 2007 and 2011 CMU [hired 43 new full-time tenure-track faculty members](#), representing [27 percent of the total tenured and tenure-track faculty](#), at CMU, as well as 40 full-time non-tenure track faculty. Similarly, WCCC has hired [15 new technical instructors](#), who comprise 51 percent of all full-time [faculty at WCCC](#).

Faculty oversight through the three Graduate, Undergraduate, and Western Colorado Community College (WCCC) curriculum committees provides an opportunity for faculty to review and approve new and updated programs and courses for relevance, currency, and adequate resources, including the faculty needed to support and sustain the programs and courses. Every new program or course addition, modification, or deletion requires faculty to submit a proposal to discuss the content with other faculty members and heads of academic departments that might be affected by the proposed changes. The process ensures consistency, currency, and rigor across the curriculum. The Policy and Procedures Manual for Faculty Senate Standing Committees (p. 4, line 120) [details the composition and duties of the three curriculum committees](#).

Beyond formal program reviews required by CMU, faculty frequently evaluate and modify their program's offerings and curriculum. This is usually done in response to perceived program changes and needs, [reviews](#) by institutional entities (e.g., the Academic Program Quality, Priorities, and Productivity (APQPP) Working Group), and new requirements from potential employers and other constituents. (See 4.A.1 for further discussion.) All of the findings from these processes serve as evidence that CMU programs are relevant and current. Listed below are some examples of recent program modifications:

- Art: The curriculum was restructured from a B.A. to a B.F.A., moving from a liberal arts emphasis to a professional degree.
- Health Science: The B.S.N. curriculum was modified in 2006 as a result of program review to include various new theory courses.
- English: The technical writing program was phased out as a result of the APQPP review.
- Mass Communication: Two concentrations were phased out in 2009 and replaced by a concentration in New Media. This was a consequence of recommendations from the APQPP review.

Professional development opportunities for faculty enable currency in content and pedagogy. CMU faculty members keep current in their respective disciplines and bring this current knowledge into the classroom in various ways. The University provides [Professional Development Funds](#) to faculty on a competitive basis for various purposes. Each department also provides funds for [faculty development](#). Faculty vita provide evidence of strong performance in faculty scholarship. This will be described more fully in Sub-component 3.B.5.

CMU responds to the needs of local and regional employers as it develops and modifies its curricula, evidence of currency in terms of workforce needs for many of CMU's programs. [Recent program changes](#) in this regard are summarized in the Progress Report on the Mesa State College 2004 Strategic Planning Goals (p. 29). For each program addition, faculty members and administration gauge potential interest in a new offering using several indicators, such as surveys to evaluate student demand, regional employers' hiring trends, and statewide, 10-year employment projections from the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. In most cases, a program's contribution to regional and local economic development also is a factor, and to date, these programs have been well-received. The 2011 Performance Contract Report (p. 26) summarizes how some of [CMU and WCCC programs have responded](#) to community concerns about, and demand for, programs. Other examples include:

- Some four- and two-year CMU programs have [external advisory boards](#), generally consisting of representatives of local employers and industry. Such boards offer oversight of the curriculum of these programs and thus ensure the currency of the program.
- CMU's partnership with regional K-12 schools has led to the development of new programs. The University has developed [four M.A. cognates](#) in Education: English for Speakers of Other Languages, Educational Leadership, Teacher Leader and Exceptional Learner. Most recently, initial teacher endorsement cognates for post-baccalaureate students at both the elementary and secondary levels were approved in May 2013.
- CMU's faculty members have structured nine curricular sequences into career ladders, whereby students can complete a credential at a specific level, and then either continue to the next higher degree or move into the workforce and complete

another higher degree at a later date. Career ladder programs also encourage continued education of community college students. Programs awarding a Bachelor of Applied Science are especially attractive for students who have completed an Associate of Applied Science.

The [Nursing Career Ladder](#) enables students to move from practical nursing certificates through graduate work. The ladder concept started in 2005, based on the vision of the Mesa County Health Care Coalition to provide the widest possible choice for health care employers and provide job seekers with multiple nursing career options. The initial step of the career ladder was implementing the link between the Practical Nurse program and the Associate of Applied Science/Registered Nurse program. This allows practical nurses to advance their education and begin their practice as registered nurses after one year of nursing coursework. This program was extended to the Montrose Campus in 2006, enabling nurses in that community to progress to the A.A.S./R.N. level as well. CMU's program is the only one in Colorado that provides the option for nursing students to obtain an entry-level license, enter the work field, and then return to further their education.

In addition to the Nursing Career Ladder, CMU offers [eight other career ladder options](#): Business, Computer Information Systems, Construction Technology/Management, Criminal Justice, Graphic Design, Mechanical Engineering Technology, Public Admin/Public Safety, and Radiologic Technology. In each case, most, if not all earned credit hours from the lower level program count toward the completion of the next higher degree level.

Sub-component 3.A.2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.

Evidence Item 3A2-1. CMU articulates and differentiates learning goals for its programs through its Combined Curriculum Committee Policies and Procedures Manual, program sheets and syllabi, and in student learning outcomes for all certificates and degrees.

CMU articulates and differentiates student learning goals for each of its award/degree levels:

- Undergraduate awards/degrees:
 - Certificates: Technical and Professional;
 - Associate degrees: Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Arts, Associate of Science;
 - Baccalaureate degrees: Bachelor of Applied Science, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Science in Nursing.
- Post-baccalaureate programs (See explanation below).
- Graduate degrees:
 - Master of Arts in Education, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science in Nursing;
 - Doctor of Nursing Practice.

Post-baccalaureate students are those who have earned baccalaureate degrees and are admitted as “non-degree seeking” in order to enroll in additional 100-400 level courses, or to be admitted into a specific professional certificate program. Students who have earned a graduate degree can be admitted as “non-degree seeking” in order to enroll in additional 500-700 level courses or as graduate students into graduate certificate programs.

CMU's [Combined Curriculum Committee Policies and Procedures Manual \(p. 22, line 705\)](#) and [Catalog \(p.10, col. 2\)](#) define the differences between certificates and A.A.S., A.A., and A.S. programs in terms of their general expectations and required general education courses. For example,

- technical certificates do not require a general education foundation but rather focus on the practical application of knowledge and skills relevant to a particular occupation.
- A.A.S. degrees require a minimum of 15 general education credit hours as appropriate, as well as coursework focused on the application of knowledge in the field.
- A.S. and A.A. degrees require a core of a minimum of 31 general education credit hours, as well as undergraduate courses in the specific and/or related fields students choose to pursue.

Program approval processes were modified in 2012, and the above discussion references both the old and new processes. These [changes to approval processes](#) are reflected in excerpts from the Curriculum Manuals for 2011 and 2012.

The same section of the Combined Curriculum Policies and Procedures Manual (p. 22, line 705) also [differentiates among the various baccalaureate degree programs](#) in terms of required coursework within the program: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of

Science, and Professional, Technical or other Bachelor Programs (e.g., B.A.S., B.B.A., B.S.N., and selected B.A. and B.S. degrees).

Curriculum committee processes ensure that student learning outcomes are addressed by each department and for each new or substantially modified program. The following processes indicate that CMU not only articulates outcomes but also ensures that courses and programs work to achieve these outcomes:

- A proposal for [approval of any new program must demonstrate that the program's intended learning outcomes map to the learning outcomes for the corresponding degree category](#), per Curriculum Manual (p. 26, line 866).
- A proposal for any [new program must demonstrate via a curriculum map specifically how the courses within the program serve to achieve the program's intended general and specific learning outcomes](#), per Curriculum Manual (p. 26, line 870). The same is true for [new courses](#) (Curriculum Manual (p. 13, line 405).
- A proposal to [change a program's intended learning outcomes must illustrate the revised mapping](#) (Curriculum Manual (p. 31, line 1085).
- A proposal for [modifying an existing program that alters the mix of courses within a program must illustrate the revised mapping](#) (Curriculum Manual (p. 31, line 1094).

Faculty members are expected to list intended student learning outcomes in their course syllabi, beginning in fall 2013, as well as to specify the methods by which those outcomes will be achieved and measured. Academic department heads or their representatives collect syllabi and monitor performance through classroom observation. Furthermore, CMU's program assessment process requires departments to periodically provide evidence that each program's intended learning outcomes are being achieved and modified as needed. Regular program review examines the alignment of curriculum with the program's measure of the successes and failures of its stated outcomes, as well as the relationship between the program, department and University student learning outcomes. Finally, the Vice President for Academic Affairs monitors a department's progress toward any remedial action that is determined to be necessary based on results of assessment and program review as department faculty take action to improve programs.

Program sheets and syllabi for courses support program requirements, articulate general education goals, and recommend a sequence of course work for degrees and certificates. CMU is in the process of articulating student learning outcomes for each of its [technical certificates](#) and its [associate, baccalaureate, graduate, and postgraduate](#) programs. All baccalaureate program sheets list learning outcomes as of the 2013-14 academic year; technical and associate programs will be updated to include learning outcomes for academic year 2014-15. These outcomes demonstrate the progressive nature of student learning at CMU, communicating the knowledge and skills to be developed as they move through the program of study. Once the process is complete, CMU will have fully articulated and differentiated learning goals for programs at each level.

Sub-component 3.A.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).

Evidence Item 3A3-1. Processes are in place for establishing consistency in program quality and learning goals across all locations and modes of delivery.

While the majority of CMU's courses are delivered in traditional classrooms on the main campus, the University's formats and locations of course and program delivery are expanding. In fall 2011, for example, of 1,288 class sections offered, approximately 68 percent were on the main campus. Nine percent were offered online, thirteen percent on the WCCC campus, four percent on the Montrose Campus, and five percent as concurrent or HSS courses at several high schools in the region. The table below illustrates the recent expansion of course and program delivery through alternative formats.

**COMPARISON OF CMU ALTERNATIVE COURSE DELIVERY
FALL 2006 AND FALL 2011**

Alternative Delivery Mode or Location	Fall 2006	Fall 2011
Hybrid courses on main campus	1	34
Hybrid courses on WCCC campus	0	1
Montrose campus	45	54
Courses in high schools	36	67
Interactive Video	0	13
Online	41	116
Total	123	285

Source: Office of Institutional Research

In a broader context, CMU Online offers a variety of courses based on distance technologies – approximately 140 sections each semester – and a restricted selection of fully online degree programs authorized by the Higher Learning Commission:

- Baccalaureate degrees:
 - Bachelor of Science in Nursing: degree completion (R.N. to B.S.N.);
 - Bachelor of Science in Sport Management;
 - Bachelor of Applied Science in Public Administration/Public Safety: degree completion;
 - Bachelor of Applied Science in Radiologic Technology: degree completion;
 - Bachelor of Art in Liberal Arts, Elementary Education licensure: combines Education courses delivered by online and videoconference technology.
- Associate degrees:
 - Associate of Art, Social Science emphasis.
- Technical Certificate: Business.

As of summer 2012, only 12 students had received degrees by enrolling exclusively in online coursework: six R.N. to B.S.N.; four A.A., Social Science; one B.S., Sport Management; and one B.A.S., Public Administration/Public Safety. Most students, even in programs where it is possible to get a degree fully online, take some of their coursework on campus. While CMU believes the product delivered to students online is similar in terms of content and rigor, not enough students have completed the online programs to make valid assessments of comparability.

There are also three HLC-approved, off-campus degree offerings: an A.A. and an A.S. at the Montrose Campus and a B.A. in Liberal Arts Elementary Education with an English Emphasis offered through a partnership agreement at the Spring Valley campus of Colorado Mountain College in Glenwood Springs. Initially the course delivery to these locations was site-based. Delivery to these regional locations has evolved over the past few years, however, to a reliance on various distance delivery formats, most of which is online.

Over the past 18 months, the University's academic department heads have developed various policies and procedures that are bringing stronger oversight to "wherever and however" coursework is delivered, be it traditional site-based off-campus, site-based high school, or online. The goal of this effort has been to specify roles and responsibilities of each participant as well as articulate standards and processes for enforcing learning objectives, content, assessment, faculty qualifications, and evaluations across all locations and methods of delivery. The process began with the development of a course comparability white paper, essentially a philosophical statement of expectations, during spring 2012, and during academic year 2012-13, an implementation plan was developed. Academic Council subsequently brought the white paper and implementation plan into a single document, the [Course Comparability Manual Draft](#), the first phase of which is being implemented in fall 2013.

Courses at Montrose and WCCC:

There is ongoing contact between CMU faculty with those at the Montrose Campus and at WCCC who offer general education to discuss course expectations, sample syllabi, and other relevant issues. Some CMU main campus faculty commute to Montrose to teach classes on that campus. Others teaching in Montrose or at WCCC are hired by the appropriate CMU department heads. The University continues to foster communication between the faculty on the Montrose and main campuses in several ways. As called for in the draft of the Course Comparability Manual Draft, academic department heads, or program faculty liaisons appointed by the department heads, generally are expected to be in contact with Montrose-based lecturers prior to the beginning of each semester to share course materials (e.g., course objectives, learning goals, and successful teaching methodologies for that course). Department heads or their liaisons are to travel to the two campuses to observe the lecturers in the classroom to ensure

quality teaching. In the case of the Montrose campus, the Director of that location will continue to observe the faculty and has input in the faculty evaluation process by the Academic Department Head. See the Course Comparability Manual (p. 7, section 4, point 4) for [further monitoring processes to ensure comparability](#) between Montrose and WCCC with courses offered on the main campus.

Courses through the High School Scholars Program:

High School Scholars (HSS) teachers, classified as concurrent lecturers, are vetted through a process involving the WCCC Director of Student Services and the academic department heads. In order to be approved to teach courses at their high schools for which students receive CMU credit, the proposed lecturers must submit an application to the WCCC Director of Student Services for preliminary screening. If the candidate meets the [concurrent lecturer qualifications](#) established in the Course Comparability Manual Draft (p. 12, section 3a, point 4), the application is passed on to the appropriate academic department head. If the department head approves the application, the candidate is informed of University policies, procedures, and expectations and sent sample syllabi for the course she or he has been approved to teach. CMU/WCCC hosts an annual workshop that is required for all current and recently approved concurrent lecturers and academic department colleagues to discuss curriculum, course objectives, and syllabi so as to ensure comparability of curriculum at these sites. Beginning in academic year 2013-14, the annual workshop will be expanded to once each semester. [Evaluation processes for concurrent lecturers](#) are outlined in the Course Comparability Manual Draft (p. 16, section 6, point 6) as part of the academic department heads' responsibilities.

Courses via Distance Delivery:

Distance education is monitored and evaluated in a number of ways. In academic year 2009-10, CMU submitted a request to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) for recognition of its offering of online degree programs, and in fall 2010, the University received approval of its change request from the HLC. As part of the process, the HLC site review team recommended that CMU create a set of standards for its online courses. In response, the Vice President for Academic Affairs convened the Distance Education Quality Working Group, chaired by the Director of Extended Studies, and made up of faculty and staff, to consider various evaluation options. During spring 2011, the working group spent a significant amount of time reaching consensus on what a quality course design was. The [group ultimately recommended that the University adopt rubrics based on the University of Maryland's Quality Matters \(QM\) program](#) for implementing standards in online course design while respecting issues of academic freedom and departmental authority.

Since then, 30 faculty and instructional design staff participated in the "Applying the QM Rubric" training workshop, beginning in August 2011, as part of [the on-going QM implementation](#). During academic year 2011-12, a subset of faculty and the instructional design staff completed the [Quality Matters Peer Reviewer](#) training program. Because the University was transitioning to a new learning management system at the same time, the [QM training process was incorporated into the training on Desire2Learn \(D2L\)](#). The coincident timing of both also enabled the University to set an expectation that courses would have a consistent format and standardized syllabus.

By spring 2012, staff did a [limited review](#) of fully online courses, based on the QM Essential Standards, and provided faculty members with a [completed rubric](#) that also included [written and oral comments](#) and [suggestions for improvement](#) to meet the standards. Meetings also were scheduled between staff and faculty members who were scheduled to teach their first online course, thereby introducing them to the standards as part of course design. During the same term, 13 faculty members from across the institution participated in the Peer Reviewer workshop, offered by CMU instructional design staff who are QM-certified, so that these faculty could review their colleagues' fully online course (see [sample course review](#)). As the process has evolved, online faculty are supported throughout the process by one-on-one help sessions, hands-on 'labs,' online short courses, and 'lunch and learn' sessions that focus on a specific topic.

Beginning in summer 2012, new online courses were developed collaboratively by faculty and staff using the new course development process. By fall 2012, 24 new online courses were designed using the process, and 58 existing online courses had been redesigned or reviewed by a faculty member or instructional design staff using the QM Essential Standards. By spring 2013, [100 courses had been developed or redesigned](#) using the new standards.

Faculty who teach exclusively online are hired and evaluated by academic department heads following the same process as faculty who are hired to teach in the classroom. Less than 0.05 percent of CMU and WCCC faculty teach exclusively online. Generally, online courses are offered by CMU and WCCC faculty who also teach in traditional classrooms. They are, for the most part, full-time faculty involved in department and curriculum planning, program and general education assessment, and program review processes.

The Faculty Senate's Distance Learning and Technology Committee reviews a variety of activities and materials associated with distance learning at CMU, including online course delivery software, video delivery courses and correspondence courses. It also suggests and reviews policy guidelines for the delivery of academic content in distance delivery courses. During academic year

2012-13, CMU created a new administrative position – Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs/Director of Distance Education – in order to further develop, systematize, and coordinate online education at CMU.

Syllabi Comparison:

Syllabi from courses offered in various venues and locations are comparable. A review of selected syllabi for courses offered in multiple modes/locations confirms that, generally, the student learning outcomes for classrooms in all locations and in online courses are equally rigorous in terms of acquired skills and content knowledge. Although it is difficult to judge the rigor of a course by looking at a syllabus, it is possible to determine if there is communication among instructors and consistency of content goals. A closer look at three sets of selected syllabi, Human Anatomy and Physiology (BIOL 209), College Algebra (MATH 113), and General Psychology (PSYC 150), is useful here to make the case that there is communication among instructors across all modes of delivery and locations.

- During fall 2011, CMU offered 11 sections of Human Anatomy and Physiology. As shown in the [syllabi](#), four were offered as High School Scholar (HSS) courses, five on the main campus, one at Montrose and one online. Ten of 11 used the same textbook. All 11 courses articulated similar goals for student learning and the 10 using the same text covered a similar, though not identical, range of chapters from the text.
- College Algebra is a general education course. Twenty-six instructors taught 32 sections of the course in fall 2011: 10 in the HSS program, 13 on the main campus in traditional classrooms, two online and one at Montrose; see [syllabi](#). Eighteen of these instructors used the same text. The online instructors and three HSS courses used a different text; three HSS syllabi did not list a text. Twenty-one included general education goals on their syllabi –four of the high school syllabi and one main campus syllabus are missing this statement. Twenty-three syllabi also included a description of the content that was either identical or very similar. One online course and two high school courses omitted this description.
- Twelve sections of General Psychology, another general education option, were offered in fall 2011 by nine instructors, who taught one section each in HSS, Montrose, WCCC, and online and eight traditional main campus sections. Although four different texts were used by the instructors, all of the [syllabi](#) include an articulation of very similar content objectives. Six of the nine syllabi include the CMU general education objectives being addressed by the course.

These three representative case studies indicate that there is significant communication among faculty teaching in various modes and locations. In particular cases it seems that, especially in the HSS courses, more involvement with and monitoring by University faculty would be advisable to establish and articulate equivalent standards and learning goals. One example of this is English Composition (ENGL 111 and 112), where the sheer number of courses offered by a large number of full-time, adjunct and high school instructors has made monitoring difficult. With implementation of the strategies in the [Course Comparability Manual Draft](#), however, variations in course expectations should be minimal. This monitoring by department heads will lead to more communication and standardization in course goals student learning outcomes, content, and assessments.

Grade Comparison and Rate of Student Withdrawal from Courses:

While the syllabi review does indicate that faculty across modes and locations do communicate in terms of student learning outcomes and course content, other measures of comparability indicate that there may be some discrepancy in delivery and assessment. For example, a review of [Grade Distribution by Instructional Method, Campus, and Course Level](#) raises questions about course consistency. While it is difficult to draw firm conclusions from these data, some trends require further attention. For example, the C or better pass rate for the HSS classes was 99 percent for calendar year 2010-11. This compares with a C or better rate of 79 percent for traditional courses on the main campus, 77 percent on the Montrose Campus, 82 percent on the WCCC campus, 68 percent in hybrid courses and 67 percent in online courses. While this could be an indication that the HSS courses are not as rigorous as the other modes and methods of delivery, it could also mean that the high school courses are made up of more high-achieving students than the general student body. Another interesting observation is found in an analysis of withdrawal rates: 5 percent of online students withdrew from their course; 6 percent of Montrose Campus students and 4.8 percent of WCCC hybrid students withdrew. When these numbers are compared with the much lower withdrawal rates of 0 percent for the HSS students, 2.8 percent for WCCC campus students and 3.3 percent for main campus traditional students, there is justification for an investigation of the causes behind these differences in terms of retention or satisfaction.

Evidence Item 3A3-2. CMU has developed and formally adopted a credit hour definition policy to establish consistency across all modes and locations of delivery.

Consistency across all modes and locations of delivery is articulated in the University's [credit hour definition and related policies](#) found in the Curriculum Committee Policies and Procedures Manual (p. 14, line 429).

Evidence Item 3A3-3. Regular program review creates consistency.

Under the University's program review schedule, all academic programs and their courses are assessed on a regular, rotating basis. See Evidence Item 4A1-1 for a description of the process. Establishing campuswide responsibilities and processes contributes to consistency across courses and programs.

Sources

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-  [Faculty Senate Combined Curriculum Policies and Procedures Manual 2013](#)
-  [Faculty Senate Combined Curriculum Policies and Procedures Manual 2013 \(Page 13\)](#)
-  [Faculty Senate Combined Curriculum Policies and Procedures Manual 2013 \(Page 14\)](#)
-  [Faculty Senate Combined Curriculum Policies and Procedures Manual 2013 \(Page 22\)](#)
-  [Faculty Senate Combined Curriculum Policies and Procedures Manual 2013 \(Page 26\)](#)

	Faculty Senate Combined Curriculum Policies and Procedures Manual 2013 (Page 31)
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	Grades by Mode, Location, Level SP-F11
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	Teacher Education_Masters_Web Page

Core Component 3.B

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

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

CMU Response

Introduction

Colorado Mesa's [Vision Statement for 2020](#) (2011 Strategic Plan (p.13)) asserts that the University

will be respected as a learning community that embraces diversity of students, faculty, staff, ideas, and degree levels, while maintaining a quality educational environment that focuses on serving its many constituents. As it assumes an expanded leadership role, CMU will expand its public engagement of the region's stakeholders by serving as the primary intellectual and cultural center and promoting the exchange of ideas that are of regional, national, and international importance.

This section addresses the ways in which CMU pursues the fulfillment of that vision through both its general education program and its upper-division and graduate offerings. CMU's focus is on preparing students to thrive in a diverse, global environment, and its commitment is to active engagement in academic and civic arenas for the benefit of all its stakeholders.

Sub-component 3.B.1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.

Evidence Item 3B1-1. CMU's Vision and Values Statements articulate goals appropriate to its mission as a regional education provider that guide general education requirements.

CMU's institutional vision contains a commitment to "a curriculum, often bridging liberal education and professional programs, which successfully prepares students for the 21st century in the areas of personal and social responsibility, civic engagement, ethics, and intercultural/global learning." The Values Statement describes the campus as "a learning environment that develops and promotes the skills of inquiry, reflection, critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation, teamwork, and communication in students." [These statements](#) from the Strategic Plan (p. 13), as well as CMU's statutory role and mission, articulate a commitment to education in the 14-county region with a focus on two central goals for CMU students: acquiring a liberal arts education, as well as preparation for professional and personal success after graduation. The groundwork for these two goals is laid in the general education curriculum, required of all baccalaureate degree programs and the associate of arts and associate of science degrees. A measure of the appropriateness of CMU's general education curriculum can be made by comparing its curriculum to that of peer institutions. A review of the [general education curriculum described in catalogs of five CMU peers](#) indicates enough similarities to assert that the general education offerings of CMU are appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.

General education requirements appropriate for CMU baccalaureate and associate degrees are specified in the [Curriculum Committee Policies and Procedures Manual \(p. 22, line 705\)](#). Essentially, all of the structure of general education at CMU applies to the two associate degrees for transfer and all baccalaureate degrees. The philosophy of technical certificates is that

they prepare students with specific workforce skills and, therefore, do not need to include a general education requirement. The general education of graduate students is assumed to have been addressed in their undergraduate education.

Of the three associate degrees offered by CMU (Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Applied Science), the first two are intended for transition or transfer to corresponding baccalaureate programs, while the third is intended as a terminal two-year degree, except in cases where students continue to a Bachelor of Applied Science degree. General education requirements for the Associate of Art and Associate of Science degrees are articulated in the [Catalog \(p. 52, col.3\)](#): "All AA and AS degree programs include the Colorado Statewide General Education Core and will thus meet the lower-division general education requirements of most baccalaureate degree programs at public institutions in Colorado." This implies that the general education requirements for the two associate degrees for transfer are the same as those for a baccalaureate degree.

Evidence Item 3B1-2. The processes in place for vetting new general education course proposals ensure that general education courses are appropriate to CMU's mission.

The Curriculum Committees, Assessment Committee, and program review process each have a role in ensuring the appropriateness of general education courses to CMU's mission. The WCCC and Undergraduate Curriculum Committees review and approve new courses and course modifications, while the Assessment Committee is responsible for working with program faculty to ensure the achievement of general educational expectations for a given course. Finally, the program review process provides a mechanism whereby each program monitors and improves its general education offerings. The guidelines for proposing a new general education course can be found in the [Curriculum Committee Policy and Procedures Manual \(p. 20, line 612\)](#). Assessment and program review will be addressed in greater detail in the chapter on Criterion 4.

Evidence Item 3B1-3. CMU's general education program aligns with state expectations.

CMU's [statutory role and mission](#) is articulated by the Colorado General Assembly in Colorado Revised Statutes 23-53-101. Through its compliance with gtPathways and other policies of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE), CMU ensures that its general education program fulfills its statutory mission. Evidence Item 3A1-1 details the gtPathways program.

Sub-component 3.B.2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.

Evidence Item 3B2-1. CMU articulates the purposes, content, and goals of undergraduate education requirements in its Catalog and reviews its general education curriculum and philosophy regularly.

CMU describes the purposes, content, and goals of its undergraduate general education requirements in its Catalog (p. 47, col. 1). The purposes of its undergraduate general education requirements are to ensure that students emerge from their education "with well-developed faculties for critical judgment, analytical thought, and an awareness of their world." The content of the baccalaureate curriculum focuses on [seven philosophical goals](#). In addition, the Catalog lists [10 goals of general education](#) that guide general education on CMU's campus. The University community recognizes that some of these 10 goals are too broad to be measured in terms of specific student learning outcomes. They serve, instead, to provide faculty with a set of guiding principles for developing institutional-level learning outcomes as the University transitions to a learning outcomes framework.

CMU reviews its general education curriculum and philosophy regularly. For example, in 2005, the faculty were called upon by the Board of Trustees to re-evaluate the general education curriculum. A General Education Working Group was convened to examine a variety of issues related to general education. The group submitted a [report](#) to the Board in spring 2006 that discussed the effects of the Colorado Student Bill of Rights, CCHE policy, commitments articulated in the institution's performance contract with CCHE, as well as specific inquiries from the trustees (Trustee Meeting Agenda, April 12, 2006, p. 47). In considering these issues, the working group was guided by a number of principles. First and foremost was the commitment that students benefit from the general education curriculum by the institution's assurance that the coursework provides them with the broad-based knowledge and critical thinking skills necessary to be successful in today's rapidly changing environment. Second, the working group ensured that the institution's general education core conformed with all state laws and commission policies. Third, the group was conscious of the importance of balancing students' needs with the institution's limited resources. Finally, the group was mindful of the need to assess student learning to document how well the college is achieving its general education goals. Implementation of several changes to credit hours, course requirements, and degree distinction requirements followed this campuswide discussion.

In response to the University's recent exploration of the Lumina Foundation's Degree Quality Profile, CMU's general education goals/curriculum is once again under review. Development of institutional-level student learning outcomes, referenced in Evidence Item 3A2-1, is the first step in the process of re-examining its current general education goals. In addition, a [Working](#)

[Group to Review General Education](#) convened in late fall 2012 by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. In spring 2013, the working group submitted its [initial draft of general education learning outcomes](#) – designed to align with the new institutional learning outcomes – to the campus for review and solicited feedback via a [faculty survey](#). Faculty representing the working group attended the American Association of Colleges and Universities Summer Institute on General Education and Assessment in June 2013 with the intention of designing the [first draft of an action plan](#) for curricular revisions that will be discussed with the faculty during academic year 2013-14. The goal is to reach agreement on the various revisions by May 2014.

Evidence Item 3B2-2. CMU's general education program is grounded in a framework adapted from the American Council of Trustees and Alumni and the Institute for Effective Governance. Specifically, recent discussions about general education have been shaped by the report "Becoming an Educated Person: Toward a Core Curriculum for College Students."

CMU's general education program is grounded in a framework derived from a report commissioned by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni and the Institute for Effective Governance. The report, [Becoming an Educated Person: Toward a Core Curriculum for College Students](#) (2003), was composed by George Leef, the Director of Research of the John W. Pope Center for Higher Education Policy. In this document, Leef identifies several questions universities and colleges need to answer in order to ascertain that their general education core is strong.

Leef believes that colleges should explore whether their core courses cover all the important fields of knowledge. Each candidate for an associate or bachelor's degree at CMU must complete a series of broad, intensive learning experiences crossing disciplinary lines in order to ensure that all students are exposed to the broad knowledge and skills that the institution believes every university-educated person should develop. CMU's general education system is designed on a distribution requirement model. Students choose from a selected group of courses in seven categories: English, Mathematics, History, Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Fine Arts, and Natural Sciences ([Catalog \(p. 50, col. 1\)](#)). Students are encouraged to complete as many of the general education requirements as possible during the freshman and sophomore years so that they can draw on and apply that knowledge to coursework in their majors.

The second question Leef asks is: "Does the school readily allow waivers and substitutions so that students can avoid taking the courses that make up the alleged core?" While CMU does have a process in place for making substitutions, and while exceptions are occasionally made, these substitutions are not readily allowed. The policy is articulated on the Registrar's [Substitution/Waiver Form](#). CMU does not waive courses for general education, but it does allow an occasional substitution. A substitution is considered if one or more of the following criteria are met:

- The course is determined by the academic department head and/or faculty to be of a comparable quality and expectations to that offered by CMU.
- The course is used to meet a general education requirement at the student's originating institution.
- The course must be at the 100 or 200 level or be brought in as a level 100 or 200 course.
- The course is approved as part of the CCHE gtPathways program.

During academic year 2011-12, the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs approved 9 out of 14 general education course substitution requests.

The third indicator of a strong general education core curriculum, according to Leef, is that the courses have appropriate breadth and substance. Each of CMU's general education courses has gone through two vetting processes to ensure that the courses have appropriate breadth and substance. First, a course must be approved by CMU's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee in order to be approved as a general education selection. Second, the course must be approved by the CCHE gtPathways process. Nearly 80 CMU courses have been approved through CCHE's gtPathways review process. All but five CMU general education courses to date have been approved for statewide transfer, and they have been submitted for the next review.

Fourth, Leef suggests an "examination of the syllabi of the courses comprising the 'core' rather than just their catalog descriptions, because course catalog descriptions can vary substantially from the actual course content." A file of syllabi for general education courses taught in 2011 is found in the Supporting Documents File. Course syllabi are submitted and are part of the review process for the statewide gtPathways process. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee application for general education course approval requires a statement of student outcomes and a topical course outline. In addition, each general education course is monitored by departments and the University through the assessment and program review processes. Until fall 2013, all sections of each general education course must have [listed the two general education outcomes it was intended to address](#) (Curriculum Policies and Procedures Manual, p. 20, line 634), and each instructor of that course should have administered the same assessment tool to measure whether those objectives were met, thereby ensuring some similarity in content and rigor.

Currently the University is transitioning from these general education outcomes to Student Learning Outcomes, and faculty are beginning to list outcomes on syllabi for fall 2013. Faculty members must evaluate the effectiveness of the courses regularly, including through the [program review and assessment processes](#), and make adjustments based on these evaluations (Academic Program Review Manual, p. 2).

Sub-component 3.B.3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

Evidence Item 3B3-1. The gtPathways criteria for statewide transfer of general education courses articulate requirements for collecting, analyzing, and communicating information. Every content area also requires that students meet critical thinking competencies. CMU's general education courses, vetted by groups of faculty and administration across the state, engage students in these behaviors.

All CMU degrees, except some A.A.S. and technical certificate programs, require students to fulfill the University's general education requirements, proving that students engage in the activities articulated in this Sub-component (3.B.3). In Evidence Item 3A1-1, the statewide gtPathways transfer review process was described with regard to CMU's general education program. With two exceptions that are currently under review by the CCHE, all courses in the general education program have been approved through this process.

To be approved courses must meet both content and competency standards developed by committees of faculty working together from institutions across the state. Documents submitted during the application process for guaranteed transfer (see example for [Cultural Anthropology \(ANTH 202\)](#) must describe the ways in which each course meets these standards. Teams of faculty review the submitted materials and accept or reject each course for inclusion in the statewide gtPathways list (sample: [CCHE web page for CMU courses approved in literature and humanities category](#)). The [five content areas](#) are Arts and Humanities, Communication, Mathematics, Natural and Physical Sciences, and Social and Behavioral Sciences. The [five competency areas](#) are Technology, Reading, Written Communication, Mathematics, and Critical Thinking.

An examination of the documents resulting from these statewide faculty groups working under the auspices of CCHE reveals that every CMU guaranteed transfer course meets the criteria to engage students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information by virtue of its inclusion as a guaranteed transfer course. Every content area requires that students meet the competency in critical thinking, which means that the course must "help students become capable of critical and open-minded questioning and reasoning." Four key criteria for meeting this requirement, as established by the gtPathways standards, are [information acquisition, analysis, synthesis, and communication](#).

Evidence Item 3B3-2. Specific courses in each program, beyond the general education requirements, also require students to collect, analyze, and communicate information.

Beyond the introductory nature of general education courses, specific courses in each undergraduate program engage students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information. A perusal of syllabi collected from courses taught in 2011 revealed [representative examples of courses](#), arranged by program, that include collecting, analyzing, and communicating information by program.

Evidence Item 3B3-3. At the associate level, students completing the general education requirements master modes of inquiry, based on the statewide gtPathways guaranteed transfer competency and content standards.

While the term "mastery" embedded in the phrase "mastering modes of inquiry or creative work" seems to move this particular behavior outside the framework of general education, even students graduating with A.A., A.S. or A.A.S. degrees have "mastered" a particular discourse and skill set. Evidence of this can be found, again, in the gtPathways competency and content standards. For example, all students, except those pursuing some A.A.S. majors or a technical certificate, must take English Composition (ENGL 112). Content competencies for this course require the "use of specialized vocabulary, format, and documentation appropriate to more extensive or in-depth writing projects." In addition, students who passed English 112 should have the "ability to communicate to a variety of audiences or the ability to communicate to an audience within a specific profession or discipline." All students, again with the above exceptions, must also take a science course with a lab. Each of these courses has a content requirement to develop the ability to "identify and highlight interconnections between specific science courses being taught and larger areas of scientific endeavor." In completing their mathematics content requirement, students must "demonstrate an ability to generalize from specific patterns of events and phenomena to more abstract principles, and to proceed from abstract principles of specific applications." All the above indicate some mastery of the discourse and modes of inquiry of a particular discipline.

Evidence Item 3B3-4. Programs demonstrate that mastery of modes of inquiry is a student learning goal through the construction of curriculum maps, through course syllabi, and through student research projects and presentations.

Currently, each academic program is in the process of developing a curriculum map that demonstrates the ways in which students move from basic to advanced knowledge and skills as they progress toward the degree. Two programs that showcase this mapping process are [Accounting](#) and [Mass Communication](#). These maps, and others in various stages of development, indicate that program faculty across campus intend for students to develop mastery of a mode of inquiry as part of their education at CMU.

In terms of particular course work, all bachelor's degree programs offer courses beyond the general education offerings to engage students in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work in specific disciplines. [These courses](#) document that students engage in these more specialized modes of inquiry or creative work.

Students in many departments also have opportunities to engage with faculty in [research projects](#) to increase their mastery in a discipline. Academic department heads [cataloged these opportunities for students](#) during academic year 2010-11. Furthermore, the annual [CMU Student Showcase](#) provides an opportunity for students to present projects that demonstrate the results of their research and creative work.

Evidence Item 3B3-5. Statewide gtPathways guaranteed transfer competencies articulate a requirement for developing skills adaptable to changing environments. CMU's general education courses, vetted by groups of faculty and administration across the state, have demonstrated that they address these competencies and, therefore, must be working to engage students in these behaviors.

An examination of [content](#) and [competency](#) areas for gtPathways reveals that in their general education program, CMU's students are fulfilling this commitment by developing skills adaptable to changing environments. For example, all students (excluding some A.A.S and technical certificate students) must take English 111 and 112. These courses have been approved as guaranteed transfer courses in the Communication content area.

A central gtPathways Communication content requirement is that students develop the "ability to adapt content and style to the needs of different audiences and different rhetorical situations or ability to adapt content and style within a profession or discipline." Students completing the Arts and Humanities content area courses and the Social and Behavioral Sciences content area courses must meet either the communication or technology competencies. One central tenet of the technology competency is that students should be able to "determine which technologies apply to the task, understand the limitations of those technologies and know how to combine technologies effectively." Students completing the Natural and Physical Sciences content area courses should be able to "identify and highlight interconnections between specific science courses being taught and larger areas of scientific endeavor."

Evidence Item 3B3-6. Applied Studies coursework and coursework in degree programs beyond general education requirements develop skills adaptable to changing environments.

One of the most interesting aspects of the campus discussion of general education reform in 2005 in terms of CMU's mission was the retention of the Applied Studies requirement for CMU's students. CMU is the only four-year institution in the state with a required content area in Applied Studies. CMU is also the only four-year institution in the state that includes a two-year career/technical and transfer mission. Because of this, the 2005 General Education Working Group felt that it was critical to the success of the institution to demonstrate the interconnection between the two-year and four-year programs.

The Applied Studies content area does this by showing students the applications of a particular skill set to a wide variety of specific disciplines. The group believed that there was value in requiring students to take classes that have application outside their specific discipline, although the group recommended that some courses in the Applied Studies area be removed from that category as they were viewed as too specialized to be part of a general education curriculum. The courses listed under the Applied Studies area were revisited and revised using two new criteria: that they must have a practical application to a variety of experiences likely to be encountered by students majoring in different disciplines, and that they must broaden the student's exposure to different disciplines. Many degree programs require [courses that develop skills adaptable to changing environments](#).

Other examples of program expectations that enable students to graduate with adaptable skills fall outside of the bounds of coursework or are part of several courses that work together toward larger goals. The Computer Science faculty, for example, believes that students will have to learn certain aspects of the profession on their own and encourages students to develop a habit of "play" in the field, which is enabled by laboratory resources. All applied music lesson (MUSL) and music performance ensemble (MUSP) courses in the Music Department work toward a long-term goal of student mastery of the many techniques, styles, and interpretations they will need in their professional performance and teaching. The Theatre Arts and Music Departments choose their productions and concert selections with an eye toward offering educational value for their students and examples of what they will encounter after they leave the University.

Many other programs offer students with opportunities for internships or cooperative education courses, providing invaluable real-life, on-the-job experience in students' fields of study. These types of undergraduate courses are generally listed as xxxx393, xxxx493, or xxxx499 courses in the University catalog. Graduate programs offer similar options to students. For

example, Educational Technology (EDUC 501), a course in the Master of Arts Education core, investigates historical and conceptual analyses of ways to design, organize, and integrate curricula across subject areas. Many of the graduate nursing courses are practica, focusing on student placements in real-world environments. Similarly, in the Masters in Business Administration program, students in the Research Practicum (BUGB 595), apply classroom theory and research methods to on-the-job experiences.

Sub-component 3.B.4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.

Evidence Item 3B4-1. CMU emphasizes human and cultural diversity within its curriculum.

Two of CMU's ten general education goals are directly related to human and cultural diversity. The CMU general education guidelines specify that a baccalaureate graduate should:

- have an understanding of the multicultural nature of our world.
- have an understanding of the complexities of social, economic, and political systems.

The general education curriculum at CMU consists of 131 courses, each of which must list two general education goals on the syllabus as learning objectives. Thirty-six courses, more than one-fourth of all general education courses, list at least one of the diversity-related objectives from above. These courses are clustered in History, Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences and Fine Arts. All baccalaureate students are required to take a minimum of five courses (15 credit hours) from these groups.

Additionally, many degree programs include required or elective courses that augment general education goals by emphasizing diversity. Examples include Native Arts of North America (Art), International Business (Business), Teaching to Diversity (Education), Ethnic Experiences in US Literature and Language Systems and Linguistic Diversity (English), Hispanic Drama and Film (Foreign Languages), and American Slavery (History). At the graduate level, courses such as Culture and Pedagogy, ESL Strategies/Content Areas, and Inclusion Methods foreground issues dealing with diversity in our culture.

CMU offers an unusually broad selection of foreign language options for a public institution of its size and emphasis, offering classical Greek and Latin as well as modern Western options in Spanish, French, and German. Additionally, students can enroll in Japanese and American Sign Language courses.

Evidence Item 3B4-2. CMU promotes awareness of the multicultural nature of the world by providing opportunities for study abroad for its own faculty and students and by recruiting students from other nations to study at CMU.

Since 2005, CMU faculty members have led 23 [international travel courses](#) to Europe, Asia, and Central and South America. A total of 210 CMU students, led by 11 faculty members, have traveled internationally via these courses.

CMU students also have the opportunity to study abroad through the [International Student Exchange Program](#) (ISEP). Although CMU has just completed its second year of affiliation with ISEP, 14 students have studied in a variety of locations including Europe, Japan, New Zealand, and Central America, while 12 students have visited CMU from abroad. The [National Student Exchange](#) (NSE) program has been a long-standing option for CMU students to broaden their educational horizons. Largely, students who have chosen to participate say they did it so they could experience life from a different point of view. During academic year 2012-13, 10 CMU students participated in the National Student Exchange program and CMU hosted four students from other institutions in the U.S.

Through the Admissions' [Coordinator of International Education](#), CMU promotes the [enrollment of students](#) from around the globe. The cultures and life experiences of these students enrich the classroom and social experiences of all CMU students.

The CMU [Outdoor Program](#) is another component of student life that provides opportunities for students to travel abroad and to be immersed in another culture. Since 2003, the Outdoor Program has led 19 international backpacking trips in which groups of seven to 12 travelers, including students, faculty, alumni, and the Program Director, gain insights into other cultures and environments around the world. The typical trip emphasizes service work, outdoor adventure, and cultural learning. Past destinations include Patagonia, India, the Middle East, and Southern Africa. Additionally, Outdoor Programs staff sponsor various travel-related activities, such as Wednesday Night Wanderings, that broaden students' perspectives. Between fall 2003 and spring 2012, the program has had more than 19,000 participants involved in nearly 1,200 activities who logged 108,300 contact hours. For more information about diversity at CMU, see Sub-components 1C1 and 1C2.

CMU faculty members have a substantial history of scholarly activity abroad. Since 2004, six CMU faculty have been named [Fulbright Scholars](#). Others have conducted research abroad as part of projects conducted during [sabbatical leave](#). This international travel enables faculty to bring the diversity of the world into their classrooms. Further information about Fulbright

Scholars and sabbatical leaves can be found below under Evidence Item 3B5-1.

Evidence Item 3B4-3. CMU enriches its educational offerings by emphasizing human and cultural diversity through a number of co-curricular activities.

One CMU group whose function is to promote and support campus diversity of all types is the student-led [Cultural Diversity Board](#) (CDB). CDB is composed of several clubs, including the Black Student Alliance, Gay Straight Alliance, International Student Association, La Raza, Native American Student Council, and Ho'olokahi Polynesian Club. These clubs are required to provide educational events to the campus yearly, and some regularly visit classes as invited guests to teach other students about their cultures and experiences.

Sub-component 3.B.5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

Evidence Item 3B5-1. CMU faculty have an impressive publication/performance record.

CMU faculty members have an impressive publication/performance record for an institution of this size that places its primary emphasis on teaching. The table below summarizes faculty scholarly activity over the last decade.

CMU FULL-TIME FACULTY PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES, AY 2003/04 -2011/12

Activity/Event	# Faculty Reporting Activity/Event	% Faculty Reporting Activity/Event	Total # of Activities/Events
Conference Presentations	144	68%	1,234
Journal Articles	92	44%	471
Grants	67	32%	272
Book Reviews	45	21%	200
Book Chapter	41	19%	19
Performances	35	17%	985
Creative Publications	33	16%	198
Books	27	13%	69
Sabbatical	25	12%	26
Exhibitions	13	6%	165
Fulbright Scholarship	6	3%	6
Patents	2	1%	3
Total # of Faculty Reporting	211		

Source: Self-reported by CMU faculty during AY 2011-12; WCCC faculty not included

CMU faculty share their scholarship and knowledge with the community in accord with the institution's vision of serving as a center of intellectual life. Each year, the Office of Academic Affairs sponsors a [Faculty Colloquium](#) series. On average, six faculty are selected each year to present lectures on their research, creative work, scholarship, or other projects. The Faculty Colloquium series is open to all faculty, students, staff, and general community members. During academic year 2012-13, the number of presenters almost doubled: five faculty presented each semester. A number of academic disciplines (for example, computer science, mathematics and statistics, and physics) also offer departmental colloquia series, targeted primarily to their faculty and students.

It is difficult to summarize the benefits of the faculty's scholarly and creative activities for the community, but they are pervasive. A recent issue of "[The Maverick: The Magazine for Colorado Mesa University](#)" featured several articles about faculty that present some idea of how faculty scholarship and involvement enhance the cultural and intellectual life of the Grand Valley and its surrounding communities. Details of faculty publications and intellectual and creative activities are available in the collected faculty vitae. Also, [a list of faculty professional and community service activities](#), drawn from a review of faculty vitae, shows the reach of their activities within the region.

Evidence Item 3B5-2. CMU students demonstrate their learning through performances, participation in academic conferences, publications, and various other venues.

The University's [Student Showcase](#) highlights student work involving creativity, discovery, research, innovation, and/or entrepreneurship. Students can participate as individuals or in groups/teams. The initial Student Showcase was held in spring 2010, when 230 undergraduate students participated in 95 projects. In spring 2011, 245 students shared their work through 140 projects. In spring 2012, 321 students participated in 142 projects. During spring 2013, 430 students presented 199 projects.

The University sponsors students in academic and creative endeavors, including research activities, presentations at conferences, and participation in competitions. A [summary of student presentations by department](#) for academic year 2010-11 is illustrative.

The Department of Theatre Arts presents four [mainstage productions](#) (two musicals and two plays) and two dance concerts, directed by faculty and including professional guest artists. In addition, the department sponsors two student-directed dance concerts, one to three student-directed plays or musicals and 20 to 30 student-directed one-act plays. Overall, 166 students participated in theatre/dance mainstage performances filling 249 positions in academic year 2012-13. Faculty and students in the Art Department present their work in the [University Center's Art Gallery](#).

