

# **Assurance Argument Adams State University - CO**

**9/13/2017 DRAFT**

## **1 - Mission**

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

### **1.A - Core Component 1.A**

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

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board. 2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.

3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

## **Argument**

The Adams State University role and mission are established in state statute (C.R.S. 23-51-101). While the statutory language provides a broad framework for the operation of the university as a public institution of higher learning, it does not function particularly well as a touchstone with which faculty, staff, and students can identify. To that end, through an open and inclusive process spanning more than two years, the university developed the guiding vision, core purpose, and values statements:

## **Vision Statement**

To become the university community of choice for diverse, historically underserved groups, and all who value quality education and inclusivity.

## **Core Purpose**

ASU's core purpose is to educate, serve, and inspire our diverse populations in the pursuit of their lifelong dreams and ambitions.

## **Values Statements**

As members of the Adams State University community, we value:

- Opportunity and access for all;
- Excellence in teaching and learning;
- Growth through inclusion of diverse cultures and ideas;
- A learning and civic community of trust, respect, and civility;
- Caring and personal relationships;
- Innovation, integrity, and ethical leadership;
- Responsible stewardship.

Diversity, opportunity, access, and education form the operational foundation of the institution.

### **1.A.1 Response and Evidence**

Adams State University's degree structure, admissions standards, and service requirements are laid out in state statute. The vision statement and core purpose focus and enhance the statute to emphasize the institution's commitment to providing quality educational opportunities to the diverse and historically underserved population of the region.

Given that the formal mission is found in state statute, all discussion in this section related to development of the "mission statement" will refer to the "core purpose," "vision statement," and/or strategic plan. The 2010-2013 Strategic Plan was designed as a "plan in continuous motion." Administrators, departments and specific individuals made changes to the documents regularly as weekly, monthly and annual updates were needed.

Development of the current Strategic Plan (ASU 2020) and the associated core purpose (a.k.a. mission statement), vision statement, and values statements formally began in October of 2012 at a retreat for a presidentially appointed "Planning Group," whose membership came from across campus. The previous Strategic Plan would expire in 2013 and the campus took the arduous steps to examine and redefine the mission and vision statements. During this time period, the previous plan continued to guide decisions while operation of the university continued under the existing plan.

The proposed mission and vision statements resulting from the October 2012 session were shared electronically with the Planning Group, who were charged with taking the proposals to their respective areas for review. Over the following 2 years, several opportunities for campus-wide discussion as well as work by the President's Cabinet resulted in final changes to the mission (core purpose) and vision statements. The Board of Trustees adopted the new mission and vision statements at their October 10, 2014 meeting. A timeline identifying the full process is included as evidence.

On July 1, 2015, Dr. Beverlee McClure started as the new president of ASU and immediately identified completion of the strategic plan as a top priority for her first year. To that end, we restructured the annual "all campus meeting," held on August 21, 2015, to engage all faculty and staff in the strategic planning process. Ideas and data from that session were transcribed and formed the basis of an all-campus electronic survey. Dr. McClure met with every unit on campus, including student groups, in an effort to help each group understand the importance of the strategic plan and the value of their participation. The Board of Trustees received regular updates on the strategic planning process and adopted the institutional goals and strategic initiatives on December 18, 2015. Actions, benchmarks, and measures were identified and incorporated into the plan during the Spring of 2016, culminating with the Board of Trustees approving ASU 2020 at their board meeting on 13 May 2016.

During the past two years, the campus has worked diligently to infuse the mission, vision, and goals into all aspects of campus operations: from the pursuit of Title V grant funding which supports the historically underserved, to implementation of a guaranteed tuition model (Goal 4: Access & Affordability), and working to identify Essential Learning Outcomes common to all programs at Adams State University (Goal 1: Academic Excellence). Formal updates to ASU2020 are presented to the Board on a semi-annual basis (December 2016 and June 2017).

## 1.A.2 Response and Evidence

Enrollment Profile: The university is a leader in diversity and equity in education. With an undergraduate student population (1,878) that is more than a third Hispanic (35%, fall 2015 data), ASU has ranked as Colorado's foremost four-year "Hispanic-Serving Institution" (HSI) since its designation by the US Dept. of Education as an HSI in 2000. ASU also has one of the highest percentages of minority students (49%, fall 2015) among four-year institutions in the state. Approximately 40% of ASU's undergraduates are residents from the San Luis Valley, which contributes to the percentage of first-generation college students (36%) and those from low-income families: 54% of ASU's students are Pell-eligible and 91% receive financial aid. ASU Extended Studies provides access to adult and special populations through distance delivery methods. In the Fall of 2014, the average student age in the distance degree program was 35, with 85% of students entering a program of study as a transfer student. Eighteen percent of the total students enrolled in the Fall of 2014 were transfer students from Colorado junior and community colleges. Incarcerated students made up 50.42% of the of the distance degree students enrolled in Fall 2014.