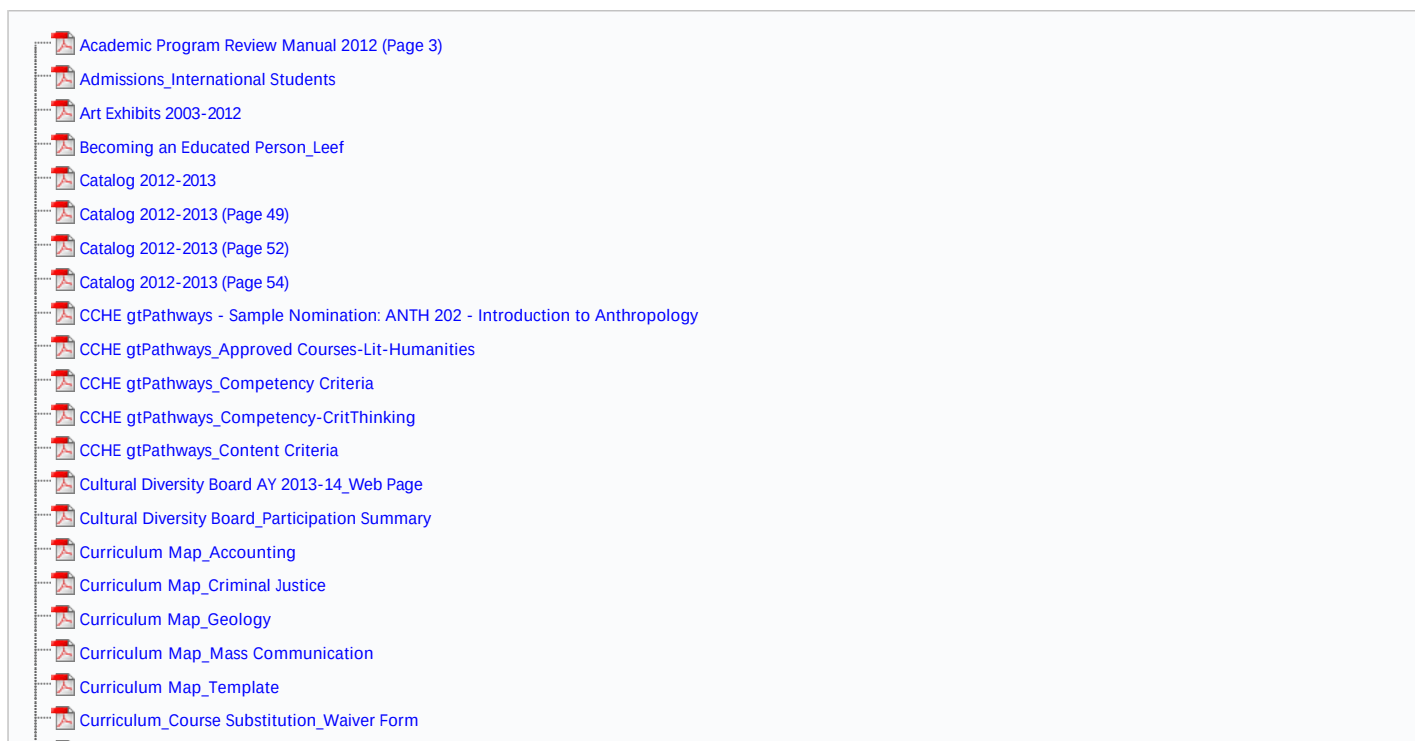
Several [student publications sponsored by the Mass Communication program](#) showcase the application of student learning. *The Criterion*, a weekly student-published newspaper, covers campus news and represents student views on local, regional, and national issues. KMSA is a student operated and managed full-service radio station. CMU-TV is a student operated and managed television station, which broadcasts from the CMU campus on Cablevision. *Horizon* is a full-color student magazine produced mainly by Mass Communication students. Depending on the number of students involved in production, one or two issues are published each year. It is a general-interest magazine with feature articles and photos about people, organizations and items of interest in the Grand Junction area.

CMU students have the opportunity to gain editing experience working on one of [the English program's literary magazines](#). *The Literary Review* is the student edited and managed in-house magazine featuring short stories, short fiction, poetry, and art created by CMU students and is typically printed each spring. The English Department also publishes a national journal – *Pinyon Poetry*. Students have the opportunity to work with faculty editors in the production process of this journal.

Experiential learning is a process through which students develop knowledge, skills, and values from direct experiences with a variety of activities outside a traditional academic classroom. At CMU, experiential learning includes capstone courses, clinical placements, independent study, internships/cooperative education, practicums, undergraduate research, seminars, student teaching, and thesis and topic courses. Every academic department offers some form of [experiential learning](#), and registrations in these various experiences exceeded 5,400 in academic year 2011-12, up from 3,700 five years earlier.

Finally, CMU students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge through various academic professional society conferences, competitions, and performances. For example, Psychology Club students are active participants in the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association (RMPA) regional meetings. Each year Psychology students design and conduct original research projects that are presented at the RMPA conference. In 2011, seven students presented four research projects at the RMPA regional meeting, with one student's research (conducted with St. Mary's Family Practice Clinic) accepted for presentation at a peer-reviewed national convention. Business students make presentations at the Mountain Plains Management Conference every year. Business students also compete and finish competitively at national and state competitions such as Future Business Leaders and the Society for Human Resource Management. Across disciplines and programs, students contribute through a number of additional student performances, presentations, and participation in competitions.

Sources



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Core Component 3.C

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

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

CMU Response

Introduction

Colorado Mesa University's faculty and staff are highly qualified and participate in the University's decisions and planning about teaching and learning at many levels, both in and out of the classroom. Because of the priority the institution places on teaching, faculty spend most of their time focused on the classroom. Teaching loads are 12 credit hours per semester for CMU faculty, and 15 credit hours per term for WCCC faculty. The University has met the challenge of keeping class sizes small in spite of the tremendous growth in the student body over the past several years. The institution evaluates all its instructors regularly according to established policies and procedures. It also provides funding for professional development for its instructors and staff, and it provides opportunities for professional development on and off campus for both instructors and staff. The institution has policies in place to ensure that instructors are accessible for student inquiry and exceed the minimum expectations in a variety of ways.

Sub-component 3.C.1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; and involvement in assessment of student learning.

Evidence Item 3C1-1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty to carry out their classroom and non-classroom roles.

CMU has undergone rapid growth in recent years. Student enrollment in fall 2004 was 6,235; by fall 2012, student enrollment was 9,482, a 52 percent increase. In that same timeframe, CMU has seen a 21.8 percent increase in tenure-track faculty, an 11 percent growth in instructors (full-time, non-tenure-track faculty), and a 66 percent rise in lecturers (part-time). The number of WCCC full-time faculty grew by 20%. The administration has made a concerted effort to balance student growth with increased faculty hiring, but it also has made a prudent decision not to over-hire full-time faculty in order to avoid layoffs, should the recent student growth rate not be sustained.

**COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY AND WESTERN COLORADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY BY APPOINTMENT TYPE,
ACADEMIC RANK, AND TENURE STATUS, AY 2004/05 - 2012/13**

Academic Year	Academic Rank and Tenure Status								WCCC Full-time Faculty (All levels)	CMU & WCCC Lecturers	Annual Grand Total
	Instructor (0,8, Visiting, & 1 Yr)	Asst Prof: Tenure-Track	Asst Prof: Tenured	Assoc Prof: Tenure-Track	Assoc Prof: Tenured	Professor: Tenure-Track	Professor: Tenured	CMU Full-time Subtotal			
2004-05	47	13	2	8	53	1	62	186	25	180	391
2005-06	50	23	2	7	45	1	63	191	26	237	454
2006-07	47	37	2	5	41	1	65	198	27	269	494
2007-08	44	38	2	4	33	0	70	191	26	285	502
2008-09	42	51	1	3	28	0	75	200	25	254	479
2009-10	43	50	2	3	27	0	74	199	23	278	500
2010-11	45	44	2	8	21	1	71	194	24	334	552
2011-12	53	59	2	7	21	1	70	217	28	299	544
2012-13	59	68	1	1	31	0	67	230	30	305	565

Note: Includes faculty on transitional retirement.

With regard to continuity of faculty, over one-quarter of the full-time faculty with academic rank are relatively new, having been at CMU for three or fewer years as of fall 2011, and almost half have been at CMU for fewer than eight years (see table below). Slightly fewer than one-quarter of the faculty have been at CMU for more than 15 years.

**COMPARISON OF COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY FACULTY MEMBERS'
LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT, FALL 2004 AND 2011***

Number of Years Employed at CMU	Fall 2004		Fall 2011	
	#	%	#	%
0 - 3	22	15.6%	45	27.8%
4 - 7	34	24.1%	32	19.8%
8 - 11	36	25.5%	17	10.5%
12 - 15	16	11.3%	31	19.1%
16 - 24	15	10.6%	29	17.9%
25+	18	12.8%	8	4.9%
Total	141		162	

*Data are based on full-time faculty with academic rank employed in specified term. Instructors, including those at WCCC, are excluded as they are hired on a year-to-year basis.

Another way to view continuity is to look at the full-time faculty with rank who have left CMU in the past six years. Eighty faculty members have left the institution since 2005, half of them due to retirement, nine to non-renewal of contracts, and 31 for unspecified reasons. A recent faculty survey undertaken for the self-study indicated that 40 percent of tenured or full-time faculty surveyed believed that CMU is able to sufficiently retain employees.

The student-to-faculty ratio has increased from 19:1 in 2005 to 23:1 in 2012. Even though the ratio has increased, a [comparison to CMU's peer institutions](#) indicates that it is not significantly lower or higher than our peers. However, it is not surprising, based on the increase in student enrollment over the past several years, that 64 percent of the faculty surveyed felt that the institution did not have a sufficient number of faculty members to carry out the classroom and non-classroom roles of faculty. Another indicator of increasing faculty workload comes from other data collected from the same survey. Of the 163 full-time faculty responding to the survey, 31 percent reported teaching an overload in both fall and spring of academic year 2011-12, and an additional 21 percent reported teaching an overload during one or the other semester of the same year. Additionally, 51 percent of the tenured/tenure-track faculty who responded to the survey indicated that department demand was one reason they chose to teach an overload.

Evidence Item 3C1-2. Continuous faculty growth has allowed CMU to keep class sizes relatively small.

CMU has long prided itself on providing students with small class sizes taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty. Only about 8 percent of non-lab courses in 2010 had 50 or more students, while slightly over 75 percent had fewer than 30 students and 50 percent had fewer than 20 students. [Large sections](#) (over 50 students) are concentrated exclusively at the 100 and 200 levels.

As seen in tables on credit-hour generation, [most of the credit hours at CMU are generated by tenured and tenure-track faculty](#), although the percentage has declined in recent years from 60 percent to 53 percent. During this same time period, the credit hours generated by instructors and part-time lecturers have increased to fill in that gap; currently, 22 percent of credit hours are

generated by full-time instructors and 21 percent are generated by part-time lecturers. [Types of faculty positions](#) are defined in the Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. III-2, line 74).

At WCCC, the [percent of credit hours generated by full-time instructors](#) has declined substantially, from 66 percent in 2006 to 42 percent in 2010, with lecturers generating 54 percent of WCCC credit hours. This is due, mostly, to the shift of delivery of developmental education to WCCC and the accompanying decision to offer developmental coursework largely by part-time lecturers. This explains the increase from 50 percent in 2006 to 82 percent in 2010. The 2005 decision to rely on part-time faculty for developmental coursework was, in part, a financial decision that enabled WCCC to reduce remedial class sizes. At the 100 and 200 level, courses are more evenly divided, with the balance shifting toward credit-hour generation by part-time lectures at these levels as well. In 2010, 57 percent of 100 and 200 level credit hours were generated by part-time lecturers and 41 percent by full-time instructors. It should be noted that WCCC students are also taught by CMU faculty, largely in general education courses.

Tables on Credit Hour Generation by Faculty Type (p. 2) provide an [overview of credit-hour generation by faculty type](#), but a fuller picture is gained by looking at upper-division (300-400) vs. lower division (100-200) credit hours. According to these figures, 53 percent of lower-division credit hours were generated by tenured/tenure-track faculty in 2006 compared with 46 percent in 2010. Especially at the 100 level, the reliance on lecturers has grown significantly, resulting in 23 percent of lower-division credit hours generated by part-time lecturers in 2010. While there has been a clear shift upward in part-time usage, CMU's reliance is nowhere near that of other Colorado institutions. Last year, for example, 44.6 percent of the student credit hours were generated by part-time faculty at Metropolitan State University of Denver. Based on discussions between faculty and administration, CMU has [concluded that a range of 20 percent to 25 percent of the total student credit hours being taught by part-time faculty](#) is reasonable for the institution (Trustee Meeting Agenda, August 18, 2011, p. 11).

At the upper-division level, credit-hour generation for 300-level courses by tenured/tenure-track faculty has remained relatively stable at approximately 75 percent, but credit-hour generation at the 400 level by tenured/tenure-track faculty has declined from 83 percent to 75 percent. CMU has a small number of graduate programs, described elsewhere in this document; the master's level credit-hour generation by tenured/tenure-track faculty has grown from 45 percent to 63 percent since 2006. The use of part-time faculty to complement tenure/tenure-track faculty expertise and to expand graduate course offerings in Business and Teacher Education is the result of a [deliberate choice made by those departments](#) (Trustee Meeting Agenda, August 18, 2011, p. 11). The Center for Teacher Education, for example, uses numerous local educators (e.g., principals, curriculum specialists, etc.) to support the M.A. in Education. Similarly, the Business Department hires experts from the community to support its master's level programs.

Evidence Item 3C1-3. Faculty members contribute significantly to learning in activities beyond the classroom.

By focusing on non-classroom workloads or duties performed by CMU faculty related to teaching and learning, it becomes clear that the extent of tenure/tenure-track faculty contributions to the University and their departments is significant. In an October 2012 report to the trustees, the Faculty Senate President observed that [60 percent of full-time faculty served on the Faculty Senate or a Faculty Senate standing committee](#) (see also Evidence Item 5B1-3). In addition, 24 faculty members are elected annually by their peers to serve on the [Tenure and Promotion Committee](#). Five faculty members also serve each year on the Faculty Professional Development Fund Committee to distribute funds annually. In addition, faculty serve on University-level committees (e.g., the Suspension Appeals Committee, Drop/Withdrawal/Refund Appeals Committee, Commencement Planning Committee, and the Student Board of Conduct).

Also at the University level, faculty members serve on a wide variety of advisory committees and/or working groups formed by the President, the Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Vice President for Student Services. While there are no centralized records of how many of these committees have been formed or of the names and numbers of faculty who have served on them, the Faculty Senate President gave a report to the Board of Trustees in January 2013 on the [extensive nature of faculty service](#) on advisory committees and working groups. Some of these committees from the last few years are the Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success, the Academic Technology Advisory Council, the Teacher 2 Teacher Planning Group, the Tutorial Services Advisory Committee, the Program Review Revision Working Group, the Architect Selection Committee for the Academic Classroom Building, the Distance Education Quality Working Group, the Distance Education Best Practices Advisory Group, the General Education Requirements Revision Working Group, the Health Insurance Advisory Group, the Study Abroad/International Exchange Advisory Group, the Montrose Campus Advisory Committee, the Anti-Violence Committee, the Liberal Arts Revision Committee, and the Student Showcase Committee. Finally, over the past two years, more than [60 faculty members](#) have served on committees involved in writing this Higher Learning Commission accreditation document.

At the department level, faculty members serve on [a large number of committees](#) that are integral to teaching and learning outside the classroom, such as travel, assessment, curriculum development, and search committees. In addition, they serve on committees that address textbook selection, course and program review and design, online and alternative delivery policies, external accreditation, general education and department assessment, facilities utilization, and technology. Faculty also organize and

supervise student research and presentation at conferences, summer field study, and study abroad programs, as well as participate in various activities and camps for regional middle and high schools. Further, faculty are involved in scheduling courses, writing and revising handbooks, monitoring and revising faculty evaluation forms and policies, and mentoring newer faculty. Faculty write brochures and newsletters and serve as webmasters and department videographers, and photographers. They are manuscript reviewers for student publications, serve on scholarship distribution committees, and participate in fundraising activities. Faculty members mentor students through sponsorship of the more than 80 student clubs. Faculty are significantly involved in campus decisions affecting teaching and learning at all levels.

While CMU has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out their classroom and non-classroom roles, the rapid growth in student enrollment has stretched faculty resources. Despite this, CMU continues to offer students relatively small class size and access to highly qualified faculty members. The administration acknowledges the challenges associated with student enrollment growth and has made efforts to hire additional faculty to accommodate that growth.

Sub-component 3.C.2. All instructors are appropriately credentialed, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.

Evidence Item 3C2-1. Hiring procedures ensure that faculty members meet minimum criteria established by search committees.

CMU has established a [search procedure for recruiting new faculty](#), found in the Faculty and Administrative Search Procedure Manual, to ensure that instructors are appropriately qualified. Per the search procedure manual, position announcements must state the minimum and the desired qualifications. Applicants who do not meet the minimum qualifications are removed from the search pool during a preliminary screening. The remaining candidates are evaluated by each search committee using a rating instrument developed from criteria articulated in the position announcement. Based on those ratings, the search committee selects candidates to interview. [Criteria for minimum qualifications for faculty](#) are established in the Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. III-2, line 74).

Evidence Item 3C2-2. Vitae of faculty indicate that CMU faculty are qualified.

In spring 2012, vitae were collected from all faculty members who taught during fall 2011. This included full-time faculty, part-time lecturers, and those who teach dual-credit courses in the high schools. Three categories were established for this evaluation: terminally qualified, meaning that the faculty member holds a [terminal degree in the field](#); qualified, meaning that the highest degree held by the faculty member is one degree higher than the level at which he or she is teaching (except in the D.N.P. program) and is in a relevant field; and not qualified, meaning that the faculty member's degree was either not one degree higher than the level at which she or he was teaching or was not in a relevant field.

The results indicated that, of full-time faculty reporting to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, 69 percent of full-time faculty are terminally qualified, 30 percent are qualified, and less than 1 percent do not meet the specified standards. A study of the vitae of part-time or lecturer faculty reporting to the Vice President for Academic Affairs determined that, of the 241 instructors who submitted vitae to the file, 6.6 percent were terminally qualified, 85 percent were qualified and 8.3 percent did not meet the specified standards.

The same standard was used for faculty reporting to the Vice President for Community College Affairs to determine whether the instructors were qualified. Of the 29 full-time instructors, only 35 percent were academically qualified. An examination of part-time vitae files of faculty reporting to the Vice President for Community College Affairs determined that of the 79 faculty teaching in fall 2011, 70.4 percent were academically qualified, and 29.6 percent did not meet the specified standards for the period under review. Though these faculty bring training and expertise to their classrooms from previous employment, and though many of these faculty have been credentialed for vocational instruction through the Colorado Community College System, these findings obviously present an issue of concern. In response, the University has developed and put into practice a process that mandates and supports these faculty in their pursuit of professional development opportunities.

Note: The full-time faculty vitae, lecturer vitae, and credential files are available in the Supporting Documents File. Also available in that file is a spreadsheet summarizing the qualifications and credentials of CMU's full-time faculty.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS OF CMU AND WCCC FACULTY MEMBERS, FALL 2011

Appointment Type	Count	Terminally Qualified	Qualified	Not Qualified	Left Institution	No Vita Submitted
CMU Full-time	217	149 68.7%	66 30.4%	2 0.9%		
CMU Lecturers (part-time)	267*	16 6.6%	205 85.1%	20 8.3%	33	3
WCCC Full-time	29	0 0.0%	9 31.0%	19 65.5%		
WCCC Lecturers (part-time)	79*	0 0.0%	50 70.4%	21 29.6%	8 11.3%	
Total	246	165	330	62	41	3

*Percentages exclude faculty who left institution or did not submit a vita.

Evidence Item 3C2-3. Vitae of currently employed High School Scholars faculty indicate appropriate credentials for most instructors.

With respect to High School Scholars (HSS) faculty, another standard for reviewing the vitae was established. According to the High School Scholars Program Policies Manual, there are [two levels of qualifications](#):

- Level 1- an earned master's degree in the discipline to be taught (preferred) or a master's degree plus 18 graduate hours in the content to be taught and a bachelor's degree in the discipline; and
- Level 2 - an earned master's degree, a minimum of five years of demonstrated teaching experience, and a bachelor's degree in the discipline/content area to be taught.

According to this standard, 47 percent of the HSS faculty were qualified at level 1; 38 percent were qualified at level 2; and 7 percent did not meet the specified standard. Four vitae are missing from the files. See High School Scholars vitae files, faculty qualification spreadsheet, and applications/approval files (A-D, F-L, M-Z) in the Supporting Documents File.

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARS LECTURERS, FALL 2011

		Level 1 Qualified	Level 2 Qualified	Not Qualified	No Vita Submitted
High School Scholars Lecturers	57	27 50.9%	22 41.5%	4 7.5%	4

*Percentages exclude faculty who did not submit a vita.

Sub-component 3.C.3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.

Evidence Item 3C3-1. CMU's Professional Personnel Employment Handbook articulates a policy and process for regular tenure/tenure-track instructor evaluation.

The [Evaluation of Faculty for Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion, and Post-Tenure Review](#) section in CMU's Professional Personnel Employment Handbook sets the policies and procedures for assuring that instructors are evaluated regularly. For tenure/tenure-track faculty, a formal performance review is conducted yearly with a comprehensive evaluation occurring every five years. The purpose of evaluation, according to the handbook, is "to assist Faculty in individual growth and to improve their contributions to the University." The evaluation system for tenure/tenure-track faculty includes four areas: teaching (weighted at 60 percent to 75 percent), advising (minimum of 5 percent), scholarship (minimum of 5 percent) and service (minimum of 5 percent). [Each department sets criteria specific to their discipline](#) in these four areas. Faculty members are evaluated on achievement of goals established in the prior year's plan.

Faculty members are scored by ratings that include exemplary, excellent, highly proficient, proficient, and below standard. The [number and proportion of CMU and WCCC faculty assigned to each evaluation category](#) for academic years 2006 through 2012 is

dominated by the excellent category, with the most recent year's distribution as follows: 13 percent exemplary, 58 percent excellent, 24.9 percent highly proficient, and 4.6 percent proficient. In order for faculty to be awarded tenure and/or promotion at CMU, "evidence of excellent or highly proficient performance [must be] clear, consistent, and compelling." The Handbook (p. VI-1, line 3) also specifies that "[Teaching effectiveness is the single most important criterion](#) for judging a candidate's tenure request."

For additional details on the quality and effectiveness of the University's instruction, see the multi-year results of the ACT Student Opinion Survey completed by CMU students in Evidence Item 4C2-6.

Evidence Item 3C3-2. Lecturers and instructors are evaluated annually based on established institutional procedures.

Lecturers and instructors are evaluated on teaching only. Instructors use the same [evaluation form](#) as tenured/tenure-track faculty and may include the other three areas beyond teaching in their annual planning and evaluation at their discretion. Lecturers are evaluated using a different [form](#).

Sub-component 3.C.4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.

Evidence Item 3C4-1. Faculty are supported in their scholarly and creative work and evaluated on it.

Faculty are evaluated on scholarship (a minimum of five percent of the total evaluation) to assure that they are "current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles." [Scholarship is defined](#) in the Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. VI-4, line 136) and includes 1) creative work and scholarly activity that supports classroom instruction, pedagogical research, participation in professional activities, or sharing expertise outside the traditional classroom environment, so long as such activities enhance teaching or otherwise contribute to the faculty member's growth in his or her discipline; 2) presentations of papers, cases, media productions, at professional and other scholarly meetings that are related to the faculty member's discipline or area of instruction; 3) continued education and professional development activities appropriate to professional assignments; and 4) other activities specific to the faculty member's discipline and/or assigned responsibilities.

CMU provides faculty with a variety of resources to support them in their professional development goals, both for teaching and scholarship. Each department is allotted travel funds as part of the institutional budget (\$600 per tenure/tenure-track faculty member). Department faculty committees make decisions on how these travel funds are distributed across the faculty. In academic year 2010-11, [186 faculty were funded with \\$114,506](#) of department funds. Each department has [criteria](#) to determine how to allocate funding.

Another source of funds for scholarly growth is the [Faculty Professional Development Fund \(FPDF\)](#), established in academic year 2007-08 by the Vice President for Academic Affairs to support projects facilitating the scholarly and creative development of faculty. For the purposes of this fund, faculty professional development is defined as any activity that supports the continued growth of a faculty member as a teacher, scholar, and/or contributor to the University community and that ultimately benefits CMU students. Proposals for funding may include, but are not limited to, any (or any combination) of the following: travel associated with conferences and/or research; travel abroad programs; materials (software/hardware, equipment, art supplies, etc.); or fees associated with seminars/workshops. It also may be used to support new teaching materials and methods or faculty activities developing new skills and expertise consistent with the University's teaching mission. Since its inception in academic year 2007-08, the FPDF has funded [242 faculty projects with a total of \\$333,777](#). The table below summarizes the number and total amounts of proposals funded from academic years 2007-08 through 2012-13.

AWARDS SUPPORTED BY CMU FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND, AY 2007-08 THROUGH AY 2012-13

Fiscal Year	Number of Proposals	
	Funded	Total Amount Funded
2012 - 13	51	\$87,898
2011 - 12	39	\$62,842
2010 - 11	41	\$44,908
2009 - 10	29	\$37,465
2008 - 09	42	\$50,593
2007 - 08	40	\$50,071

CMU faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge through a variety of venues. As articulated in the institution's Vision and Values statements, CMU values "a faculty recognized for their professional expertise

and quality of instruction and opportunities that engage students in applied learning." CMU's faculty are first and foremost teacher-scholars, whose primary focus is on instruction, providing students with current knowledge and practical skills for engaging with and succeeding in their discipline of choice. While CMU is not a research university, it recognizes how important research and sponsored programs are. Research and sponsored programs support more than just faculty-specific research projects. Grants have been sought to improve student success, develop and advance academic programs, contribute to the community, and advance knowledge in specific fields. Faculty members and administrators believe it is important to develop projects that distinguish the institution as a dynamic and creative learning environment that encourages collaboration between departments, community organizations, and other education providers. Along these lines, CMU has [brought in 223 awards totaling nearly \\$16 million](#) in external funding through the Office of Sponsored Programs in the past eight years.

Evidence Item 3C4-2. CMU faculty currency is supported through the sabbatical program.

Another institutionally-funded avenue for faculty to contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge is through the faculty sabbatical program. Faculty members submit proposals for sabbatical leaves. Proposals, including sabbatical plans, must be approved by the respective department heads. Each sabbatical plan must specify how the sabbatical activity will result in the faculty member's professional growth, how it will enhance CMU's reputation and the students' educational experience at the University, and how it will increase the overall level of knowledge in the faculty member's area of expertise, and it must specify the goals the faculty member will work to achieve while on sabbatical. A sabbatical committee reviews the proposals and makes a recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The recommendation process also includes the President and fund approval by the Board of Trustees.

Between 2005 and 2012, [26 faculty received sabbaticals](#) for research, for working on book manuscripts, and for other creative works. Upon return from a sabbatical, faculty are required to submit a report to the President and trustees. Sabbaticals are awarded for one semester at full pay or for two semesters at half pay, at the discretion of the faculty member receiving the award. [Policies and procedures for sabbatical applications](#) are found in the Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. V-1, line 2). Two to three sabbaticals are approved each year, though five have been approved for academic year 2013-14.

Evidence Item 3C4-3. CMU faculty currency is supported through Fulbright Scholar awards.

Since 2004, [six CMU faculty have received Fulbright Scholar awards](#), with one faculty member being awarded twice. As part of this program, faculty members have lectured and conducted research in various countries in the areas of socio-linguistics, diversity measures and museum curation, American studies, art and literature, and entrepreneurship. Faculty receiving Fulbright Scholarships have been supported by the institution in various ways – for example, the institution has continued to pay into pension plans or the institution has continued to pay health insurance costs while the faculty member was on leave. This support is negotiated on a case-by-case basis with the academic department head and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Evidence Item 3C4-4. The institution provides professional development opportunities for its faculty.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs provides [on-campus professional development opportunities](#) for all faculty members for 1 - 2 days each semester. Faculty professional workshop topics have included student assessment, teaching strategies, critical thinking in the classroom, and online learning. [Faculty Colloquia](#) are also sponsored regularly by the Office of Academic Affairs, and various [training opportunities are offered to faculty](#) members throughout the academic year.

Teacher to Teacher (T2T) is a working group of faculty appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs made up of faculty from the 12 departments across campus plus WCCC. The purpose of the group is to plan and coordinate activities to promote faculty professional development opportunities related to teaching. The group hosted a two-day professional development seminar with Ken Bain, author of widely-recognized books *What the Best College Students Do* and *What the Best College Teachers Do*. T2T also sends out [weekly teaching tips](#), organizes late afternoon faculty development programs, and sponsors small group discussions on various topics related to teaching.

A two-day orientation for new faculty – [New to Colorado Mesa University](#) – and an orientation session for part-time instructors – [Lecturer Resource Night](#) – are delivered by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, providing information about effective teaching strategies and transition into full- or part-time instruction. Additional resources include the following: [Ten Ways to Engage Your Students on the First Day of Class](#), [Effective Strategies for Improving College Teaching and Learning](#) and [How Do I Get More Students to Participate in Class](#). These publications are available on the faculty tab of the campus portal, MAVzone.

Finally, staff in the Office of Extended Studies (renamed Office of Distance Education in 2013) have designed numerous activities and resources to enhance coursework delivered via distance formats. The following summarizes ongoing projects and initiatives to expand resources available to faculty and students and to enhance the overall delivery of courses via distance formats during academic year 2012-13:

- Expanded communication avenues with faculty on e-learning and changes in CMU distance education through a CMUOnline Blog, that focuses on e-learning tips and strategies, in addition to the CMUOnline Facebook page and Twitter account

previously in existence. Further, a CMUOnline tab was added to MAVzone for faculty and students to facilitate direct “anytime-anywhere” support, register for upcoming workshops, get important D2L information, and access FAQs, QuickGuides, and technology tutorials.

- Hosted two sets of faculty workshops: "May the Course Be With You" and "Build an A+ Gradebook." The response was strong, with a total of 78 faculty attending the two workshops.
- Assisted faculty in the design, development, and maintenance of their e-learning courses with several tools in response to the growing need for more instructor tools and resources. For example, the MAVzone tab contains the self-paced tutorial *How to Build a Quality Online Course* that guides faculty in the design of an online course and the basic pedagogical principles behind the design.
- Created a *Bloom's Quick Guide* as a way for instructors to easily determine what type of assessment best works based on a simple set of questions for each level. The [Choosing the Right Assessment Tool](#) is a matrix that allows instructors to align course activities, assignments, and assessments to course outcomes. The [Outcomes Mapping Worksheet](#) allows instructors to align course outcomes to program level outcomes.
- Developed a new [syllabus template](#) for use with web-enhanced, blended, and online courses. The template incorporates components specific to the online environment and for teaching with technology. Faculty can incorporate course level outcomes as they move through that process during academic year 2013-14.
- Designed a lecture capture survey to help Information Technology assess the level of faculty interest, possible uses, and formats of having the technology implemented at CMU. A group of faculty and administrators will revisit the survey results in fall 2013 to evaluate the results and potential technologies.
- Began the upgrade process from D2L version 9.4 to version 10.2 that brings with it a need for substantial video and document resources. Distance education staff have begun creating these and, partnering with the Information Technology staff, will review and approve each faculty and student resource prior to making it available. For the first time at CMU, all students, faculty and staff will have access to a library of D2L resources, regardless of the modality in which they teach and learn.

Sub-component 3.C.5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

Evidence Item 3C5-1. Faculty hold regular office hours for interaction with students and provide other opportunities for student inquiry.

Faculty are responsible for holding [weekly office hours](#), according to the Professional Personnel Employment Handbook, Section VIII, C.1.b., p. VIII-3. The Handbook specifies that faculty are responsible for:

establishing, posting and keeping a minimum of five office hours weekly spread over a minimum of four days commencing one week prior to and continuing through each Fall and Spring Semester excluding scheduled breaks. Faculty may use a different configuration of office hours with the approval of the Department Head. Faculty who are granted Release Time will keep office hours as determined by the Department Head.

In addition to teaching and tasks directly related to their courses, faculty members engage in both formal and informal advising. Formal advising loads have grown as student enrollment has grown, reaching an average of 30 advisees per faculty member in fall 2011 (see table below). However, this average does not tell the whole story. Taking the [Social and Behavioral Science Department advisee loads](#) as an example, it becomes obvious that advising loads are unevenly distributed across disciplines. The three Criminal Justice faculty members have an average of 142 advisees each, while the six History professors have an average of 27 advisees each. A similar discrepancy can be found in comparing [Languages, Literature and Mass Communication advisee loads](#). Four Mass Communication faculty members have an average of 60 advisees, while five Spanish faculty have an average of 17.

SUMMARY OF CMU FACULTY ADVISING, FALL 2004, 2008,
AND 2011*

Criterion	Fall 2004	Fall 2008	Fall 2011
# Faculty Advisors	215	225	245
Average # Advisees	18.37	19.07	29.83

Students at CMU have benefited from faculty advisors who know them well, who can provide personalized advice on their progress through the program, and who write personal letters of recommendation. However, continuing to maintain that level of advising is a challenge with recent rates of enrollment growth, particularly in disciplines where enrollment has outpaced the addition of new full-time faculty. Several factors affect how the University is addressing this issue. The University continues to hire new faculty prudently, especially in view of recent slow-down in student growth rates. In spite of growth rates and the increasing numbers of advisees per faculty member, student satisfaction with their advisor's availability continues to be high. Evidence item 3C5-3 below provides more details.

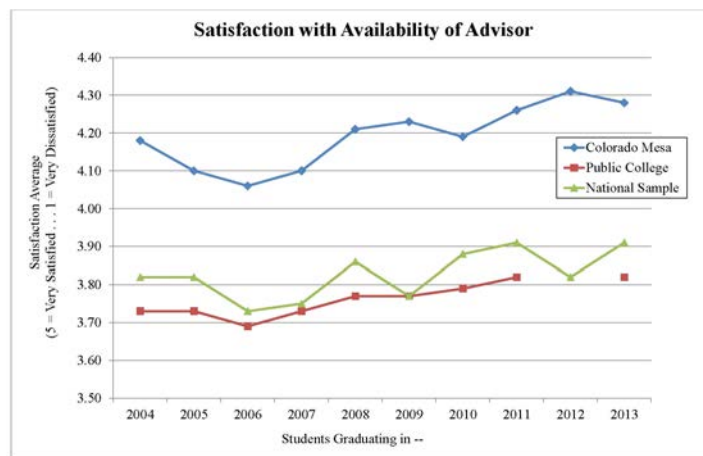
Evidence Item 3C5-2. Several departments on campus offer group advising sessions, in addition to one-on-one advising with personal advisors.

Several departments offer advising sessions beyond the one-on-one sessions recommended each semester with individual advisors.

- The Department of Health Sciences offers [group advising sessions](#) to interested students regularly throughout the semester. At these sessions, faculty from all Health Science programs share information regarding specific program requirements and specific program application processes.
- The elementary, secondary, and K-12 programs each hold at least one group advising meeting a semester for potential teacher education candidates. These sessions are held about a month before applications to the program are due in March and October.
- The Department of Business holds a group advising session in the Freshman Business Seminar (BUGB 105) each semester. Business faculty meet with the BUGB 105 students and assist students with their schedules for the next semester.
- In Geology, the 200-level field class is used to do much of the general advising of new students.
- At the beginning of each academic year, the Art Department faculty hosts a meeting for all art majors. During the presentation, students are brought up to date regarding relevant changes in faculty, curricula, facilities, events, and any other items needing attention during the new academic year. Program sheets are reviewed for each area of study.
- Each semester, Environmental Science professors spend a few minutes in each class informing their students about what courses they should be enrolling in the next semester.
- The faculty in Criminal Justice hold a session every semester in which they take 30 to 40 minutes to review the program sheets in detail for both the general B.A. in Criminal Justice and the B.A. in Criminal Justice, Concentration in Law Enforcement. They address FAQs and other important advising issues (e.g., course sequence, who should be the assigned advisor given the student's area of interest, etc.). These sessions are offered just before registration begins.

Evidence Item 3C5-3. Students highly rate the availability of instructors and advisors.

Student survey data suggest that students are highly satisfied with the availability of faculty. The [ACT Student Opinion Survey](#), which is administered to CMU students petitioning to graduate, asks students about their level of satisfaction with the out-of-class availability of their instructors and their advisors. In 2011, the average response to these questions was 4.25 and 4.26 respectively, on a 5-point scale, where 5 is very satisfied and 1 is very dissatisfied. Over the past eight years, the average response to these questions has been consistently above 4. In areas of faculty availability and attitude toward students, CMU has consistently scored higher in student satisfaction over public colleges and national samples, as shown below.



Satisfaction scale: 5-point, with 5 = very satisfied, 4 = satisfied, 3 = neutral, 2 = dissatisfied, 1 = very dissatisfied
Source: Section III, ACT Student Opinion Survey, 2004 - 2012.
Note: In 2012, ACT did not report comparative data for the category 'public colleges.'

The CMU [faculty/course evaluation form](#) asks students if “the instructor is accessible to students during office hours or by appointment.” Among the campuswide responses for fall 2010, spring 2011, and fall 2011, 90 percent agreed or strongly agreed that instructors were accessible.

Sub-component 3.C.6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Evidence Item 3C6-1. The Faculty and Administrative Search Procedure Manual ensures that staff meet the minimum qualifications established by search committees.

The University’s search procedure for recruiting administrative staff is articulated in the [Faculty and Administrative Search Procedure Manual](#). For each staff position, there is a position description, developed by the supervising authority in conjunction with the Director of Human Resources. The position description lists the responsibilities, the minimum qualifications, and the preferred qualifications. These responsibilities and qualifications are stated in position announcements and job advertisements. As with faculty searches, applicants who do not meet the minimum qualifications are removed from the search pool during a preliminary screening. The remaining candidates are evaluated by the search committee using a rating instrument developed from the position announcement. Based on those ratings, the search committee selects candidates to interview.

Evidence Item 3C6-2. All administrative staff providing academic student support services are well qualified.

In spring 2012, vitae were collected from all administrative staff in offices that have direct student contact, including Admissions, Advising, Career Services, Tutorial Learning Center, Educational Access Services (support for students with disabilities), the Testing Center, the Library, the Registrar’s Office, Financial Aid, Residence Life, Student Life, Student Mentoring, the Recreation Center, and University Center. Each staff member’s vita was compared to the corresponding position description to verify that the staff member meets the qualifications of the position. It was determined that 99 percent of CMU staff members meet the educational requirements for their positions; only one staff member did not meet the given requirement and that person was on track to finish the required degree in May 2013. In addition to the educational requirements, many of the staff positions have requirements for prior work experience. Ninety percent of staff members meet these additional requirements for their positions.

Evidence Item 3C6-3. Staff members participate in additional training and certification and take part in professional development activities.

Staff vitae were also reviewed for evidence of training and certifications. Most staff members listed some type of professional development related to their campus positions. Thirty-nine staff members reported attending training, a workshop, or a webinar. Thirty-three staff members had attended professional conferences; of these, 12 had given conference presentations. Thirteen staff members had completed college courses related to their positions and 14 had earned relevant certifications. A [summary of recent staff training events](#) documents the types of training that academic and student support staff attended recently and the number of staff involved in professional development activities.

Evidence Item 3C6-4. Training manuals and schedules for training sessions indicate conscious attention to staff preparedness and information awareness.

Staff training and policy/procedures manuals from offices across campus document how staff are trained by their respective department supervisors. (See examples of manuals: [Academic Advising](#), [Educational Access Services](#), [Financial Aid](#), [Recreation Services](#), [Tutorial Learning Center](#), [Testing Center](#), and [University Center](#).)

Sources

-  [Advisee Loads - LLMC 2012](#)
-  [Advisee Loads - SBS 2012](#)
-  [Advising _Health Sci Group Advising - Spring 2012](#)
-  [Assessment Survey - ACT Student Opinion Survey_2012](#)
-  [Class Size by Course Level 2005-2011](#)
-  [Credit Hours by Faculty Type AY 2007-11](#)
-  [Credit Hours by Faculty Type AY 2007-11 \(Page 2\)](#)
-  [Dist Educ - Choosing the Right Assessment](#)
-  [Dist Educ - CMU Syllabus Template](#)
-  [Dist Educ - Outcomes Mapping Worksheet](#)
-  [Effective Strategies Improve Teach and Learn](#)
-  [Faculty and Administrative Search Procedure Manual](#)
-  [Faculty Colloquia 2004-2011](#)
-  [Faculty Department Service Summary from Vita](#)
-  [Faculty Evaluation Criteria by Department 2009](#)
-  [Faculty Evaluation Multi-Year Summary](#)
-  [Faculty Evaluation_Full-time Faculty Form](#)
-  [Faculty Evaluation_Lecturer Form](#)
-  [Faculty Fulbright Scholars List_2011](#)
-  [Faculty Orientation - Lecturer Resource Guide \(for Part-time Faculty\)](#)
-  [Faculty Orientation_New to CMU Resource Guide \(for Full-time Faculty\)](#)
-  [Faculty Professional Development Fund - 2008-2012 Awards](#)
-  [Faculty Professional Development Fund - Call for proposals](#)
-  [Faculty Professional Development Workshops - Teaching, Assessment, Distance](#)
-  [Faculty Professional Development Workshops - Training Workshops Fall 2011-Spring 2013](#)
-  [Faculty Sabbatical Leaves Approved 2006-2013](#)
-  [Faculty Senate Report_BOT_January 2013](#)
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-  [Faculty Service on Campus Advisory or Working Groups](#)
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-  [Faculty Terminal Degrees and In Lieu of Instructors and Lecturers](#)
-  [Faculty Travel Fund Guidelines/Narratives by Academic Department](#)
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-  [Faculty/Course Evaluation Form 2012](#)
-  [Faculty_T2T Teaching Tips](#)
-  [Funding Awards for Faculty Sponsored Programs FY03- FY11](#)
-  [High School Scholars \(Concurrent Enrollment\) Program Policies](#)
-  [High School Scholars \(Concurrent Enrollment\) Program Policies \(Page 2\)](#)
-  [High School Scholars Approvals A-D](#)
-  [High School Scholars Approvals F-L](#)
-  [High School Scholars Approvals M-Y](#)
-  [HLC_Self-Study Committees](#)
-  [Instructor Guide of Student Learning](#)
-  [Magna_Students Participating in Class Handout](#)
-  [Magna_Ten Ways to Engage](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section III-Recruitment and Hiring \(Page 2\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 4\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section VIII-Salary Administration \(Page 3\)](#)
-  [PPEH-CMU-Section V-Leaves \(Page 1\)](#)
-  [Professional Staff Development_Acad & Stu Support Services](#)
-  [Ratios - student to faculty- at peer institutions](#)

-  [Staff Training_Academic Advisors 2012](#)
-  [Staff Training_EAS Staff-Tutors](#)
-  [Staff Training_Financial Aid Procedures](#)
-  [Staff Training_Intramural-Recreation Student Workers](#)
-  [Staff Training_Testing Center](#)
-  [Staff Training_TLC Coordinators-Tutors](#)
-  [Staff Training_University Center](#)
-  [Trustee Agenda Book_2011_0818 \(Page 11\)](#)

Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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

CMU Response

Introduction

CMU's administration, particularly the Vice President for Academic Affairs, has continuously sought ways to enhance student learning and improve student success over the course of the past several years. One of the most impressive efforts was the [Working Group to Improve Student Success](#) and its resulting reports and actions. The University is committed to student success and satisfaction, and it has dedicated itself to serving students in all the ways it can – specifically, in terms of the following areas:

- Services tailored to very diverse needs.
- Placement that will ensure a positive outcome for learning.
- Advising to make sure the path to graduation and a career is clear.
- Facilities that are comfortable and functional.
- Ethical research practices.

As reported in the Fall 2012 Student Profile (p. 1), [CMU had an enrollment of 9,482 students](#), with 12 percent of the University's student body coming from outside Colorado. The student population was 54 percent female and 46 percent male, and the vast majority of undergraduates – 75 percent – were enrolled in full-time study. Three of four students were traditional-aged students (defined as less than 25 years old), and 21 percent self-identified as a racial or ethnic minority. Many CMU students attend college while working and/or caring for families. Most of CMU's students – 65 percent – are pursuing bachelor's degrees, 23 percent associate degrees, 2 percent certificates, and less than 1 percent are pursuing master's and doctoral degrees. While less than 1 percent of the University's students are pursuing their degrees completely online, about 20 percent take one or more classes online or on another campus.

The University provides a wide variety of services to meet the needs of this diverse student body. Sub-component 3.D.1 addresses support offered through CMU's student services division, followed by Sub-components 3.D.2 and 3.D.3, which describe academic support services, such as advising and placement, as well as resources that enhance students' learning.

Sub-component 3.D.1. The institution provides support services suited to the needs of its student populations.

Evidence Item 3D1-1. The University coordinates efforts to serve its students through the Office of Student Services.

The [Office of Student Services](#) supports CMU students in numerous non-instructional aspects of University life by collaborating with faculty, students, and staff to create a campus community that fosters the growth of students as strong individuals and productive citizens. The office oversees a variety of functions that include financial aid, student records, campus safety, residence life, health and wellness, mentoring, diversity initiatives, and recreation services. Together, these student services, along with offices in the University's Academic Affairs division, ensure that students are informed, connected, and engaged to support the achievement of their academic, professional, and personal goals. The [Vision Statement and Goals for Student Services Offices](#), based on [outcomes from the Council on Academic Standards](#), articulate a philosophy anchored in a commitment to student learning, character development, and student success. To move beyond thinking about retention as numbers, Student Services staff designed student learning outcomes that emphasize developing “the whole person” through connections to other students, the University, and the community.

Evidence Item 3D1-2. The University provides transactional services for its students.

The University awards more than \$70 million in financial aid to 75 percent of the student body through CMU's [Office of Financial Aid](#), whose staff is dedicated to assisting students in sorting through the various forms of student aid. The University also provides a convenient installment payment plan for students. A wide variety of scholarships are offered for academic excellence and leadership achievement, and the University Foundation awards more than \$500,000 in private scholarships to over 300 students each year. These scholarships range from a cash stipend to full tuition and fees. Students are informed of scholarship opportunities primarily via the [Scholarship Web Page](#). Through the Office of Financial Aid, students can also apply for various paid positions, funded by the federal government, the state government, and through the institutionally funded [MavWorks](#) program.

In order to assist students in paying for textbooks over time instead of upfront and all at once, students have the option of charging their books directly to their student accounts. Credit is limited to \$50 per enrolled credit hour, with a maximum of \$600 available credit. Account payment is handled through the [Business Office](#). The 2012 ACT Student Opinion Survey (p. 7, item 10) reported a satisfaction average for the [University's financial aid services](#) of 4.03. Note that all averages for the ACT Student Opinion Survey are based on a 5-point scale, with 5.00 being the highest.

The awarding of financial aid at CMU consists of a [balanced program of self-help, scholarships, and grants-in-aid](#) awarded for outstanding academic achievement or outstanding performance in special skill areas, such as vocational skills, athletics, drama, and music. CMU also participates in federal and state programs for grants, loans, and student employment. Awards are based primarily on need, which is determined by the federal government's need analysis system. The application used to determine need is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Staff from the Office of Financial Aid conduct numerous presentations on the financial aid process at area high schools and provide printed and web-based materials. A Financial Literacy and Default Management Counselor was hired in spring 2013 to assist students with financial planning and debt management.

CMU is committed to supporting veterans of the military and their eligible dependents by providing them with needed information so they can receive education benefits through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. See [FAQs](#) for student veterans and the [Veteran's Services Brochure](#) for a detailed list of services provided. The 2012 ACT Student Opinion Survey (p. 8, item 22) indicates an average satisfaction of 4.22 for [University-sponsored veteran's services](#). In addition, CMU veterans have organized a Veterans Club whose mission is to create and promote student veteran academic achievement through networking, education, resources, and benefits, and involvement in campus and community activities.

The Office of the Registrar also has a dedicated staff member for vocational rehabilitation coordination, assisting students whose disabilities result in barriers to employment and helping them to succeed at work and live independently. Staff work with vocational rehabilitation counselors regarding payment of tuition and purchasing of textbooks.

Because CMU is committed to the success of its students, it has an on-campus residency policy. All first-year and sophomore students who are single, under 21 years of age, and not residing with their parents in Mesa County are required to live on campus, provided that space is available. In recent years, growing enrollments have required CMU to build additional residence halls. Over the past decade, the University has increased the number of beds on campus from 961 (2003) to 1,248 (2008) to 2,065 (2012). This 215 percent increase since 2003 has not kept pace with the 64 percent increase in student headcount between 2003 and 2012. Some of the recent enrollment growth, however, has been at the upper division level due to improved retention; these students are not required to live on campus. Nonetheless, CMU has plans for adding another 600 beds over the next five years in the new Garfield Village housing complex to address this issue, 200 of which became available in July 2013.

As soon as students are admitted to the University, they have access to many technology resources. They can send and receive email through the campus email system; log into MAVzone, the campus portal; use computers in the computer labs across campus; and access the Internet from their personal computers in residence halls, classroom buildings, the library, and the student center. Wi-Fi access is available across campus. The average satisfaction of graduating students with [University computer services](#) was 4.06, based on participation in the 2012 ACT Student Opinion Survey Summary Report (p. 8, item 19).

Evidence Item 3D1-3. CMU provides for the health and recreation needs of its students.

[Campus Recreation Services](#), housed in the Hamilton Recreation Center, provides varied programs and services that contribute to the health and well-being of the students of CMU. The Campus Recreation Services division encourages its participants to use leisure time responsibly. It offers recreational activities and opportunities for participants regardless of age, sex, or motor ability. Additionally, opportunities for participating in athletic activities are provided through [Club Sports](#) and [Intramural Sports](#) activities. Feedback from graduating seniors who completed the 2012 ACT Student Opinion Survey (p. 8, item 5) resulted in an average satisfaction of 4.33 for [recreational and intramural programs and services](#) offered by the University.

CMU provides services aimed at sustaining and developing healthy, physical lifestyles for its students, as well. Located one

block from the north side of campus, the [Student Health Center](#) provides quality, accessible medical care seven days a week. Medical treatment and preventive care similar to the services of a family physician are provided for students and their dependents. The Center provides the following services for students: physical examinations, pap smears, diagnosis and treatment of illness, injury treatment and follow-up care, health education/counseling and pamphlets, diagnostic laboratory and radiology services, immunizations, and family planning education and birth control. Students also have access to emergency care at the Community Hospital Emergency Department when the Health Center is closed. The table below summarizes recent student usage data since data collection began in August 2009, and the average level of graduating student satisfaction with [student health services](#), based on the 2012 ACT Student Opinion Survey (p. 8, item 7), was 3.74.

CMU STUDENT USAGE OF HEALTH SERVICES

Month	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
January	0	248	336	423	444
February	0	443	472	599	680
March	0	385	419	528	536
April	0	371	412	540	
May	0	241	230	280	
June	0	170	168	138	
July	0	161	148	189	
August	140	298	391	430	
September	410	469	582	702	
October	446	432	534	673	
November	312	442	483	557	
December	168	318	307	356	

Being proactive about health issues is also a concern of the University. All CMU students are required to take Health and Wellness (KINE 100), a course presenting information concerning the benefits, assessment, and implementation of healthy lifestyles. In addition, students are required to take two activity courses that focus on promoting physical activity as a lifelong habit.

Evidence Item 3D1-4. The University provides personal, emotional, and developmental support for its students.

The Office of Student Services provides assistance for students in need of behavioral or psychological counseling. For example, [counseling services](#) are contracted annually with [Behavioral Clinical Services](#) (BCS) to provide primary student mental health care and support. BCS has a number of licensed professional counselors on staff to serve CMU students. Currently enrolled students are provided professional talk therapy for a \$5 copay for up to six one-hour sessions. This can be extended if the provider determines a student needs more extensive support. BCS also provides group sessions and specializes in discrete areas of mental health service needs such as addiction and substance abuse, domestic violence, and other more serious chronic mental health issues (bipolar and depressive disorders, etc.). Results from the 2012 ACT Student Opinion Survey Summary Report (p. 8, item 2) indicated a satisfaction average of 3.70 with the [University's personal counseling services](#). The University is also an active participant in the Mesa County Prevention Policy Board, which supports the concepts of proactive prevention and intervention within the University's overall policy of maintaining a safe and healthy campus.

The [Student Diversity and Advocacy Office](#) works to support underrepresented students on campus who may have issues adjusting to the campus environment that are particular to their physical, religious, cultural, or ethnic backgrounds, expectations, and needs. The University also employs [staff mentors](#) who assist students experiencing financial concerns, having personal issues, or needing help communicating with faculty, and/or registering for classes.

For students with preschool children, the University has a contractual arrangement for child care through the [Little Mavericks Learning Center](#), located on the south side of the campus. The average level of satisfaction with [University-sponsored day care services](#) was 3.50, as reported in the 2012 ACT Student Opinion Survey Summary Report (p. 8, item 23) for responding graduating seniors.

Evidence Item 3D1-5. The University provides for the social and cultural needs of students.

A number of student fee-funded organizations are administered by CMU students, including the following:

- Club Advisory Board (CAB): Currently CMU has over [70 active clubs](#) on campus, including club sports and religious, academic, and social clubs, which allow students to meet others who share similar interests.
- Associated Student Government (ASG): ASG is the representative body and official voice of the students. The ASG operates through the General Assembly, a legislative body composed of students elected by the student body. Students

involved in ASG have an opportunity to gain leadership skills by representing student opinions to the CMU administration and Board of Trustees, and they are responsible for reviewing and administering student fee requests.

- **Cultural Diversity Board (CDB):** This student organization offers leadership experiences for students and organizes programs to educate students regarding multicultural concerns and issues. Member groups include the Black Student Alliance, Gay-Straight Alliance, Ho’olokahi Polynesian Club, International Student Association, La Raza, and the Native American Student Council.
- **Programming Activities Council (PAC):** PAC is responsible for Welcome Week, Homecoming Unity Fest and MAV Fest as well as other entertainment activities such as concerts, movies, dances, comedians, other entertainers, and speakers. These events are free for all CMU students.
- **Media Board:** Organizations within the Media Board include the student newspaper, *The Criterion*; the student radio station, KMSA 91.3 FM; and the literary and art publications, *The Literary Review* and *Horizon Magazine*. Each of these groups is professionally advised by faculty members and utilizes the latest equipment employed in their fields.
- **Fine Arts Board:** Organizations participating in the Fine Arts Board include the Art Gallery, the Forensics Team, the Pep Band, and the Campus Design Studio.

In response to the results of the Student Activities Survey (p. 2), [students expressed interest in Greek life](#) on campus. The administration and the Faculty Senate responded by forming a committee to study the issue. The Vice President for Student Services reported to the Faculty Senate that national Greek organizations have contacted the CMU administration, and some groups of students are in the early stages of forming chapters of national Greek organizations. As of spring 2012, the University was facilitating student dialogue, obtaining information from national Greek organizations, and seeking advice from colleagues at other institutions.

Results from the 2012 ACT Student Opinion Survey (p. 8, items 14 and 15) indicated an average level of satisfaction of 4.09 with [University-sponsored social activities](#) and 4.15 with its [cultural programs](#).

Evidence Item 3D1-6. CMU provides for the safety and security of its students.

CMU is committed to the safety and security of all members of its campus community, believing that academic freedom can flourish only in an environment that is free of criminal or other disruptive activity and unsafe conditions. All public safety services on the CMU campus are provided by the [Grand Junction Police Department](#), with officers staffing two locations. They are responsible for maintaining the campus community as a place of study, work, and residence that is free from abuse, intimidation, and harassment, and where all are treated with respect and courtesy. The [CMU Crime Report](#) details University policies and procedures for dealing with criminal behavior.

CMU offers a [Campus Safety Assistants Program](#), designed to provide safe pedestrian travel around campus for all students, faculty, and staff. The service covers all of the main campus and extends up to two blocks off campus. In addition, emergency telephones are strategically placed around campus, and when activated, the phones provide a direct connection via a 911 line to the regional communications center.

CMU also has an [Emergency Response Guide](#) in place to deal with major emergencies on campus. The Emergency Operations Plan is designed to effectively coordinate the use of University and community resources to protect life and property immediately following a major disaster on the campus. The plan is put into operation whenever an emergency affecting the campus cannot be controlled through normal channels. The primary emergencies specified in the plan are fire, chemical spill, radiological emergency, bomb threat, the need for campuswide evacuation, or a major earthquake.

CMU has contracted with an emergency notification provider to send alert text messages to cellular phones and to distribute voice messages in the event of an emergency situation. The University provides students with information on [Emergency Contact Services](#), the referral point for emergencies, in its Student Resource Guide (p. 19).

[Personal safety workshops and first-aid/CPR training sessions](#) are offered regularly to campus members. Over the past three years, national campus safety expert, Dr. John Nicoletti, who has consulted on school violence incidents such as the 1999 Columbine High School and the 2007 Virginia Tech shootings, conducted three on-site training sessions and workshops at CMU to promote awareness and develop detection and response skills for faculty and staff dealing with potential threats on campus. The University has also offered faculty/staff self-defense courses every year since 2010. These efforts complement the University’s Campus Safety Assistants program, violence prevention programs, women’s safety courses, and the campuswide Students of Concern committee, a group made up of representatives from across the institution dedicated to the detection and disruption of potentially dangerous situations, as per national best practices.

Policies and procedures are in place and in practice to manage access to student residence halls to optimize student safety. All residence halls on the CMU campus feature controlled electronic access (locked entrance doors) and on-duty (or on-call) staff 24 hours a day. Access to individual rooms is limited to residents and authorized University employees, who must follow procedures established to protect the safety of the residents. Other elements of the residence hall security system are door peepholes and security cameras at each entrance and fire door location. In addition, students are required to show identification to an authorized staff member at the staff member's request, and to escort their guests at all times. The CMU Facilities Services Department manages the door access system and works with the Department of Housing and Residence Life and the MAVcard Office to approve access to the residence halls.

Evidence Item 3D1-7. Results from the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) indicate that CMU fulfills the needs of its students.

Student satisfaction is one way to track how successful the University is in meeting the needs of its diverse student body. Among other measures, CMU uses the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (p. 3) to gauge student satisfaction. Some of [CMU's noteworthy strengths](#) are 1) a knowledgeable and available faculty, 2) a safe and secure campus that is well-maintained, and 3) an environment in which students feel welcome and find it enjoyable to be a student. Students also strongly agree that computer labs are adequate and accessible and that the institution has a good reputation within the community. An indicator of University's success in providing quality education is that its [SSI scores equal or exceed the national four-year public averages in every item making up the instructional effectiveness scale](#). CMU also administers the National Survey of Student Engagement, most recently in 2010 for this report's purposes (2013 results are not available). According to that survey, 85 percent of first-year [students report a favorable image of this institution](#), and 85 percent of [seniors would choose this school again](#) if they could start their college careers over.

Sub-component 3.D.2. The institution provides learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for placing entering students in courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.

Evidence Item 3D2-1. The University provides admission and placement support.

Even before students decide to attend CMU, they are provided with several opportunities for gathering information about the University. Each year, CMU hosts several [Mesa Experience Visitation Programs](#), which allow prospective students and their families the opportunity to experience firsthand the nature of academic and student life at CMU. These comprehensive, one-day visitation programs enable prospective students and their families to tour the campus and to meet and talk with current students, faculty, and staff. Additionally, they are encouraged to attend sessions on admissions, financial aid/scholarships, housing, athletics, student life, and student services. Faculty members are available at each event so that prospective students can learn about academic offerings, and faculty members provide tours of their department facilities. The University also recruits exceptional students from the 14-county region through the [MavScholars](#) program, staffed through the Office of Academic Affairs.

All new degree-seeking CMU freshmen are encouraged to attend a [Student Orientation](#) program in order to register for their first-semester courses. Information regarding Student Orientation is mailed to students upon notification of acceptance. Students are grouped by intended major and receive personal assistance in selecting classes that will fit both their learning needs and their program choice. From orientation through graduation, academic advisors and faculty mentors assist students in matching their majors to their career aspirations and ensuring that their coursework fits CMU degree requirements.

An advising hold is placed on all first-semester students' accounts. This hold ensures that first-semester entering undergraduates go through an advising process at orientation or with an advisor before registering for classes. This hold also prevents students from making changes to their schedules without meeting with an advisor during their first semester of school.

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) has established [admissions standards](#) for Colorado's public four-year institutions of higher education based on 1) an admissions index, calculated using a combination of standardized test scores (either ACT or SAT) and high school performance (either high school grade point average or class rank); and 2) a student's completion of curricular requirements, referred to as the Higher Education Admissions Requirements. CMU previously was classified as an institution with moderately selective admissions having an index of 85. CCHE allows an institution to admit up to 20 percent of its baccalaureate-seeking students below its index, a concept commonly described as being admitted "through the window." When CMU admits baccalaureate-seeking students with an index score between 80 and 91 they must enter either an associate degree program or the provisional baccalaureate program. These students must meet one of the following criteria to obtain full admission into a baccalaureate program:

- Completion of 13 to 29 credit hours of college-level work at CMU with a 2.3 GPA or higher and meet the [Colorado Higher Education Admission Requirements](#);

- Completion of 30 credit hours or more college-level work at CMU with a 2.3 GPA or higher;
- Completion of an associate degree program at CMU.

Students applying to CMU whose index score is lower than the state mandate for CMU are advised about placement after taking ACCUPLACER exams developed by The College Board. ACCUPLACER is a skill-assessment tool used to place students in the appropriate classes. CMU offers assessments in English, Mathematics, and Reading. Students receive a class placement based on their score, which they take with them to their advising sessions. Students whose ACT or SAT scores are more than five years old are advised to take the ACCUPLACER exam as well.

Based on their ACCUPLACER scores, some students are advised to enroll in developmental education courses so that they can be assured that they are better prepared to do college-level work in their course of study. Students enroll in developmental education courses in Mathematics, Reading, and English. Numbers of such courses are below the 100 level (e.g., Basic Writing (ENGL 090); Intermediate Algebra (MATH 091); College Preparatory Reading (READ 090)). These courses are designed for students who need to strengthen their skills before entering college-level classes, are not intended for transfer purposes, and do not fulfill degree requirements.

Some programs have program-specific admission requirements. These guidelines ensure that students are prepared for the rigor and specialized knowledge that are essential for success in certain fields. For example, music majors at CMU must pass a [performance audition](#) and a music theory exam before being accepted into the program. Others, such as [Nursing](#) and [Teacher Education](#) programs require students to apply to the major, and faculty members select candidates from pools of applicants. Application materials and prerequisites for the programs can be found at the programs' websites.

In order to make the process work smoothly for students transferring to CMU, students are assisted through the [Center for Transfer Services](#) in the Registrar's Office. Transfer Services completes preliminary transcript evaluations, assists with solving transfer problems, and participates in scheduling and advising. The services are available to transfer students and faculty who may be working with them. The center also coordinates with community colleges to communicate with students before they transfer to CMU about the best course selections for a chosen major.

Evidence Item 3D2-2. CMU provides preparatory instruction and on-going learning support to help students succeed.

Responsibility for the Developmental Education Program was moved to WCCC in fall 2006. Recently the Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success (WGISAS) examined how developmental education was being delivered by WCCC faculty and [recommended changes](#). In spring 2012, CMU and WCCC faculty members piloted a one-credit-hour writing studio course (ENGL 111L) as an alternative to Basic Writing (ENGL 090) for students who test below the ACCUPLACER cut score for English Composition (ENGL 111) but above the score for placement for lower level developmental English courses (030 and 060). In the initial lab session, students write a diagnostic essay to determine particular areas of their writing in need of improvement and set up regular times to meet with a lab instructor to work on specific assignments for ENGL 111. The studio course was given final approval in spring 2013 as ENGC 092.

A second WGISAS recommendation, implemented to increase the likelihood for first-year student success, was the administration of the [Learning and Study Strategies Inventory](#) (LASSI), an 80-item assessment that gauges student awareness and uses of "learning and study strategies related to skill, will, and self-regulation." More specifically, the LASSI provides students with an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of their learning and study skills related to anxiety, attitude, concentration, information processing, motivation, selecting main ideas, self-testing, student aids, test strategies, and time management. All first-time freshmen are required to complete the LASSI during their first semester, prior to meeting with their advisor for spring registration. Institutional Research staff shared findings following the first administration of LASSI, observing that the motivation scale is highly predictive of student success when measured by retention and first-semester grades. Staff in the Advising Center use the inventory's results as part of their mid-fall advising sessions to identify strategies that will improve student success in courses in which students are enrolled that term as well as to guide selections for spring semester courses.

In the area of academic support, the University implemented an Early Alert System (EAS) for first-time undergraduates in fall 2006. Students are provided with feedback about their success in their coursework in the third (optional), fifth (mandatory) and eighth (optional) week of the semester, with the intent that those who are at risk of failing a course will be prompted to meet with their instructors and academic advisors to identify remedies for their specific situations, such as tutoring services, time management advice, meetings with the instructor, withdrawal from a course, and/or adding a second module class. Since its original implementation, students on academic probation have been added for reporting through EAS. Faculty feedback does not become part of the student's academic record.

Other developmental education projects that have been implemented are the Reading Lab, piloted in summer 2010, and an ESL program launched in fall 2010 through a collaboration of staff from the main campus, Mesa County Library, and CMU's Montrose

Campus. Additionally, on-campus tutoring services were expanded at WCCC and in Montrose in spring 2010 to encourage use of this service by community college students.

In addition to developmental education courses for academically underprepared students, the University offers a program designed to enhance the experience of first-year freshmen students and to ease the transition from high school- to college-level learning. This program, the Freshman Year Initiative (FYI), is offered to new first-year students prior to the start of each fall semester, as well as during the fall and spring semesters as Introduction to Higher Education (SUPP 101). SUPP 101 is a two-credit elective course designed to introduce students to the resources of the University and to enhance their study skills in order to better prepare them for the expectations of college-level work. The course emphasizes test-taking, reading techniques, note-taking, and memory as well as the skills of critical thinking, stress management, utilization of campus resources, goal-setting, understanding the relationship of academic planning to career goals, career exploration, and other topics. During fall 2011, the University offered 35 sections of SUPP 101, both through FYI and as a regular semester course; 783 students, 39 percent of the degree-seeking, first-time-enrolled student body, took the course. Data on the retention of first-year students to their second fall semester collected by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment from 2007 through 2011 show that [completion of SUPP 101 with a grade of C or better increased retention by 10 percentage points](#). Fifty-four percent of entering undergraduates who did not take SUPP 101/FYI or did not pass the course with a C or better, continued on into their second fall term. By contrast, 64% of entering freshmen who completed SUPP 101/FYI with a C or better, enrolled for their second fall term.

Often, at the beginning of their sophomore year, students are still unsure of their majors. To assist them in making this choice, CMU offers a January term course, SUPP 202 (Sophomore Year Experience), for students to explore career and academic interests. This course assists students in refining their academic effort toward a major and career goal that best fits their interests and abilities through self-discovery, resume-building, and making connections with faculty, alumni, and community members. It also includes a follow-up opportunity to job shadow and participate in service learning.

Evidence Item 3D2-3. The University provides learning support to students throughout their academic careers.

All students have access to the [Tutorial Learning Center](#) (TLC), with free, walk-in tutoring available for a variety of subjects. TLC goals include creating opportunities for student success and helping students become more independent in their learning. Qualified peer tutors, recommended by the faculty, are trained to help students with their academic endeavors. The 2012 ACT Student Opinion Survey (p. 8, item 9) indicates a satisfaction average of 4.10 with [University-sponsored tutorial services](#) by responding graduating students. (Evidence Item 4C3-1 includes information about student usage.)

Students with disabilities are provided support services through [Educational Access Services \(EAS\)](#). EAS recognizes disability as an aspect of diversity and as an integral part of society. This office collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create an accessible higher education community. EAS provides academic accommodations and promotes universal design principles, enabling students with disabilities to fully participate in all aspects of the educational environment as successful and independent learners. [EAS services](#) include, but are not limited to, volunteer note-takers, testing accommodations, and textbooks in alternative formats. Online students with documented disabilities may be eligible for extra time on tests and books in alternative formats. Students with disabilities may also be granted permission to register early, before their regularly assigned registration time. In addition, EAS works with the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to assist in employing people with disabilities. The EAS office also provides training for online instructors in creating online course environments that allow students with disabilities to participate fully. In addition, the Hamilton Recreation Center collaborates with EAS to offer disability services. Support staff and academic accommodations enable all students to fully participate in every aspect of the educational environment as independent and successful learners. (See Evidence Item 4C3-1 for information about student usage.)

Through the federal Student Support Services [TRiO](#) grant, operated by CMU and the U.S. Department of Education, academic and mentoring support is provided throughout a student's academic career at CMU. The University hopes to increase retention and graduation rates of first-generation, low-income, and disabled students enrolled in the TRiO program. The program aids qualified students with tutoring, counseling, academic and financial aid advising, and mentoring. The TRiO program, administered by director and advisor positions under the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, served 135 students in academic year 2012-13.

Sub-component 3.D.3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.

Evidence Item 3D3-1. The Advising Center is staffed with qualified and knowledgeable advisors who work with entering students and students who have not declared a major.

Professional academic advisors support students from the time of their initial contact with the University until they declare a major. This advising includes first-semester freshmen, continuing provisional baccalaureate students, and students with undeclared majors. Academic advisors help students match majors to career aspirations as well as evaluate how a student's

coursework fits CMU degree programs and general education requirements. Advising Center staff also assist students in identifying their interests through career and interest assessments in major exploration, guide students in course selection and registration, aid in the interpretation of the LASSI assessment (as outlined in Evidence Item 3D2-2), and recommend strategies for academic success.

Beginning in fall 2013, the University will implement an Office of Student Success, as part of the Advising Center and staffed by a coordinator and four academic success coaches. This office will be responsible for providing more intensive support for provisionally-admitted baccalaureate students as they transition into higher education. Once a student meets specific criteria, s/he can move to full admission status in a baccalaureate major. For more details on this initiative, see Evidence Item 4B3-2.

Evidence Item 3D3-2. Processes are in place to assist students in selecting a major in a timely fashion.

An Undeclared Major hold (UM hold) is placed on any student's account when an official major has not been declared after the first semester of enrollment, thereby preventing a student from registering for the next semester. Prior to registration, undeclared students must have their UM hold removed by meeting with an academic advisor to discuss course selection or by declaring their major. Students who have selected a major are directed to the academic department associated with that major to [declare their major](#) and obtain a faculty advisor who provides them with a program sheet (see [sample program sheet for Art](#)).

Evidence Item 3D3-3. Recommended course sequencing offers students a plan for completing their majors.

Students are advised to declare a major by their sophomore year. While majors can be changed, declaring a major by the sophomore year helps avoid a delay in graduation. Once a major has been declared, students can consult the recommended course sequencing, attached to each major's program sheet (see [sample for Environmental Science](#)). The sequencing communicates relevant course pre-requisites and co-requisites for their program of study and the order in which they should be completed. Students can also contact the Advising Center or their faculty advisor once a major has been declared to discuss major and/or career possibilities. In addition, the Advising Center publishes a [Four-Year Career Planning Guide](#) that articulates the timing of specific actions to stay on track toward graduation and a career.

Evidence Item 3D3-4. Students who have declared a major are assigned an academic faculty advisor who assists them in the process of degree completion.

To declare or change a major or minor, a student must visit the academic department associated with that program. Once a major is declared, students are assigned a faculty advisor within the [academic department](#) that houses their major. They also obtain the [relevant program sheet](#) and are encouraged to regularly seek the advice of the assigned faculty advisor, whose job it is to assist in the process of degree completion. Students are required to have a faculty advisor's signature on their program sheet and other graduation paperwork that is submitted to the Registrar during the penultimate semester of their last year.

Evidence Item 3D3-5. Faculty are available for student advising and are equipped with the technology for serving students efficiently.

Faculty are required to keep at least five office hours on at least four days a week for their students and advisees. During these office hours, faculty are available to answer student questions and offer advice about program tracking and career paths. In the case of online courses, office hours may be held online. Faculty and advising staff are provided with excellent tools for monitoring and communicating with students. For example, on the faculty web page in MAVzone, faculty have access to tabs on [resources for advising, access and email for their advisees, and transcripts and degree evaluation reports for their advisees](#). Early Alert warnings and LASSI assessments are emailed to faculty so that faculty can contact students who may need advice or counseling early in their academic careers.

Evidence Item 3D3-6. CMU holds a Major Fair, Graduate Fair, and three Career Fairs annually to provide information about the connections between academic disciplines and career opportunities.

The University organizes a [Major Fair](#) each fall. At the Major Fair, students can meet with representatives from academic departments to find out about majors, minors, and certificate programs as well as employment possibilities, graduate school, and research opportunities. The [Graduate Fair](#), also held in the fall, provides an opportunity for students to speak with graduate schools about pursuing advanced degrees.

In addition to academic advising, the University provides career advising through the [Office of Career Services](#). Professional staff work with students to explore career paths and bring employers to campus for interviewing and networking. Group workshops offered throughout the year prepare students to create effective resumes and cover letters and develop techniques for interviewing. When requested, Career Services also holds workshops to help students in specific disciplines build resumes and prepare for interviews. They also offer the [Strong Interest Inventory](#) and the [Choices Planner CT](#) career assessments to guide students, alumni, and community members in exploring career interests.

Staff in the Office of Career Services maintain a Resources Corner which offers students free career information and brochures and informs them of job and internship opportunities. The office also hosts three [Career Fairs](#) annually. The [Spring Career Fair](#)

provides an opportunity for job-seekers to find out about employment and career opportunities both locally and nationally and allows employers a venue to meet and interview prospective candidates. The [Fall Employment Fair](#) is designed to meet students' employment needs during the academic school year. Students can learn about full- and part-time employment, internships, scholarships, and career and volunteer possibilities with various companies. Career Services also hosts a [Teacher Education Fair](#). This fair provides an opportunity for teachers and teacher candidates to learn about employment opportunities with school districts. At the fair, candidates can meet formally with school district representatives, learn about their hiring needs, and interview for open positions. Students from WCCC participate in the two general career fairs, local community college career fairs, as well as in events at the Mesa County Workforce Center and the Grand Junction Veteran Support Center.

Evidence Item 3D3-7: Similar or equivalent services are available to students on CMU's Montrose and WCCC campuses.

The Montrose campus of Colorado Mesa University is a growing and thriving part of the Colorado Mesa system. With over 300 students currently enrolled in certificate, associate, and bachelor degree completion tracks, general education classes and selected upper division classes, Colorado Mesa Montrose is a prime higher education hub for students in Southwestern Colorado. With the growth of CMU Montrose, providing [quality student services](#) has been of great importance. The staff of the Montrose campus ensures that services are made available to students. In the case of the community college students, many WCCC students enroll on the Bishop and main campus, thereby having access to the full range of CMU support services. Additionally, [selected student services](#) also are made available on the WCCC campus.

Evidence Item 3D3-8: The University dedicates staff to serving the special needs of its graduate students and provides opportunities for students to learn about and adapt to graduate school culture. Small class sizes and frequent and personal faculty advising promote student success.

CMU offers four graduate degrees: M.B.A. in Business, M.A. in Education, and M.S.N. and D.N.P. in Nursing. The three programs supporting graduate students – [Business, Nursing and Teacher Education](#) – have developed clear admissions standards. Each department has an administrative assistant and/or coordinator who assists applicants as they move through the application, admission, and registration process. In addition, the administrative assistant works with graduate students on their financial aid applications. Each program with a graduate degree – [Business, Nursing, and Teacher Education](#) – has a handbook that details specific degree requirements.

Each fall or spring semester (depending on the program's start date), orientation programs are held to introduce prospective students to graduate school. The orientation sessions explain graduate school-level performance standards and program requirements. They also create networking opportunities between students and professors in the programs. Student progress is monitored through each program. For example, the Department of Business places holds/permissions on many MBA classes to ensure that students take the correct classes in the correct sequence. Each graduate program includes a capstone experience that is closely supervised by faculty. Faculty who teach graduate coursework meet regularly to evaluate the program in order to assess and address concerns.

While faculty in each of the three graduate programs have developed processes to assist their students upon entry to and throughout their programs, graduate students would benefit from a more centralized administration of application, admission, registration and financial aid processes. In addition, a dedicated staff and a centralized location would enhance graduate students' experiences at CMU. In order to continue development of a sustainable graduate culture, the University needs to focus on building programs, clubs and activities geared to graduate student needs. For example, though business students have established an MBA club to provide opportunities for networking and support, the University could focus resources to develop additional opportunities for a healthy and inviting climate for all its graduate students. Additionally, it should explore ways to support and develop professional development activities for faculty who teach graduate courses. The Graduate Studies Advisory Committee developed a [Proposal for the Ongoing Development of a Graduate Culture at Colorado Mesa University](#) in spring 2013 that fully articulates these issues and proposes a time frame for implementation of processes that could address them.

Sub-component 3.D.4. The institution provides its students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning.

Evidence Item 3D4-1. Exemplary facilities can be found across disciplines and campuses. CMU facilities provide comfortable, convenient surroundings for students.

The nexus for students at CMU is the [University Center](#). It hosts a variety of programs and services in a learning environment that promotes the open exchange of thoughts and ideas, celebrates diversity, and builds community. The staff of the University Center are dedicated to providing quality experiences for students. The building is home to many of the student clubs and organizations on campus, as well as to campus dining, meeting rooms, study lounges, the campus art gallery, a game room, and a ballroom. Students can access Parking Services, Career Services, the bookstore and the MAVcard Office in the University Center. Additionally, several important student organizations are located in the University Center: Associated Student Government, the Center for Student Involvement, KMSA (the student radio station), *The Criterion* (the student newspaper), and the Campus

Design Studio. Wells Fargo has a banking office and an ATM in the Center. The facility also brings together the CMU community and the larger Grand Junction community, as its meeting rooms often host personal as well as business events. Several other new and/or redesigned buildings contain spaces where students can study and socialize between classes: Houston Hall, Wubben Science, and ACB, for example. Results from graduates participating in the 2012 ACT Student Opinion Survey (p. 11, item 25) yielded an average level of satisfaction of 4.27 with [study areas on campus](#).

CMU's commitment to providing exemplary facilities can be illustrated by two sample programs, although similar initiatives are occurring in other departments as well. The Mass Communications program has enjoyed steady growth over the past two years. The University has invested over \$600,000 in facilities, including a new MAC-based computer laboratory (39 stations); a new 15-person seminar room with "smart room" technology; a reconfigured audio lab with enhanced soundproofing; additional office space for new faculty; expanded TV studio space; new multi-view flat screens and software for the TV control room; new computer graphics software for TV production imaging; and a new lab table and chairs. In addition, the program has benefited from several Rocky Mountain PBS station donations, such as updated camera pedestals, enhanced lighting instruments, and grid and added audio equipment.

Another example is the Nursing program, where the newly remodeled [Clinical Education Center Simulation Lab](#) offers an exceptional environment for student learning and performance outcomes, as it provides opportunities to engage in realistic patient scenarios. In Medical-Surgical Nursing (NURS 301/301L), faculty incorporate a day in which three students attend a clinical session in the Simulation Lab. They are given a scenario in conjunction with the theory class to which they have to respond, integrating fundamental procedures and skills with an emphasis on patient safety.

There are many other exemplary facilities on campus:

- The [Monfort Human Performance Lab](#) is an integrative multiuse laboratory that features state-of-the-art equipment and provides advanced physiological and biomechanical performance and wellness testing for students, faculty, staff, and community members. At the time the lab was built, CMU was one of five U.S. universities with such a facility. The lab brings together services for assessing students, faculty and staff performance based on physiological and biomechanical tools with the opportunity for undergraduates to assist with analyses as part of research projects.
- The [Archuleta Engineering Center](#), located in the Foresight Industrial Park, houses classrooms and offices for Construction Management, Mechanical Engineering, and Machining Technology programs. The center features an electrical lab, a computer lab, and 9,200 square feet of high bay learning labs.
- The Wubben-Science Center houses modern laboratories for Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Computer Sciences, Geology, Mathematics, and Environmental Sciences. The Courtyard provides space for outdoor lectures and study; a rooftop greenhouse houses tropical vegetation for Biological Sciences students to study.
- The renovation of Houston Hall included the addition of high-definition technology to many of its classrooms.
- The [Maverick Center](#) houses classrooms and laboratories for Health Sciences and Kinesiology programs, intercollegiate athletic facilities, and campus recreation facilities.
- The Fine Arts Building provides studio laboratories, offices, and classrooms for Studio Art, Graphic Design, and Mass Communication. This facility has a large, covered outdoor work area for ceramics kilns and a bronze foundry.
- WCCC's Machining /Manufacturing lab at the Archuleta Engineering Center is a nationally-designated Haas Technical Education Center, where students learn using state-of-the-art Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Haas machining centers and lathes. This equipment was purchased in 2009 and reflects the CNC machines used in industry. The lab is also a national Feature CAM Training Center.

Evidence Item 3D4-2. Collaborative planning enables the University to provide an infrastructure that supports the needs of campus stakeholders as the campus grows.

Collaboration in planning has been at the heart of the tremendous growth and rejuvenation of CMU's campus since 2005. The University has doubled the campus' square footage since 2005, and over the past five years, campus building and remodeling projects have focused on providing every classroom on campus with current technology that enhances teaching and learning. Equally important, a campus technology standard has been developed to promote consistency in classrooms across campus.

In order to more effectively plan, the Mesa State Moving Forward Survey was distributed online in April 2010. Invitations to complete the survey were sent via email to five stakeholder groups: students, faculty, staff, alumni, and members of the business community. Not surprisingly, the respondents viewed the University's instructional environment as its greatest strength; also not surprising is the fact that the second most common institutionwide strength cited was the newly renovated and expanded campus.

facilities, which support effective instruction and engage students. That CMU is dedicated to building and maintaining the best facilities possible is further evidenced by the fact that the University continues to invest in facilities and technology that expands, expedites, and enhances learning for every student. See Evidence Items 5A1-4 and 5A1-5 for a lengthier discussion on these investments.

The University's success in creating a favorable instructional environment is due, in part, to the University planning process and, in particular, to the ways all stakeholders of the campus community are involved in a new project from the ground up. As an example of collaborative planning, the Houston Hall renovation stands out. Houston Hall is the oldest building on campus, constructed in 1940 for Mesa Junior College. In the beginning of the process of rejuvenating this building, the campus formed an advisory committee consisting of faculty, staff, students, and administrators to explore the options and discuss the needs of the community for this very important classroom building. Once an architect had been hired, continuing discussions with the committee and other faculty, students, and staff shaped the design and guided the selection of furniture, equipment, and technology. This sort of collaborative decision-making creates results that support effective teaching and learning. The [Program Plan for Houston Hall/CMME Building](#) offers more details about the process.

A similar process was undertaken when the University decided that it needed new software to support its online programs. Discussions were held with the [Academic Technology Advisory Committee](#), made up of faculty, students, staff, and administration, along with an expanded group of faculty and students. The Information Technology staff conducted research based on the groups' recommendations and invited several vendors to campus. Subsequent discussions led to a recommendation and the purchase of the Desire 2 Learn platform that replaced the WebCT platform.

Evidence Item 3D4-3. Tomlinson Library supports effective teaching and learning.

Tomlinson Library staff work with academic departments to maintain and update their resources as well as offer library instruction as requested by program faculty. Each academic department is given a budget and may direct some of it to the library's collection. To ensure that research needs are met for both faculty and students, the library staff conduct access seminars for faculty and students on accessing and using library materials from all CMU locations. Student satisfaction with [library facilities and services](#), as measured by the 2012 ACT Student Opinion Survey (p. 8, item 6), indicated an average of 4.32.

Tomlinson Library is a 68,793-square-foot building that was constructed in 1984. As of academic year 2012, the collection had more than 348,000 volumes (an increase of 276 percent since its beginning). In keeping with the digital age, the library has over 120 computers and provides services that include Internet access to more than 50 databases, over 5,000 online journals, and other full-text resources such as newspapers, legal and reference materials, interlibrary loan services, and access to Proquest, a unified catalog of academic, public, and special libraries in Colorado and Wyoming ([Library Data Sheet](#)). In addition to traditional library functions – housing books, periodicals, and reference materials and providing computer and reading areas – Tomlinson Library also provides space for Media Services, distance education classrooms, group study rooms, and a repository for archives and government documents.

The library collection has grown at a rate of 3 - 4 percent annually, but the University's enrollment growth rate for the past three years has averaged 13 percent (12 percent, 15 percent, and 11 percent, respectively). University planners have been aware that, as the campus has grown, the library is in need of expansion. Further, the need to acquire new collections as undergraduate and graduate programs are added, upgrade electronics and plan for adequate digital infrastructure, to accommodate new usage patterns of library patrons, and deal with the problems of an aging building, led to the conclusion that a renovation plan was crucial as the facility reached its capacity. In the tradition of cooperative planning common to CMU's expansion and improvement plans, a preliminary study of the community's needs for library services produced a [Library Expansion Plan](#) that is served as the basis for the library's renovation and expansion, scheduled to begin during academic year 2013-14. Reference Evidence Item 5A1-4 for further discussion of plans for expansion of the library.

Evidence Item 3D4-4. The University provides technology-enhanced teaching and learning environments that enrich the effectiveness of the educational experience for students.

Colorado Mesa University strategically deploys instructional technology to support the institution's mission and goals as a regional education provider. The Information Technology (IT) Department, with a professional support staff of 24 FTE, provides technology for teaching and learning environments that range from state-of-the-art lecture halls and labs to video conference classrooms. With extensive input from faculty, IT staff design, install and support smart classroom technology.

In October 2006, the [Year of the Classroom Committee](#), along with other faculty focus groups, worked with IT staff and audiovisual consultants to develop a new "smart" classroom standard for the University. The standard was first fully implemented with the construction of the Academic Classroom Building that opened in 2008. Like that for traditional "smart" classrooms, the standard for each classroom and computer lab included video projection systems, audio systems, computers, and Blu-ray/DVD players. Additionally, microphone inputs for voice reinforcement and optional assisted listening devices, document cameras for projecting hardcopy materials, auxiliary analog and digital input connection mounted in top of lectern,

touch screen controls, and widescreen format displays were part of each room's installation. In select science, graphic design, and teacher education classrooms and labs, document cameras were upgraded to ceiling-mounted cameras to assist instructors in demonstrating intricate concepts and/or procedures. Major classroom buildings have window coverings and room lighting controls integrated into the room control systems for full faculty control at the lectern.

As digital video presentation systems matured and became more competitively priced, the Academic Technology Advisory Council and IT staff evaluated digital video presentation equipment and classroom practices, leading to the development of a full-digital classroom technology standard during academic year 2010-11. This led to an enhanced "smart" classroom standard that was implemented with the Houston Hall renovation project completed in fall 2011. As part of this renovation, 28 classrooms were designed with high-definition projectors and fully digital, high-performance video matrix switchers for HDMI signals that are compliant with the High-bandwidth Digital Content Protection (HDCP) standards. As part of the Montrose Campus renovation in 2012, those classrooms also were upgraded with the same technologies as Houston Hall. The University currently is in the process of standardizing systems in all classrooms, including those at WCCC, as part of the on-going implementation of the technology replacement plan. See Evidence Item 5A1-5 for additional details.

The [Academic Technology Advisory Council](#) (ATAC) and interested faculty members have reviewed alternative document cameras and annotation devices during this period. The Council also is evaluating the purchase of lecture capture software.

Video conferencing is used by CMU to provide students in multiple remote locations with synchronous learning experience, similar to being in the same room as the faculty. Seven "smart" classrooms—two each at the Montrose and WCCC campuses and three on the main campus—have been outfitted with video conference equipment to provide synchronous multi-site delivery of courses. In 2005, CMU received a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development's Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program. CMU partnered in the grant with other area regional institutions and hospitals, and over the next three years, replaced outdated compressed H.320, MPEG II, and ISDN video conferencing systems with an H.323 IP standards based solution which expanded delivery of Nursing, Teacher Education, and Business coursework across the University's 14-county service region. Each room is equipped with microphones and two cameras for instructor and student participant views. A video conference bridge was installed as part of the grant to provide transcoding and support multi-site videoconferencing.

IT provides other services benefiting students and faculty in classrooms, labs, and meeting areas. A secure wireless network (CMU WLAN) blankets the campuses. As part of a green initiative, the University implemented MAVprint, providing students with wireless printing capability to many of the campus-networked printers. Additionally, curriculum software is centrally managed and deployed to over one thousand computers in twenty open and academic labs.

Beyond upgrading technology in its traditional lecture halls, the University has enhanced its online learning environment. In 2010, the University released a Learning Management System (LMS) RFP to replace an end-of-life system and purchased a new platform to continue building its online programming. Following a lengthy, faculty-driven evaluation process, Desire2Learn's (D2L) Learning Environment was selected to replace the prior system. Information Technology and Extended Studies staff worked extensively with D2L to implement Learning Environment, train faculty and system administrators, and integrate the new online platform with campus systems. The contents of over 580 courses were successfully migrated from the old to new system and selected courses were available by the fall 2011 semester, completing the official transition of its online programs to D2L's Learning Environment in spring 2012.

While technology and infrastructure investments are important, the University realizes that faculty must be kept current in order to make good use of these new opportunities. To that end, CMU offers a variety of faculty and staff professional development training sessions. The University is committed to enhancing faculty and staff's capabilities and keeping them aware of new research that can enrich their work. In addition to regularly scheduled D2L workshops and beginning-of-the-semester equipment demonstrations for faculty, the University has sponsored [workshops](#) by staff on online learning.

Sub-component 3.D.5. The institution provides guidance to students in the effective use of research and information resources.

Evidence Item 3D5-1. The University has clearly defined and easily accessed research policies and procedures.

CMU, in its Student and Academic Policies Guide (p. 3), clearly [articulates its commitment to student research](#) as part of the Student Conduct, Rights and Responsibilities General Statement. It declares that the "University has a unique charge in allowing for free, reasonable, and rational discourse while establishing an environment conducive to contemplative study and research."

The University has also developed clearly defined and easily accessed research policies and procedures which apply to students engaged in research including [Human Subjects](#) and [Misconduct in Research](#). The policy for research on human subjects applies

to all faculty, staff, and students whenever they are supervising or conducting research activities involving human subjects, regardless of whether the subjects are members of the college community. Both funded and unfunded research activities are covered by this policy. No research involving human subjects may be conducted by CMU faculty, staff, or students prior to approval being granted under the appropriate provisions of this policy. This restriction applies equally to all categories of review: exempt, expedited, and standard. No contact of any kind may be made for purposes of research with actual or prospective subjects until after the appropriate informed consent form has been reviewed and approved or a waiver of informed consent has been granted by the CMU Institutional Review Board. (See Evidence Item 2E1-1 for more information about the Institutional Review Board.)

Evidence Item 3D5-2. Courses in research methods are offered throughout the curriculum.

All masters and most bachelors programs on campus offer [a course in research methods](#) at some point in the student's career. In addition, many majors offer students research opportunities over the summer or through internship programs.

Evidence Item 3D5-3. The Library User's Manual contains information about finding resources in the library. Several specific disciplines have research guides and tutorials that can be accessed from the Library's web pages.

General information about research practices and the use of information resources can be found on the library home page in various formats. There is, for example, a [Library User's Manual](#), which contains information about finding resources in the library, checking out and returning materials, interlibrary loan policies and procedures, and searching the library databases from home. A [page on the library's website](#) includes links (labeled "General Sources") to sites that model various citation styles. In addition, the library has set up several discipline-specific [research guides and tutorials](#). Students can visit the Reference Desk for help in person, or they can access a reference librarian 24/7 by email or through the online chat service [AskAcademic](#). There is an "Ask a Librarian" widget on the MyHome page of all Desire2Learn (D2L) course shells. This provides students the ability to engage in a live "chat" with a Tomlinson Library librarian from within their D2L course. First-year students who participate in the FYI program are informed about the library and its research assistance programs in a special session. Finally, faculty are encouraged to include library instruction in their courses by scheduling an instruction librarian to provide a session for their students about finding and using information for research.

Evidence Item 3D5-4. Most CMU associate degree students and all baccalaureate students must take English 112, a course focused on researched writing.

CMU students (with the exception of those pursuing some A.A.S. degrees or a technical and certificate) must pass English Composition (ENGL 112) – or an equivalent course transferred in from another institution with a grade of C or better – in order to graduate from the University with an associate of arts or science or a bachelor's degree. The focus of this course is researched writing, and its goals, as articulated by the English Composition Committee, are to enable students to:

- develop an academic essay grounded in logic, critical thinking, research, and the clear and careful presentation of ideas;
- find, use, and analyze library resources in both electronic and hard-copy formats;
- plan, draft, and revise essays that incorporate the ideas and voices of others, which requires a clear working knowledge of the principles of documentation;
- learn to quote from and cite sources correctly and to avoid plagiarism (both intentional and unintentional); and
- review the grammatical conventions of academic English.

The course is designed to serve all students, no matter what their chosen major, in that any field of study requires its students to think critically and logically, to be able to research and document others' ideas responsibly, and to write persuasively and clearly about significant issues.

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Core Component 3.E

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

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

CMU Response

Introduction

One of the core values articulated in Colorado Mesa University's [Values, Vision and Mission statements](#) is the creation of a vibrant and varied campus setting that encourages involvement and interaction outside the classroom. Following this core value, students at CMU are provided with many opportunities to engage intellectually outside of classes. The University fosters involvement in civic affairs and encourages students to participate in exercise and outdoor activities to promote healthy living. CMU also creates co-curricular opportunities for students to expand their experiences with a variety of cultural, ethnic, and religious groups. The function of the Student Services Division was discussed in Sub-component 3.D.1, and many of the activities and services provided to CMU students were detailed there. In the following, co-curricular programs beyond those functions will be addressed. For this core component, co-curricular programs are defined generally as non-credit-bearing University-sponsored activities; however, Evidence Item 3E2-1 addresses some credit-bearing activities.

Sub-component 3.E.1. The institution's co-curricular programs are suited to its mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.

Evidence Item 3E1-1. The University is committed to providing opportunities for students to engage in various social, community-based learning activities outside the classroom.

The [University's commitment to developing opportunities for students outside the classroom](#) is clearly articulated in Goal #4 of the 2011 Strategic Plan (p. 16). During academic year 2011-12, Student Services staff developed [student learning outcomes](#) related to CMU's mission and planned activities aimed at helping students achieve those outcomes. Each unit within the Student Services Division is using these outcomes to develop its own learning and assessment plans. For example, Residence Life has developed [a learning plan](#) focused on helping students achieve the following student learning outcomes: students living on campus will be able to understand their roles and responsibilities within a community, the practices and skills that support academic success, and the way to develop and sustain healthy relationships. Residence Life staff coordinate activities to encourage students to develop these skills, an assessment plan has been developed, and the staff are [collecting data](#) to begin assessment of their efforts. Student services units have developed learning goals as part of their assessment plans, and like assessment efforts in instructional units, student service units are in varying stages of plan development and implementation.

Evidence Item 3E1-2. CMU enhances classroom learning with practicums, internships, field experiences, and clinical assignments.

CMU students are provided with many opportunities to enhance their learning outside the classroom, some for credit, others not. These activities broaden knowledge, increase skill levels, encourage creativity, and foster civic engagement. CMU student responses to the [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (p. 1, col. 2) indicate that upon graduation, 45 percent of responders have participated in some form of practicum, internship, field experience, co-op, or clinical assignment, and 57 percent have participated in some form of community service or volunteer work. Students participate not only in these more formal types of co-curricular activities but also in more informal activities. For example, 42 percent of first-year students work with peers on assignments outside of class, and 67 percent discuss readings or ideas from course work outside of class. The [2011-12 Programs of Study](#), excerpted here, also details many of the out-of-classroom opportunities available to CMU students.

Evidence Item 3E1-3. Student Life provides opportunities for traditional-aged students to participate in extra-curricular activities.

To meet the goal of involving first-time students in at least one extracurricular activity, staff in Student Life have expanded engagement opportunities for students and increased advertising in order to connect students of varying interests with different opportunities. For example, at the start of academic year 2012-13, Student Life staff targeted its marketing effort at all first-year students living in housing. This increased attendance at Welcome Week events from 13 percent in fall 2007 to 58 percent during fall 2012. Staff in Student Life, along with those in Housing and Residence Life, also provide a wide range of programs that engage students in campus community events as illustrated in the table below.

ACTIVITIES SPONSORED BY CMU OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE

Music Events	Programs/Performances	Cultural Events	Family Programs	Service Learning Projects	Commuter Programs
DJ Ryan Griz - Concert	Suicide Prevention Speaker (TWLOHA)	La Posada - La Raza	Harvest Fest - PBL	Parade of Lights - Hoolokahi	Welcome Bash
Darling Thieves - Homecoming Concert	Andrea Gibson - Slam Poet	Riverside Education Pool Night - La Raza	Adopt-a-Family	Riverside Education Center - La Raza	Pool Party - Welcome Week
FCA Charlie Hall Concert	Sabrina Jalees - Comedian	Dia De Los Muertos - La Raza	Tune In Game Show - Welcome Week		Activities Fair
DJ Jose Yanez (La Raza Sponsored)	James Zingleman - Hypnotist	Su Teatro field trip - La Raza	Welcome Bash		Stampede Weekend
Foamalicious DJ - Homecoming	Paul Cochrell - Magician	CDB Dining Hall Nights - 1/month	Movie Night		Homecoming Tailgate
Jay Ketchum - Bonfire	La Raza speaks to High Risk students at Central HS	Gay & Lesbian History panel discussion - GSA	Bonfire		Bonfire
Guns for Roses - Tailgate		"Coming Out for a Cause" Day - GSA	Homecoming Tailgate		Cosmic Bowling
Collie & the Gang - CC Grand Opening		Hula Lesson/Practice - Hoolokahi	Coffee with the CMU President		Foam Party
Meant for Movement Rappers - CC Grand Opening		International Diner - ISA	Canyon View Vineyard High Ropes Course - La Raza		
Everybody Else - CC Grand Opening Concert		Sweat Lodge Retreat - NASC	Cultural Diversity Board's Family Fun Night		
KMSA DJ Block+ this fall semester					
Stay Positive Charity Concert featuring Ralph Dinosaur and ShowCage					

Beyond the social programming on campus, Student Life has also connected with students through a variety of campus clubs and organizations. The Cultural Diversity Board, Club Advisory Board, and Associated Student Government have been able to fill all of their leadership positions because of this connection with the Student Life leadership.

Evidence Item 3E1-4. Student Life engages returning students and adult learners.

To engage returning students and adult learners, Student Life has implemented a text message alert system for students. This provides an opportunity for students to receive texts when events are happening on campus and to stay connected to CMU while they are off campus. Student Life has also reached out to students with in-class announcements and with handouts between classes and strategically placed posters in order to disseminate information about activities. Student Life encourages students to bring their families to campus through activities such as Movie Nights, Halloween Hallway, Family Day, and Culture Day. In 2012, Student Life partnered with the E-Club to host a vendor and involvement fair to educate off-campus students about clubs that are available on the CMU campus.

Evidence Item 3E1-5. Student Life sponsors events that foster community participation.

Through the course of the academic year, opportunities are provided for the community to participate in on-campus events. Some events that have been open to the community are Luau Culture Event, the 2012 3Oh!3 concert, Toys for Tots and winter clothes collection by multiple clubs, gift wrapping with Partners, city park clean-up, Unity Fest, Culture Day at the library, and the Rainbow Prom. Also, in cooperation with Student Life, the Outdoor Program invites community members and alumni to rent outdoor equipment and go on a limited number of trips.

Evidence Item 3E1-6. The Honors Program is designed to involve exceptional students inside and outside of the classroom.

The goal of the [Honors Program](#) at CMU is to offer promising and highly motivated students opportunities for enhanced intellectual stimulation and increased personal scholarship as they fulfill requirements for their degrees. The Honors Program is affiliated with the National Collegiate Honors Council, and it offers opportunities for students to contribute to their own learning at a level beyond what is normally required by most college courses. Beyond challenging students intellectually, this program also involves students in extracurricular activities. The Honors Program hosts a series of lectures/discussions each semester, and students are required to attend at least one. In addition, the program organizes one or two discussions/debates where students choose the topics. Honors students also have the opportunity to present scholarship at national and regional conferences each year. The program regularly purchases access to honors lecture series where students can watch podcasts by respected scholars on various subjects. The program features an Honors House where students can engage in social activities as well, such as communal meals and game/movie nights. Due to the drop in [the number of students enrolled in the Honors Program](#) (p. 3) in

recent years, the University is currently reviewing the program. A faculty working group was formed in spring 2013 to evaluate other honors program models that might be more suited to CMU, with a proposal due in fall 2013.

Evidence Item 3E1-7. Students can join or be nominated for membership in several international and national honors programs.

In addition to the CMU Honors Program, there are several international and national honors programs that students can join if they meet the requirements. The function of these societies is to promote and maintain excellence in scholarship in the discipline. These clubs encourage their members to attend and participate in conferences related to their disciplines, to sponsor readings and to participate in fundraising and social activities. Two important examples are the Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities and Alpha Chi. Between 2005 and 2012, 356 CMU students have been inducted into Who's Who. Who's Who recognizes students who not only excel in the classroom but also give back to their campus community and/or their home community through community service, including volunteering for the March of Dimes, coaching a wide variety of sports, tutoring grade-school children, and serving in a soup kitchen and Habitat for Humanity, to name a few.

Students are nominated for membership in Alpha Chi by faculty and academic department heads. They must exhibit the character and academic credentials of true scholars. [Honors societies associated with specific disciplines](#) can be found in CMU's Catalog (p. 43, col. 3).

Evidence Item 3E1-8. Clubs devoted to promoting knowledge within certain disciplines are open to students.

There are [several clubs on campus](#) devoted to promoting knowledge of and within their disciplines. Members of these clubs create opportunities for community interaction, sponsor speakers, reach out to local experts, and foster discipline-related discussion. A [complete list](#) is available at the Student Life home page.

Evidence Item 3E1-9. CMU encourages students to make contributions to the community.

The University encourages students to make a commitment to participate in and engage with the community. A notable external recognition of CMU's commitment to student engagement is that [the University was named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll](#) (2013 Regional Economic Impact Study, p. 9), the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service learning, and civic engagement. Six years ago, the federal government launched the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll to recognize institutions of higher education that support exemplary student community service and service-learning programs, and CMU is one of only three institutions in the state of Colorado to be named to the Honor Roll for all six years.

In 2013, CMU reported in its Regional Economic Impact Study (p. 9) that [3,028 students engaged in 355,188 hours of community service](#), including service learning during academic year 2010-11. Using the dollar estimate of volunteer time of the Independent Sector, the value of the volunteer activities in academic year 2011-12 was estimated to be \$7.8 million. For academic year 2008-09, then-Mesa State reported in its impact study that [2,674 students engaged in community service, providing 314,326 hours of service](#), and had a special focus on "youth from disadvantaged circumstances" for the 2010 recognition.

Other evidence that CMU students are active and engaged comes from the Marketing Department. Since 2006, the local newspapers – *The Free Press* and *The Daily Sentinel* – have featured [416 articles](#) about students who have made an impact on the community in various ways, either through application of their classroom learning or by sharing their time and talent with others. [Many student clubs](#) also promote involvement in civic and community issues, both on and off campus.

Evidence Item 3E1-10. Co-curricular athletics, outdoor life, and community engagement are integral parts of campus life.

Sports are an integral part of the University experience, and athletics plays a key role in the development of CMU students. The University has a strong winning tradition as a member of the NCAA Division II and Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference. The Mavericks have over 68 conference and regional titles. Currently, the University competes in [23 men's and women's intercollegiate varsity sports](#) and offers over 700 student-athletes the opportunity to earn a degree while competing at a top Division II institution. In addition, athletes have the opportunity to compete at the collegiate level in emerging sports such as skiing, rodeo, and cycling. CMU boasts some of the finest facilities in the conference, with its recently renovated athletics offices, field house, practice fields, and El Pomar Natatorium. Students can also participate in [intramural and club sports](#), as well as in wellness classes.

[The Outdoor Program](#) provides opportunities of a unique nature. All members of the campus community can take advantage of its services and offerings, which range from Thursday afternoon adventures – skiing, kayaking, climbing, and hiking – to international adventures between the semesters to help students better understand the world in which they live, and to develop connections and insights about other cultures and environments around the world. These trips are not designed as vacations but rather as adventures in personal transformation through intense introductions to developing nations and authentic travel moments. The typical experience includes a mixture of service work, outdoor adventure, and cultural learning and is conducted in backpacker style, adhering to the tenants of sustainable and ethical travel.

In addition to offering opportunities for students to participate in activities that involve their physical well-being, the University is also interested in the social development of its students. The University Center's game and fireplace rooms create venues for student interaction. New buildings have been designed with spaces for socializing and group study. In addition, the [Programming Activities Council \(PAC\)](#), a student-run organization, provides high-quality entertainment to enrich the lives of students outside the classroom. PAC organizes Welcome Week, Stampede Weekend, and Homecoming events, for example, and sponsors various entertainment events. Finally, [several social clubs on campus](#) provide students with the opportunity to develop personal relationships outside the classroom.

Evidence Item 3E1-11. Co-curricular diversity activities and organizations are committed to educating the campus community about ethnic, religious, and cultural differences.

CMU is committed to inspiring students to respect and understand ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity. The [Cultural Diversity Board](#), a student organization made up of six cultural clubs – The Black Student Alliance, the Native American Student Council, La Raza, Gay/Straight Alliance, Ho'olokahi Polynesian Club and the International Student Association – strives to promote and support the ethnic and cultural groups on campus. It provides educational resources and support services and serves as the educational liaison to the CMU campuses and the regional community regarding culturally diverse issues and activities. In addition, CMU sponsors [clubs dedicated to promoting religious understanding and tolerance](#).

Sub-component 3.E.2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

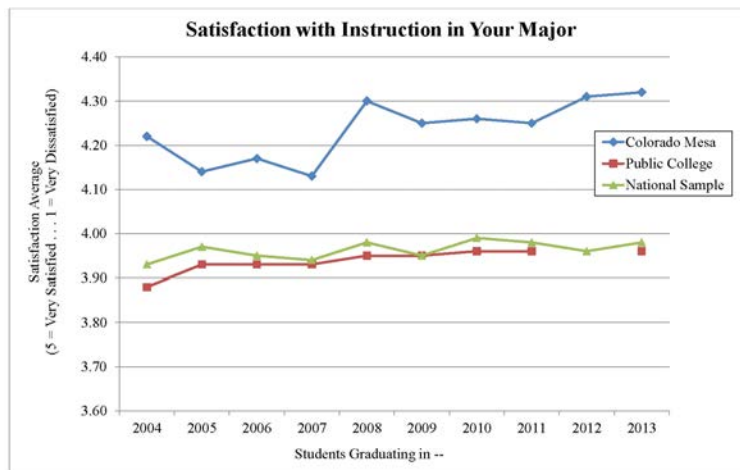
Evidence Item 3E2-1 Student success, student engagement, and student satisfaction demonstrate that CMU delivers on its promises to its students.

The University's claims about what it offers its students in terms of educational experience are not found in its statutory mission statement, but rather in its Vision and Values statements. CMU indicates that it will offer an adaptable, flexible approach to learning that allows students to choose from multiple and potentially integrated pathways to achieve degrees; a highly qualified faculty that excel in teaching; and a curriculum that will prepare them for the 21st century in the areas of personal and social responsibility, civic engagement, ethics, and intercultural/global learning. The institution values and offers a student-centered environment, small class sizes, and a learning environment that develops and promotes the skills of inquiry, reflection, critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation, teamwork, and communication, as well as opportunities that engage students in applied learning. Much of what has been addressed in Criterion 3 speaks to how CMU delivers on these promises. More generally, however, three indicators support the assertion that CMU's students thrive as a result of their educational experience: student success, student engagement, and student satisfaction.

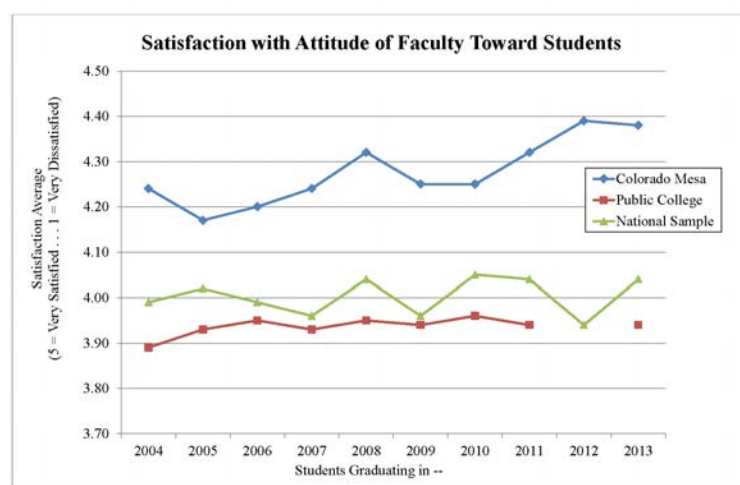
Student success in academic venues, such as at conferences and in competitions, indicates that the work students engage in during their course of study equips them with the information and skills they need to make their way in the contemporary marketplace. Student scores on exit exams and licensure exams show that CMU's students are reaching benchmarks equal to or above those reached by students at institutions across the country. Data collected about student employment and continued education of graduates provide evidence that employers and graduate schools find that the University's graduates are equipped with relevant and appropriate skills and knowledge.

CMU can document in numerous ways, and has outlined above, how its students are engaged. For example, [internship opportunities are accessed by more than 600 students annually, while nearly 600 more undergraduates collaborate with faculty on research projects](#). The Student Showcase engages students in presenting their research to the campus and the community. CMU's recognition through the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll documents that CMU and its students are committed and engaged in civic and socially responsible behaviors. CMU engages more than 700 student-athletes annually in competitive sports and offers students opportunities to participate in dozens of intramural and club sports. In addition, campus life activities and more than 80 campus clubs and organizations engage students in extracurricular activities. CMU's Outdoor Program provides unique opportunities for student interaction with peers in several activities, as well as the opportunity for international travel. The Cultural Diversity Board engages students in activities foregrounding multicultural, intercultural, and global learning.

Finally, student satisfaction with their experiences at CMU demonstrates that the institution has made good on the promises it makes to students through its Values and Vision statements. Multi-year results of the annual ACT Student Opinion Survey, wherein graduating seniors evaluate their experiences at CMU, show that the averages for satisfaction with the University's instruction significantly exceed the comparative data for other public colleges as well as a national sample of comparative data for other comparable institutions.



Satisfaction scale: 5-point, with 5 = very satisfied, 4 = satisfied, 3 = neutral, 2 = dissatisfied, 1 = very dissatisfied
Source: Section III, ACT Student Opinion Survey, 2004 - 2012.
Note: In 2012, ACT did not report comparative data for the category 'public colleges.'



Satisfaction scale: 5-point, with 5 = very satisfied, 4 = satisfied, 3 = neutral, 2 = dissatisfied, 1 = very dissatisfied
Source: Section III, ACT Student Opinion Survey, 2004 - 2012.
Note: In 2012, ACT did not report comparative data for the category 'public colleges.'

The results from the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (p. 22) indicate that CMU's averages for items comprising the instructional effectiveness scale equal or exceed the national four-year public averages in every category. CMU also administers the National Survey of Student Engagement. According to that survey (p. 2), 85 percent of first-year students report a favorable image of this institution, and 85 percent of seniors would choose this school again if they could start their college career over.

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Criterion 3: Conclusion, Strengths, and Recommendations

CMU Response

Conclusion

CMU's degree programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate. The institution articulates appropriate learning goals for its certificate, associate, baccalaureate, and graduate programs. The University has processes in place to monitor the quality of its programs and the consistency of its learning goals across all modes of delivery and all locations. CMU's general education program is appropriate to its mission, purpose, and content. Processes have been restructured to develop student learning outcomes for general education. CMU's degree programs engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information, as well as in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work, and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments. The institution's programs recognize human and cultural diversity.

The faculty and students of CMU contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge as is appropriate to their disciplines and the institution's mission, and faculty members are available for student inquiry. Faculty and staff are qualified to carry out their duties, and CMU has policies and procedures for evaluation of faculty and staff as well as opportunities for their professional development. CMU provides academic and student support services suited to the needs of its population, including academic advising, learning support, and preparatory instruction. It also has processes for directing first-time undergraduates to courses and programs for which they are adequately prepared. The University's infrastructure and resources adequately support teaching and learning, and students are provided with guidance in the effective use of research and information resources. Finally, CMU's co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to its students' educational experience. Taken as a whole, CMU fulfills the promises it makes to students with regard to its mission, vision, and values.

Strengths

- CMU's programs are rigorous and current.
- CMU's faculty and student body participate vigorously in scholarship activity.
- CMU faculty participation in service and committee work ensures that faculty expertise and input are integral to the decisions and policies of the institution.
- CMU maintains a safe and secure campus, which creates a welcoming and enjoyable environment for students.
- CMU has many programs and processes in place to optimize student success in terms of placement and preparedness for academic life.
- CMU provides excellent advising services for students.
- CMU has created a positive learning environment for its students by hiring and retaining highly qualified faculty, building and maintaining exemplary facilities, and developing and sustaining technology that supports effective teaching and learning.

Recommendations

- CMU and WCCC full-time faculty members not holding a degree at least one level higher than the courses they teach should have a professional development plan that leads to degree completion.
- CMU should better ensure the comparability, rigor, and consistency of courses taught in multiple modalities and at multiple locations, particularly those offered through the High School Scholars program. A "White Paper" was developed which contains recommendations for achieving consistency of courses. These recommendations were formally adopted by the Academic Council in spring 2012. Processes for ensuring implementation should be put in place. Methods should also be implemented to better combine the efforts of personnel at the WCCC campus with the academic department heads who have the responsibility for the courses being taught in the high schools.
- The University should develop an operational plan for the continued development of a more vigorous and inviting culture for its graduate students. CMU should coordinate application, admission, registration and financial aid processes for its graduate students in a centralized location with a dedicated staff. In addition, CMU should work to promote increased support for both faculty and students in graduate programs.

Criterion 4: Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

CMU Response

Introduction

Colorado Mesa University is dedicated to producing high-quality graduates ready for employment and further education in their respective fields. In addition to transcribing courses and assuring that student instruction is consistent no matter the method of delivery, the University utilizes processes to assure quality education: academic program review, the assessment of student learning, and annual ad hoc analyses of student success and satisfaction. From 2006 to 2011, the University required a periodic review of all programs and used the same type of assessment for both general education and program courses based on the ten general education goals.

In academic year 2011-12, the program review process was evaluated, leading to an expansion of the factors to be considered as part of the self-study. Additionally, the process evaluation led to the conclusion that the assessment of student learning outcomes, its accompanying reporting, and analysis of findings for program improvement should be integrated into program review. During that same time frame, institution-level student learning outcomes were developed, using the Lumina Foundation's Degree Qualifications Profile as a starting point. The institution-level outcomes, in turn, served as the framework for articulating program-level outcomes during academic year 2012-13. Assessment of general education courses has been suspended while a working group is reviewing the goals of general education and its methods of assessment, a process that began in January 2013. CMU is committed to demonstrating that its delivery of high-quality education is, in part, due to the collection and evaluation of information accompanied by substantial documentation. The process is geared to become increasingly systematic and more easily linked to the new mission statement of the institution.

Experiencing a modest downturn in student enrollments in 2005 and 2006, CMU took steps to increase not only recruiting but also retention and completion rates. Among the efforts was the work in academic year 2010-11 by the Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success (WGISAS) which concluded that changes were needed to address student success rates in both the academic and student services divisions of the institution. As a result of a variety of initiatives, enrollment at CMU has increased greatly, and the institution has seen incremental success in improving retention and completion rates.

Core Component 4.A

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its programs.

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

CMU Response

Introduction

Colorado Mesa University has maintained a high-quality delivery of education, in part, by reviewing academic programs on a scheduled basis and by conducting a comprehensive review of all programs in the past 10 years. CMU sets high standards for courses that the institution transcripts as well as credits transferred in from other institutions. Regardless of delivery method, the University takes responsibility for all credited courses. There are ten academic programs with specialized accreditation and/or external approvals, so CMU evaluates the success of its graduates, not only through graduate and employer surveys, but also through other state and national evaluative criteria.

Sub-component 4.A.1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.

Evidence Item 4A1-1. CMU uses regular program review as a basis for continuous improvement and planning.

CMU is committed to the quality of its programs. Prior to the dissolution of the Trustees of the State Colleges in Colorado, the University submitted reports on all its programs on a five-year basis, as documented in the 2003 Self-Study for the Higher Learning Commission. In 2006, the institution implemented its own program review process of all degree and certificate programs. This current process begins with faculty in the academic program writing a self-study and submitting it to the Office of Academic Affairs. An external consultant then reviews the document and performs a site visit. After the visit, the reviewer submits a report (examples: [Biological Sciences](#), [History](#), [Construction Technology](#)) to Academic Affairs, and the program faculty may respond to the review if desired. During the initial six-year cycle, the program review guidelines required that the document be sent to the Undergraduate Curriculum for examination and feedback to the program and the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs (AVPAA). Guidelines for the revised process now also require [a review by the Assessment Committee](#) that is sent to the program faculty and the AVPAA. Finally, the document is sent to the President for review and approval, and the appropriate academic department head presents the review to the trustees as an information item.

The internal institutional program review functions on a [six-year rotation basis](#). A program assessment plan is submitted in the fall semester of the first year to indicate the learning outcomes and criteria that will be evaluated over the next six years. Under the new review guidelines implemented in fall 2012, [evidence is gathered by the program over the six-year period](#), and a program assessment progress report will be submitted to the Assessment Committee after the first three years, documenting what has been done in terms of student learning outcomes during the three-year period. The final report documents the assessment work over the review period, identifying strengths and weaknesses in the program as well as targeted areas for improvement. Beginning with reviews during academic year 2012-13 that used the revised process, the final report will include an assessment report with curriculum mapping that aligns courses and [expected student learning outcomes for the program](#). Additionally, the program curriculum, analysis of student demand and success, program resources, and future program plans will be addressed in greater detail. As of May 2013, five program reviews used the new review guidelines (examples: [Physical Sciences](#); [Kinesiology](#)).

At CMU, student learning assessment has taken place at the general education level and the academic program level. Currently, assessment of general education coursework has been suspended while revisions are being made to the assessment process. Concluding that the process in place for assessment of learning outcomes was not demonstrating the "feedback loop," the Vice President for Academic Affairs suspended program review and general education/program assessment in 2011 to provide an opportunity to revise previously adopted guidelines and processes in use at that time. Program faculty began collaborating to develop new assessment plans using the Lumina Foundation's [Degree Qualification Profile](#) as the basis of assessing student learning outcomes. The [Working Group on Program Review and Approval](#) developed a revision of the guidelines and processes starting in academic year 2011-12. A key component to the revised review is increased coordination of the assessment of student learning outcomes and the program review process. The addition of a [checklist for external reviewers](#) provides a clearer explanation of the areas of strength and concern for the program. A more complete explanation of changes to the assessment process is provided in the response to Sub-component 4.B.2.

Colorado Mesa uses [standardized tests, surveys, and other methods of data collection](#) to gather information about student, alumni, and employer satisfaction as well as demonstrated academic achievements of students and graduates. By utilizing multiple assessment mechanisms, evaluation processes, and data sources, faculty members have a comprehensive and systematic method for evaluating their programs. The institution continues to explore additional methods of collecting evaluative data, affording opportunities for curricular revision and improving student learning and satisfaction.

Evidence Item 4A1-2. An institution-wide, comprehensive academic program review was conducted in 2009.

In 2008 the Board of Trustees requested a review of "program quality, priorities and productivity in the context of the College's role and mission." The Academic Program Quality, Priorities, and Productivity (APQPP) Working Group, composed of faculty and academic administrators, reviewed all programs on campus to answer the following two questions: How does each academic and technical program fit within the institution's four- and two-year role and mission, and to what programs should the institution's resources continue to be allocated? Over the course of academic year 2008-09, data were collected and analyzed, and the results were disseminated to the departments. [Recommendations for each program and related follow-up actions](#) were made in one of five categories: program of distinction, program of promise, program of achievement, program for further study, and program to be phased out. The [committee findings](#) were based on each program's centrality to the role and mission of the institution, student demand, program characteristics, financial information, and faculty. The majority of programs matched the criteria for continuing, but the working group recommended that 12 programs be totally or partially phased out. Three programs received the highest category of program of distinction: the B.S.N., Nursing; B.S., Biological Sciences; and the Technical Certificate in the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST).

Sub-component 4.A.2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning.

Evidence Item 4A2-1. All credits transcribed by Colorado Mesa University have been reviewed by curriculum committees, and transfer credits are evaluated by the Registrar's Office.

All upper- and lower-division coursework is approved through the Faculty Senate's Curriculum Committee structure and process. Nearly all academic courses offered for general education credit have been approved through the [gtPathways](#) process of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. In addition to the state's [31 credit hour general education core](#) identified in the Catalog (p. 49, col. 2), CMU students must also take Kinesiology and Applied Studies courses to fulfill the [University's lower-division requirements](#) (Catalog, p. 51, cols. 1, 2). These courses are not a part of the gtPathways approval process.

Prior to acceptance to the University, transfer students are assisted by staff in the Admissions Office's Center for Transfer Services to assist with their transition to CMU. These staff members complete a preliminary transfer evaluation of which credits are eligible for transfer and outline potential course sequencing. After a student has been admitted to CMU, the Registrar's Office evaluates transcripts and prepares a [Transfer Equivalency Report](#) to determine the courses that are transferred to CMU. Additionally, the Transfer Manager in the Registrar's Office evaluates all transcripts submitted from other colleges and universities to determine whether transfer courses are equivalent to courses taught at CMU. This determination is based on a review of course descriptions from transfer institutions, but as needed, academic program faculty will evaluate a course if the Manager is uncertain of its acceptability. When the final equivalent course decision is made, the course is entered on the student's permanent transcript.

Evidence Item 4A2-2. The organization evaluates nontraditional credits that it transcripts.

The practice of awarding credit for college-level prior learning is based upon the belief that the most meaningful education to a student builds on, interprets, and incorporates past and present knowledge. CMU and WCCC recognize that students may have gained college-level knowledge and competencies through their work and life experiences that can be incorporated into their academic programs.

Nontraditional credit that can be granted for prior learning includes the following:

- [Advanced Placement](#) (AP) credit: Awarded to students who have successfully completed AP courses and tests while in high school;
- [International Baccalaureate](#) (IB) credit: Awarded to students who have successfully completed IB courses and tests while in high school;
- [CLEP testing](#): Students are allowed to use prior knowledge to take tests and receive course credit;
- [Military Credit](#): Based on the type of experience in military service, students may receive up to 20 hours of course credit; and
- [Prior Learning Portfolio](#): Students who wish an assessment of prior learning for credit through portfolio assessment must prepare a well-documented portfolio, detailing learning objectives for which they are requesting credit through work and/or life experience.

The faculty and head of each department, with the approval of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, determine if and under what conditions nontraditional credit is allowed. For example, the WCCC two-year Criminal Justice Program accepts credits from applicants who have completed equivalent courses from Delta-Montrose Technical College. Similarly, hours from the [Colorado State Patrol Academy](#) can transfer into CMU's Public Administration/Public Safety program, a contractual relationship approved by the Higher Learning Commission in 2011. Because of the newness of the arrangement, it is premature to evaluate the success of the program based on its five enrollees.

The Faculty Senate approved, in February 2011, the Academic Policies Committee report and recommendation regarding nontraditional credit hours:

Grades of “P” are passing grades and are not included in the GPA. “P” grades at the undergraduate level are used only for zero-credit-hour courses or nontraditional credits such as CLEP, AP, military credits, etc., and may be applicable toward graduation. At the graduate level, “P” grades may be allowed for research, practicum, and thesis courses at the discretion of the program. “P” grades may also be used for graduate level in-service courses which are not applicable toward degree completion at Mesa State College [CMU].

Sub-component 4.A.3. The institution has policies in place that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.

Evidence Item 4A3-1. CMU has clear policies for accepting transfer credits from other institutions of higher learning, including international credits. Department heads have final approval of use of transfer credits to complete course requirements.

It is the policy of CMU to accept academic credits from the following:

- All public colleges and universities in the state of Colorado provided they are currently regionally accredited. This applies regardless of the institution’s accreditation status at the time the credit was earned.
- Private and out-of-state colleges and universities provided the institution is currently regionally accredited and was accredited or was a candidate for accreditation at the time the credit was earned.
- Regionally accredited two-year community or junior colleges.
- Regionally accredited institutions that award “S” or “P” grades if the granting institution states that such a grade is equal to a grade of “C” or better.
- Courses that are part of the CCHE statewide gtPathways.
- Credits from [international institutions](#). If college credits are from an institution outside of the U.S., the transcript(s) must be translated (if not already in English) and evaluated by a third party before CMU will process the application and accept transfer credits. CMU recognizes and uses [Educational Credential Evaluators](#), [World Educational Services](#), or any service listed on the [National Association of Credential Evaluation Services website](#) for translation and evaluation services.

The policy and process for transfer of credit is clearly described on the Registrar's web page. Restrictions apply to preparatory courses, religious classes, the number of physical activity courses that can be taken, technical trade courses, and courses taken more than 15 years prior to admittance. The academic department head has the final approval of how courses meet the requirements of a specific major.

Sub-component 4.A.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 of its programs, including dual-credit programs. It assures that its dual-credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.

Evidence Item 4A4-1. Prerequisite courses are evaluated by curriculum committees and enforced by the Registrar's Office.

Prerequisite requirements are applied to specific courses as determined by the faculty members offering those courses. Prerequisites must be approved by the applicable campus curriculum committee, and committee minutes are approved by the Faculty Senate. Enforcement of prerequisites is the responsibility of the Registrar through the student online registration system that blocks an enrollment if a prerequisite has not been met. A registration override of a prerequisite can occur only with the approval of the student's academic advisor or permission from the course instructor and/or academic department head.

Evidence Item 4A4-2. The institution is responsible for the rigor of the courses taught in each academic program regardless of the method of delivery.

Faculty members and academic department heads are responsible for the rigor of each academic course, regardless of how or where the course is taught. All courses and programs are reviewed by the respective curriculum committees. Consistency is maintained through the use of course objectives and outlines and through assessment of student learning outcomes. Academic programs and department faculty are also responsible for aligning the rigor of online/distance delivery courses with those same courses taught on-site. Additionally, the respective departments and programs determine and evaluate the rigor of courses with ongoing assessment practices and, in some cases, by review through outside accreditation agencies. CMU department heads developed a [Course Comparability White Paper](#) in spring 2012 which was a philosophical outline of the requirements for academic rigor across all campuses and methods of delivery of education. During academic year 2012-13, the department heads built on the white paper by detailing implementation policies, processes, roles, and responsibilities for courses delivered site-based but off campus, through the High School Scholars Program, and via distance formats. This material has been compiled into a [Course Comparability Manual Draft](#) which is being refined and implemented, beginning in fall 2013, to ensure equitable delivery of all CMU courses.

While the three curriculum committees are not responsible for the content of the courses in terms of subject matter coverage, each program, whether new or existing, must [submit proposals for curriculum changes](#) as specified in the Combined Curriculum Committee Policies and Procedures Manual (p. 6). The curriculum committee review of proposed changes assures that the course meets the level (e.g., 100, 200, 300, etc.) at which it is offered, and that the original proposal containing course objectives and outlines demonstrates academic rigor consistent with the level of offering. The committee also reviews the sequencing of the courses in program proposals to assure progression of learning from lower-level to higher-level courses. The process also informs related disciplines of changes that might have an effect on their curriculum.

Evidence Item 4A4-3. Expectations for student learning are determined by evaluation of learning outcomes at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Assessment is the ongoing process in which student learning outcomes are defined, student success in achieving those outcomes is measured, and the results are used to improve curriculum. In order to strengthen the instructional side of the University during a period of significant enrollment growth beginning in fall 2009 through fall 2011, the administration chose to limit the number of staff support hires, one of which was in the area of student assessment. The [assessment process](#), as originally conceived in 2002, was determined by the members of the Faculty Senate Assessment Committee and a Faculty Assessment Coordinator. It should be noted that while many faculty members did engage in varying forms of course assessment on an on-going basis, often there was no consistent or formal documentation or involvement of all program faculty. Clearly, formal program assessment was not functioning as intended, despite the on-going collection of data through methods developed in 2005.

Since 2011, a new approach and commitment to assessment has developed, with the hiring of a Director of the Assessment of Student Learning. A systematic evaluation of learning outcomes is now emphasized in both undergraduate and graduate education. A key consideration to this evaluation is that the data faculty collect must be relevant to determining the level of learning as the student progresses through course sequences and that the faculty must use the results of the collected data to make changes to courses and programs (see Evidence Item 4B1-1 for history of assessment). Additionally, assessment needs to be conducted across all methods of delivery in all programs.

Evidence Item 4A4-4. Access to learning resources are available to all students, faculty and staff on every campus, in online delivery, and to students and faculty in high school courses.

Tomlinson Library houses extensive resources and learning materials for all constituents and offers services such as a reference desk, instruction on the use of the library and online databases, and interlibrary loans. There are also online databases as well as e-reference resources for online/distance education and dual-credit high school students. Most academic buildings and the library have computer labs for student access to the Internet and many software programs.

CMU also provides a comprehensive Tutorial Learning Center on the main campus, tutoring on the WCCC campus, and tutoring on the Montrose Campus. Online/distance tutoring is available via Skype or by phone. To assure that high school students enrolled in concurrent-credit courses have the same access to resources as University students, they must be admitted to the University and be enrolled in a participating high school to be eligible to register for a course offered by CMU. High school students can also take advantage of the Tutorial Learning Center on campus or the online/distance tutoring for help in areas such as writing, reading, and mathematics.

The Office of Educational Access Services has an array of learning resources available for students with disabilities.

Evidence Item 4A4-5. Qualifications for all faculty are listed in the Employment Handbook. Faculty qualifications for CMU are defined for high school faculty teaching concurrent enrollment courses (dual-credit) who must meet specified degree requirements determined by the University. The University provides workshops and other resources to assist high school faculty in meeting requirements.

Faculty qualifications for specific faculty ranks are outlined in the Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. III-2, line 74) and in most cases require terminal degrees. The degree required for tenured and tenure-track positions may differ from the credentials required for an instructor or lecturer position.

Appropriate degree requirements for technical instructors in various ranks at WCCC may differ from those of the academic faculty and may include a combination of degree attainment, years of work experience in the field, or national certifications in the profession as specified in the Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. III-3, line 123). Thus, WCCC faculty credentials may range from certification with years of experience to associate or baccalaureate degrees, or a combination thereof. The Vice President for Community College Affairs is working with each faculty member who has less than a baccalaureate degree to develop a three-year plan toward higher degree attainment.

All high school faculty teaching concurrent enrollment courses must meet the requirements of CMU as outlined in the Concurrent Enrollment Program Policies and Procedures (p. 2). In addition, “High school teachers who offer a University course for concurrently enrolled students (High School Scholars Program) are employees of their respective districts rather than the University and do not hold Academic Rank” (CMU Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p.III, line 119). High school teachers who wish to teach in the High School Scholars Program must be nominated by their school principals and submit academic credentials to the appropriate CMU academic department for approval. Continuing professional development stipends and faculty workshops for instructors offering concurrent enrollment courses are available from CMU/WCCC to assist in meeting the requirements for instructors in the High School Scholars program. Among the procedures to ensure that equivalent learning outcomes and levels of achievement in High School Scholars programs are comparable to those of courses delivered on the main campus are the following:

- Concurrent enrollment instructors attend annual workshops, meeting with departmental faculty to ensure commonality of syllabi, course objectives, course resources, assessment expectations, and any other instructional issues.
- Concurrent enrollment instructors are able to connect to library resources through various online services, ensuring that distance is not a barrier to access.
- Concurrent enrollment instructors are approved and evaluated by the appropriate department chairs and must meet the minimum professional requirements as outlined in the policy and by the department.

Evidence Item 4A4-6. Policies are in place that outline the requirements for courses taught in the concurrent enrollment program.

Concurrent student enrollment is delivered via four different options:

- The Early Scholars program is offered to high school students wanting to take courses on the CMU main campus. School districts determine the number and content of the courses for which they will pay tuition.
- The High School Scholars program offers CMU general education courses that are taught by high school instructors at the individual high schools.

- The [Technical Scholars](#) program provides qualified students the opportunity to take WCCC career & technical education courses in their high school or at WCCC. The courses are taught by high school instructors approved as WCCC adjunct faculty. The courses are offered for both high school and college credit.
- The [ASCENT](#) program permits eligible students to participate in a "5th year" of high school while enrolled in college courses. ASCENT program participants are counted as high school students for funding purposes but take all classes at the participating college. Student tuition is then paid by the school district for the ASCENT year.

Academic requirements are in place for students participating in any of the four concurrent student programs at CMU. The University found in 2011, however, that there were discrepancies between the rigor of courses taught at CMU and those taught through the High School Scholars Program (e.g., ascertaining the credentials of the faculty teaching the course at the high school; assuring that a semester-long course is not taught over two semesters). As described in Evidence Item 4A4-2, processes are being implemented to make academic departments more accountable for supervision of high school faculty and for review of courses that are given University credit, thus assuring that teaching and learning are equitable. The learning outcomes for courses taught in the concurrent program are the same as those of the University-based courses, since high school faculty must follow the same course description, syllabus, and assessments used by faculty at the University.

Modifications to concurrent courses have included adjustments that allow courses to fit within the high school semester calendar and make accommodations for varying levels of technology and/or lab materials; however, there should be no difference in rigor wherever or however the course is delivered. While some effort have been made by a few programs to coordinate assessment of courses in the high school program, little data has been collected or utilized to suggest that this work has been effective. As part of the new policies on [course comparability](#), dual enrollment courses will be assessed in the same manner as all other courses offered by the institution.

Sub-component 4.A.5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.

Evidence Item 4A5-1. The University has ten programs with specialized national accreditation and four programs with state review for certification or licensure.

The institution evaluates the benefit of having programmatic accreditation compared with the expense and ramifications of not having specialized accreditation. Whether or not his external program review is undertaken depends on the allocation of the institution's resources and the benefits that may accrue to the program and the institution. In programs that require state or national licensure/certification, CMU has specialized accreditation. The table below lists the ten programs; further explanation of each accredited program is found in the [Programs with Specialized Accreditation](#).

**CMU/WCCC PROGRAMS WITH ACCREDITATION
AND/OR EXTERNAL APPROVAL**

Program	Year of Most Recent Approval	Accrediting/Approving Agency
Athletic Training: B.S.	2008	Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE)
Emergency Medical Training: Paramedic	2011	Commission on Accreditation on Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)
Music: B.A.	2011	National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)
Nursing: B.S.N.	2008	Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)
Nursing: A.A.S./R.N.	2013	National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC)
Nursing: P.N., Technical Certificate	2013: Initial Candidacy	National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC)
Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST): Technical Certificate	2007; 2013	Colorado Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board
Radiologic Training: A.A.S.	2006	Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT)
Teacher Education: Continued accreditation for Initial Teacher Preparation and initial accreditation for Advanced Preparation level	2011	Colorado Commission on Higher Education, Colorado Department of Education and National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
Transportation Services: A.A.S., Technical Certificate	2011	National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF)

Note 1: The Center for Teacher Education withdrew its membership from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in 2013. The intention is for the program to seek membership with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation in 2014.

Note 2: The Mechanical Engineering program, offered through the partnership program between Colorado Mesa University and the University of Colorado Boulder, is accredited by ABET. Because the degree is awarded by the University of Colorado, the accreditation is earned through that institution.

In addition to the above, the Educator Preparation program is approved by the Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. The undergraduate Nursing programs are also approved by the State Board of Nursing, a division of the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies, for licensing purposes. Other types of program reviews occur through the State of Colorado as well. WCCC Career and Technical Education programs are approved by the CMU Board of Trustees but collect data for the [Colorado Community College System \(CCCS\)](#), the agency designated by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education as the [state's coordinator for distribution of Perkins funding](#) and coordination of other specific legislative requirements. Every five years, a trend data report – VE 135 – is required to determine eligibility for Perkins Grant funding and reimbursement of career and technical education expenses under the [Career and Technical Education Act](#) (see Evidence Item 4A6-1 for more details). All instructors in vocational programs must be [credentialed](#) with the Career and Technical Education Center of CCCS.

Sub-component 4.A.6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its missions, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced-degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and AmeriCorps).

Evidence Item 4A6-1. Baccalaureate, associate, and certificate programs collect data on employment and continued education rates based on institutional and departmental surveys.

The [Alumni Survey](#) is an assessment tool currently used in the program review process. On an annual basis, the Office of Institutional Research administers the survey to all graduates who completed a program during the six-year cycle under review. The results are then compiled and returned to the individual programs for review and use in the self-study. Part of the survey (pp. 3-7) [addresses employment and continuing education](#). Of the graduates who responded to the survey between 2007 and 2011, 70.1 percent identified themselves as being employed in a field related to their degree. Additionally, 20.3 percent of the respondents indicated enrolling in a graduate or professional education program since graduating. Some alumni are both [employed and continuing their education](#). This survey is administered to gather information from graduates of programs at CMU and is not compared to national statistics; nevertheless, the information aids in discussions of program improvement.

Another technique used by departments during the program review process is inviting former students back to campus for an interview. The interview is conducted by an external reviewer, allowing graduates to be more open about their experiences. Topics discussed in these interviews can range from preparedness for advanced study or employment to quality of the program based on knowledge gained since graduation. An example of the outcome of one of the meetings between the external reviewer and alumni is noted in the [Physical Sciences Program Review](#) (p. 15).

Additionally, staff from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment piloted a [survey of students at the time of commencement to assess work or education plans](#). The first survey data were collected in academic year 2011-12. Of 319 students surveyed, 52 percent were employed, with 30 percent of the total having employment in their chosen field. Twenty-two percent of the 319 respondents indicated that they planned to continue their education whether or not they were employed. Ninety-two percent of those surveyed who graduated from a master's program were employed, with 71 percent employed in the chosen field.

WCCC associate and certificate programs submit data on program completers ([Combined 5-Year Trends Report CTE/WCCC](#)) to the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) via the Career and Technical Education (CTE) data collection system. This statewide system serves the data reporting needs of CTE program approvals, the Colorado Vocational Act, and the Carl D. Perkins IV Act. The table below shows employment and continuing education rates for WCCC graduates, based on 5-year trend reports from CCCS for the years 2007 to 2011, with comparisons to statewide rates of employment and continuing education. Note that graduates may be employed and continue their education at the same time.

**GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR CMU/WCCC
ASSOCIATE AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAM COMPLETERS**

Program	Employment in Field (%)	Statewide Employment (%)	Continuing Education (%)	Statewide Continuing Education (%)
A.A.S., Criminal Justice	95	59	62	38
A.A.S., Nursing	99	85	14	29
A.A.S., Process Systems Technology	48	55	37	38
Administrative Office Technology*	83	48	25	42
Construction Technology*	33	61	33	56
Criminal Justice and POST certificate	70	69	20	24
Culinary Arts*	87	77	34	25
Electric Line Worker	76	70	40	53
Emergency Medical Technician*	79	38	64	70
Manufacturing Technology*	59	59	35	35
Nurse Aide	83	50	94	62
Practical Nurse	85	73	53	50
Radiologic Technology	77	75	20	27
Technology Integration*	72	49	64	60
Transportation Services*	70	42	36	58

*Certificate and associate degree programs were reported together.
Three programs that had data for three or fewer years were excluded.

Evidence Item 4A6-2. The institution publishes certification and licensing exam results, and reports on gainful employment for specific programs.

Colorado Mesa University has a proven record of graduate success in pass rates for national and state certification, or licensing exams. These results are published under Student Outcomes on the HEOA disclosure page. The University's [Success Matrix \(p. 2\)](#) includes the pass rates as part of the annual performance monitoring that the administration discusses with the Board of Trustees.

Indicators that the institution considers to demonstrate success include gainful employment. The U.S. Education Department's gainful employment regulations require disclosure of certain program information to students and prospective students. Gainful employment programs are those "that prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation." Public institutions are required to report the following information for all undergraduate and graduate programs that are Title IV eligible and that lead to certificates, diplomas, graduate certificates, or specialist awards: information on occupations that the program prepares students to enter; program costs including tuition, fees, books, and supplies; median federal and private loan debt of recent graduates; on-time completion rate of recent graduates; and job placement rate of recent graduates.

Reporting is not required for undergraduate certificates and diplomas that require fewer than 16 credits or for graduate certificates and specialist awards that require fewer than eight credits. Degree programs at all levels are not considered to be gainful employment programs. CMU is in compliance with the reporting requirements, and the [results](#) are made public on the CMU website.

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Core Component 4.B

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

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

CMU Response

Introduction

Assessment of student learning at Colorado Mesa University has been ongoing since 1986, revised in 2002 and amplified after an HLC focused visit in 2006. Both general education and program-level assessments were conducted using the "10 goals of baccalaureate education". In the most recent cycle, data were collected and analyzed each year until fall 2011, when the process was suspended to revise and strengthen the assessment process. Using the [Degree Qualifications Profile](#) as a model, the University developed institution-level learning outcomes for all baccalaureate-seeking students and is now aligning program and course assessment with the institutional outcomes. New initiatives will include assessment of co-curricular activities for student learning. CMU follows good practice when assessing learning outcomes and faculty development workshops have focused on effective assessment and revision of these outcomes.

Sub-component 4.B.1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.

Evidence Item 4B1-1. CMU has a history of assessment of student learning.

During the time of the last self-study, then-Mesa State College put together an assessment plan that focused on general education and programs but was designed with limited faculty buy-in. Subsequent to the visit, the Faculty Assessment Coordinator and Faculty Senate Assessment Committee worked in good faith to implement the plan for several years, making adjustments that they believed would help the faculty move forward in this effort. Professional development workshops on assessment were offered to all faculty, though attendance was small. Priority was given to a phase-in assessment of general education courses, wherein faculty selected one or two of the general education statements for their initial assessments, and in subsequent years, other statements or objectives were to be added. Faculty submitted "results" of data collection to the committee as requested, but little happened beyond that. Such was the process through 2009.

At least four things were learned from the activity during this period. First, the original design of the assessment plan started with the wrong foundation, resting on existing general education principles that were written in the mid-eighties. While they were lofty expectations for undergraduates, crafted mostly around the types of coursework students should complete, the principles were not expressed in measurable terms of what students should know, be able to do, or how to behave. Second, with the focus on general education, a major segment of the institution's faculty – particularly in the professional programs that offered little or no general education – saw little connection of assessment to their program. Related to that point was a third factor: no one "owned" general education. By default, it was viewed as the responsibility of the Faculty Assessment Coordinator, but because of the nature of the process, results offered little meaning about student learning that could be discussed, let alone acted upon. Finally, and equally concerning, it became clear that faculty resistance to this approach assessment was growing. They viewed it as a burdensome process of moving paper and checking off requirements that fulfilled a responsibility that had no real value.

Thus, while the faculty's efforts were well-intended, the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) concluded that the process was neither manageable nor meaningful to the faculty and needed to be reconfigured. In 2009, the emphasis shifted to one of building faculty buy-in, providing a better understanding of assessment resources, and continuing faculty professional development, all of which was designed to make the assessment process manageable for the institution, both in terms of human and financial resources, as well as meaningful for faculty members.

Since then, professional development workshops were presented by CMU faculty and external speakers who addressed

assessment in both general education and academic programs to clarify the role and purpose of assessment of student learning. In academic year 2011-12, the Vice President for Academic Affairs introduced the Lumina Foundation's Degree Qualifications Profile to the campus by way of a workshop offered by one of its co-authors, Paul Gaston. The Vice President also chaired the Working Group on Program Approval/Program Review that included representatives from the Faculty Senate, the Assessment Committee, Curriculum Committees (graduate, undergraduate, and WCCC), related University self-study criterion committee chairs, and academic department heads. In addition to revising program review guidelines, during the course of the spring 2012 semester, the group achieved two major accomplishments. First, it developed an initial articulation of institutional-level learning outcomes for CMU students that became the framework for program-level outcomes (see [Campus Assessment Update Spring 2012](#)). Second, the assessment process was integrated into program review, a revised process that began in academic year 2012-13. Program assessments were put on a six-year assessment cycle to match that of program review, but assessment data collection and review within the program remained annual activities, and three-year progress reports are now required to be submitted to the Assessment Committee between program reviews.

University assessment activity took another major step forward in academic year 2011-12. In addition to the appointment of the current Faculty Assessment Coordinator, a search for a full-time Director of Assessment of Student Learning began. During academic years 2010 - 2012, the significant student enrollment growth experienced by the University placed heavy demands on instruction, and most new positions in those three years were allocated to faculty. Thus, while it was desirable to have done so sooner, the goal of hiring a full-time assessment director was delayed until academic year 2012-13. The institution has made a commitment over time to the assessment process as demonstrated by the increased amount of [funding for the assessment program](#).

Work on general education is progressing, but on a multi-year schedule. As noted earlier, the framework for assessment of general education was one of the factors working against meaningful progress in this area of the curriculum. As a philosophy and set of general goals, the statements were appropriate, but as the foundation for a productive assessment process, they did not work well due to their vagueness and, in most cases, their inability to be measured. In order to evaluate what parts of CMU's general education were successful, what needed revision, and what was missing, the Vice President for Academic Affairs appointed a [Working Group to Review General Education](#) in late fall 2012. The group began with a review of the existing 10 goals, the philosophy of a baccalaureate education, and the requirements of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education as they related to the general education core. A related charge to the group was that general education outcomes, as recommended by the working group, have to align with those at the institutional level. Additionally, an assessment plan is expected as part of the group's work. By May 2013, the group shared a brief [summary](#) of their work from the prior semester with the campus and also requested that faculty participate in an online survey. Results of the [survey](#) will serve as the starting point for discussions in fall 2013. Additionally, representatives of the working group and the VPAA attended the Institute on General Education and Assessment sponsored by the Association of American Colleges and Universities in June 2013. As a result, a [proposed action plan](#) for changes to general education will also be shared with the fuller working group when it reconvenes in the fall.

Since 2011, the revisions to CMU's assessment processes have led to a more rapid development of learning outcomes, due to broader faculty buy-in, so that the systematic evaluation of learning outcomes in both undergraduate and graduate education has made significant strides forward. Clearly, [some programs are further along](#) than others, but all have the goal of including course learning outcomes on syllabi and employing assessment results to make systematic improvements in programs by spring 2014. Two key considerations in developing these plans are that the learning outcomes data need to be meaningful to faculty members in determining if learning is at or above the expected level and that the faculty need to be able to improve courses and/or programs as a result of an analysis of the collected data. The process also has to be manageable within the resources of the institution.

Evidence Item 4B1-2. CMU developed goals and assessment strategies for undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

The faculty and administration of the University realize that in order to deliver a curriculum that prepares students at all degree levels, assessment of that learning is critical. The goal is to gauge what students have learned in the context of program/course expectations and to document the needed enhancements to program/course delivery. As outlined in the CMU Professional Personnel Employment Handbook (p. VI-3, line 105), [assessment of student learning is an integral part of each faculty member's teaching responsibilities](#).

The Faculty Assessment Coordinator, representatives on the Faculty Senate's Assessment Committee, and staff from the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment have all been a part of offering various resources including workshops to faculty members in their assessment efforts, and serving as consultants to program faculty. All are committed to assisting faculty and staff members who participate in the assessment of student learning and to demonstrating how the use of assessment results leads to a culture of continuous improvement. As a result of reviewing current assessment methods, the responsibilities of the Assessment Committee have become more focused on guiding assessment activities for each program and reviewing assessment plans more critically during the first year of the program review process and then at the midpoint when progress reports are submitted. The Assessment Committee is also a part of the completed program review process to assure that assessment had been ongoing over the six-year period of time.

A Director of Assessment of Student Learning (DASL) was hired in 2012 to support faculty in accomplishing these tasks. Several projects were undertaken from August 2012 to June 2013. The DASL met with each department to explain the new assessment process. Program faculty worked on refining learning outcomes that had been written in spring 2012. The Assessment Committee began work by updating the [responsibilities](#) of the committee. The Assessment Handbook and website are being updated. There is now more involvement by the Faculty Senate Assessment Committee in the program review and survey evaluation process. An assessment plan template was approved by the Committee and a new review rubric is being developed to help provide feedback to programs on the new plans.

Faculty members from each program on the main campus are currently developing, or in some cases revising, course-level learning outcomes for inclusion on their course syllabi. At the same time, they are developing an assessment plan that identifies how those outcomes are met throughout the program, with the expectation that results will be used as the basis for improvements. These program assessment plans will be submitted in early fall 2013 to the Assessment Committee. All baccalaureate program learning outcomes are now on the respective program sheet (examples: [Exercise Science](#), [Psychology](#), [Physics](#)). Use of the 10 goals for a baccalaureate education has been phased out in program assessment as each program is now aligned to the institutional learning outcomes. As of spring 2013, [all baccalaureate programs had outcomes](#) listed on program sheets and faculty have added outcomes to course syllabi. The goal is that work on CMU course-level outcomes will be finalized in spring 2014, so that by fall 2014, all syllabi will include outcomes at that level.

The department heads and faculty at WCCC developed [student learning outcomes for technical certificate programs](#) in spring 2013 and are in the process of writing program outcomes that will align associate and/or technical certificate outcomes with those at the institutional level. The DASL is currently working with associate degree and certificate program faculty to have outcomes on program sheets by spring 2014.

Department heads in the graduate programs of Business, Nursing and Teacher Education developed an [assessment matrix](#) that addresses learning outcomes across all three disciplines. The matrix was organized into two sections: institution-level outcomes common to all graduate programs and related discipline-specific outcomes. All programs have completed an assessment plan that incorporates the outcomes from the matrix ([M.B.A.](#), [M.S.N.](#), [D.N.P.](#), [Teacher Education](#)).

As the assessment process continues to expand, the Director of Assessment of Student Learning will work to assure that all programs have effective assessment methods in place for continuous improvement. The [Campus Assessment Update 2013](#) documents the progress made towards improved institution-wide assessment. A five-year [Assessment Strategic Plan](#) has been drafted as a guideline for future assessment activities.

Sub-component 4.B.2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.

Evidence Item 4B2-1. The University assesses individual program learning outcomes with consistent methods of collection and analysis appropriate to the program.

CMU curricular learning outcomes are assessed through a combination of direct and indirect methods. Direct assessments are collected through a scheduled system that includes program self-studies, external accreditation reviews, and a six-year data collection schedule. Indirect assessment occurs through general graduate and alumni surveys, program-specific graduate surveys, student course evaluations, and student satisfaction surveys. A part of the first cycle of program reviews required collection of assessment information and reports of how it was used for program improvement. Discussion in several reviews centered on program improvement without discussing student learning outcomes. On the other hand, some programs did summarize student learning outcomes and results from assessment over a three- to five-year period as reflected in the Faculty Initiatives in Program Assessment 2010-11 document (see example from [History](#)). Other programs with national accreditation have been providing assessment plans to their respective agencies for a number of years. An example of this is the [assessment plan with evaluation for an A.A.S. in Radiologic Technology](#).

Evidence Item 4B2-2. Collection of assessment data in co-curricular student learning with reporting has been progressing. Processes are being developed to make assessment consistent and useful.

The Strategic Planning Committee recognized the importance of co-curricular activities to student learning outcomes when it set a goal in the 2011 Strategic Plan to “Develop student learning and/or development outcomes for all support programs offering enrichment services, leading to an increase in the senior NSSE composite score for supportive campus environment by five percentage points over the planning period” (Goal 4, Objective C).

While much information had been collected from assessment of co-curricular learning, the institution realized that, similar to curricular assessment, there was little review and discussion of the results for program or service improvement. Steps have been taken in the Office of Student Services to assure that an assessment plan is in place with measurable outcomes of student

learning in the co-curricular arena. Academic programs are also reporting student learning accomplishment outside of the classroom in co-curricular activities.

As part of assessing learning outcomes in Student Services units, the Vice President for Student Services and the Director of Institutional Research developed a survey for all undergraduate students to determine their participation in campus clubs and activities. Additionally, Educational Benchmarking, Inc. (EBI) survey instruments in the areas of Residence Life and the University Center and the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory aided with assessment across the division.

Questions from EBI and the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory were mapped to the [Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education \(CAS\)](#) to measure performance by Student Services at increasing student satisfaction and learning. The University's 2009 retention plan goals, along with suggestions from CAS, provided the framework and defined the key elements to be assessed in the Student Services divisions. The CMU [Student Services Assessment Tool](#) elements were aligned to CMU's learning outcomes: knowledge acquisition and application, critical thinking, inter- and intra-personal development, and civic engagement. Outcome goals were defined for each learning outcome.

The initial results of this assessment were reported in fall 2012, reviewed by staff from Student Services units and Institutional Research, and used as the basis for recommending changes. For example, one of the goals of the assessment was to promote student participation in a wider variety of campus activities and to align with the University's desire to promote awareness and knowledge of various cultures. Responses about the quality and frequency of those student experiences and reasons why students do not participate were collected. Review of the 2012 data about student involvement indicated that student participation in at least one event increased by six percent from the previous survey, but the total number of students participating was still low. The revised goal is now to have first-time students participate in at least one event in the first year of school. The most recent [assessment results](#) were obtained in summer 2013 and will be reviewed by departments at the beginning of the fall semester.

Sub-component 4.B.3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

Evidence Item 4B3-1. Programs demonstrate “closing the loop” in course and program assessment.

Prior to the last HLC site visit in 2003, little direct information was gathered by CMU about how students were learning. Since that time, a revitalized Assessment Committee and several institutional initiatives have ensured not only the collection of information about student learning but also the incorporation of that information into pedagogical and policy improvement.

Perhaps the most important of these process changes is that the program assessment cycle is now integrated into the program review process. The program assessment process directly asks each program to detail how it has used the information collected from assessment to improve the program. Examples of using assessment for improvement follow; some are anecdotal, but nevertheless representative. Other examples of program changes based on assessment can be found in Section 8 of the Federal Compliance chapter of the self-study.

EXAMPLES OF USING ASSESSMENT FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

Program	Assessment Results	Solutions	Follow-up
English	Students were 75% proficient in using ideas of other writers	Faculty incorporated more direct instruction on research.	A sample taken from the Senior Seminar two years later indicated 92% proficiency.
Mass Communication	Student writing levels were below the desired levels of quality, and students were not completing assignments within a specified time frame.	Faculty added more introductory theory and writing courses into their lower division curricular revision.	There was noticeable improvement with grammar and writing styles. Students in upper division courses now are able to complete assignments in a more appropriate timeframe.
Psychology	Formal exit exams revealed a dearth of understanding in some areas in the program. Biopsychology had the most problems.	Faculty revised program sheets to require that all students take at least one course in all three areas of the major.	Students have more balanced knowledge base across all areas in Psychology, based on exit exams results.
Criminal Justice	Students waited until their senior year to take Statistics and Research Methods, which created inadequate abilities and skills in final senior coursework.	Two new courses were developed: STAT 215 – Statistics for Social and Behavioral Sciences and CRMJ 315, Research Methods in Criminal Justice. Majors are now advised to take courses earlier in the program.	Scores on the research portion of the final project in senior seminar have markedly improved.
Business Administration (MBA)	While results met the existing benchmark, the faculty felt that there were deficiencies in presentations of final projects.	A workshop/practice presentation section was added to the students' preparation for Research Day.	Presentation quality has significantly improved.
Teacher Education	The percent of candidates being removed from final internship semester, at times, exceeded 10% of total placements.	Research indicated these candidates had struggled in earlier coursework. The program instituted a "B or better" policy for all EDUC coursework to provide opportunity to remediate weak candidates.	The number of students who were removed has dropped to one percent or less per academic year.
Biological Sciences	Learning outcomes for Philosophy of Science for Secondary Teacher Education candidates were not aligned to the standards of the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA).	There was re-evaluation of BIOL 386 course content by the department head and faculty.	Faculty from Biology and the Center for Teacher Education collaborated to revamp the course. It will be introduced in fall 2013, after Curriculum Committee approval. Key assessment data will be collected to evaluate after one academic year.

Additionally, many program changes have occurred due to assessment in capstone courses. Based on feedback from students or through testing, papers and projects, faculty members increasingly realize a need for better assessment measures or for program improvement to assure competency in graduates going into the work place. A [Summary of Capstone/Culminating Experiences by Baccalaureate Programs](#) documents these changes.

Although progress has been made in assessing and evaluating programs, some external reviewers have commented on the lack of "closing the loop" or recording program/course improvement based on assessment results (examples: [Theatre](#) (p. 140), [English](#) (p. 191), and [Physical Sciences](#) (p. 5)). As the revised program review process is fully implemented, the University will require programs to collect and evaluate assessment data annually and, at a minimum, report results every three years. These actions will strengthen faculty review of programs that may result to curricular modifications, as appropriate, and by extension, lead to improvements in student learning.

Evidence Item 4B3-2. The University utilizes feedback from post-graduation evaluations and WGISAS to improve program instruction and student learning satisfaction.

Often, CMU's understanding of student learning comes from students' experiences in graduate school or employment after graduation. One example of a University program that solicits feedback from its graduates is Teacher Education where surveys of its first-year teachers provided the impetus for developing four new classes. Survey data indicated that first-year teachers needed more instruction in classroom management techniques, differentiation for special populations in their classes, more practice

integrating technology into their instruction, and a deeper understanding of how assessments can drive instruction. These conclusions were confirmed by area superintendents and K-12 principals. With this information, faculty from the Center for Teacher Education discussed the need to redistribute credits in elementary education degree programs with faculty colleagues in content areas. After a number of meetings to discuss alternatives, six credit hours were shifted from general education requirements to the licensure skills content.

Other institutional assessments have proven to be valuable to the improvement of student learning. For example, the Report from the Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success (WGISAS) not only studied ways to improve student retention but also examined factors such as course success, measured by grades in [Mathematics](#) and [English](#), as well as term [grade point average](#) and [earned credit hours](#). Data for students needing varying levels of developmental coursework were analyzed. When [pass rates](#) indicated that students taking the highest level of remedial English fared as well in first-year English Composition (ENGL 111) as those who opted out, faculty from the English Program teamed with the Developmental English faculty to create a Writing Studio that provides "just in time" support thereby reducing the amount of student time and money in developmental courses.

The most recent outcome of the WGISAS project was the revision of academic support for under-prepared students in all disciplines. With the change in CMU's admissions standards, the definition for provisional admission also was modified. For students with an index score below that assigned to CMU by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, an [Office of Student Success](#) is being implemented in summer 2013 through academic success coaches who provide enhanced advising and guide students into appropriate courses. Reading-intensive courses were identified, and supplemental reading labs were added. Further, these students are required to take two supplemental success courses because of the WGISAS findings. Higher Education Success Skills (SUPP 100) requires a "success plan" for a major in which they have interest as well as complete financial aid activities that should discourage students from unnecessary borrowing. That course will be followed by Introduction to Higher Education (SUPP 101) which is patterned after the national transition-to-college model developed by John Gardner at the University of South Carolina. Finally, the WGISAS group also produced a document for faculty to attach to syllabi for all general education classes titled "[Your Success at Colorado Mesa University or Western Colorado Community College](#)." It provides a framework for helping all students understand what they need to do to have a productive University career.

Sub-component 4.B.4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Methods of course and program assessment vary across campus, due in part to the differing nature of disciplines, to professional accreditation requirements, and to the stage of a program's progress in evaluating its goals. However, CMU's educational values, as articulated in the [Vision, Values, and Mission Statements](#), are common to all programs and underlie the faculty collective intention to demonstrate how much their students are learning.

Evidence Item 4B4-1. Faculty members are increasingly involved in assessment processes through curriculum mapping projects and the articulation and analysis of student learning outcomes.

Over the past six years, a variety of [professional development workshops](#) have been available to faculty and staff on the topic of assessment. After the Degree Qualification Workshop in January 2012, much progress was made by the campus during the spring semester for the articulation of institutional and program student learning outcomes and assessments. As a follow-up to the workshop, faculty members were asked to complete a campus [survey](#) intended to aid in identifying the student learning outcomes that CMU and WCCC faculty members expect of all graduates of this institution's associate and baccalaureate programs. Set up parallel to the Degree Qualification Profile, the statements in the survey were organized by degree level within the categories of student learning identified in the profile. Faculty members were asked to rank the level of importance they placed on each learning outcome in four categories. The outcomes selected for the institution are:

- Specialized Knowledge/Applied Learning;
- Intellectual Skills
 - Communication fluency
 - Quantitative fluency
 - Critical thinking

The working model was refined during academic year 2012-13, yet this process is not complete. Additional student learning outcomes (information literacy, ethics, and resource stewardship) will be considered during academic year 2013-14, based on feedback from the faculty. Faculty began working on including learning outcomes on course syllabi in spring 2013. Susan Hatfield, a Visiting Scholar to the HLC, was invited to campus in March 2013 to assist programs in refining student learning outcomes and reviewing assessment plans. As of summer, 2013, faculty in all programs are writing assessment plans based on learning outcomes and are writing outcomes to add course syllabi. One institutional goal is that all program learning outcomes be

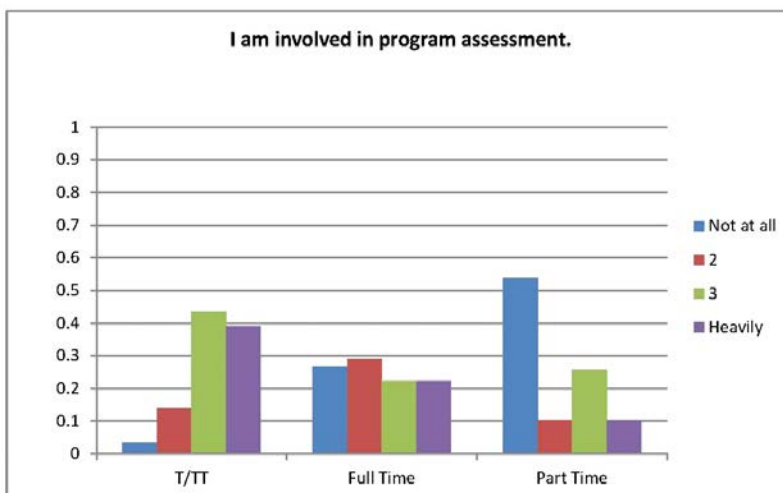
posted on academic department web pages beginning in fall 2013. The development in the assessment process across campus for baccalaureate programs is demonstrated in the [Program Assessment Progress](#) document.

The ETS (Educational Testing Service) [Proficiency Profile](#) is being piloted as an assessment tool. This instrument was selected because it contains elements for assessing each of the intellectual skill areas noted in the above list of institutional outcomes and because it can provide useful reports on student performance. Instructions sent to the faculty and students on the administration of the profile through a capstone course/culminating experience ensures student participation. The Profile was administered to graduating baccalaureate students in spring 2013, and the Assessment Committee will review the results and report out to faculty in the fall semester.

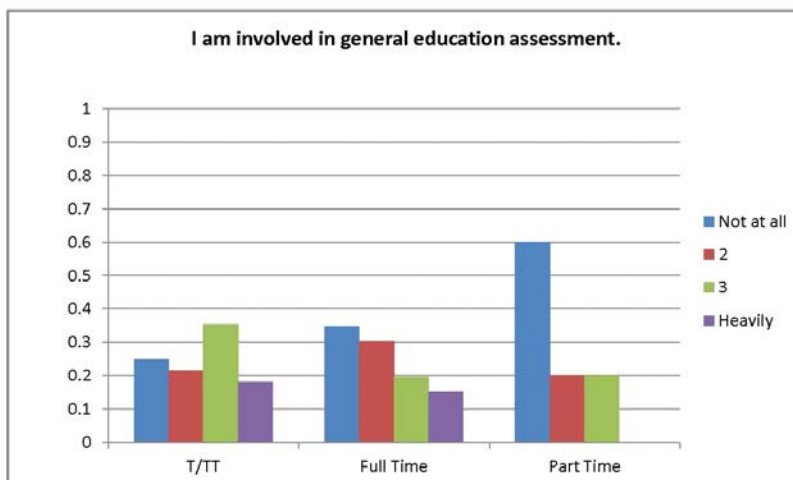
Evidence Item 4B4-2. A majority of CMU faculty members are involved in the assessment process.

Three questions related to involvement in assessment were included on the 2012 faculty survey distributed by the HLC Steering Committee. Participation in the survey included 117 tenure/tenure-track faculty, 46 full-time instructors, and 41 part-time instructors. Note that many faculty in professional and technical programs do not offer general education courses; this, in part, explains the level of nonparticipation responses for the survey item shown below.

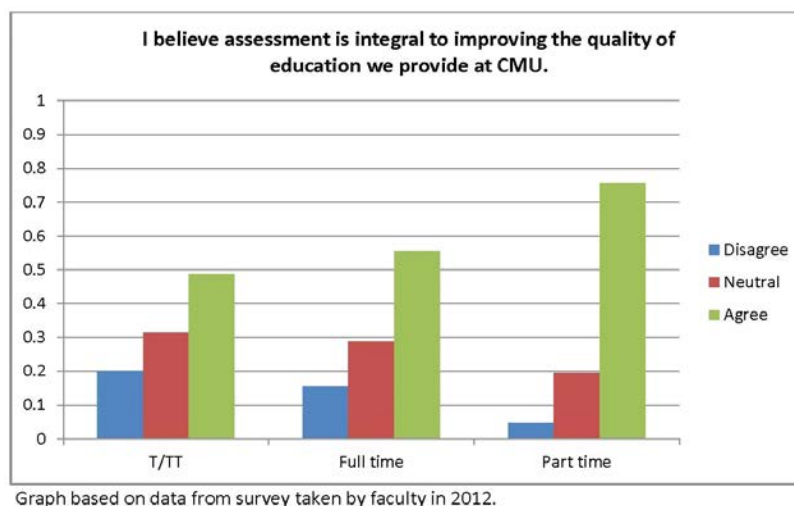
When asked if they believed assessment is integral to improving the quality of education provided at CMU, 49 percent of responding tenure/tenure-track faculty, 56 percent of full-time instructors, and 76 percent of the part-time faculty agreed. When asked about the amount of involvement in general education assessment, 66 percent of respondents were involved on some level, and 82 percent of respondents were involved at some level with program assessment.



Graph based on data from survey taken by faculty in 2012.



Graph based on data from survey taken by faculty in 2012.



In order to emphasize the importance of program accountability and promote faculty responsibility, the Director of Assessment of Student Learning met during academic year 2012-13 with faculty across all programs to assist with development of learning outcomes and assessment plans. As the University continues to support and emphasize the importance of assessment and faculty buy-in grows, the level of involvement and commitment by faculty is expected to increase.

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- [Curriculum_General Education_Draft Action Plan for CMU_June 2013](#)
- [Curriculum_General Education_Faculty Survey_May 2013](#)
- [Curriculum_General Education_Learn_Express_Do-Draft_May 2013](#)
- [Degree Qualifications Profile_Lumina Foundation](#)
- [Graduate Policies and Procedures Manual_2012 \(Page 24\)](#)
- [PPEH-CMU-Section VI-Faculty Evaluation \(Page 3\)](#)
- [Program Review_English \(Page 193\)](#)
- [Program Review_PhysicalSciences \(Page 213\)](#)
- [Program Review_Theatre Arts \(Page 141\)](#)

-  [Program Sheet-BA_Psychology_1314](#)
-  [Program Sheet-BS_Exercise Science_1314](#)
-  [Program Sheet-BS_PhysicalSci_Physics_1314](#)
-  [Strategic Plan_Vision, Values and Mission_Web Page](#)
-  [Student Success at CMU_WCCC](#)
-  [Student Success_Office_Home Page](#)
-  [Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success_Final Report_2011 \(Page 33\)](#)
-  [Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success_Final Report_2011 \(Page 40\)](#)
-  [Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success_Final Report_2011 \(Page 41\)](#)
-  [Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success_Final Report_2011 \(Page 51\)](#)

Core Component 4.C

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

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of 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 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.)

CMU Response

Introduction

Colorado Mesa University pays careful attention to the retention and completion rates of its students. The Board of Trustees, President's Office, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and other administrative staff receive regular updates on these rates, and the institution is held accountable for them through the Performance Contract with the State of Colorado. Because the institution has seen fluctuation in these rates, it has responded by implementing several programs and methods to help students continue and complete their education at CMU.

Sub-component 4.C.1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.

Evidence Item 4C1-1. The CMU Board of Trustees is committed to increasing retention and graduation rates, particularly among underserved students.

The Board of Trustees is dedicated to [providing all students with a quality education that leads to successful completion](#) of their academic programs and subsequent career success (CCHE Performance Contract, p. 6):

The Board of Trustees, MSC [CMU] and the [Colorado] Commission [on Higher Education] agree that it is a priority to ensure widespread access to Colorado's public colleges and universities with particular focus on expanding the number of students who are prepared, apply, and enroll, while maintaining and potentially increasing retention and graduation rates with particular emphasis on increasing the participation and success of under-served students.

Evidence Item 4C1-2. The Strategic Plan points to implementation of programs to increase retention rates among diverse populations and aligns to the University's mission.

The [Strategic Planning Committee](#) – composed of board members, administrative personnel, faculty, staff, students, and community members – recognized that a key component of increased completion rates is implementation of programs to help increase retention rates for entering undergraduates. Retention and graduation rates have been an on-going, high priority for central administration as part of enrollment management, as reflected by [Goal #2 of the 2005 Strategic Plan](#) (p. 21). This goal was written to support activities that enhanced student success. As a result, [12 accomplishments](#) (2011 Strategic Plan, p. 3) were listed for this goal from both the academic and student service units over the six-year period of the plan. Goal #4 of the 2011 Plan is to “[actively engage students of all backgrounds in on- and off-campus activities](#) which broaden their educational experiences and enhance their successes” (2011 Strategic Plan, p. 16).

Sub-component 4.C.2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.

Evidence Item 4C2-1. The University provides external reporting of retention and completion rates to IPEDS, NCAA, the Common Data Set, and college guide surveys.

[Data regarding retention and completion](#) are reported and disseminated to external stakeholders. As an institution that relies on Title IV funding, CMU submits all required data, including retention and completion rates to the U.S. Department of Education. This information is also reported to other external sources, such as the Common Data Set, U S News, and the College Board. The University also has previously participated in the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE), and the report formerly submitted to the consortium is still updated internally to gain a more complete understanding of retention, persistence, and completion rates across multiple years. The University is a member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, and to maintain compliance with that organization, CMU submits completion rates on all student athletes (see Evidence Item 4C2-5) who receive an athletic scholarship in their first year.

Evidence Item 4C2-2. The University analyzes retention, persistence and completion of students at all degree levels. The results are reported to departments, administration, and the Board of Trustees for assessment and planning purposes.

The institution conducts many analyses of the retention, persistence, and completion of students at all degree levels for internal audiences. In some cases, retention and graduation rates are reported using traditional cohorts of first-time entering students. For other types of analysis, student success is used as the metric, wherein a student is considered successful if s/he is retained from one fall to the next fall semester or if the student graduates within that year. The Office of Institutional Research employs a variety of methods, including descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and data mining to examine student success among different populations and to discover what factors are associated with increased likelihood of success (see attached [example of data mining results on factors affecting CMU student success](#)). Other factors serving as a basis for retention analyses include: [gender](#), [living on campus](#), participating in [intercollegiate athletics](#), [provisionally-admitted students](#), [admissions index](#), and freshmen students [registering early vs. late for their initial semester](#). These examples illustrate the types of retention questions being asked by administrators; information is shared with internal constituents for use in assessment and planning.

Evidence Item 4C2-3. The institution utilizes the information on retention and completion from the National Center for Educational Statistics for strategic planning and budgeting.

Graduation rates for baccalaureate-degree students at CMU (2006-2011) have varied by as much as seven percentage points, from a low of 25 percent to a high of 32 percent, for the six years between admission and degree completion. Reasons that have extended the number of years to graduation from four to six range from financial and/or personal circumstances to change of major to from under-preparation for college-level work. One reason, in particular, for the decline in retention, thereby leading to lower completion rates, was the heightened need in the mid-2000s for gas and oil workers in the region. Many students opted to delay starting college or to leave school shortly after beginning and take employment in this lucrative field. In 2009, the regional economy trended downward, and many oil companies left the state due to stricter regulations on exploration. Since then, enrollment numbers increased dramatically due, in part, to decreased employment, as well as growing opportunities offered by the University (e.g., new academic and technical programs). In fall 2011, based on the 2010 cohort, the retention rate was 66 percent, and the completion rate was 26 percent. It is anticipated that both rates will increase based on the enrollment rates and the measures being taken to increase retention. [Comparisons of retention and graduation rates with peer institutions](#), shown below, are provided by the National Center for Educational Statistics and reviewed annually.

**COMPARISON OF RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES
WITH PEER INSTITUTIONS FOR
CMU BACCALAUREATE-SEEKING, FIRST-TIME, FULL-TIME STUDENTS**

Institution	First-Year Retention Rates for Students Entering in Fall 2009 (%)	Six-Year Graduation Rates for Students Entering in Fall 2003 (%)
Colorado Mesa University	66	26
Angelo State University	63	31
Armstrong Atlantic State U.	72	28
Augusta State University	69	25
Black Hills State University	64	29
Clayton State University	60	22
Colorado State University- Pueblo	64	31
Eastern New Mexico University	62	24
Fairmont State University	63	35
Midwestern State University	71	26
Minnesota State U-Moorhead	67	42
Missouri Southern State Univ	61	34
Southwestern Oklahoma State Univ	67	30
U. of Arkansas-Fort Smith	63	21
U. of North Carolina at Pembroke	73	38
University of Southern Indiana	66	32
University of Wisconsin-Parkside	65	32
Average	66	29

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2010

Evidence Item 4C2-4. CMU collects and analyzes internal data on the rate of graduates returning to the institution to further their education.

To examine student persistence, information was gathered to demonstrate the [number of students returning to CMU](#) following completion of a certificate, associate, or baccalaureate program. The past three years of data show that there is a continued increase in the percentage of students returning within two years of degree or certificate completion for all sub-baccalaureate levels.

**STUDENTS RETURNING TO CMU WITHIN TWO YEARS OF
DEGREE/CERTIFICATE COMPLETION**

Graduation Year	Degree Level	# Degrees Awarded	# Students Receiving Higher Degree in Same Year as Graduation	# Students Re-enrolled within two years at CMU		# Students Re-enrolled within two years at CMU at a Higher Degree Level	
2007-08	Certificate	147	4	35	23.8%	33	22.4%
	AAS	125	1	23	18.4%	20	16.0%
	AA/AS	55	2	23	41.8%	19	34.5%
	Baccalaureate	527	0	41	7.8%	3	0.6%
2008-09	Certificate	138	12	51	37.0%	47	34.1%
	AAS	127	1	32	25.2%	27	21.3%
	AA/AS	44	0	10	22.7%	9	20.5%
	Baccalaureate	560	0	59	10.5%	9	1.6%
2009-10	Certificate	261	11	105	40.2%	100	38.3%
	AAS	119	0	37	31.1%	31	26.1%
	AA/AS	56	0	23	41.1%	21	37.5%
	Baccalaureate	613	0	69	11.3%	16	2.6%

Evidence Item 4C2-5. The University reviews graduation rates of athletes for NCAA reporting and evaluation of academic achievement.

Analysis of [student athlete graduation rates](#) documents a better than average level of success when compared with the general student population rates. A comparison of six-year graduation rates for students starting in 2004 is shown below:

CMU ATHLETIC SUCCESS METRICS

Cohort	All Baccalaureate-Seeking, First-time, Full-time Undergraduates	Student-Athletes
AY 2004-05:		
Graduation Rate	26%	44%
Four-Class Average (AY 2002-05)	32%	45%
Student-Athlete Academic Success Rate		71%
AY 2005-06:		
Graduation Rate	25%	50%
Four-Class Average (AY 2003-06)	30%	47%
Student-Athlete Academic Success Rate		71%

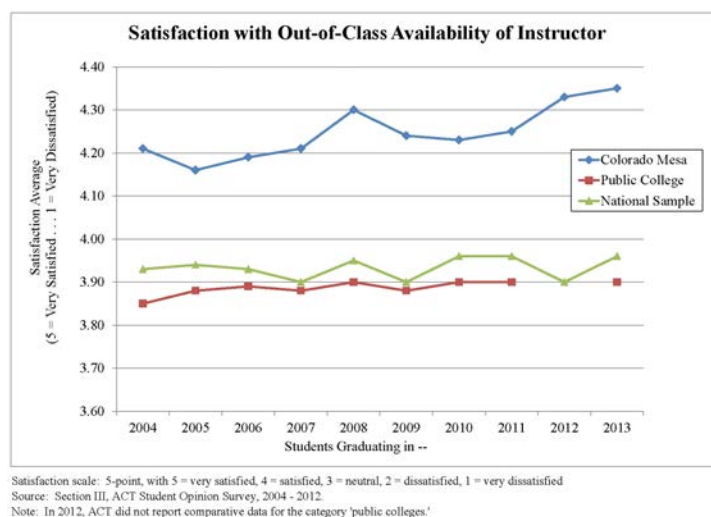
Athlete Academic Success Rate (NCAA) = Completion whether retained at CMU, transferred in from another institution and graduated at CMU, or transferred out and graduated from another institution within the six-year time frame

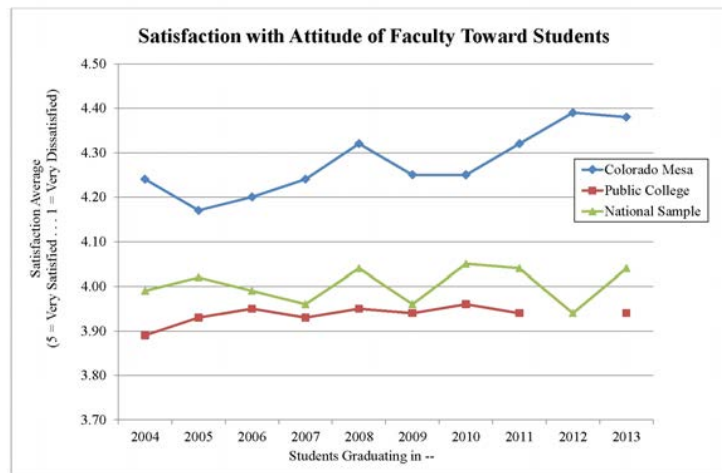
This information reflects CMU's commitment to student academic success of Division II schools and, in part, that of the coaches of the various sports at CMU. The student-athlete academic success rate is also used as part of the coaches' evaluations, along with the win/loss record, to determine coaching effectiveness.

Evidence Item 4C2-6. The University performs student satisfaction surveys for retention and completion purposes.

The institution measures student satisfaction and engagement through multiple instruments. CMU participates in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). A report that [compared results](#) from the 2010 NSSE administration side-by-side with 2011 FSSE results on key elements served as the basis for discussions between the President and Vice President for Academic Affairs with faculty at department meetings in academic year 2011-12. Responses where faculty and students were aligned and where they converged served as the point of departure for how CMU might improve academic programs in each visited department. [Comparisons](#) between the 2008 and 2011 CCSSE analyses were also reported by Institutional Research to WCCC faculty and administrators. To continue measuring perceptions, the University will use all three of these surveys again in 2013. Through analysis of internal and external data, it is clear that students engaged in extracurricular school activities, as well as in the classroom, are more likely to succeed in college.

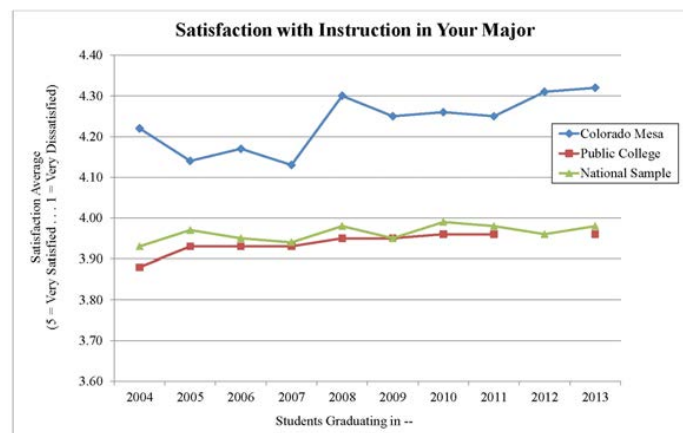
The institution also surveys graduating seniors using the [ACT Student Opinion Survey](#) (SOS). In areas of faculty availability and attitude toward students, CMU has consistently scored higher in student satisfaction over participating public colleges and national institutions, as shown below.



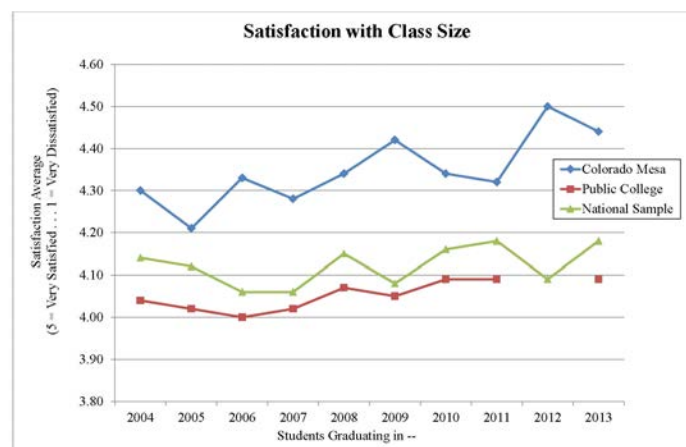


Satisfaction scale: 5-point, with 5 = very satisfied, 4 = satisfied, 3 = neutral, 2 = dissatisfied, 1 = very dissatisfied
Source: Section III, ACT Student Opinion Survey, 2004 - 2012.
Note: In 2012, ACT did not report comparative data for the category 'public colleges.'

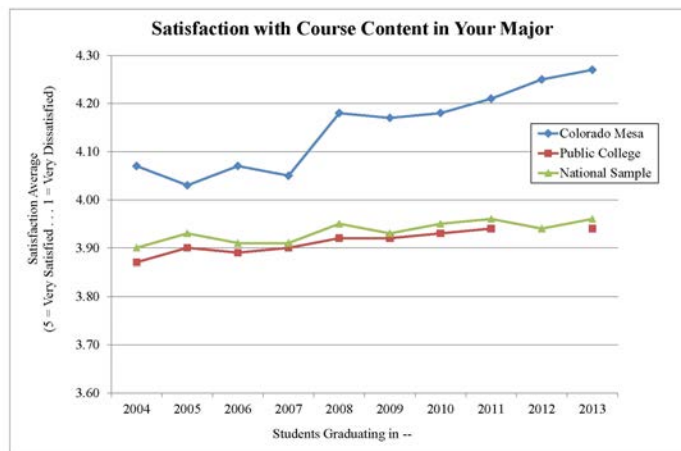
The SOS demonstrates that CMU students are more satisfied with instruction, class size, course content in the major, and with the University in general than are students at other national and public colleges administering this survey. This information has been shared by the President and Vice President for Academic Affairs with all academic departments.



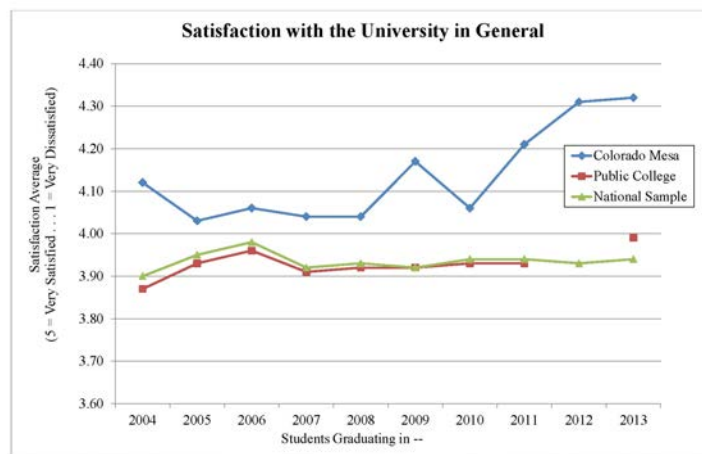
Satisfaction scale: 5-point, with 5 = very satisfied, 4 = satisfied, 3 = neutral, 2 = dissatisfied, 1 = very dissatisfied
Source: Section III, ACT Student Opinion Survey, 2004 - 2012.
Note: In 2012, ACT did not report comparative data for the category 'public colleges.'



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Satisfaction scale: 5-point, with 5 = very satisfied, 4 = satisfied, 3 = neutral, 2 = dissatisfied, 1 = very dissatisfied
 Source: Section III, ACT Student Opinion Survey, 2004 - 2012.
 Note: In 2012, ACT did not report comparative data for the category 'public colleges.'

CMU administered the SOS for the final time in October 2012 since ACT discontinued the survey in December 2012. In addition to the Student Opinion Survey, CMU administered the NSSE, CCSSE, and FSSE surveys in spring 2013. Results will be available in the fall semester.

Sub-component 4.C.3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to improve its persistence and completion rates as warranted.

Evidence Item 4C3-1. Advising and Academic Services developed new academic and student support programs and has made revisions to existing departments to address the results of retention and completion rate data.

Advising and Academic Services (AAS) encompasses the offices of Advising, Career Services, Educational Access Services, Testing Center, and the Tutorial Learning Center. Each area has continually surveyed students to learn how to best accommodate them in order to increase retention rates, and the staff conduct [exit surveys](#) with students who withdraw completely from the University. Based on recommendations from the Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success (WGISAS) as well as on departmental surveys, changes were made in Academic Services offices that has led to a substantial increase in the use of services by students. While some of the growth was due to a larger number of admitted students, increased awareness of the services – from word-of-mouth, presentations in Freshman Year Initiative courses, marketing and emailing students, improved facilities, updated technology, and more efficient procedures – have all contributed to the increase in the use of services. For detailed usage reports, see [Advising Center](#), [Career Services](#), [Educational Access Services](#), [Testing](#), and [Tutorial Learning Center](#). Finally, as described in Evidence Item 3D3-1, the Office of Student Success is CMU's most recent addition to academic support services to enhance student retention and completion in summer 2013.

Based on surveys and data collected in all the service areas, changes were made to better assist students with the goal of strengthening CMU's retention efforts. The Director for Academic and Advising Services created a department-wide database in 2006 that tracks students who use any of the available services. Once a student is in the system, each service department can

report what was done to help the student become more successful with academics. Technology-based improvements have been incorporated into all offices, and staff members in the Registrar's and Financial Aid offices have been cross-trained with staff from advising, business services, and student accounts to enhance customer service. Examples of changes and improvements in each academic support unit since 2007 are listed below, with links providing more detailed descriptions of improvements.

Changes made to the Advising Center:

- Implemented more efficient ways to manage the demand for advising services, such as advising students on a walk-in basis during peak registration times, helping students remove academic holds prior to the start of registration, contacting students who had received Early Alert warnings regarding resources and options, and providing immediate access to an advisor at the front counter without requiring an appointment.
- Added an Athlete Checking Process for all new and transfer student athletes to check student athlete program requirements and help them stay in good standing and remain NCAA eligible to participate in their sport. This reduced the number of students who needed to make last minute changes to their schedule because of mistakes in registration or transfer credit interpretation.
- Adjusted the student orientation model in fall 2009 to accommodate increased enrollment by combining advising and registration, revised the orientation worksheets to provide better advising, and developed a system for auditing student schedules after orientation.
- Made additional changes to student orientation in fall 2011 to accommodate the continued increase in enrollment by implementing a small-group advising model that better matched students to faculty, and restructuring the orientation schedule to better accommodate students who needed to complete assessment tests prior to registration.

GROWTH IN ADVISING CONTACTS, FY 2006/07 THROUGH FY 2011/12

Metric	Fiscal Year -					
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Total Contacts Advised	4,275	4,758	6,509	7,802	8,770	10,832
Annual Increase in Student Contacts		11%	37%	20%	12%	24%

Changes made in Career Services:

- Created an Office for Career Services, separate from the Advising Center, which is now known as the Advising & Career Center. It is located in the University Center for easier student access and visibility.
- Increased the number of workshops and class presentations.
- Made Optimal Resumé available, beginning in fall 2007, to help students create more professional resumé and design their own websites for potential employers.
- Created and implemented an alumni mentoring program to help students explore possible career paths.
- Began coordination with the WCCC Career Specialist, as well as offering selected services throughout each semester at the Montrose Campus.

GROWTH IN CAREER SERVICES FUNCTIONS, FY 2007/08 THROUGH FY 2011/12

Indicator	Fiscal Year				
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Workshop	11	12	13	18	23
Class Presentations	6	8	8	32	31
Job Postings	n/a	756	732	892	1425
Students Using Optimal Resume	96	221	226	419	587

Changes made to Educational Access Services (EAS):

- Relocated and remodeled office space to facilitate easier access to accommodations, such as individualized testing

environments, altered book formats, and new technology.

- Revised test accommodation process, requiring students to take a more active role in setting up their accommodations and opening better communications with faculty.
- Shortened the turnaround time for book requests in alternative formats.
- Offered services at WCCC.
- Assisted freshmen in planning course schedules and participated in student orientation programs.

**GROWTH IN EDUCATIONAL ACCESS SERVICES USAGE,
FY 2007/08 THROUGH FY 2011/12**

Metric	Fiscal Year				
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Students Served	166	191	202	245	301
Accommodations Provided	863	981	1,050	1,257	1,590
Tests Administered	845	925	854	888	1,252
Books Requested	272	306	253	255	345
Annual Increase in Students Served		15%	6%	21%	23%

Changes made to the Testing Center:

- Moved the center moved back to the main campus in January 2009 into a newly remodeled space that accommodated the increased enrollment and expanding testing programs.
- Increased hours of operation.
- Revised testing programs to computer-based formats.
- Increased opportunities for off-site proctoring of tests.

GROWTH IN TESTING CENTER USAGE, FY 2007/08 THROUGH FY 2011/12

Indicator	Fiscal Year				
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Test administrations	7,123	8,258	11,248	12,703	13,586
Annual Increase		16%	36%	13%	7%

Changes made to the Tutorial Learning Center (TLC):

- Changed the tutoring model from an appointment-based schedule to a flexible, walk-in system.
- Tripled the center's physical size in fall 2009.
- Added tutoring services to the Montrose and WCCC locations.
- Expanded delivery of tutoring services online and for distance education via Skype.
- Increased the number of tutors in the Center.
- Added Sunday hours of operation.

**GROWTH IN TUTORIAL LEARNING CENTER STUDENT CONTACTS,
FY 2007/08 THROUGH FY 2011/12**

Indicator	Fiscal Year				
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Student Contacts	2928	4620	7455	8683	11754
Hours Tutored	2073.17	3315.83	4332.50	4964.75	7146.75
Annual Increase in Student Contacts		58%	61%	16%	35%

- **Involvement of Faculty in Registration, Orientation, and Advising:**

While faculty members have been involved in freshman orientation over the past 10 years, changes were made in 2009 to have faculty participate in advising when first-time students attended registration. In 2011, changes were made again to accommodate the continued increase in enrollment by implementing the small-group advising model that better matched students to faculty in the desired major. In addition to being advised about appropriate general education courses for their intended major, incoming freshman were given specific program information and requirements. Students were also grouped in same-major areas to build peer relationships. This change has facilitated higher accuracy in registration, by providing real-time information on course options, and made faculty more knowledgeable for advising as it relates to alternative sequencing when scheduling issues arise. These changes also have fostered academic connections between incoming students and faculty, enabled students more one-on-one time with a faculty advisor, if needed, and allowed more independent students the option of registering for classes at their own pace.

FACULTY INVOLVEMENT IN ORIENTATION/REGISTRATION

Student Orientation Participants	Fiscal Year -					
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10*	2010-11	2011-12**	2012-13 (Fall only)
Number of Students	1,422	1,300	1,652	1,872	2,159	1,928
# Faculty Advisors (Duplicated Count)	184	190	262	334	253	246
# Staff Advisors (Duplicated Count)	95	86	187	159	174	153

*Registration and advising were combined.

**Small-group advising was implemented, reducing the number of faculty needed.

Evidence Item 4C3-2. Program and department changes were developed or improved based on findings from WGISAS, Student Services, and through grant funding.

Supplemental Courses

Supplemental courses help new and freshmen students meet the rigors of university-level courses and manage their time and skills to succeed in their coursework. For more than 10 years, Introduction to Higher Education (SUPP 101; also known as the Freshman Year Initiative), has been offered each semester in a compressed format the week before classes start in the fall. In 2012, approximately 575 students enrolled in this course, which is designed to provide freshman students with early information on how to succeed in higher education academically, financially, and socially. A sophomore success course was added in January 2011 to help students transition into courses in their majors and to help them with general education coursework. In fall 2013, an additional success course, Academic Success Skills (SUPP 100) also will be implemented (see Evidence Item 4B3-2). The two supplemental courses are the primary distribution point for [MavSuccess](#), a guide for entering undergraduates containing a host of short informational and advisory entries that can strengthen their success.

Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI)

Results of the LASSI demonstrated a need to increase students' study skills and awareness of their levels of motivation. Since fall 2011, [entering undergraduates have been required to complete the inventory](#) during the first half of the semester. Results of the 2011 inventory showed that the key criterion for student success is individual student motivation. Upon discovering this, staff in Advising and Academic Services Offices now contact students who are admitted in the provisional baccalaureate category or with an undeclared major in order to discuss their LASSI results. Students with a declared major are instructed to meet with faculty advisors to discuss results.

Improving Teaching Effectiveness

The Office of Academic Affairs has provided annual professional development workshops targeting teaching effectiveness. Most recently, in fall 2012, Dr. Ken Bain, author of “What the Best College Professors Do,” was invited to present a workshop to faculty on how to effectively engage and motivate students toward deep learning in large and small classroom settings. Over 150 faculty members attended the workshop, and all new full-time faculty are given a copy of Bain's book by Academic Affairs to assist the faculty with their teaching philosophy and approaches in the early phase of their career. The Teacher2Teacher Committee has followed up with efforts to improve faculty effectiveness via [weekly emails on teaching tips](#) and [meetings encouraging dialogue on effective teaching practices](#).

Admissions Standards

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education [admission index is used to determine the placement of an entering freshman student into an associate, provisional baccalaureate or baccalaureate-level program](#). The index score is based on high school grade point average or class rank and on ACT scores. The minimum index score required for admission to baccalaureate degree programs was raised from 80 to 85 by the Board of Trustees in 2005 for students entering in academic year 2007-08. In 2012, based on a [recommendation of the Working Group to Improve Academic Student Success](#), CMU requested modification of its CCHE admissions category from “moderately selective” to “selective,” and the minimum index score was raised to 92, effective with students admitted for academic year 2013-14.

Provisional Baccalaureate Designation

Initially implemented in fall 2010, the provisional baccalaureate (admission index score of 70-84) allows students to be admitted above the associate level. Students admitted to the provisional baccalaureate are required to meet with advising staff on course selection and are placed in courses based on entering test scores (ACCUPLACER, ACT, etc.). In the first term of implementation of the provisional baccalaureate classification, 158 students were admitted. Based on GPA data for students in this index range, additional support and tools are offered for these students to help them succeed in college. Support includes the assignment of student mentors to assist in the development of fundamental study skills and work habits, which may best be accomplished in peer-to-peer interaction. Each provisional baccalaureate student is assigned a faculty advisor from one of the disciplines within the general education program. Since the majority of their initial coursework will be within the general education requirements, connecting early on with faculty members in those disciplines is an effective way to improve their chances of success. Because the regular baccalaureate admissions index score has now been raised to 92, the new index score for provisional baccalaureate admission is 75-91 effective for academic year 2013-14. As a result of raising the index score, there are approximately 400 entering undergraduates who are enrolled under this designation for the fall 2013 semester. CMU created an Office of Student Success in summer 2013 to address the academic needs of these students.

Mathematics Placement

Implementation of WGISAS recommendations in 2011-12 included creating a [Mathematics placement web page](#) to assist advisors and students regarding initial placement in math courses. Placement is determined by scores on ACT or ACCUPLACER tests. Students applying to the University, who do not qualify for higher-level math courses based on ACT scores, are directed to the ACCUPLACER website to find information on the math portion of the test as well as sample test questions to help them prepare for the test. While students who are not in the provisional baccalaureate program are not required to take developmental math courses, it is highly recommended by advisors and faculty that they do so when that is indicated by their test scores.

Pre-admission Testing for Incoming Freshman

The Testing Center orchestrates the administration of pre-admission testing by on-site availability or through the use of qualified proctors. Students who come to orientation and registration sessions take placement examinations prior to registration if ACT scores are not met in English, math or reading. [Workshops](#) are offered at WCCC to help prepare applicants for the ACCUPLACER admission test.

Early Alert System

Since 2007, the institution required mandatory reporting by faculty on students' academic performance during the fifth week of class each semester through the Early Alert System. This applied to all first-year students (i.e., those with fewer than 31 credit hours), probationary students, or student athletes who enrolled for at least 12 credit hours for the term. Faculty reports were placed into a database housed in the Office of Institutional Research. Students were designated as having satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress and contacted by email regarding their status. Faculty advisors of students making unsatisfactory progress were also copied on the email and encouraged to contact them to make advising appointments. WGISAS determined that reporting at the fifth week was already too late for students who were off to a poor start and too early in some courses that had later assessments. An [optional third- and eighth-week reporting was added](#) and faculty were encouraged to post comments in Early Alert to give student positive, as well as corrective feedback.

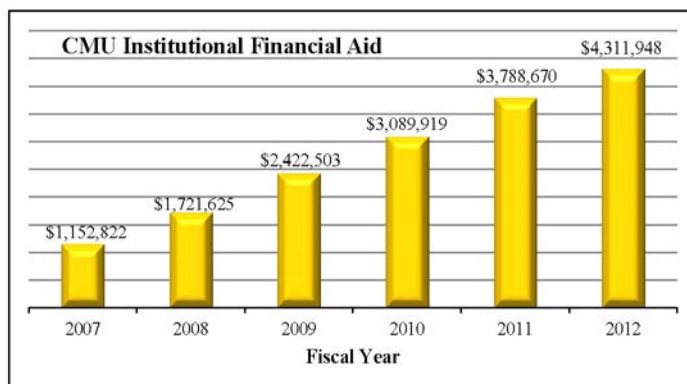
Limitations on Course Attempts

[Students who fail the same course repeatedly](#) may not know how they need to change their behavior to be successful in the course.

Since these students may have other issues that need to be addressed (e.g., learning disabilities) or be following courses of study that are not appropriate, options are being examined that would give such students a chance to discuss with advisors the skills that are necessary for success or, perhaps, a change in major or career path.

Financial Aid Strategies

Total financial aid paid to students increased from \$28 million in fiscal year 2005 to \$74 million in fiscal year 2012 based on all forms of aid to undergraduates. During this time, the Office of Financial Aid has worked with the Office of Institutional Research to more closely align awarding and packaging of financial aid with the institution's Strategic Plan. CMU has demonstrated its [continued commitment to assisting students financially by increasing institutional aid](#) from \$700,000 in fiscal year 2003-04 to \$4.3 million in fiscal year 2011-12. In fall 2012, 42 percent of institutional merit-based awards were given to students with documented financial need.



During a retention and financial aid review in 2009, it was shown that students who received work-study funds were retained at a higher rate and had higher GPAs than those who did not receive work-study funds. It was also shown that a great number of students had requested work-study but the available federal and state funds were insufficient to meet the demand. In response, the institution developed the MavWorks program, an institutional-based work-study program targeting students with little or no documented financial need. The program, piloted in 2010 with 47 students and a payout of \$46,646, grew to 274 students with a payout of \$480,888 in 2012.

The TRiO Program

Started in 2010 as a student assistance program co-sponsored by CMU and the U.S. Department of Education, this grant-funded program has the goal of providing academic and mentoring support throughout a student's academic career at CMU. A second goal of the program is to increase retention and graduation rates of first-generation, low-income, and disabled students. The program provides services for qualified students including tutoring, advising, counseling, financial aid advising, and mentoring.

Evidence Item 4C3-3. The University developed initiatives and services intended to enhance student engagement.

CMU has created opportunities across many of its disciplines that emphasize student involvement on campus and in the classroom. These experiences can help sharpen students' abilities to think critically, spark their creative ideas and sense of discovery, and extend their understanding of concepts beyond academic coursework. Initiatives are aimed at bringing increased numbers of new students to campus and keeping existing students engaged while they are here, thereby improving retention and completion rates. Examples of relatively new initiatives and services include the following:

- Appointing a faculty member to coordinate the International Student Exchange Program for students enrolling abroad as well as for international students coming to CMU.
- Adding more intercollegiate men's and women's sports. The number of athletic programs expanded from 11 teams in 2004 to 23 teams in 2012.
- Expanding access to dining and recreation activities to increase interactions of commuter students with their residential peers.
- Restructuring child care to extend hours during days, nights, weekends, and breaks to allow students who are parents to have access to campus wellness and recreation activities.
- Targeting students through a number of intramural and club sports, wellness classes, campus life activities, and entertainment and more than 80 clubs and organizations ranging from academic interests to cultural interests.

- Providing opportunities in adventure and education locally, nationally, and internationally through the [Outdoor Program](#).
- Enhancing activity by the [Cultural Diversity Board](#), a student organization made up of cultural clubs.

Sub-component 4.C.4. 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 the determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to use measures that are suitable to the student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of the measures).

Evidence Item 4C4-1. CMU utilizes the federal IPEDS definition for establishing criteria on student retention and completion; the University also uses internal methodologies for associate and certificate programs based on accepted statistical approaches.

Institutionally, CMU uses IPEDS guidelines and definitions to calculate retention and completion rates. These guidelines represent standard higher education practice. The retention and graduation rate components of the IPEDS survey analyze data on the cohort of first-time, full-time, degree- and certificate-seeking undergraduates and track students for 150 percent of the normal time of their program to see how many complete. (For CMU baccalaureate students this is a six-year window.) This information is collected as part of the Student Right-to-Know Act.

A slight variation in reporting is made to the State of Colorado as part of the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) requirements under the institution's performance contract. As part of the contract, retention and graduation rates for cohorts based on IPEDS definitions are reported, but data are also reported on students who transfer to or graduate from other Colorado institutions. CMU also uses internal methodologies and processes based on best practices in research methods to collect and analyze data from populations of students in certificate and associate programs, as well as transfer students who are not reported as part of the federal IPEDS definitions. These methodologies are based on accepted and proven statistical analysis.

Sources

	Admissions_CCHE - Eligibility
	Advising Center_Historical Statistics
	Advising Center_Improvements
	Assessment Survey - ACT Student Opinion Survey_2012
	Assessment Survey - Community College Survey of Student Engagement - 2008 and 2011 Compare
	Assessment Survey - Comparison of NSSE and FSSE Results 2011
	Athletics_Institution Graduation Report 2012_NCAA
	Career Services Statistics
	Career Services_Improvements
	CCHE Admissions Index_Chart
	CCHE-CMU Performance Contract Report 2011 (Page 6)
	Cultural Diversity Board AY 2012-13_Web Page
	EAS_Program Changes
	Faculty_T2T Spring 2013 Event
	Faculty_T2T Teaching Tips
	Financial Aid - Awards Paid to Students FY 2004-2012
	IPEDS - Comparison with other institutions
	LASSI Inventory and Hold_CMUAdvising
	Math Placement ACT/SAT
	MavSuccess_The Herd Guide
	Outdoor Program
	Retention and completion rates baccalaureate cohorts
	Retention_Admissions Index_Band
	Retention_Application_Registration Date
	Retention_Data Mining Example_FreshmenSuccess
	Retention_Graduation_Gender
	Retention_Provisional Baccalaureate Students
	Retention_Residence Hall
	Retention_Student-Athletes

	Retention-persistence-graduation rates by year
	Strategic Plan 2005 (Page 23)
	Strategic Plan 2011 (Page 22)
	Strategic Plan 2011 (Page 27)
	Strategic Plan 2011 (Page 9)
	Students_Returning by Degree and Year 2003-2010
	Testing Center_Improvements
	TLC_EAS_TC_ Statistics
	TLC_Improvements
	TRiO Student Support Services_Web Page
	WCCC_CEC_Catalog_Fall_1213 (Page 17)
	Withdrawal Survey Form
	Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success_Final Report_2011 (Page 26)
	Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success_Final Report_2011 (Page 53)
	Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success_Final Report_2011 (Page 57)

Criterion 4: Conclusion, Strengths, and Recommendations

CMU Response

Conclusion

Criterion 4 addresses program review, credit for course work, graduate success, assessment, retention, persistence, and graduation rates. Program reviews have been in place since 2007, and the process has recently undergone a revision. While general education and program assessment have been ongoing since 2006, revision to the current assessment methods is in progress. Information gathered from assessment has been beneficial to some programs; however, more documentation of course or program revisions as a result of assessment needs to occur. There also needs to be more consistency in reporting assessment of learning outcomes across all methods of delivery. Retention, persistence, and completion rates are under constant review by the institution. Experiencing a downward trend in those rates, CMU took measures to improve academics and services to enable students the opportunity to not only continue in their coursework but graduate and become gainfully employed and further their education in their chosen fields. The results have been significant improvements in retention and graduation rates.

Strengths

- CMU is committed to demonstrating the quality of education it provides for all of its students.
- CMU has integrated program review and assessment into the University culture.
- Positive changes in retention and completion rates resulted from the implementation of recommendations from the Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success.

Recommendations

- The University should continue its initiatives for involving all faculty members in assessment and for implementing program changes based on assessment outcomes. Faculty members will continue to develop assessment plans based on the program learning outcomes that were created in 2012-13. Departments will begin structured data collection in fall, 2013. The Assessment Committee has been tasked with critically reviewing all program assessment plans and working with programs to assure compliance. Revisions in the program review manual also include an enhanced assessment review process.
- CMU should work to connect assessment of student learning on the main campus more closely to assessment on the Montrose and WCCC campuses. Course assessment and evaluation also need to be expanded to include the High School Scholars Program.
- As CMU monitors assessment of program effectiveness in co-curricular activities, it should also continue to develop assessment of student learning in these areas. Both academic departments and academic and student service support offices will work in the curricular and co-curricular aspects of student learning. As assessment is strengthened across the campus, continuous improvement will be evident not only in academic areas but in the co-curricular areas, student services, and campus life as well.

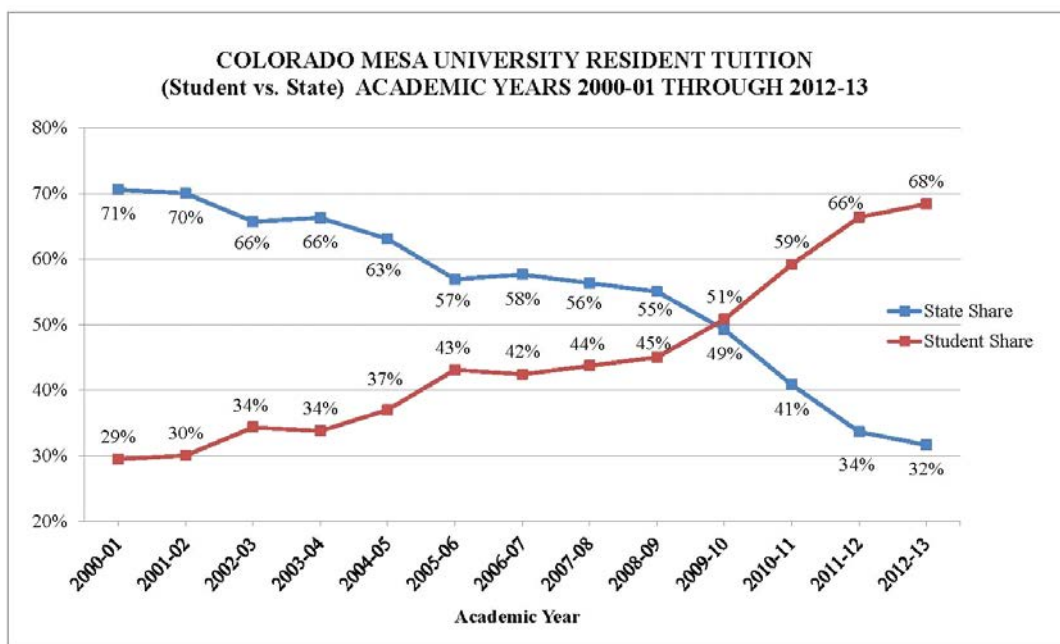
Criterion 5: Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

CMU Response

Introduction

The long-term financial health of Colorado Mesa University has changed dramatically over the past decade. With a governing board appointed to oversee a single institution since 2003, CMU's trustees have worked to secure resources, organize structures, and implement processes that support and enhance the University's capacity to fulfill its role and mission. Faced with a budget deficit in fiscal year 2003-04, the new administration implemented a budgeting approach that recognized the shift in the University's funding from the State of Colorado to the student was accelerating. That recognition led to a series of initiatives that has broadened the financial base of the University and reduced budget inefficiencies. As is the case in many states, other sectors of the State's budget were growing while higher education's share was shrinking. In 2000, 44 percent of CMU's budget came from the General Assembly, a proportion that has dwindled to its current level of less than 10 percent. The financial scenario has been made even more challenging due to the University's commitment, as a regional public institution, to keep tuition and fee increases at their lowest possible levels.



In spite of these circumstances, however, the University has used its strategic planning process to keep budget priorities focused on CMU's core mission, thereby enabling it to expand and improve the quality of its educational offerings, give annual faculty and staff salary increases, renovate nearly every building on campus, build additional classrooms and residence halls, and invest heavily in technologies to support the work of faculty, staff, and students. Each step is an indication that the institution learns from its experiences and is effectively and continuously monitoring changes in its demographic, social, political, and fiscal environments. In sum, the University has moved forward by evolving into a nimble, adaptable organizational culture that is proactive and responsive to its opportunities and challenges.

Core Component 5.A

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

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

CMU Response

Introduction

Colorado Mesa University focuses its resource base on delivering high quality educational programs, reflected in its current investments and future goals. Plans for reduced reliance on state support, reserved tuition capacity for future years, a competitive pricing advantage, institutional flexibility with student financial aid packaging, growth in resident and non-resident enrollments, and strong operating margins all have positioned CMU to strengthen its resource base to meet the uncertainties of the future. As it adapts to both short-term uncertainties and expected longer-term reductions in state and federal funding, CMU has created an operating contingency that was nonexistent in 2003 and exceeded \$4 million in fiscal year 2011-12.

CMU has budgeted on the assumption that state funding will continue to decline below 10 percent of total revenues, and this assumption serves two purposes: it positions the University to manage financial self-sufficiency in a worst-case scenario, should all state funding be eliminated, and it guarantees the University "enterprise" status according to the Colorado Constitution, thus preserving future tuition/revenue flexibility for CMU's Board of Trustees. Under the Colorado Constitution, [the Taxpayer Bill of Rights \(TABOR\)](#) imposes artificial limits on the growth of government programs not considered to be separate "enterprises" of the state. The unique role of colleges and universities and the diversity of revenue sources supporting their operations qualify most institutions as an "enterprise." The evidence items presented in this core component are organized around four primary resource categories – fiscal, human/intellectual, physical and/or technology – and addressed in the context of the University's goals as articulated in its [2011 Strategic Plan](#).

Sub-component 5.A.1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

Evidence Item 5A1-1. CMU has sufficient fiscal resources to support its operations.

In fiscal year 2003-04, the University's expenditures were exceeding its revenue. As one of four institutions making up the former State Colleges in Colorado system, Colorado Mesa University (then-Mesa State College (MSC)) had limited control over its future development, both programmatic and fiscal. With the dissolution of the State Colleges system in 2003 and the appointment of a Board of Trustees whose primary responsibility was MSC, the institution gained total control over its own operations. A new president, chief academic officer, and chief financial officer were hired in 2004, and all remain in their respective positions today. Since fiscal year 2004-05, the institution has significantly improved its fiscal situation through strategic planning, budget discipline, and the alignment of resources with University priorities. The [institution's credit rating](#) went from "A3" in 2005 to "A2" with "a positive outlook" in 2012. The results of the collective efforts of faculty and staff are evident when the fiscal performance of the institution for fiscal years 2002-03 through 2011-12 is examined.

COMPARISON OF CMU FISCAL SUMMARY, 2003 AND 2012

	2003 (\$K)	2012 (\$K)
Revenue	41,025	91,587
Expenses	41,261	84,611
Net	(-236)	6,976
Operating margin (5)	-0.58%	7.62%
Capital Appropriations & Other	2,652	(836)
Net Assets	54,594	167,327

Operating efficiencies, pricing adjustments, and expansion of the auxiliary business activities all contributed to a new fiscal environment. Departments and offices that previously operated under a “use it or lose it” budget practice, now functioned differently by retaining unspent funds to encourage their wisest use. After several years in the early 2000s when no salary adjustments were given, an annual review of funding for faculty and staff salaries began. The review process takes into account inflation and market, and as shown below, adjustments have been given each year since 2005-06. In fiscal year 2006-07, a merit reward system was implemented to recognize and reward performance (see [exemplary funding for faculty](#) as an example).

CMU FACULTY ANNUAL SALARY ADJUSTMENTS, AY 2005-06 THROUGH AY 2013-14

Academic Year	Adjustment*
2005 - 06	3.00%
2006 - 07	2.90%
2007 - 08	3.50%
2008 - 09	2.80%
2009 - 10	3.75%
2010 - 11	2.65%
2011 - 12	2.05%
2012 - 13	3.80%
2013 - 14	2.75%

*Percentage represents adjustments to all full-time faculty base salaries and excludes additional changes due to market that were program and/or rank based, etc.

Evidence Item 5A1-2. CMU successfully leverages a variety of fiscal resources.

In an era of reduced state appropriations, CMU has invested its fiscal resources wisely in order to expand the University's academic program inventory and invest in updating the campus infrastructure and technology support. A key element in the University's financial restructuring to make these improvements has been the partnerships it has developed with diverse community stakeholders (e.g. state capital funding, city and county government agencies, local school districts, and federal and corporate grants) that have enabled CMU to leverage its own investments.

A prime example of leveraging fiscal resources is the development of the Mechanical Engineering Partnership Program with the University of Colorado Boulder. In addition to sharing costs and revenues with the Boulder campus, and shortly after implementing the partnership, the CMU Real Estate Foundation issued a low-interest bond through the Colorado Education and Capital Financing Authority to purchase land and buildings – known as the Leitner-Poma property – contiguous to the University's community college site. The 2009 acquisition included 10 acres of land and three buildings, one of which now serves as the home for the mechanical engineering partnership program, as well as the CMU program in construction management and the WCCC manufacturing technology program. The tax-exempt bond had a 10-year maturity and was awarded to Leitner-Poma in lieu of cash. The bond was secured by a corresponding 10-year lease of the buildings and property between the Foundation and the University at a rate of \$417,634 per year, the proceeds of which were then used by the Foundation to pay off the bond. The bond indenture included a provision of early pre-payment without penalty. Through approved transfers of funds from the University, the Foundation pre-paid the bond in fiscal year 2011-12 – six years early – and immediately transferred the title of the property to the University. Since the acquisition of the Leitner-Poma property, the University has invested an additional \$2.6 million in improvements for the academic programs at that site. The facility and improvements are debt free.

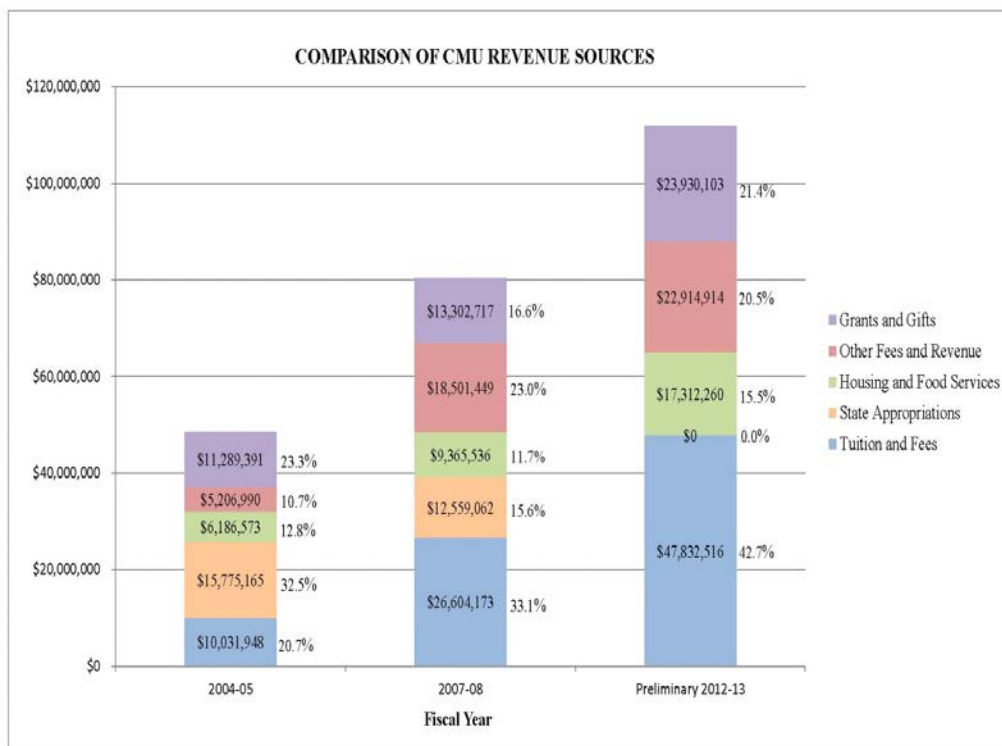
A second example of CMU's ability to leverage financial resources is the \$1.5 million renovation of the Montrose Campus in 2012. With an ambitious capital campaign, the goal of raising \$1 million in the Montrose community was launched in order to

renovate the physical campus and outfit it with equipment and technology comparable to CMU's main campus. In addition to individual contributions and grants from various foundations, the City of Montrose contributed nearly \$500,000 and Montrose County contributed \$150,000. By combining funds from numerous sources, CMU was able to complete a major capital project that significantly improved the Montrose learning environment without raising tuition or fees in the process. For more details on this project, see Evidence Item 5A1-4 below.

Yet a third example of the University's leveraging is the authority it secured to manage its investments. Prior to 2007-08, all Colorado public institutions – with the exception of the University of Colorado – were required to invest all of their cash and investments with Colorado's State Treasurer's Office. In 2008, Colorado Revised Statutes 23-53-103 granted the [CMU Board of Trustees the authority to invest the University's financial assets](#). Colorado State University was also given investment authority, and today, only the University of Colorado, Colorado State University, and Colorado Mesa University have this authority. Since the passage of the legislation, the University's original investment of \$5 million has grown to almost \$6.5 million, a cumulative return of 26.6 percent (as of January 2013) while the State Treasurer has achieved a cumulative return of only 12.3 percent for the same period. In keeping with the University's conservative fiscal practices, none of the gains or income has been spent, protecting the institution against market volatility and serving as a contingency for unexpected challenges and/or opportunities.

A fourth example of leveraging is illustrated by the financial support for the University from government agencies and local organizations. The City of Grand Junction and Mesa County annually contribute \$500,000 and \$100,000, respectively, to facilitate campus expansion consistent with the [West Expansion Property Acquisition Project Program Plan](#), which was approved by the trustees in April 2011. In fiscal year 2012-13, both agencies increased their support of CMU in recognition of the [significant role the University plays in the development of the regional economy](#) (Regional Economic Impact Study, p. 4). Further, CMU receives generous monetary support annually from businesses, alumni, and individual friends of the institution. For the period fiscal year 2002-03 through 2010-11, businesses and organizations gave approximately \$14 million, alumni gave nearly \$3 million, and individuals gave \$3.7 million, for a [combined total of nearly \\$21 million in cash donations from individuals/businesses/organizations in the 14 Western Colorado counties](#).

Finally, perhaps the best example of CMU's ability to leverage its financial resources is found in the deliberate, strategic realignment of costs with price over a six-year period (fiscal years 2006-2011). The University's tuition and fee structure in 2004 was one where the institution did not charge for a significant share of the coursework it delivered. Quite simply, CMU only charged tuition for enrollments up to 11 credit hours and those over 22, effectively giving away the revenue for all credit hours between 12 and 21. While this approach was based on the traditional assumption that the State of Colorado would effectively "underwrite" costs associated with this model, by 2005, that funding model for higher education became even less reliable, as each fiscal year's support became less and less certain as shown below.



Thus the annual goal of balancing quality and price was not only out of equilibrium, but also an incentive existed for students to enroll in up to 21 credit hours – sometimes in multiple sections of the same course – and decide later which classes they wanted to take or drop. No financial penalty existed for such behaviors, and the scenario had the second negative consequence of precluding other students from registering in high demand classes.

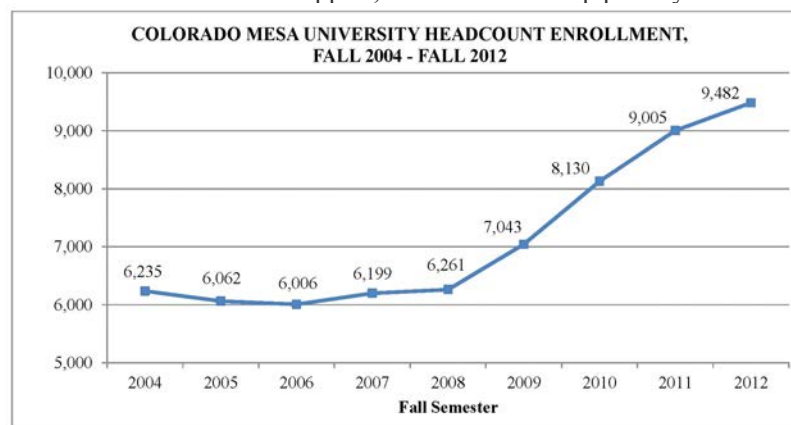
The University ranked ninth lowest in tuition and fees of the 12 four-year public institutions in Colorado in 2005 when it developed a multi-year plan to align cost with price. Beginning in fiscal year 2005-06, the University began the gradual closure of the free “tuition window” from the bottom up and the top down. By fiscal year 2010-11, the University finished its transition to a linear tuition model by charging all new students by the credit hour while grandfathering all currently enrolled students. A [comparison of tuition and fees for four-year Colorado public institutions for fiscal year 2012-13](#) shows that, while implementing this linear tuition model, CMU remains competitive, ranking eighth, and has experienced some of the highest enrollment growth rates across the state.

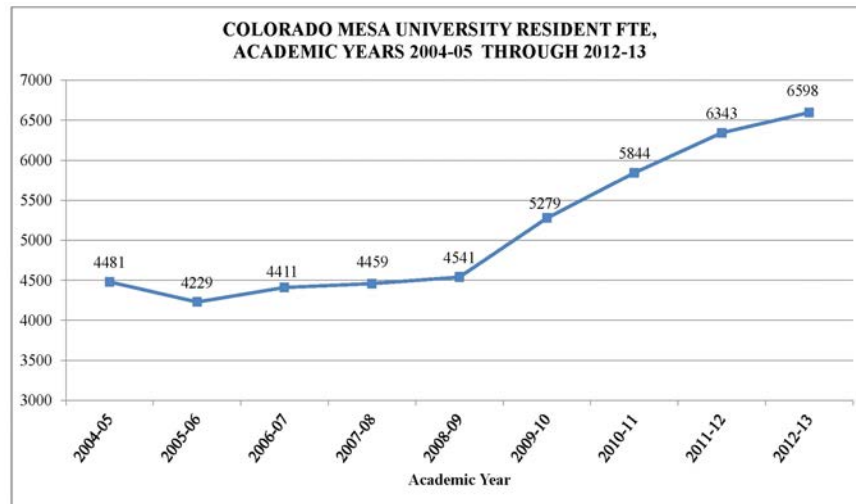
The by-products from this pricing realignment were numerous:

- Declining state revenues were supplanted with tuition revenues.
- Academic programs were enhanced and expanded with new revenues.
- Resources necessary to transform facilities and update technologies into a high-quality learning environment became available.
- Most student fees, both programmatic and mandatory, were eliminated. CMU has the lowest student fees of all four-year institutions in Colorado.
- Institutional student financial aid grew six-fold during this period.
- Administrative efficiencies were realized through the reduction in processing of dropped courses and associated adjustments to financial aid.

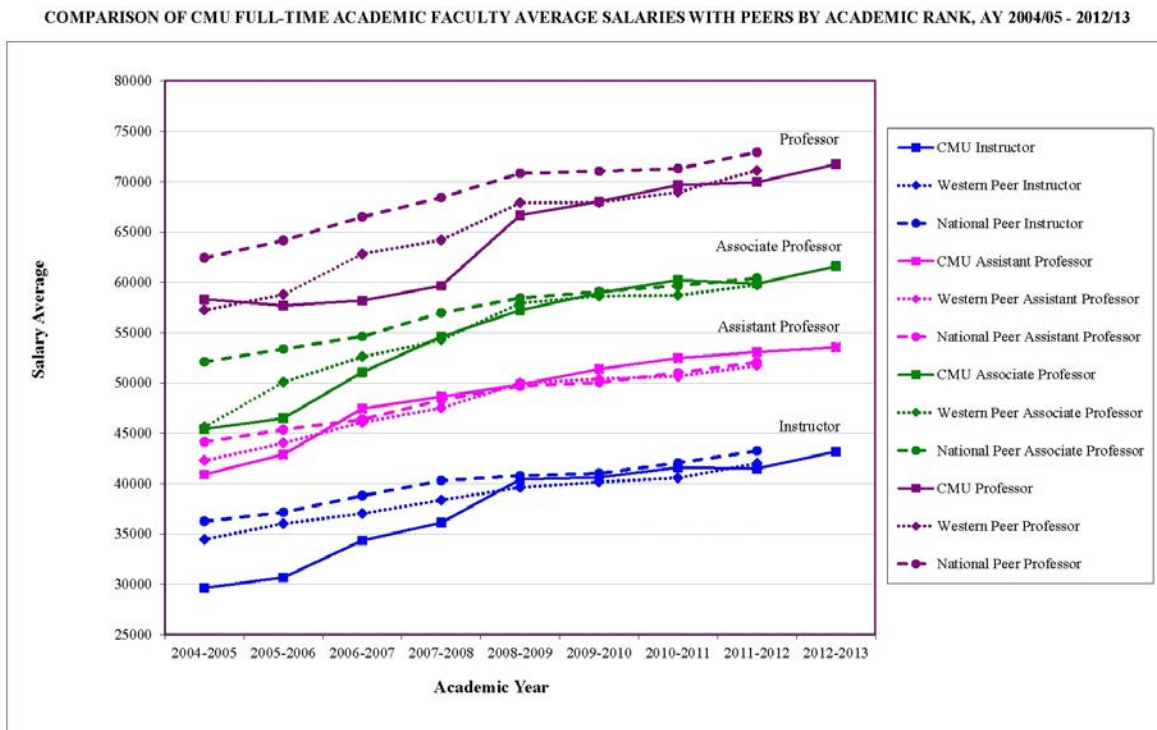
Evidence Item 5A1-3. CMU has sufficient human resources to support its operations.

The growth in student enrollments and the commitment to continuous improvement have been addressed through the intentional allocation of funding for instruction and instructional support, the institution's top priority.





From fiscal year 2003-04 to 2011-12, expenditures for instruction grew from \$14.5 million to \$25.5 million (+76 percent), and expenditures for support services and scholarships grew from \$11.2 million to \$26.5 million (+137 percent). One result of these fiscal allocations was the recruitment and hiring of additional full- and part-time faculty, in response to the growing enrollment pressures, along with the planned commitment to increase faculty salaries in an effort to be more competitive.



Source: IPEDS Faculty Salary Surveys

The University also has recognized the importance of staffing academic support and student services in meeting the needs of a growing student population, although hires for instruction have been a higher priority. As a result, CMU increased instructional full-time equivalents (FTEs) by 26 percent and academic/student support FTEs by 11 percent between fiscal years 2007-08 and 2011-12 (see additional discussion in Evidence Item 3C1-1).

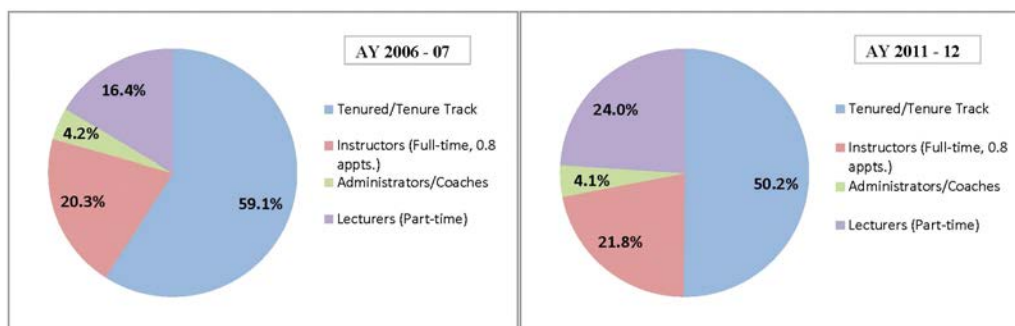
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) EMPLOYEES BY FUNCTION, FY 2007-08 THROUGH FY 2011-12

Education & General FTE*	Fiscal Year					Change FY 2007-08 to FY 2011-12	
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	#	%
Instruction	283.80	297.50	289.90	320.76	356.48	72.68	25.6%
Academic Support	45.20	44.00	45.90	47.48	49.99	4.79	10.6%
Student Services	58.00	62.40	66.00	70.17	82.61	24.61	42.4%
Institutional Support	25.70	28.20	30.70	28.41	26.65	0.95	3.7%
Plant	27.90	33.60	31.90	32.19	31.27	3.37	12.1%
Total E & G FTE	440.60	465.70	464.40	499.01	547.00	106.40	24.1%

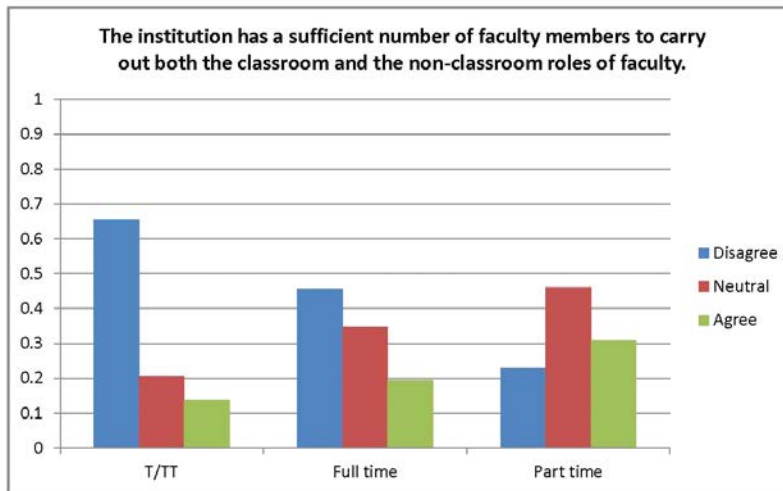
The administration has practiced a [fiscally prudent budget strategy of hiring](#) cautiously in the event that future enrollment growth slowed, given the uncertainty of the duration of the enrollment surge that began in fall 2009 (Trustees Meeting Agenda, August 18, 2011, p. 9). The impact of the growth between fall 2009 through fall 2011 was offset by [hiring a combination of additional full-time, tenure-track professors, non-tenure-track instructors, and part-time lecturers](#). The total number of full-time faculty increased from 191 to 217 between fiscal years 2007-08 and 2011-12, while part-time faculty (lecturers) grew from 285 to 299. Within these increases have been some significant shifts in full-time faculty appointments, particularly in the assistant professorial rank, as faculty in higher ranks have retired. This dynamic is especially noteworthy when one observes that in fiscal year 2004-05, CMU had only 13 assistant professors, and by fiscal year 2012-13 the number reached 68.

The graphs below show that the credit hours generated by each faculty type for academic years 2006-07 through 2011-12 have changed. The data reflect an overall growth in student credit hours of more than 47 percent. To accommodate the rapid growth, the proportion of credit hours taught by full-time faculty (tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track) declined 10 percentage points during this period. It should be pointed out, however, that CMU full-time faculty members still deliver more than 70% of all student credit hours.

CMU STUDENT CREDIT HOUR GENERATION BY FACULTY TYPE, AY 2006-07 AND AY 2011-12

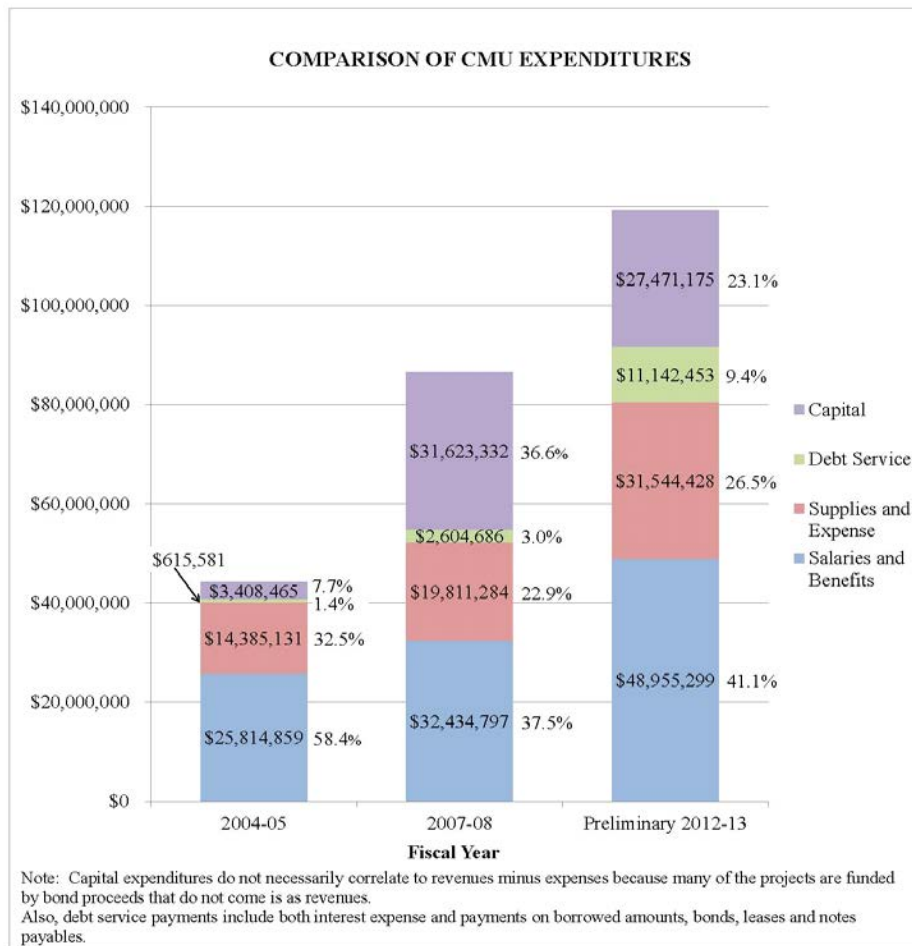


Although significant gains have been made, the hiring of faculty and staff still lags behind the growth in enrollments, leading to increased workloads for all personnel. The graph below shows the results from the fall 2012 self-study survey of faculty and indicates that the faculty, particularly tenured and tenure-track faculty, are concerned about their ability to carry out their classroom and non-classroom roles.



Graph based on data from survey taken by faculty in 2012.

The data also make it clear that additional academic and student support staff are needed, especially in areas that directly interact with students, such as advising, library, and student services. The administration concurs with these concerns, and in recent years, has increased the proportion of the budget allocated to salaries and benefits and will continue to add faculty and staff positions as resources permit.



In sum, the pressures of funding constraints, coupled with three consecutive years of significant enrollment growth, have placed a serious strain on the University's human resources. As noted above, CMU's administration recognizes the on-going funding priority of hiring additional faculty and staff. In that context, then, it is especially noteworthy that the faculty and staff indicate a high level of satisfaction with the institution. In response to the statement "I am satisfied with being a part of our organization" from the fall 2012 self-study survey of employees, more than 70 percent of all employment categories agreed or strongly agreed

with the statement, as summarized below.



Graph based on data from survey taken by faculty in 2012.



Graph based on data from survey taken by staff in 2012.

Evidence Item 5A1-4. CMU has sufficient physical resources to support its operations.

New facilities have been designed and constructed with the input of faculty, staff, and students. As an example, both the Academic Classroom Building that opened in fall 2008 and the renovation of Houston Hall completed in fall 2011 incorporated “smart” classroom technology and student study areas for breakout sessions. As described above, the [acquisition of land and buildings](#), including that at the Leitner-Poma site in Foresight Business Park – one block from the Bishop Campus and three miles from the main campus – has enabled the expansion of academic programs. Including the list of recent major [capital projects](#), the additions have essentially doubled the available square footage of the campus buildings over the past decade, using funding from a combination of state funds, bonds, gifts, and University reserves. Since 2003, the University's facilities have expanded from 876,261 square feet to 1,722,264 square feet by the end of fiscal year 2011-12.

As noted in Evidence Item 5A1-2, the Board approved the Program Plan: West Expansion Property Acquisition Project in 2011 to continue growth of the main campus that began in 1999. Since then, the Colorado Mesa University Real Estate Foundation has been acquiring property on the University’s behalf and, beginning in 2004 with the approval of the [House Demolition and Ground Recovery Project](#), began gifting the properties to the University. Originally, the 2004 program plan was projected to take 15 years to complete. By April 2011, however, only five properties remained to be acquired. Early completion of the program plan, coupled with the unprecedented enrollment growth, placed the University in a position of proceeding with phase two of the [land expansion plan](#) needed for the University's long-term viability and growth. The additional property consists of 214 residential lots, two churches, and 21 commercial properties, comprising a total of 77.3 acres. In addition, the plan includes acquiring the affected city streets and alleys that fall within the University's boundaries.

In August 2012, the trustees prioritized the renovation of Tomlinson Library as the University's number two capital priority after a new classroom building. When the Associated Student Government (ASG) identified the library renovation and expansion as the

number one capital priority of students in fall 2012, the Board approved proceeding with a new classroom building in January 2013, thereby elevating the library project to the number one priority. Since then, a library consultant has worked in concert with the campus architect and University faculty, administration, and student representatives to determine the amount and type of additional needed space. Their charge is to look 20 years into the future, anticipating growth and integrating flexible spaces that can be easily adapted to changing needs and technologies. A preliminary program was completed and an architect was selected in March 2013. The University anticipates finalizing the building design during academic year 2013-14.

In addition to allocating resources to growth of the main campus, CMU is also committed to improvements at its other sites, namely the Montrose and Bishop Campuses. In these cases, the University has elected not to invest in program plans for projects valued at less than \$2 million, since plans are not required by the State. Thus, the process is less formal, involving representatives of the affected offices or departments, the relevant vice president, and the President. The following projects do not have plans but rather schematic designs that are used to guide the projects to completion.

As described above, a \$1.5 million renovation of the Montrose facility was completed in August 2012, co-funded by CMU and the community. The campus is housed in a former elementary school building and leased from the Montrose Regional Library District. Although the district funded some renovations prior to CMU's move into the facility in 1998, the building still reflected the setting of an elementary school. Students had to take science classes at the local high school because the building lacked a science lab. The site also needed a student computer lab, as only an instructional lab was available, and it lacked space for faculty members to meet with students.

The Montrose renovation transformed the 1935 building into a contemporary higher education learning center. Capital improvements included the addition of a student computer lab, a meeting room with interactive technology capabilities, and areas for group and individual study. The redesign allowed for more efficient use of classrooms with improved lighting and acoustics. Major additions were specialized laboratory spaces for general science classes as well as the health sciences programs in nursing and medical office assisting. All classrooms and the instructional computer lab were equipped with the same technology as the main campus, and faculty can continue use of video-conferencing technology to link with other sites on the Western Slope. Each classroom was also outfitted with new furniture. These renovations reflect the University's commitment to allocating the necessary resources to support all of its programs.

At Western Colorado Community College (WCCC), the physical campus has been improved with significant input from faculty and staff. In order to better meet the needs of its career and technical programs, CMU acquired the building and property at 2501 Blichmann Avenue in spring 2012. Approximately one-third of the building was remodeled to accommodate the high school Medical Preparation Program, the post-secondary program in Medical Office Assistant, and the Certified Nurse Assistant Program in time for the fall 2012 semester. Building B was renovated for the integrated multimedia design and technology integration programs, as well as the CISCO Networking Academy with a dedicated server room and classroom space that models a real-world, information technology environment. To accommodate the expansion of the Culinary Arts program, a 2,400-square-foot general culinary laboratory and a 1,600-square-foot bakery lab were installed for use by fall 2013. Finally, the transportation lab was renovated with upgraded workbenches and equipment, a new hoist and alignment machine that was purchased with Perkins funds, and a new customer service center.

Evidence Item 5A1-5. CMU has sufficient technology resources to support its operations.

CMU has a strong commitment to technology and provides sufficient resources to manage its technology systems and services in support of the University's mission. Over the past seven years, CMU has invested in Information Technology (IT) through increasing annual operating budgets, the hiring of professional staff, and funding technology sustainability. Doing so has enabled the University to acquire new technologies that support operational efficiencies, as well as strengthen the University's core infrastructure and technology for delivery of its online learning.

IT Operations and Sustainability

The University's technology resources are centrally managed and supported by the Information Technology Department. The centralized management of IT systems and services is a primary means by which the University controls operating budgets while continuing to move the institution forward. Funding for IT operations is at an all-time high – more than doubling over the past 10 years – growing steadily from \$2 million in fiscal year 2002-03 to \$4.1 million in fiscal year 2012-13, including technology sustainability funds.

CMU has continually invested in its technology replacement planning since the University first centrally-funded PC replacements in fiscal year 2005-06. Six years later, the University had fully funded its \$1.1 million [Technology Sustainability Plan](#), which has proven to be an effective tool for managing hardware purchases. A significant portion of sustainability funding – approximately \$345,000 annually – is used for maintaining classroom and distance learning equipment. See Evidence Item 5C5-2 for additional information on sustaining facilities and technology.

The University has made a substantial investment in state-of-the-art classrooms over the past five years, spending more than \$3 million on instructional technology projects. The number of "smart" classrooms has increased to more than 160, from 113 in 2007, with the most significant accomplishment being the advancement in the quality of campus classroom video presentation systems. The [Academic Technology Advisory Council](#), along with CMU Information Technology Department staff, evaluated digital video presentation equipment and classroom practices, resulting in a true, fully-developed, digital classroom technology standard. This new standard was implemented for the first time in 28 classrooms as part of the Houston Hall renovation in 2011, and most recently with the Montrose Campus remodel in 2012.

Core IT systems and services are supported entirely by personnel located on the main campus, while computer support on the Montrose and WCCC campuses is performed by onsite technicians and/or student workers. Information Technology is responsible for overseeing technology projects and through rigorous purchasing processes has set campus standards for most hardware applied across all campuses. Although funding for IT operations is at an all-time high for the University, IT staffing levels would be considered lean by most campus metrics. Considering a 45 percent growth in student enrollment over four years, the University has funded five new IT positions, increasing the IT support staff to 24 FTE, a 25 percent increase. Additionally, the Information Technology Department went through a minor restructuring by separating desktop support from network services. A Computer Support Services Manager was hired to oversee improvements with the Help Desk.

Fiscal resources are dedicated to staff the Help Desk, which serves as the front line of the Information Technology Department. Ongoing department enhancement of Help Desk services has two main objectives: improve customer satisfaction and improve the efficiency of the Help Desk itself. In spring 2010, Information Technology personnel outlined a phased service desk project plan. The initial phases of the plan centered on new help desk software with integrated management of assets, software licensing, and system and software configuration change requests. In 2011, Web Help Desk was implemented and has created a sound foundation for accomplishing the help desk's customer satisfaction and efficiency objectives.

Investments in Technology

Colorado Mesa University has continually invested in technology in order to gain operational efficiencies across its administrative offices. With attention to economies of scale, the University has acquired software and technologies, illustrated by the campuswide implementation of an E-commerce solution. To improve student access to accounts and enable students to make online payments, CMU implemented TouchNet's Commerce Management system. In 2008, the University began evaluating E-commerce solutions with the primary objective of providing students with a seamless, single, secure payment method; this also benefited campus staff by improving the efficiency of payment handling. By fall 2009, the Payment Gateway and Bill+Payment modules were implemented, and through the campus MAVzone portal, students could access their account statements and make payments. Students, in turn, can authorize other individuals (e.g. parent, guardian) to make online payments on their behalf and decide what level of account detail the authorized user may see. TouchNet's integration with the Banner system automatically adjusts student billing and payment plans for activities such as course adds and drops.

Also in 2009, the first Marketplace online stores were developed. eBills and eRefunds became available to students, and cashiering stations were deployed at the Business Office, Parking Services, Testing Center, and Montrose Campus. By fiscal year 2011-12, approximately 9,590 students, plus 600 additional individuals who were authorized by students, accessed the TouchNet system. Additionally, the University had 39 online stores, with applications ranging from camp registrations to capital campaign fundraising, resulting in online sales through Marketplace exceeding \$1 million for fiscal year 2011-12. Initial cost of implementation was \$197,000 (plus \$100,000 annually), but the system improved the student experience and gained efficiencies in processing payments.

Investments in Infrastructure

CMU also has funded less visible, but extremely important, infrastructure upgrades. As part of the Wubben-Science Center expansion and renovation, the University constructed a 630-square-foot raised floor data center with redundant electrical and mechanical systems to replace an outdated server room that the campus had outgrown. Building a new data center also positioned the University to meet the technology demands of a rapidly expanding campus, and the data center's equipment and infrastructure upgrades have improved system availability. The cost of the data center redundant systems and equipment enclosures cost was in excess of \$300,000.

CMU's investment in server virtualization is another example of an infrastructure upgrade to improve the availability of applications and services as the University works toward providing 24/7 uptime of computer systems. In addition to improving the availability of services, server virtualization on campus has:

- reduced project timelines with fast server provisioning;
- decreased capital and operating costs by requiring fewer physical servers and increasing hardware utilization through pooled resources;

- afforded the campus a higher server to system administrator ratio and less after-hours maintenance; and
- improved disaster recovery planning.

The majority of the conventional servers on main campus and all of the servers on the Bishop and Montrose Campuses have been virtualized.

Investments in Online Delivery

In fiscal year 2010-11, the University invested \$200,000 to fund a strategic upgrade of its learning management system (LMS) and cover expenses for the phase out of WebCT. The University selected Desire2Learn's (D2L) Learning Environment following a lengthy, faculty-driven evaluation process. A Software as a Service (SaaS) delivery model for the LMS was selected as a cost effective way to increase support for online courses after-hours and weekends. By selecting D2L's managed hosted service option, Learning Environment was installed in D2L's high-availability data centers, which are staffed for 24/7 support. During this transition, CMU invested in instructional design and technical support time to migrate over 580 courses, training faculty and system administrators, and integrating the new online platform with campus systems.

In support of distance education, CMU added a second instructional designer in January 2011. In summer 2012, the institution reconfigured the position of Director of Extended Studies and hired an Assistant Vice President/Director of Distance Education. Investment has continued in electronic resources in Tomlinson Library – approximately \$175,000 in fiscal year 2012-13 – for online database subscriptions. Approximately 24 percent of the library's holdings can be accessed electronically and are available across all CMU campuses as well as off-campus locations. The [Library Fact Sheet](#) reports the amount of inventory in various information formats and a numerical measure of the services provided. It also shows library budgeted book allocations, usage of interlibrary loans, and a description of Prospector, all of which represent ongoing fiscal commitments.

Sub-component 5.A.2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.

Evidence Item 5A2-1. CMU is an independent public university with no superordinate entity to which it disburses revenues.

CMU was one of four institutions in the former State Colleges in Colorado System until that governing board was dissolved in spring 2003 and replaced with four separate boards. This change ended the need to disperse revenue to any superordinate entity. CMU supports all of its sites, and allocation of resources to these entities is controlled through a detailed budgeting process. In fiscal year 2002-03, the last year of the State Colleges in Colorado System, all funding for the four state colleges – Colorado Mesa University (then-Mesa State College), Adams State University, Metropolitan State University of Denver, and Western State Colorado University – flowed through the system office. The system retained the first \$2.5 million for operations and to perform duties such as institutional oversight, policy development and implementation, system accounting, interaction with the State Auditor, State Controller, the Office of State Planning and Budget, and political advocacy on behalf of the four state colleges. CMU's share of the \$2.5 million was nearly \$1.3 million. When the system was dissolved, the four schools were the beneficiaries of the eliminated costs. The University has replaced services previously provided by system staff for an investment of \$298,000, resulting in a \$1 million benefit to Colorado Mesa.

Sub-component 5.A.3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.

Evidence Item 5A3-1. CMU is guided by well-articulated, realistic strategic goals that provide context for identifying annual priorities.

As discussed in Criterion 1, CMU's Mission, Vision, and Values Statements – articulated in its [2011 Strategic Plan](#) (p. 13) – guide the University's operations. Appropriate for CMU as a regional public institution with a strong teaching orientation, data measuring the University's progress are reported in the annual [Success Matrix](#). Additionally, monitoring data through fiscal year 2011-12 (the last required year) were submitted to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education based on its [performance contract](#) with CMU's Board of Trustees. The significant progress toward achieving the strategic goals demonstrates that goals are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities, and they are being addressed through ongoing efforts.

Sub-component 5.A.4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.

Evidence Item 5A4-1. CMU has established policies and procedures for hiring appropriately qualified and trained faculty

and staff. CMU ensures that all hiring practices and processes are inclusive.

CMU has established policies and procedures for hiring appropriately qualified and trained faculty and staff. The University has board-approved [terminal degrees for full-time faculty hires in academic programs](#). Academic departments also have guidelines for evaluating full-time, non-tenure track hires as well as those teaching part-time who have experience or expertise in lieu of at least a master's degree in the discipline or a related field, though the credentialing varies from department to department. Similarly, [minimum qualifications for full-time career/technical education faculty](#) have been identified. As described in Evidence Item 3C2-2, 99 percent of CMU full-time faculty meet or exceed minimum qualifications, but the credentialing of WCCC faculty members needs to be strengthened. WCCC full-time technical faculty members are a mix of qualified and under-qualified instructors, with only 35 percent meeting minimum qualifications. This is especially problematic for several programs where no faculty member currently holds at least a bachelor's degree.

Exempt staff qualifications vary by position, according to required education, experience, knowledge, and skills articulated in position descriptions housed in Human Resources. The University follows hiring procedures of the state's system for the hiring of classified employees. Policies and procedures are delineated in the [Faculty and Administrative Search Procedures Manual](#), and each search committee includes a staff member trained as an affirmative action representative. A review of staff credentials, described in Evidence Item 3C6-2, documents that they possess appropriate qualifications and that they participate in on-going professional development as [illustrated by the list of activities in which Academic Affairs and Student Services staff have engaged](#).

Sub-component 5.A.5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expenses.

Evidence Item 5A5-1. Budgets are monitored by the Vice President for Finance and Administration and the Budget Director, with reports reviewed quarterly by the Board of Trustees.

The CMU budget process is ongoing and continuous. The process begins with a [briefing on the budget process](#) to the trustees by the Vice President for Finance and Administration at their meeting in mid- to late fall (Trustee Meeting Agenda, November 13, 2012, p. 15). The budget process identifies the guiding principles related to the University's strategic priorities and initiatives that guide budget development. Both instructional and non-instructional department heads are provided with a [budget packet](#) in early December, which includes the guiding principles, a timeline, assumptions, projected cost increases for specific items, a budget and a form for supporting narrative to explain proposed increases. The completed packets are submitted to the Budget Director in late January, and hearings are held in February to discuss each unit's request. The Board receives a [Financial Dashboard](#) quarterly, and it approves the annual budget in May, following the close of the legislative session.

Budgets are monitored by the Vice President for Finance and Administration and the Budget Director. In addition, quarterly reports which compare current operations with prior-year budgets are reviewed, and department administrators are contacted if concerns arise. [Budget summaries](#) are shared with the Board at its meetings (see example from March 2012). Department administrators are provided with training to access budget information, as needed, in order to encourage continuous budget monitoring. See Component 5.C for additional details.

Sources

	Academic Technology Advisory Committee
	Budget Request Packet_FY 2013
	CCHE-CMU Performance Contract Report 2011
	CMU Expenditures 2004 - 2012
	Donations to CMU 2003-2011
	Economic Impact Study 2013 (Page 4)
	Facilities_Capital Projects
	Facilities_Expansion Plan Map
	Facilities_House Demolition_Ground Recovery Project
	Facilities_Property_Facilities-Land-Building Purchases
	Faculty and Administrative Search Procedure Manual
	Faculty by Appointment Type
	Faculty Evaluation Criteria by Department 2009
	Faculty Terminal Degrees and In Lieu of Instructors and Lecturers
	Faculty Exemplary Faculty Award Criteria April 2011
	Faculty_WCCC Credentials

-  [IT_Technology Sustainability Plan](#)
-  [IT_Utility Master Plan 2012](#)
-  [Legislation_CRS 23 53 103_Investment Authority](#)
-  [Legislation_TABOR Amendment](#)
-  [Library Fact Sheet 2011-12](#)
-  [Moody's Rating of CMU_Series 2012B](#)
-  [Professional Staff Development_Acad & Stu Support Services](#)
-  [Strategic Plan 2011](#)
-  [Strategic Plan 2011 \(Page 19\)](#)
-  [Success Matrix_October 2012](#)
-  [Trustee Agenda Book_2011_0818 \(Page 9\)](#)
-  [Trustee Agenda Book_2012_0321 \(Page 79\)](#)
-  [Trustee Agenda Book_2012_1113 \(Page 13\)](#)
-  [Trustee Agenda Book_2012_1113 \(Page 15\)](#)
-  [Tuition-Fees Colo 4-yr Public Institutions](#)
-  [West Expansion Property Acquisition_April 2011](#)

Core Component 5.B

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

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

CMU Response

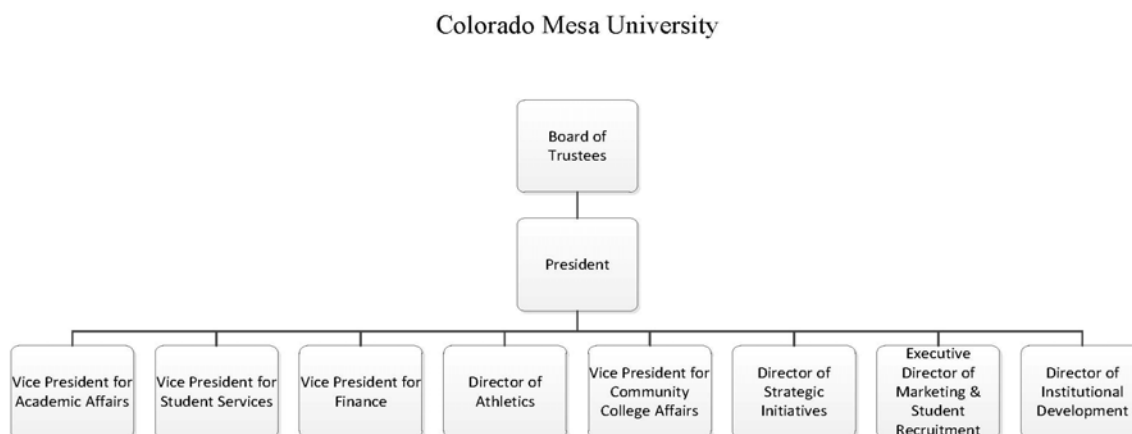
Introduction

In 2003, the Colorado General Assembly restructured public four-year higher education by dissolving or modifying some college and university systems, essentially moving to a decentralized model. The system most affected by this reconfiguration was the State Colleges in Colorado (SCC), a system composed of four institutions, one of which was in downtown Denver and the other three in central and western rural Colorado. With the passage of House Bill 03-1093, then-Mesa State College was one of the [four former state college institutions that were given their own Board of Trustees](#) effective July 1, 2003.

As specified in Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) 23-53-101, the institution's [Board has full authority and responsibility for the control and governance of CMU](#), including finance, resources, academic programs, curriculum, personnel policies, admissions, and role and mission. Appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, the Board originally was comprised of nine voting members ([later expanded to 11](#)) from around the state. To exercise their authority appropriately, the [Board has established policies](#) designed to enable the trustees to perform their statutory responsibilities in a rational and systematic manner.

Furthermore, the work of all higher education boards on policy matters, including that of CMU, is coordinated at the state level by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE). Within the University, the Board delegates responsibility for the day-to-day leadership and management, as well as internal governance of the University to the President.

The administration of CMU is organized by four vice presidents and four program directors reporting to the President as shown below. Further detail on the University's administrative structure is organized by division under the [Vice President for Academic Affairs](#), the [Vice President for Finance and Administration](#), the [Vice President for Student Services](#), the [Vice President for Community College Affairs](#), the [Executive Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment](#), the [Director of Athletics](#), the Director of Development, and the Director of Strategic Initiatives.



Sub-component 5.B.1. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies – including the governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students – in the institution's governance.

The University's administration has numerous ways by which it communicates regularly with the various internal constituencies. Central to the [University's vision](#) is an "administrative structure that uses human and natural resources wisely, embraces

excellence, is committed to shared governance, and is focused on the future.” This section discusses the ways that the administration and the trustees support mechanisms for sharing information and perspectives in order to enhance communication and give prompt attention to University matters.

Evidence Item 5B1-1. The CMU Board of Trustees meets regularly and interacts with stakeholders to solicit input prior to making decisions.

As noted earlier, the CMU Board of Trustees currently is made up of 11 voting members, serving staggered four-year terms, who are appointed by Colorado's Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Additionally, the CMU faculty and student body each elect one non-voting member to serve two- and one-year terms, respectively. Typically, the trustees meet at least six times per year. The Trustees Policy Manual (p. 7, line 120) requires that “[complete and accurate minutes of each meeting, which shall constitute the official record of proceedings of the Board of Trustees, shall be promptly recorded and shall be made available for public inspection during reasonable hours.](#)”

A primary [responsibility of the trustees](#) is the hiring and evaluating of CMU's President, who reports to the Board. The President provides the day-to-day leadership and management of the institution and is responsible for communicating regularly with the state legislature, the CCHE, and other state agencies. When University administrators anticipate legislation that will affect the University, the President communicates and confers with trustees in a timely fashion. Similarly, when responding to a specific request for information from such an agency, the President and other University officers include Board members on correspondence as appropriate.

As outlined in [Colorado Revised Statutes 23-53-104](#) and the [Trustee Policy Manual](#) (p. 6, line 36), “the Board shall have authority for and control of the assets and resources of CMU and shall ensure that the activities of the University are performed in an exemplary manner.” The Board’s goals are “to create and maintain an environment conducive to the discovery and dissemination of knowledge to all citizens who seek it, to provide necessary resources in an atmosphere that induces and honors excellence and promotes equality of access, and to develop a sense of responsibility, accountability, and ethical practice among all those who are involved in sponsoring and providing educational services.” Trustee policies are structured to “provide substantial administrative authority, to guarantee a minimum of external involvement in the affairs of the University, to encourage the development of the distinctive role of the University, and to support the University in its efforts to maintain and enhance academic excellence.” Thus, the trustees expect the University's operations to be effective, efficient, and accountable as measured by indicators such as enrollments, financial performance, compliance and internal audits, external assessments by credit-rating agencies, federal reporting compliance, satisfaction surveys, and academic program accreditations/approvals/external reviews.

The CMU Trustees Policy Manual (p. 12, line 243) specifies the [President's role on policy considerations by the trustees](#):

The President is responsible for establishing and distributing guidelines for the submission of policy proposals for consideration by the Board. No such proposal will be considered unless it is submitted in accord with these guidelines. The guidelines shall provide constituent groups, including the Faculty Senate, Student Government, and administrator/staff representatives, the opportunity to initiate and propose changes in policy to be considered by the board.

The Board provides the [opportunity for any individual to be heard](#) on a topic related to University matters at official meetings by registering prior to each regular meeting (Trustee Policy Manual, p. 7, line 117). This is one indication that the Board is responsive to its constituencies. Transparency also is provided through public access to the trustees’ agenda posted prior to the meeting, as well as through its meeting minutes. The closest working relationship with the institution, though, is through the President and other members of the administration.

Board members routinely seek input from their stakeholders as they formulate actions on various topics, exemplified by the development of the University's Strategic Plans, initially developed in [2005](#) and updated in [2011](#). In both cases, the Strategic Planning Committee was composed of [on- and off-campus representatives](#) of the faculty, administration, staff, and students as well as off-campus participants, including alumni, community leaders, and business owners. The update of the initial Strategic Plan included discussion of [progress made by the institution on goals](#) articulated in the 2005 plan as well as changes to CMU's political, financial, social, technological, and demographic environment as of 2010, [evaluating each in the context of a strength, weakness, opportunity, and/or threat analysis](#). Upon completion of an initial draft of the University’s [Vision and Values Statements](#), assumptions, and goals, the Strategic Planning Committee discussed the document with the Board, which requested input from the campus community in fall 2010 before adopting it in early 2011. Thus, through the strategic planning process, CMU identified areas for potential change and improvement based on broad input.

The 2011 name change from “Mesa State College” to “Colorado Mesa University” is another example of the trustees' emphasis on a collaborative governance process. The Board requested staff research and stakeholder engagement to guide its decision on whether to change the institution's name. Prompted by the [2010 strategic planning process](#) (2011 Strategic Plan, p. 17), and

following studies to measure brand awareness, further studies were undertaken to gauge readiness for institutional re-branding among key internal and external stakeholders. More than 30 stakeholder engagement meetings were held between November 2010 and March 2011, with approximately 400 individuals participating in these discussions. An online survey conducted in March 2011 generated 2,603 responses from current students, alumni, faculty, and staff, while a telephone town hall meeting was held with 3,154 participants that same month. Collectively, these studies indicated that there was consensus and support among key stakeholders to pursue a change in name and "status."

To determine a new name, a vetting process was established and agreed upon that required any new name to: 1) honor and communicate the heritage and history of the institution and region, 2) contain a geographic anchor that clearly identifies the location of the institution, and 3) provide a strong foundation for brand clarity, perception and equity that could be trademarked. From an initial list of approximately 60 names, a list of 20 options, many of which were "directional" or "geographic" in nature, were presented to stakeholders for input via an online survey. This yielded eight final options, which were then placed against a filtering process to ensure that finalists met the aforementioned requirements. [Two finalists were presented to Board members who selected the new name](#) (Trustees Meeting Agenda, April 26, 2011, p. 7).

Evidence Item 5B1-2. The President engages internal constituents in a variety of ways.

Every August, the President facilitates a welcome-back meeting before the official start of the fall semester for the entire campus community. The President discusses the current status of the University's enrollments, projected financial picture, and other relevant issues. New faculty and staff hires also are introduced to the rest of the campus community at the event. In addition to the welcome-back event, the President and Vice President for Academic Affairs meet with the faculty at least once a semester at departmental meetings, serving as opportunities for the President and the Vice President to share [information](#) about the state of the University – particularly as it affects instructional units – and respond to questions of interest from faculty members. The President also holds a weekly office hour to encourage faculty, staff, and students to use this "open door policy" to candidly discuss any campus concerns. He meets bi-weekly with representatives of the Associated Student Government (ASG), along with other student groups throughout the semester. These practices demonstrate some ways in which the administration engages and values input from internal constituents.

Evidence Item 5B1-3. CMU faculty participate in shared governance through the Faculty Senate, recognized by the Board as the primary formal representative of the faculty to it and the administration.

["Faculty input is a vital component of informed decision-making at Colorado Mesa University,"](#) and the primary mechanism by which faculty members participate in governance is through the Faculty Senate (Trustees Policy Manual, p. 12, line 262). The Senate is composed of representatives from each academic department, and all full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members are eligible to serve. The Senate also includes an *ex-officio* representative from the library and a non-voting representative from the Associated Student Government. Members meet twice monthly in open meetings. Representatives from the Office of Academic Affairs attend Senate meetings and work with standing committee members as requested by the Senate.

Elected officers are a president, vice president, secretary, and past president who meet as an executive committee with the University President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs prior to Senate meetings. A key function of the Faculty Senate is to serve as a liaison between the wider faculty body and the central administration on matters of policy, procedure, and welfare efforts. The Senate President gives a report to the trustees at each Board meeting and provides the Faculty Senate with meeting information as it relates to their interests and obligations to the institution.

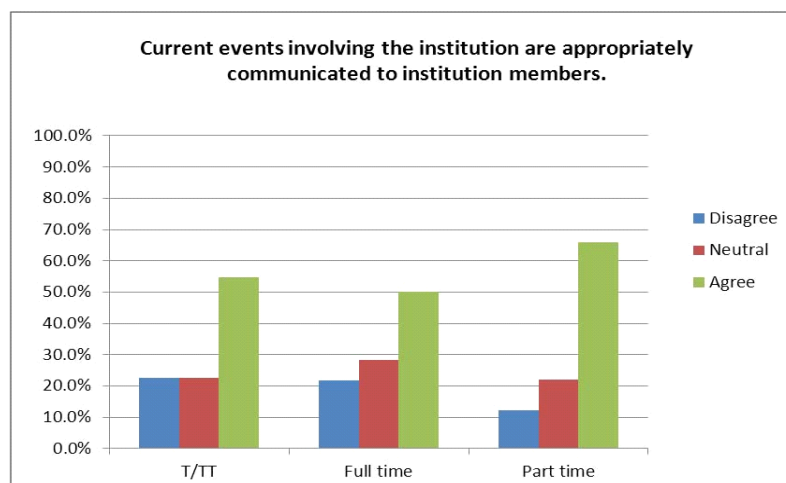
Standing Faculty Senate committees meet separately to consider and develop policy on issues such as those described in the bullet points below and then report back to the Senate as appropriate. The Senate also organizes a variety of *ad hoc* committees that focus on campus issues as they arise. Standing committees are staffed by faculty members from across the CMU community to ensure broad participation by faculty in the governance process, and the following lists the Faculty Senate's Standing Committees and their responsibilities:

- Academic Policies Committee: Responsibilities include studying and recommending policies pertaining to academic standards, honors, and other instructional and learning practices; reviewing faculty evaluation policies and procedures; establishing policies regarding student grievances and academic appeals issues; and establishing and reviewing standards of ethical conduct for faculty.
- Assessment Committee: Responsibilities include researching and recommending assessment criteria and methods; supporting faculty assessment plans within each department; helping programs to articulate student learning outcomes; verifying that assessment results are used for programmatic improvement; and promoting student learning assessment on all three campuses as well as in online and early scholar programs. This committee also makes yearly reports to the Faculty Senate on the quality and effectiveness of the overall assessment process.

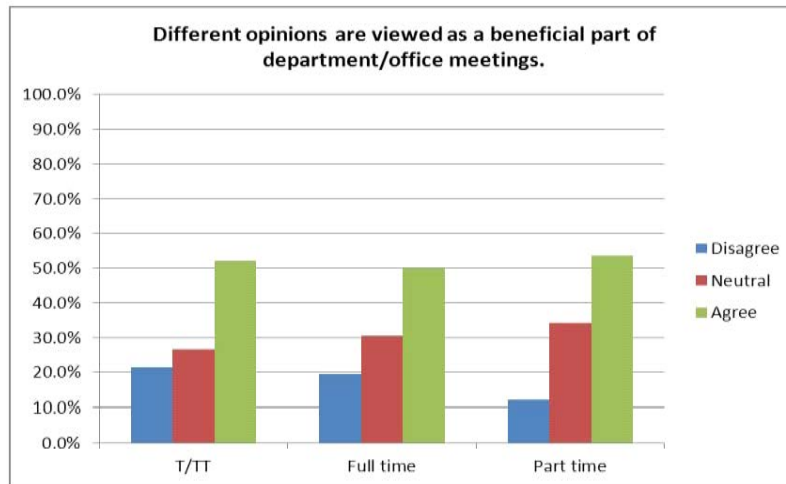
- Curriculum Committees (graduate, undergraduate, and WCCC): The responsibilities of all curriculum committees include studying proposals from academic departments for curricular changes and recommending such changes to the Senate, administration, and Board; examining criteria, standards, and procedures for course offerings and recommending actions where needed; and maintaining the Curriculum Policies and Procedures Manual for CMU.
- Distance Learning and Technology Committee: Responsibilities include reviewing and evaluating the variety of distance-learning formats at CMU and suggesting and reviewing policy guidelines for the delivery of academic content in distance-delivery courses.
- Distinguished Faculty Award Committee: Responsibilities include advertising and receiving nominations for the annual Distinguished Faculty Award and reviewing requests for emeritus faculty status and forwarding recommendations for granting emeritus status to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- Faculty Salary and Benefits Committee: Responsibilities include analyzing and commenting on the annual staffing patterns for the CMU faculty, offering recommendations about the equity study and salary distribution plan annually, and providing input related to the benefits packages for full- and part-time faculty.
- Library Advisory Committee: Responsibilities include making recommendations for and advising the Director of Tomlinson Library on matters pertinent to major operational policies, budget allocations, collection development policies, and other issues related to library support services.
- Sabbatical Leave Committee: Responsibilities include establishing policies and procedures for implementation of the sabbatical review process, reviewing sabbatical leave requests, and recommending faculty members for sabbatical leaves to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

For the past three years, the Faculty Senate has appointed a non-standing committee, the Pre-Tenure Review Committee, charged with providing constructive feedback to any interested tenure-track faculty member who is approximately midway through his or her probationary period. Additionally, the Faculty Senate appoints faculty representatives to serve on other collegewide administrative committees, such as the Handbook Committee. Although senators typically do not serve on Faculty Senate standing committees, they do serve on other campus committees and working groups, such as the Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success, Academic Program Quality, Priorities, and Productivity Working Group, and the Strategic Planning Committee.

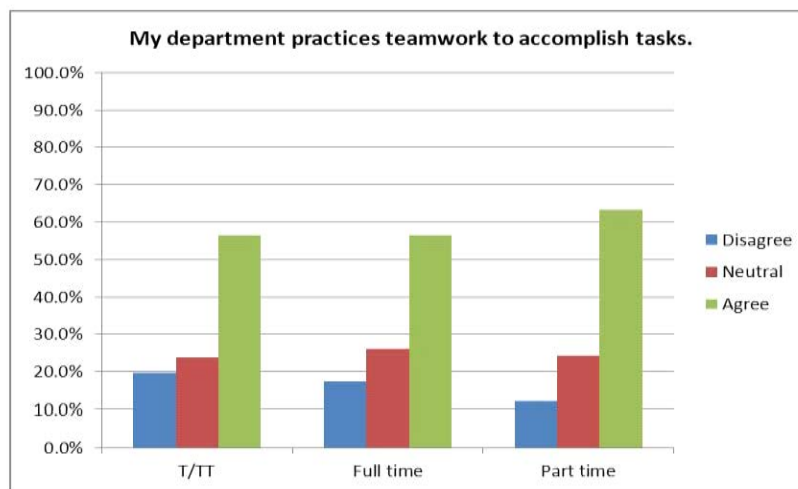
The Faculty Senate reported to the trustees in October 2012 that [60 percent of tenured- and tenure-track faculty members participate in the shared governance of the institution](#) by serving either on the Senate itself or one of its standing committees, demonstrating the successful engagement of a critical internal constituency. A recent faculty survey provides insight about how faculty members perceive their relationship to the University's administration. Approximately 55 percent of tenured/tenure-track faculty members feel they are informed about the University's activities and that information about CMU is communicated appropriately to the campus community. A similar proportion of full-time faculty members feel that different opinions are viewed as beneficial and that teamwork is practiced to accomplish tasks.



Graph based on data from survey taken by faculty in 2012.



Graph based on data from survey taken by faculty in 2012.



Graph based on data from survey taken by faculty in 2012.

Evidence Item 5B1-4. The Vice President for Academic Affairs meets with the Academic Council twice monthly to discuss academic matters.

In addition to the Faculty Senate, the Vice President for Academic Affairs meets twice a month with representatives of all academic units in an Academic Council as another voice of the faculty to the administration. In addition to the academic department heads, other participants are the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Director of Tomlinson Library, the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment, the Director of the Assessment of Student Learning, the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs/Director of Distance Education, the Director of Sponsored Programs, the Director of the Montrose Campus, and the Vice President for Community College Affairs.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs convenes the meetings and distributes an agenda prior to each (see [sample agenda](#)). The sessions provide a forum for discussing academic policies and procedures, special projects, and campuswide initiatives for input from and dissemination to these internal groups. Similarly, the meetings provide an opportunity for the department heads to communicate concerns and ideas from their respective faculty and staff members. Examples of topics on which these faculty and administrators have collaborated are:

- [Revision of Faculty/course Evaluation Form](#);
- [MAV3 Graduation Plans](#);
- [Credit for Prior Learning Criteria and Review Process](#);
- [Exemplary faculty criteria and annual award process](#);

- [Evaluation process and form for lecturers](#);
- [Academic Program Review Manual](#);
- [Revision of Individualized Learning Contract Form](#);
- [Course Comparability Manual Draft](#);
- [Working Group to Improve Academic Success Report](#) and follow-up [Implementation Plan](#) in 2012; and
- [Academic Program Quality, Priorities, and Productivity \(APQPP\) project](#) and Implementation Plans in 2010 and 2011.

Periodically, administrators from non-academic units (e.g., the University President, Vice President for Student Services, and the Executive Director for Information Technology) participate in meetings to seek input from Academic Council members.

The academic department heads are an important component in the shared governance with faculty as they are a direct link to the University's central administration. In addition to the Academic Council meetings, each of the department heads meets one-on-one each month with the Vice President for Academic Affairs to discuss issues specific to the academic unit each represents, frequently involving personnel and/or budget matters. As relevant, the Vice President follows up on these discussions by briefing the University President.

Evidence Item 5B1-5. Classified staff members are represented in CMU governance and maintain open channels of communication with the administration.

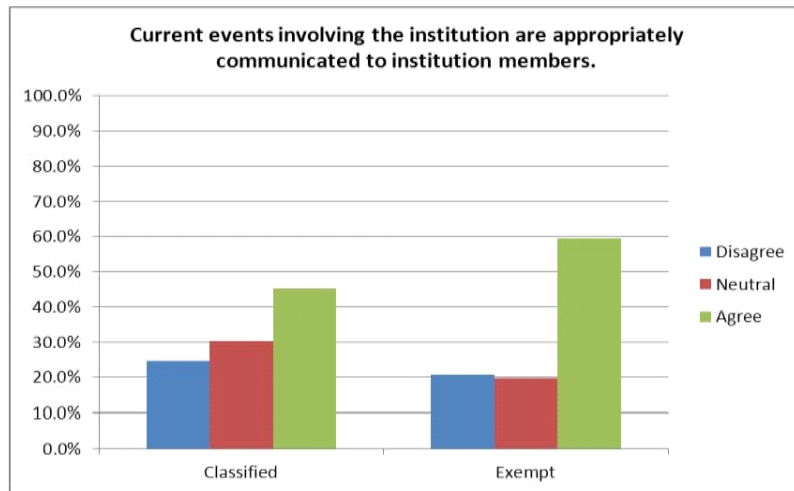
CMU has two categories for staff: classified and exempt staff. Classified staff are hired under the specifications of the Colorado State Personnel System and are subject to the rules and regulations of that system. Their duties usually are related to the assistance of the day-to-day operations of the University. Approximately 14 percent of the employees at CMU are classified staff, and they have representation through monthly [Classified Staff Council](#) meetings, where they can express their concerns about issues relating to both CMU's campus and the wider State Personnel System.

The Classified Staff Council (CSC) provides the CMU administration with a conduit for working collaboratively on issues of mutual interest to classified employees and CMU administration. CSC discussions usually focus on issues of more immediate concern, such as employment issues, pay issues, and employee/dependent tuition benefits. For example, the CSC drafted legislation in 2011 to create a pathway for individuals to exempt their positions from the State Personnel system. While this particular legislation failed, the process catalyzed substantive personnel policy discussions at all of the Colorado colleges and may have influenced the passage of the Higher Ed Institutional Efficiency Act. In 2012, the CSC lobbied for and received a one-time, non-base-building bonus of \$500 or \$1,000 depending on an employee's annual review. This was the first increase in compensation for classified employees for more than four years and was long awaited, as faculty and exempt staff have experienced annual inflation adjustments while classified employees have not.

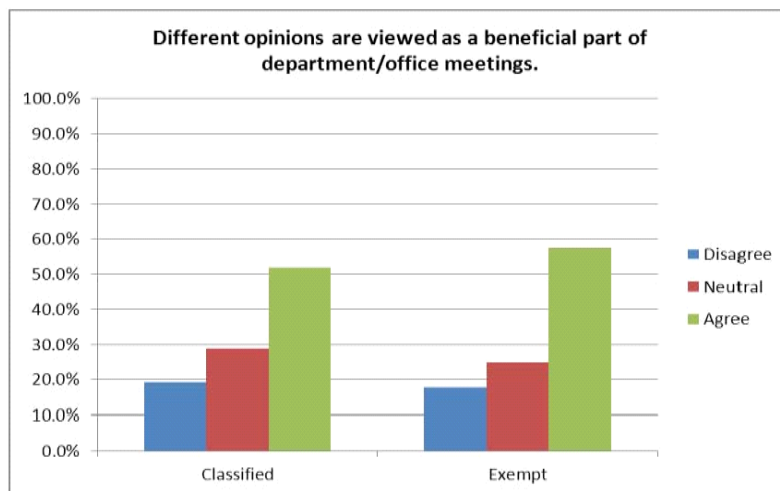
The CSC also is the primary venue for classified staff to participate in campuswide issues and serve on numerous campus committees. Classified staff representatives were involved with the current self-study process and contributed to both strategic planning efforts. The CSC was included in the discussions concerning CMU's recent name change and the change in admission standards from moderately selective to selective. The CSC encourages interactions by hosting speakers to discuss topics of interest, such as ballot issues, public health (e.g., the H1N1 flu concern), and fire safety and fire extinguisher use.

The CSC does not represent exempt staff; however, interest has been expressed in combining the two types of staff and providing representation for all staff under an expanded staff council. The CSC has resisted the inclusive modification consistently, citing the profound differences in the staff systems and issues of concern. Exempt staff are administrative employees who are not part of the state classified system, usually salaried, and often serve in supervisory positions. Exempt administrative staff make up approximately 29 percent of CMU employees and are represented by and heard through their respective vice presidents.

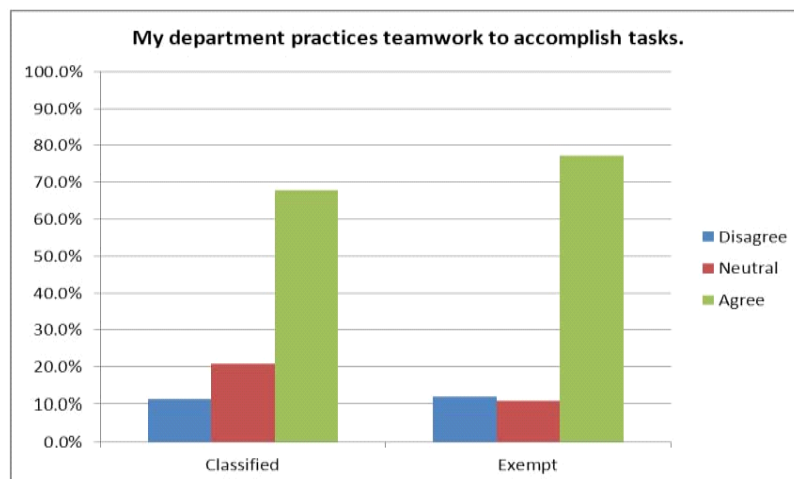
As previously mentioned, a recent staff survey provides information about how the staff members perceive their relationship to the University's administration. In general, staff members feel that they are able to contribute to key aspects of the University. Nearly 60 percent of exempt staff, however, expressed satisfaction with the University's communication in contrast to those employed in the State's classified personnel system. A majority of both groups believes that differing opinions are viewed as beneficial at the department level, and finally, approximately two-thirds of the classified staff and nearly 80 percent of the exempt staff feel that teamwork is used to accomplish tasks in their respective departments.



Graph based on data from survey taken by staff in 2012.



Graph based on data from survey taken by staff in 2012.



Graph based on data from survey taken by staff in 2012.

Evidence Item 5B1-6. The trustees and administration interact with students in multiple ways.

CMU clearly recognizes students as important stakeholders in governance, and they are represented in a number of ways. First, students are represented by a student trustee on the Board of Trustees. As called for in C.R.S. § 23-53-102(3), the [student body at](#)

[large elects one of its eligible members](#) to be the Student Trustee representative. The Student Trustee serves as one voice of the students to the Board, having speaking (but not voting) privileges at meetings. In this way, the Board remains informed about the position of students on a variety of issues.

CMU also ensures that students are well represented on one of the most important student issues: tuition and fees. While the Board makes the final decisions about student fees, the University President consults with the Student Trustee and representatives of the ASG on the amount and allocation of such fees prior to submitting them to the Board for action.

The second form of representation open to students is the [Associated Student Government](#) (ASG). Along with the Student Trustee, the ASG President prepares reports for the Board. The objectives of the ASG include maintaining a representative student government; promoting the educational experience and opportunities of the student body by working to expand student participation and involvement on campus; coordinating activities, communication, and services of general benefit to students; and overseeing the activities related to student fee assessment and allocation. The ASG is comprised of 26 elected senators and meets weekly while school is in session. Meetings are open to the public unless legal and/or personnel matters are to be discussed. The ASG also oversees the Student Supreme Court, the organization charged with arbitrating grievances related to student clubs and organizations.

Students have input into decisions regarding academic issues through the ASG; Senators may simply discuss the issue or pass a resolution regarding the matter. These issues are then shared with the appropriate administrative officials at meetings every other week between ASG officers and the CMU administration. One of the more recent examples of student involvement in shaping academic policy were the changes made to admission standards for baccalaureate-seeking students in 2011. Extensive conversations were held between the President and ASG representatives, and multiple presentations were made to the full ASG by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment. The Student Trustee and ASG President also were in attendance at each meeting leading up to the trustees' action on the admissions index change. In each case, all questions were answered and student input helped to shape the final policy. Additionally, ASG representatives participate in meetings of the Faculty Senate, many of its standing committees that review academic policies, and some *ad hoc* committees.

The ASG communicates with the general student body in a variety of ways. First, ASG meetings are open to the public, including the student body. Second, ASG executive members often report on issues and actions in the student newspaper, and third, the ASG president delivers an annual State of the Student Address during the spring semester.

Sub-component 5.B.2. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution, provides oversight for the institution's financial and academic policies and practices, and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

Evidence Item 5B2-1. The Board of Trustees has depth and breadth of experience, and its members are well informed about the University.

[Board members are a diverse group](#) of appointees who bring varied yet complementary skill sets and reflect a balance in terms of race/ethnicity, gender, and geographical representation across the state. Some Board members bring an understanding of academia, while others bring significant expertise in finance or legal matters; each has a proven background in policy-making as well as fundraising. The Board has the ultimate responsibility and authority for University policies, a record of which is maintained by staff in the President's Office and distributed, as appropriate, to campus constituents as amendments are made.

Newly appointed trustees are given an orientation on the University's finances, academic programming, and supporting services. Coordinated by the President, various senior administrators discuss information with the trustees that includes the institution's history, CMU's core values and guiding philosophies, applicable state legislation, the Board's legal and fiduciary responsibilities, and University policies and procedures. A trustee orientation notebook is provided by the President to the new appointees that usually includes a current [Trustee Policy Manual](#), [Financial Dashboard](#), [Catalog](#), [Student Profile](#), [Degree Profile](#), [Success Matrix](#), and the [CMU Guide to Programs of Study](#).

The Board meets in person at least six times in a given calendar year. Of those six meetings, one is normally held in the Denver area during the legislative session and the other five are held on the Western Slope of Colorado, mostly in Grand Junction. The Board holds additional meetings as needed, usually via teleconference, though Trustees who are geographically close to the CMU campus often join the President and other CMU administrators in person for such teleconferences. The CMU President contacts each trustee before meetings to inform them of the agenda, special issues, or other critical matters to be discussed. Doing so increases the trustee's knowledge and makes Board meetings more effective and efficient. The President also communicates with all members of the Board through regular emails that focus on upcoming events or issues of importance to the trustees. When appropriate, former CMU trustees are included in this information exchange and have the opportunity to share their institutional experience and/or professional knowledge with the sitting members of the board.

Evidence Item 5B2-2. The trustees fulfill their obligations as part of financial, academic, and legal/fiduciary governance.

Financial oversight: The Board of Trustees oversees all major financial investments, contracts, and negotiations and requires an annual external audit of the University's finances by an audit committee. All financial proposals related to appropriated programs, auxiliary enterprise funds, student activity fees, sponsored programs, gifts, contracts and grants, capital construction, and controlled maintenance are submitted to the Board for its approval. All funds must be budgeted in conformance with instructions, guidelines, and formulas established by funding or coordinating agencies (e.g., the CCHE and Colorado Statutes), but financial plans are developed only after approval of program plans for capital projects. External financial and legal advisors assist the President, Vice President for Finance and Administration, and Board members formulate a financing strategy. Factors considered in developing financial plans include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Compliance with all Master Resolution Covenants that govern the issuance of additional bonds.
- Trustee approval of a “[parameters resolution](#)” that specifies:
 - maximum interest rates allowed;
 - maximum term/maturities allowed;
 - maximum amount of proceeds for deposit in the project fund;
 - whether the bonds will be issued under the “state intercept” legislation;
 - sources and uses of funds;
 - assurance that all required debt service coverage tests are met;
 - authority to include borrowing for capitalized interest;
 - CCHE, CDC and JBC approvals received;
 - proceeds that can be used to cover cost of issuance; and
 - a competitive bid or negotiated interest rates on bonds.

The various elements of the financial plans, along with options to consider, are presented for review and approval by the Board, and under specific circumstances may require other state and legislative approvals. Generally, bonds are issued under both the State's and the University's credit rating as determined by either Moody's or Standard and Poor's or both. The [University's credit rating](#) as of May 15, 2012 was “A2” with a positive outlook. This was an upgrade from “A3” with a stable outlook that was assigned to the University in 2009. The use of a parameters resolution gives the institution the flexibility to be prepared in times when market conditions are volatile and unpredictable and/or the timing is critical.

At an operational level, the trustees [have delegated](#) “the authority and responsibility to establish, maintain, and manage a financial budget and accounting system for all sources of funds subject to approval by the BOT of each fiscal year's budget” to the CMU President (Trustee Policy manual, p. 26, line 643). The President is authorized to establish processes and procedures, such as budget instructions, guidelines, and formulas and is charged with recommending fiscal-year budgets for all funds to the Board for review and approval. The President also submits [quarterly financial reports](#) to Board members for review and approval, and all funds must be accounted for in conformance with the principles and practices of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the National Association of College and University Business Officers. Should an issue arise, trustees ask critical questions about how funds are being allocated. Over the past 10 years, the Board has encouraged and supported numerous [cost-saving measures](#), including securing competitive contracts for food, banking, and technology services.

Academic Oversight: While the Board has the ultimate authority for approving curriculum, the faculty plays a primary role in proposing curriculum programming and policies for trustee consideration. As stated in the [Trustees' Policy Manual](#) (p. 38, line 1027) and the [Combined Curriculum Committees Policies and Procedures Manual](#) (p. 6, line 98), the faculty have a clearly defined set of responsibilities that include recommendations on academic policies, program proposals, course additions or deletions, general education structure, assessment of student learning, and delivery of instruction.

Proposals for new academic programming (i.e., majors, minors, and concentrations) are developed by faculty members with department head coordination and oversight. Each [proposal](#) must address items such as curricular design, expected learning outcomes of potential majors, an assessment of demand for the proposed major, projected enrollments for five years, and the impact on the institution's budgets, facilities, technology, and library (Combined Curriculum Committee Policies and Procedures Manual, p. 26, line 851). Proposals then are reviewed by the appropriate curriculum committee for recommendation to the Faculty Senate. Following action by the Senate, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the University President complete their reviews prior to making a [recommendation to the Board](#) (see sample agenda item for recommended approval of Health Informatics, Trustee Meeting Agenda, p. 27). Approved programs that are consistent with CMU's role and mission are reported to the CCHE as a matter of information, and new technical programs are coordinated with the Colorado Community College System staff for the purpose of Perkins funding allocations.

Legal Authority and Fiduciary Responsibility: While many changes have occurred since the appointment of the initial institution-specific board in spring 2003, CMU trustees have invested much time and effort to develop relationships

that strengthen the trust of the University's communities on and off campus. Like its commitments to its financial and academic obligations, the Board's handling of its legal and fiduciary responsibilities is done within the context of the University's broader role and mission.

As a specific external example, CMU is an institution of access – both geographic and financial – for much of western Colorado and, as such, has a commitment to keep tuition and fees as affordable as possible. CMU typically ranks around eighth or ninth when comparing tuition and fees for the 12 four-year institutions in Colorado, offering a cost that is [lower than that of institutions in either the University of Colorado or Colorado State University](#) systems. Community members, including potential students and their parents, see this decision as a broader commitment to serving the region's residents, thereby enhancing their confidence in, as well as trust and respect for, the University and its leadership.

An example of efforts to strengthen trust internally is seen in the Board's commitment to annual inflation-based [salary increases given to faculty](#), as well as to exempt staff. Despite tight budgets, CMU has consistently provided inflation increases to faculty and exempt staff throughout the decade, the only public Colorado institution to do so. Enabling employees to better absorb increases in inflation and other costs has also improved morale and made salaries competitive regionally.

The board has been highly engaged in legislative matters as well, as illustrated by the following legislative actions:

- The Higher Education Flexibility Act of 2010 ([Senate Bill 10-003](#)) gave Colorado higher education governing boards greater latitude in fiscal authority and reporting. Driven by shrinking general fund appropriations to colleges and universities, the bill more specifically lifted the statutory caps on tuition increases and allowed for more flexibility in regard to purchasing and procurement for the institution.
- The Mesa State College Authority Bill ([Senate Bill 10-079](#)) modified the institution's statutory role and mission for the purposes of expanding graduate-level programming and updating outdated language in the institution's community college role and mission.
- The Mesa State College Name Change Bill ([Senate Bill 11-265](#)) led to the renaming of the institution to Colorado Mesa University.
- House Bill 12-1324 resulted in a modification to CMU's role and mission by raising CMU's admission requirements for baccalaureate-seeking students from moderately selective to selective and expanded the size of the Board of Trustees from nine to 11 voting members.
- During the most recent legislative session, two sections of Senate Bill 13-230 provide the State's appropriations for [operating funds](#) for the University (p. 69), the second highest increase in base funding from the State (6.4%). The University also secured a \$9.7 million [capital allocation](#), approximately half of the construction cost of a new classroom building, in addition to \$1.4 million to meet controlled maintenance needs for the campus (pp. 247-8). The Board also actively supported Senate Bill 13-033 which gives [in-state tuition classification to any graduate of a Colorado high school](#).

Sub-component 5.B.3. The institution enables the involvement of its administration, faculty, staff, and students in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Evidence items 5 B1-1 through 5B1-6 above describe University processes through which the trustees and administration effectively interact and collaborate with various internal stakeholders. The discussion also illustrates the shared responsibilities in the development and implementation of academic policies and administrative procedures, such as is illustrated by changing the University's name and status, renovating campus facilities, as well as revising the admissions index for baccalaureate-seeking students.

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- 
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Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

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

CMU Response

Introduction

Colorado Mesa University (CMU) engages in systematic and integrated planning that is guided by its [2011 Strategic Plan](#), developed in 2010 and approved by the Board of Trustees in January 2011. The plan was the result of the work of [a 27-member committee representing the University's various stakeholders](#). Built around six broad institutional goals, the plan articulates a vision for CMU in the year 2020. The budget planning process, described in the evidence items for Sub-component 5.A.5, has direct links with the Strategic Plan, as do the technology and facilities plans.

Sub-component 5.C.1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.

Evidence Item 5C1-1. CMU's Strategic Plan articulates the University's mission, assumptions, values, and goals that serve as the context for annual budget planning activities.

As part of their annual budget submissions, unit administrators are expected to describe how the request contributes to meeting one or more of the strategic goals, thereby keeping the focus on the institution's priorities. Central to the budgeting process is a set of guiding principles that further define institutional expectations:

- Budget conservatively;
- Protect life, health, and safety;
- Continue to invest in strategic enrollment management;
- Continue to invest in program review, development, and people;
- Protect the gains achieved to date;
- Identify areas where we can do more and better with less, and reward those who champion those initiatives; and
- Identify and eliminate the unnecessary.

Evidence Item 5C1-2. CMU prioritizes resources annually according to its support for student success and effective instruction.

With an adequate, but finite, resource base as well as a commitment to keeping tuition and fees affordable, it is critical that CMU's allocation of new, and reallocation of existing, resources be closely tied to activities that advance the University's mission and strategic priorities. The budget planning process, described in Sub-component 5.A.5, the Introduction to 5.C, and Evidence Item 5C1-1 underscore this connection. Because of the relationship of budget to planning, particular emphasis is placed on:

- funding instruction-related needs (e.g., the addition of faculty members who are excellent undergraduate instructors);
- updating and expanding facilities as appropriate;
- keeping technologies current; and
- investing in activities that will improve student retention and graduation.

More details on these expenditures are found in Evidence Item 5A1-1 and Sub-component 3.D.1 of the self-study.

Sub-component 5.C.2. The institution links assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and

budgeting.

Evidence Item 5C2-2. An in-depth assessment of student success led to planned changes in academic support and funding for new initiatives.

In December 2010, a group of faculty and staff were appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) to examine the success, or lack thereof, of students who enrolled at CMU, but were underprepared for college-level courses even though they arrived at CMU believing they were college ready. Chaired by the VPAA, the Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success (WGISAS) spent the spring 2011 semester intensively reviewing a variety of metrics of student success in order to identify strategies that would increase the likelihood that this sub-population of CMU students would succeed. Among the "success" variables used by the group were number of earned credit hours per term, credit hours completed with a 'C' or higher, term and cumulative grade point average, and success in the college-level course that followed developmental enrollment (e.g., success in English Composition after completing Basic Writing). As part of its [report](#), the WGISAS made 15 recommendations in May 2011, all of which were approved by the President, and they became the [plan for implementation](#) and subsequent budget requests.

Recommendations were grouped into four categories listed below. Subpoints identify implemented changes.

- Admissions -
 - raising the admissions index for baccalaureate-seeking students; and
 - modifying the provisional admissions criteria.
- Assessment and placement -
 - changing the placement process and improving communication about placement to students; and
 - limiting self-placement by students and number of course repeats.
- Course enrollments -
 - restricting course options for underprepared students;
 - requiring completion of developmental requirements in first 30 hours of enrollment at CMU;
 - enforcing course prerequisites; and
 - encouraging consistency of courses across delivery modes and formats and form them to more fully engage students in active participation.
- Academic support -
 - implementing more intrusive advising processes; and
 - administering the Learning and Study Skills Inventory (LASSI) to entering undergraduates.

During fiscal years 2011-12 and 2012-13, CMU implemented those recommendations with limited cost implications and funded the administration of the LASSI. For academic year 2013-14, the University allocated funding for the Office of Student Success as a unit within Academic Affairs, staffed by a coordinator, four academic success coaches, and 20 student peer coaches. Beginning in August 2013, the staff teach the two courses involving academic skills and the transition to higher education for all students admitted with a provisional baccalaureate classification and provide highly intrusive advising. In so doing, the University completed the initial cycle of assessment of students and evaluation of units, planning, and budgeting. It also laid the groundwork for measuring the success of students' academic performance and the Student Success Program with this additional support.

Evidence Item 5C2-2. Results of academic program review provide the basis for improving instructional delivery as well as unit planning and budgeting.

CMU evaluates each of its academic programs on a six-year cycle, unless scheduled differently due to accreditation requirements, and uses the results of this evaluation to make planning and budgeting decisions for program improvement. Programs are reviewed through a combination of an internal self-study by faculty members, which now integrates this process with that of assessment, and an evaluation by an external reviewer with expertise in the discipline who visits campus to validate the program's assessment and meet with individuals and groups associated with the program under consideration. The results of the appraisals become the basis for subsequent budget requests to support program elements that are successful and/or those aspects of the program needing improvement, assuming the problem has resource implications. Academic department heads and the Vice President for Academic Affairs present a summary of the internal and external documents to the trustees for information and discussion as part of the annual budgeting process (see [Physical Sciences program review](#) as an example).

Evidence Item 5C2-3. Through the budgeting process, initiatives have been funded to strengthen assessment activities supportive of program improvements.

In recent years, CMU has expanded its commitment to the assessment of student learning outcomes. Initially, the University relied solely on a Faculty Assessment Coordinator who worked with academic department heads, the Faculty Senate Assessment

Committee, and the staff in the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. The groups focused on the assessment of general education objectives as they were defined at that time. While the priorities for limited new funding were placed on direct instruction, the University sent faculty teams to assessment workshops and brought assessment professionals to campus each year as part of faculty professional development. It also began the periodic administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement, Community College Survey of Student Engagement, and the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement, in addition to other assessment tools such as the Major Field Test, which has been administered annually for more than a decade as an indication of student performance. In 2012, a new position of Director of Assessment of Student Learning was created to bring greater focus to assessment activities and make fuller use of assessment results. Additionally, the University has continued to [increase its investment in the assessment of student learning](#) as shown by budget comparisons over the past decade. See Evidence Item 4B1-1 for a more detailed description of the history of CMU's assessment activities.

Sub-component 5.C.3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.

Evidence Item 5C3-1. CMU developed its 2005 and 2011 strategic plans with extensive involvement of internal and external stakeholders.

To facilitate a broad-based understanding and discussion of the institution's current status and future directions, the President convened [eight advisory groups](#) in April 2004 to begin development of a strategic plan for then-Mesa State College (2005 Strategic Plan, p. 23). These groups represented a cross-section of Faculty Senate members, academic department heads, administrators, Associated Student Government representatives, classified staff members, community leaders, and the CMU Alumni Association and Foundation boards. This group composition enabled participation of internal constituencies and added participation of external voices as well. The groups conducted SWOT analyses and considered then-Mesa State College's role in the state's public higher education system and the implications of the institution's 2003 designation as the Regional Educational Provider for 14 Western Colorado counties as part of its articulation of Mesa State's vision and eight strategic goals.

The 2010 planning effort reflected a similar approach and broad participation. The [27-member planning committee](#) was comprised of on-campus representatives from the faculty, administration, staff, and students as well as off-campus participants including alumni, community leaders, and business owners (2011 Strategic Plan, p. 21). Members were provided with the University's [role and mission statement](#), [SWOT analyses](#), and [a lengthy compilation of data and accomplishments related to the 2004 goals](#). The information was the starting point for the committee's discussion and shaped the goals for the current CMU plan. Undoubtedly, the involvement of these various constituents in setting the future direction of the institution and the role CMU plays in the regional economy has contributed to the strong partnerships from which the University benefits in a variety of ways.

Evidence Item 5C3-2. CMU's operational planning and improvements incorporate input from the campus community.

CMU conducts surveys frequently during the academic year, particularly of its students, to gauge how successfully various aspects of the institution are functioning and solicit suggestions for improvement. Two examples that are non-instructionally-based are the campus' physical plant and its auxiliary services, where planning plus maintenance of facilities and/or delivery of quality services are the result of input from the campus community. To assist with this effort, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) [regularly surveys](#) students regarding how well the institution's facilities are maintained, using several national instruments to inquire about the condition of the buildings and grounds. These instruments enable the institution to benchmark against peers as well as examine trend data and include:

- EBI Residence Hall Survey;
- EBI Student Union Survey;
- ACT Student Opinion Survey;
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE);
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE);
- Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE);
- Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory; and
- NACUFS Dining Survey.

In addition to the national surveys, several other methods of collecting information from the campus community are used:

- Requests from academic department heads on improvements/repairs needed to instructional spaces;
- Electronic and paper comment/suggestion collections;
- End of term [course evaluations](#);
- End of season athlete interviews and [surveys](#);
- Focus groups; and
- Recreation Center survey.

As a result of information collected via the various methods, CMU administrative staff have been responsive to concerns brought to their attention. Some of the actions the institution has addressed as a result of this effort include:

- Reconfigured spaces for student projects as part of undergraduate research;
- Added cameras to parking lots for security;
- Widened wheelchair ramps due to several ADA concerns;
- Repaired athletic venues;
- Expanded the recreation center and library (in progress);
- Added clocks to the recreation center;
- Addressed several maintenance issues in the residence hall; and
- Extended dining hall hours.

Sub-component 5.C.4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.

Evidence Item 5C4-1. University administrators carefully monitor demographic and economic factors that can potentially affect enrollments.

The University does extensive monitoring of demographic and economic changes that potentially affect enrollment to minimize the possible effects of fluctuations in enrollments and decreases in state financial support. These results, in turn, inform decisions on investments in activities such as institutional brand perception and awareness, recruitment of non-resident enrollments, and student financial aid opportunities. For example, as state-level financial aid has been reduced along with direct appropriations, CMU has significantly [expanded institutional student financial aid](#) to \$4.3 million as of fiscal year 2011-12, an increase of approximately than \$3.6 million since fiscal year 2003-04.

As described previously, the University has budgeted conservatively so as to improve its operating margin from a negative position in fiscal year 2003 to an annual average of nearly 11 percent. The positive operating performance has come about due to the practices and assumptions that CMU administrators make as part of annual budget planning and investing. For example, as part of enrollment planning, staff members in the Office of Institutional Research release [internal bi-weekly reports](#) on student applications, admissions, and enrollments for the upcoming year, as well as applications for student housing and financial aid, which are used as a basis for projecting tuition and fee revenues. The reports compare current activity with data from two previous years. Further, changes in high school enrollments and graduating class sizes also are monitored, as are reports from the Colorado Department of Education and the State Demographer's office. Additionally, U.S. Census data, as well as data from the American Community Surveys, are used to identify areas outside of Colorado that appear most conducive to recruiting a diverse student body. As administrators review the projections, they build in an allowance for a 6 - 8 percent enrollment loss since actual enrollment is not known until three months after the budget is approved by the trustees. Thus, the University is prepared financially should the August enrollment not reach expected levels. If the enrollments meet or exceed projection, the additional tuition revenue becomes available for other institutional priorities.

While CMU works to assure that its resource base is sufficient to support the existing and planned capacity of the institution at all levels, the University would benefit from a more formal, multiyear enrollment management plan that includes enrollment projections that assist in planning educational services and facilities as well as the number of staff and faculty. A more formalized, comprehensive plan to manage enrollments at all of its locations would assist in developing longer-term strategies for recruitment, retention, and academic program delivery (e.g., online vs. site-based). This type of planning also would further strengthen the institution's modeling of potential revenue fluctuations.

Evidence Item 5C4-2. A multiyear planning and budgeting approach ensures that resources can support existing, as well as anticipated, needs of the University's infrastructure.

In addition to accounting for possible enrollment changes, an example of how the University plans for uncertainty is in how it plans for residence hall occupancy. CMU's annual vacancies tend to run in the range of 8 - 10 percent, and as a result, the University budgets at the expected occupancy rather than full occupancy to minimize uncertainty about how to achieve a balanced budget. Should vacancy rates be higher than expected, the institution has budgeted for this possibility, but should lower vacancy rates occur, the uncommitted budget becomes available for other priorities of the institution.

Another illustration of prudent University budget planning is how it has built a base budget operating contingency. As mentioned earlier in the self-study, the University did not have a contingency in 2003. By fall 2005, \$1.6 million was built into the base operating budget; the contingency now is at \$4 million, which the University believes is a reasonable level for accommodating potential budget fluctuations. This is especially crucial since the State Constitution requires the State of Colorado to have a balanced budget each year, but due to conflicting constitutional requirements, the Colorado General Assembly has little discretion

in what it chooses to fund annually. Higher education is not one of the departments required to be funded, but it is the largest recipient of discretionary funds, generally making it the first department to have funding reduced if state revenues fail to meet budget. Through its contingency fund, CMU believes it is prepared for this potential volatility, and the institution adds to the funding pool annually. If the contingency is not needed in a given year, it is available to be redirected to institutional priorities.

These efforts, combined with quarterly revenue forecasts by both the Legislative Council and the Office of State Planning and Budget, as well as control of utility costs, cost efficiencies, and other expense reductions (outlined in [Cost Efficiencies and Expense Reductions](#)), ensure that the University's finances are well planned. While other factors are considered beyond those described above, a key point is that the administration's budgeting practices allow faculty and staff to give their undivided attention to fulfilling their responsibilities and not be distracted by financial uncertainties as was the case historically. It also allows the University to build reserves to address building, technology, and equipment improvements using the previous year's net revenues.

Sub-component 5.C.5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors such as technology, demographic shifts and globalization.

Evidence Item 5C5-1. CMU plans for demographic shifts.

See Evidence Item 5C4-1 above.

Evidence Item 5C5-2. The University proactively plans and budgets for sustaining facilities and technology that are essential to the mission and operation of the institution.

Beyond the investment in its faculty, the University's mission is partially reliant on the facilities and technology infrastructure in which it has strategically invested. In addition to the general contingency, the University has built sustainability plans for both technology and facilities, neither of which existed prior to 2004. Currently, the University has allocated more than \$1.1 million into the base operating budget for technology sustainability and advancements in addition to \$950,000 for preservation and upkeep of buildings, equipment, and the campus exterior.

By investing in sustainability planning such as for technology, the University reduces the possible impact of annual revenue fluctuations. The [Technology Sustainability Plan](#) – a collection of inventories and procedures – is used to budget for initiatives to update technology, based on projected replacement costs and equipment life cycles. Funding for core system purchases is annualized, while a portion of non-capital equipment (e.g., computers and projectors) is replaced each year. Technology sustainability planning not only allows the University to replace systems in lean revenue years without negatively affecting student support or academic programs, but it also diminishes the need for emergency expenditures to replace mission-critical systems. The 2007-2008 Technology Master Plan was updated in 2012, based on the goals identified in the 2010 CMU Strategic Plan. A summary of sustainability planning over the past eight years is included in the [2012 Technology Master Plan](#).

The following examples illustrate how the University's Technology Sustainability Plan benefits the institution:

- Every academic program and business unit relies on the University's Storage Area Network (SAN), which is the institution's single largest information subsystem. Although the cost of data storage continues to decline, the institution's data storage capacity and performance requirements are increasing. The University has fully funded the fiscal year 2013 replacement of the SAN it purchased in fiscal year 2009. The University accomplished this by reserving one-fifth of the SAN cost during each of the past five years.
- Over the past four years, the University has increased the number of "smart" classrooms from 113 to over 160, spending more than \$3 million on classroom technology with capital projects. To help prevent technology-enhanced classrooms from becoming outdated, the University budgets to refresh a portion of classroom technology (e.g., projectors, document cameras, and video switchers) each year, and classroom equipment is continuously updated to reflect new technologies.

Generally, funding for technology investments works well, particularly when the projects are requested through the budget process as described above. On occasion, however, projects are initiated outside the budget process and are only partially analyzed prior to requesting funding. Considering the University's limited resources and the myriad of technology-based solutions available to support instruction and non-instruction units, CMU would benefit from requiring a formal process to more fully evaluate and prioritize technology projects when proposed outside the formal budgeting process.

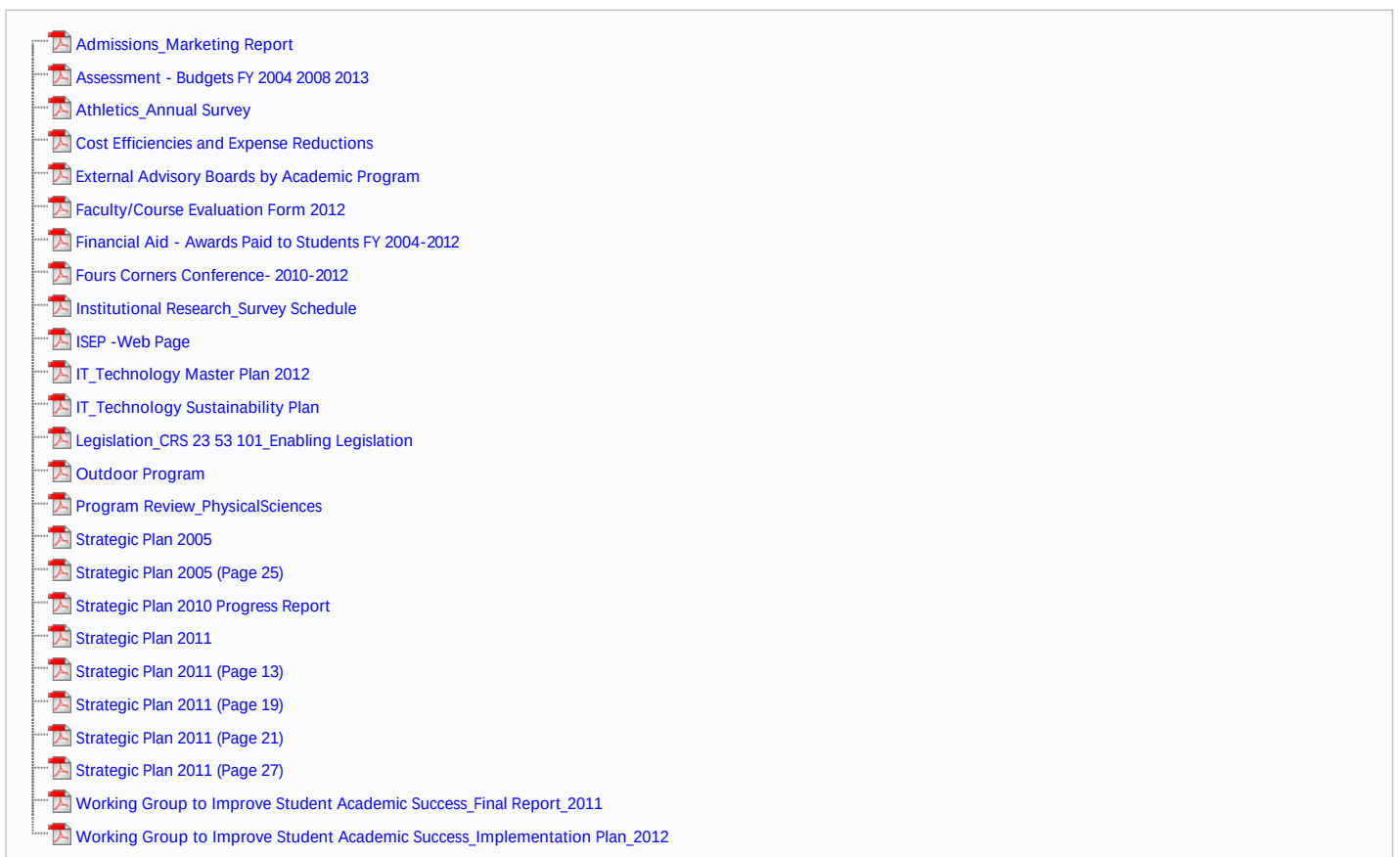
Evidence Item 5C5-3. CMU addresses globalization from a variety of perspectives.

The 2011 Strategic Plan articulated a [vision](#) and [goals](#) that speak to the University's preparation of students with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in their careers, graduate education, and their communities in the 21st century global economy through curricular enhancements (2011 Strategic Plan, p. 13, 15). CMU faculty members and administrators stay current by interacting with professional colleagues at institutions of higher education (across Colorado and the nation) and business leaders

in order to understand new patterns and trends, develop partner relationships, and seek new resources. These activities are key to better understanding CMU's relationship to national and international activities.

One of the primary ways of improving students' global understanding is through curricular enhancements including, but not limited to, upper-division learning experiences in other countries. Faculty members in CMU's baccalaureate Nursing program have taken students to Nicaragua and Ecuador as part of a summer upper-division courses, while the faculty in Biological Sciences routinely involve students in research in Ecuador. Spanish faculty include globalization issues in their courses, incorporating discussions on topics in health care, business, and/or criminal justice that compare and contrast cultural differences between U. S. models and those of the Spanish-speaking world. Additionally, the [Outdoor Program](#) offers yearly experiences across the world, providing unique experiences for students from all disciplines in our campus community. CMU students also are provided study-abroad opportunities, some of which are shorter-term trips led by CMU faculty, while others are individual student experiences through organizations such as the [International Student Exchange Program](#) for one-semester and one-year programs of study throughout the world. Finally, CMU has sponsored the [Four Corners Conference on Globalization](#) for four years. This bilingual conference attracts foreign and American academics as well as community members from across many disciplines. Presenters discuss how they approach the challenges resulting from globalization in their research and the services they provide.

Sources



Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

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

CMU Response

Introduction

The culture of Colorado Mesa University (CMU) is one that emphasizes learning from all stakeholders of the institution in order to improve the performance of operational units as well as the entire institution. Improvements have come about, not only from formal reviews of policies and procedures, but just as importantly from recommendations by faculty and staff in offices across campus. The commitment to continuous quality improvement is consistent with an overall philosophy of supporting students to be successful in whatever ways are possible and placing a high priority on positive customer service by support units. Results from surveys document an improvement in student satisfaction that is illustrated by responses, such as: 1) [85 percent of seniors indicate they would choose CMU again if they were to make the decision again](#) (National Survey of Student Engagement, p. 2, col. 2); and 2) [students are made to feel welcome on this campus](#) (Student Satisfaction Inventory, p. 3). The University's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) administers numerous surveys throughout the year and conducts data analyses for insights into what is working at the operational level and what is in need of improvement. Regular updates to the Board of Trustees, through tracking mechanisms such as the [Success Matrix](#) and [Financial Dashboard](#), document performance at the institutional level for monitoring levels of success.

Sub-component 5.D.1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.

Evidence Item 5D1-1. CMU is a data-driven institution that routinely collects and analyzes its operational performance.

In addition to the program review process described earlier, [program-level data](#) are compiled annually for each academic program and department. Course enrollments by term, credit hour activity (by program, student level, and type of faculty appointment), number of majors and minors, retention, and number of degrees awarded are all aggregated by department and program. These reports are then distributed to each academic department head by the President and Vice President for Academic Affairs and are the basis for discussions about the need for more faculty, courses that might need to be reviewed for low enrollment, or other program concerns. As a second example of monitoring operational performance, the [bi-weekly admissions and marketing reports](#) are utilized by the Admissions Committee, chaired by the President, to monitor recruitment application and registration activities and compare current and prior year enrollments, financial aid awards and acceptances, and residence hall occupancy. Initially designed in 2004, these reports inform admissions recruitment, marketing strategies, and budget planning.

Annually, OIRA collects data for the institutional [Success Matrix](#) to inform the Board of Trustees. This document serves to measure performance on a number of indicators, such as two- and four-year graduation rates, admission yield, enrollment patterns, faculty salaries as compared to peers, diversity of the student body, financial aid indicators, and finance indicators, as well as several other measures. Institutional Research staff also have implemented a number of other processes that assist in documenting evidence of performance in CMU's operations, including:

- Administering a [cycle of surveys](#), some of which include national benchmarks, as well as institution-specific *ad hoc* surveys;
- Assisting in measuring institutional performance relative to University goals through comparative analyses of aspirational and [competitive peer](#) metrics; and
- Initiating [assessment structures](#), such as for the Vice President of Student Services, to measure progress towards the division's goals.

Beyond formal surveys and analyses, the University provides ample opportunities for the campus community to contribute suggestions for improvement, most of which can be accessed through the University's web portal, MAVzone. Ideas can be submitted through service enhancement channels available to students, faculty, and staff. Another option is the Cost Saving Initiatives box, located on MAVzone, the campus portal, which elicits feedback on cost savings and revenue enhancement ideas from [students](#) as well as [faculty and staff](#). Sample suggestions for cost savings that have been implemented were expanding

library hours of operation, replacing golf carts used by facilities staff with bicycles (when the responsibility and weather permit), purchasing athletic buses that run on compressed natural gas, and eliminating fax machines and scanners when new copiers with the same functions were leased.

Sub-component 5.D.2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

Evidence Item 5D2-1. CMU continually improves its effectiveness, expands its capabilities, and extends its sustainability by learning from experiences at all levels of the organization.

CMU administrators understand the larger context of the University, are knowledgeable about trends in their areas of responsibility, and learn from experiences within the organization and those at other institutions. Further, the University's organizational culture, and the values and guiding principles reflected in the strategic plan, all point to over-arching commitments to continuous learning and improvement. Taken collectively, the administration's knowledge base and institutional commitments have produced a strong record of accomplishments implemented by 1) routinely monitoring of all aspects of CMU operations, 2) regularly investigating perceived opportunities and deficiencies, 3) appropriately responding to what was observed, and 4) "closing the loop" by collecting data to evaluate the outcomes of an action. These improvements demonstrate an organizational willingness to adapt when called for – at times rather quickly –and were documented throughout the self-study. Particularly noteworthy are institutional assessments and improvements over the past decade that:

- Increase the likelihood of student success through
 - projects such as Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success;
 - investments in institutional financial aid (e.g., MavWorks);
 - increase of the admissions index for baccalaureate-seeking students;
 - frequent surveys of students to evaluate various academic and administrative operations;
 - planned delivery of courses over a two-year cycle used for budgeting as well as academic advising;
 - expanded availability of academic support, co- and extra-curricular activities, and student services;
 - creation of the Office of Student Success; and
 - the assessment of student learning outcomes in both academic and non-academic units, using internal benchmarks and/or external comparisons.
- Strengthen curriculum content and overall academic program quality through feedback and/or recommendations from
 - annual program review involving an external reviewer;
 - program-specific accreditations and approvals;
 - the statewide gtPathways course review;
 - external advisory boards;
 - periodic review of general education;
 - course comparability implementation; and
 - projects such as the Academic Program Quality, Priorities, and Productivity.
- Enhance the effectiveness of faculty instruction and assessment of student learning outcomes through
 - on-campus professional development workshops;
 - funding of scholarly pursuits;
 - orientations for new full-time and part-time faculty;
 - activities supported through Teacher2Teacher;
 - course evaluations and annual performance evaluations and planning; and
 - access to, and training in the use of, learning management systems and technology-based tools.
- Evaluate and allocate resources annually that
 - align with the University's mission, strategic goals, and performance contract expectations;
 - maximize resource allocation to instruction and student-related functions by functioning with a lean administrative structure; and
 - expand the use of technology to streamline processes and improve the efficiency of administrative units.
- Maintain campus facilities that are a positive teaching and learning environment and one in which all University constituents have pride.
- Facilitate the interaction with regional stakeholders that identify the
 - need for new academic and technical programs and
 - ways in which faculty and staff expertise can assist in addressing the educational, economic, and environmental challenges of Western Colorado.

[Examples from a limited survey of mid-level program directors](#) illustrate some of the less-formally documented improvements from across the institution.

Evidence Item 5D2-2. Goals in the 2011 Strategic Plan reflect learning from experience.

Evidence of overall institutional learning from operational experience is provided in the 2011 Strategic Plan where new strategic goals indicate learning from experience. Particularly noteworthy are the objectives for:

- Reducing reliance on state support;
- Pursuing sustainable and eco-friendly technologies to reduce reliance on traditional utilities to meet energy needs; and
- Integrating continuous improvement practices into all support operations ([2011 Strategic Plan, p. 16](#))

Examples of steps taken to manage resources more efficiently as a result of lessons learned include:

- Resigning from the Colorado Higher Education Insurance Benefit Alliance in 2005 and securing health, life, and dental benefits independently. Cost savings is in the range of 15 percent, or \$300,000 annually.
- Entering into a performance contract with Chevron to complete a facilities energy infrastructure audit and identify energy conservation measures sufficient to pay for infrastructure improvements. Results identified approximately \$250,000 annually in energy conservation measures.
- Soliciting proposals in 2006 from professional providers interested in operating all food, beverage, and catering operations at the University, reducing food service operational costs by over \$300,000 annually.
- Investing in a Health IQ program that creates financial incentives to employees in the form of lower co-pays on health insurance premiums in return for healthy lifestyle practices, reducing the University's annual health care premiums by \$40,000.
- Launching a new Luminous Portal that allows integration of programs and yields long-term information technology and administrative efficiencies. Consolidating multiple license and support contracts into a single umbrella contract yielded a projected savings of \$382,112 over 10 years.
- Streamlining fiscal, student, and academic administrative services in 2009 for a savings of \$1.2 million ([2011 Strategic Plan, p. 6](#)).

Sources

	Admissions_Marketing Report
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	Assessment Survey - EBI Student Satisfaction Inventory_Fall 2012 (Page 3)
	Assessment Survey - National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2010 (Page 2)
	Budget CMU 2006-2012
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	Classroom Usage Charts-Graphs
	Classroom Usage Stats 2010
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	Institutional Research_Survey Schedule
	IT_Technology Master Plan 2008
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	Program Data Annual Report - Example_Art
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-  [Strategic Plan 2011 \(Page 12\)](#)
-  [Strategic Plan 2011 \(Page 22\)](#)
-  [Success Matrix_October 2012](#)
-  [Suggestion Box_MAVzone_Staff](#)
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-  [Trustee Agenda Book_2013_0123 \(Page 23\)](#)

Criterion 5: Conclusion, Strengths, and Recommendations

CMU Response

Conclusion

By focusing limited resources on improving quality in every area of campus, Colorado Mesa University has been transformed in recent years. Through conservative budgeting, strategic growth initiatives, and consistent engagement of internal and external stakeholders, the institution has been able to provide for quality programming while preparing for future uncertainty. From turning an annual budget deficit into an annual budget contingency to transforming the physical plant of campus, Colorado Mesa University is well-positioned for future success.

Strengths:

- The successful 2003 reorganization of CMU's governing structure resulted in CMU having its own Board of Trustees and yielded many benefits for the institution. The Board of Trustees provides appropriate oversight in financial, academic, legal, and fiduciary matters.
- CMU has been able to successfully navigate the highly changeable and challenging resource environment of the past decade and improve its outcomes and performance.
- The CMU Strategic Plan was developed by broad constituencies and guides the planning and operations of the institution. The Strategic Plan is revisited on a regular basis. Campus-wide planning activities are linked to and driven by the Strategic Plan.
- CMU works systematically to improve its operational performance. By implementing strategies for improvement, the institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability.
- CMU has made substantial investments in new facilities and technologies to enhance instructional delivery.
- Faculty, staff, students, and external constituencies have multiple means of formal communication with the Board of Trustees and the administrative members at CMU.
- CMU's budget process follows the guiding principles related to the University's priorities and strategic initiatives.

Recommendations:

- CMU should appoint a working group that represents the stakeholders of CMU, WCCC, and the Grand Valley Board of Cooperative Educational Services to evaluate the successes, challenges, and future of the University's two-year division, Western Colorado Community College. Once the future framework is established, a strategic plan that guides subsequent operational planning and budgeting for WCCC should be developed.
- As the University plans for future full-time hires, it should balance the needs for additional staff positions, resulting from the recent significant growth of the institution, with those for faculty members.
- CMU should implement a process for formally evaluating and prioritizing future technology investments using a business model that leverages campus-wide solutions, takes advantage of economies of scale, and aligns expenditures with strategic initiatives. The process should assist with assessing technology solutions, scheduling projects within staff resources, and allocating campus resources within the broader institutional goals.

Concluding Remarks

CMU Moving in the Right Direction

As expected, the self-study has revealed a great deal about the various facets of the institution and the ways they interact. In doing so, it has reminded many at CMU of the accomplishments being realized every day and has fostered satisfaction among the University's faculty and staff. This is reflected in recent survey data that show a majority of CMU employees are satisfied being a part of this institution. The survey data also show that most CMU employees believe that CMU has significantly improved over the last five years and is also currently heading in the right direction as it moves forward. The spirit of enthusiasm for applying new ideas, building on our successes, and advancing together will surely lead to continued success and continuous improvement at Colorado Mesa University.

CMU FACULTY AND STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF INSTITUTIONAL DIRECTION

Employment Category	Percent of CMU Survey Respondents Indicating Agreement or Strong Agreement with Survey Statement -		
	The institution is headed in the right direction.	I feel that the institution has overall significantly improved over the last 5 years.	I am satisfied with being a part of our organization.
Faculty			
Tenured/Tenure-track	58.9	60.9	70.7
Instructors (full-time, non-tenure-track)	62.3	73.3	71.7
Lecturers (part-time)	60.0	59.0	72.5
Staff			
Exempt	82.0	85.2	84.2
Classified	75.0	74.6	73.5

Source: Data from Self-Study Survey of Faculty and Staff, August 2012.

Strengths

Specific institutional strengths are described throughout this report and listed at the end of each criterion chapter. Examination from a wider perspective has revealed how many of these strengths work together to make CMU an effective institution that delivers rigorous, yet accessible, programs to a wide variety of students. Effective academic programs, and the services necessary to support them, are recognized as the foundation of the University. Programs and services are supported by student and faculty scholarship, active collaboration in academic planning and decision-making, and information sharing by the many components of the institution. CMU's close ties to the community and its clear and public statements about its nature and purpose have helped the University to increase regional accessibility via multiple modes of course delivery and variety in the program options it offers. All of this has been made possible, even through economically challenging times, by a clear strategic vision, sound fiscal planning, and the effective leveraging of traditional and non-traditional resources.

Recommendations

Although the evidence in this report shows that CMU meets the criteria set forth by the Higher Learning Commission, several areas of needed improvement have been identified. Areas of improvement that are considered less urgent but in need of consideration are found in the list of [further opportunities](#) for continuing improvement. Areas which are considered more pressing are listed at the end of each criterion chapter in the form of recommendations, and they are compiled here. These represent actions recommended by the findings of this self-study.

• Criterion 1 - Mission:

- Recommendation 1: CMU should establish and clearly articulate the mission, role, scope, and intended constituents of its two-year division, Western Colorado Community College. Additionally, CMU should make clear how its two-year and four-year divisions are differentiated and integrated within the context of accomplishing the institution's overall mission.
- Recommendation 2: CMU should build on its current efforts and processes to actively recruit and retain faculty, staff, and students from all backgrounds to further enrich the diversity of the campus community. As CMU makes additional full-time faculty and staff hires, continued efforts should be made to find candidates from diverse backgrounds. The University should also move forward with setting goals for increasing enrollments from underserved populations and

ensuring greater student success rates among the same. The University recognizes the value of enriching the campus community with increased diversity, and while there are active efforts to promote diversity at CMU, continuous attention is needed. In this regard, the University should direct additional efforts toward supporting a campus culture of respect and understanding among students, faculty, staff, and the community at large.

- **Criterion 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct:**

- Recommendation 3: CMU should make clear to potential and current students which programs are delivered by CMU's four-year division and those that are offered by WCCC in all of its marketing materials, including the CMU and WCCC websites.

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

- Recommendation 4: CMU and WCCC full-time faculty members not holding a degree at least one level higher than the courses they teach should have a professional development plan that leads to degree completion.
- Recommendation 5: CMU should better ensure the comparability, rigor, and consistency of courses taught in multiple modalities and at multiple locations, particularly those offered through the High School Scholars program. A "White Paper" was developed which contains recommendations for achieving consistency of courses. These recommendations were formally adopted by the Academic Council in spring 2012. Processes for ensuring implementation should be put in place. Methods should also be implemented to better combine the efforts of personnel at the WCCC campus with the academic department heads who have the responsibility for the courses being taught in the high schools.
- Recommendation 6: The University should develop an operational plan for the continued development of a more vigorous and inviting culture for its graduate students. CMU should coordinate application, admission, registration, and financial aid processes for its graduate students in a centralized location with a dedicated staff. In addition, CMU should work to promote increased support for both faculty and students in graduate programs.

- **Criterion 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement:**

- Recommendation 7: The University should continue its initiatives for involving all faculty members in assessment and for implementing program changes based on assessment outcomes. Faculty members will continue to develop assessment plans based on the program learning outcomes that were created in 2012-13. Departments will begin structured data collection in fall, 2013. The Assessment Committee has been tasked with critically reviewing all program assessment plans and working with programs to assure compliance. Revisions in the program review manual also include an enhanced assessment review process.
- Recommendation 8: CMU should work to connect assessment of student learning on the main campus more closely to assessment on the Montrose and WCCC campuses. Course assessment and evaluation also need to be expanded to include the High School Scholars Program.
- Recommendation 9: As CMU monitors assessment of program effectiveness in co-curricular activities, it should also continue to develop assessment of student learning in these areas. Both academic departments and academic and student service support offices will work in the curricular and co-curricular aspects of student learning. As assessment is strengthened across the campus, continuous improvement will be evident not only in academic areas but in the co-curricular areas, student services, and campus life as well.

- **Criterion 5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness:**

- Recommendation 10: CMU should appoint a working group that represents the stakeholders of CMU, WCCC, and the Grand Valley Board of Cooperative Educational Services to evaluate the successes, challenges, and future of the University's two-year division, Western Colorado Community College. Once the future framework is established, a strategic plan that guides subsequent operational planning and budgeting for WCCC should be developed.
- Recommendation 11: As the University plans for future full-time hires, it should balance the needs for additional staff positions, resulting from the recent significant growth of the institution, with those for faculty members.
- Recommendation 12: CMU should implement a process for formally evaluating and prioritizing future technology investments using a business model that leverages campus-wide solutions, takes advantage of economies of scale, and aligns expenditures with strategic initiatives. The process should assist with assessing technology solutions, scheduling projects within staff resources, and allocating campus resources within the broader institutional goals.

The recommendations listed above will guide CMU toward clear improvement during the next four years.

Request for Re-affirmation of Accreditation

This Self-Study Report, covering a 10-year period of significant institutional change, has outlined the achievements made toward the fulfillment of the articulated mission for Colorado Mesa University. Through the Self-Study process, CMU has assembled for the North Central Association's Higher Learning Commission clear evidence demonstrating that the institution fully meets all the Criteria for Accreditation established by the Commission. This evidence demonstrates that:

- Colorado Mesa University's mission is clear and articulated publicly, and guides the institution's operations.
- Colorado Mesa University acts with integrity, and its conduct is ethical and responsible.
- Colorado Mesa University provides high-quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.
- Colorado Mesa University demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.
- Colorado Mesa University's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. Colorado Mesa University actively plans for the future.

It is clear that the University is not only fulfilling its mission with integrity, but that it is also well-positioned to face the social, technology, and demographic changes that may challenge CMU in the future.

After consideration of this evidence, it is formally requested that the accreditation currently granted to Colorado Mesa University by the Higher Learning Commission be re-affirmed. CMU is confident in requesting this re-affirmation and anticipates the opportunities for growth that will be afforded the institution as it moves into a new stage of Pathways Assurance planning, documentation, and action.

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