Academic Programs: ASU academic programs are consistent with its mission, vision statement and core values through the implementation of ASU Strategic Plan.

Founded in 1921 as a teacher's college to serve the educational and economic needs of the region, ASU continues to provide a range of programs focused on teacher preparation:

- Traditional bachelor's degrees in both elementary and secondary licensure;
- Online degree completion programs for elementary licensure;
- Cohort-based master's degrees in education, educational leadership, cultural and linguistically diverse education, curriculum and instruction, and a Reading Teacher endorsement;

ASU continues to embrace the two-year component of the statutory mission by offering a number of concentrations for two-year associate degrees (associate of arts and associate of science). In 2010, the campus began providing a \$500 scholarship for the following semester to any student who completed an associate degree. This program provides incentive for students to complete an intermediate milestone on their way to a four-year degree and to continue their education. Moreover, as many ASU first-time students enter college underprepared in math, reading, or writing, or some combination of the three, several developmental coursework options are provided every semester.

Four-year degree offerings include 22 degree options in 13 academic departments. The breadth of these offerings is consistent with traditional liberal arts and sciences degree programs required by the statutory role and mission. In addition, several new academic programs have been developed in the last 10 years. Each of these programs was developed to address needs within the community and/or our student body:

- The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) was initiated as a Registered Nurse (RN) to BSN program in 2004 and has since grown to include a traditional (or pre-licensure) four-year BSN option. Both programs are nationally accredited by CCNE (Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education). The first cohort of the BSN program graduated in May 2012.
- The Bachelor of Arts degree in Sport Psychology is an interdisciplinary program combining Human Performance & Physical Education with Psychology. The degree offers students the opportunity to learn and apply psychological concepts to the multi-billion dollar sports industry. The first degree in

this area was awarded in May 2009.

- In 2007, ASU began offering a bachelor of fine arts degree. This program requires students to engage more intensively in art study and specialize in a single art medium. The ultimate goal of this program is to better prepare our undergraduates for further study and for professions in visual arts.

The statutory mission specifies that “Adams state university shall offer programs, when feasible, that preserve and promote the unique history and culture of the region”. In 2014, ASU began offering a minor in Latino Studies. This program is an interdisciplinary effort that provides students in any major the opportunity to expand their understanding of economic, social, and cultural relationships. Our Spanish program provides an important link between the long political and cultural history of the San Luis Valley and present-day residents. The Spanish bachelor of arts program offers two emphases, liberal arts and secondary education. There is also a Spanish emphasis for elementary education licensure as well as a minor in Spanish. In addition, the program offers several career-oriented classes such as Spanish for Health Professions and Spanish for Business.

Over the past two decades, ASU has significantly enhanced and expanded graduate degree offerings to include a range of master's degrees and one doctoral degree. ASU views graduate education as a critical component to our mission and vision of serving both the needs of historically underserved populations and providing access to higher levels of education. Individuals living in rural areas find difficulties in pursuing their educational dreams because institutions that provide graduate programs are generally concentrated in urban areas. New graduate degrees are primarily online programs which provide access to students regardless of their physical location. While master's degrees in education have been a component of the ASU offerings for years, the institution has responded to growing demand by developing the following programs in the last decade:

- Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision
- MA in Higher Education Administration & Leadership (HEAL)
- MA in Humanities
- MS in Exercise Science
- MA in Music Education

Extended Studies also supports our roots as a teacher preparation institution by working with school districts to align professional development credit opportunities for teachers and by offering dual enrollment courses to high school students. Through a partnership with the United States Satellite Laboratories, Adams State University offers an MA in Education/Curriculum & Instruction with STEM concentration to address the growing need for quality STEM focused education in the K-12 systems.

Student Support Services. ASU has extensive student support programs that begin with New Student Orientation, extends through housing and residence life for on-campus students (e.g., learning communities), includes a wide variety of student clubs and organizations, and other efforts such as a dedicated Veterans Affairs Coordinator. ASU has a long-running and successful Student Support Services (SSS) program (a significant body of relevant evidence for these programs can be found as evidence in Criterion 3), a Federal TRiO Program, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, whose mission is to advance and defend the ideal of equal educational opportunity by helping disadvantaged students overcome economic, social, academic, and cultural barriers to higher education. A variety of programming and services are available through this office, including academic counseling, financial literacy, mentoring, tutoring, scholarships and many others.

Students are supported in their efforts in earning a degree through academic advising and tutoring. Undecided students and conditionally admitted students are assigned to an advisor in the Academic Advising Center, while students who have declared a major are assigned a faculty advisor in their department. Students must meet with their academic advisor at least once every semester and are not allowed to register for classes until they have.

The Grizzly Testing and Learning Center and the STEM Center provide free peer-tutoring services to all undergraduate students. While the bulk of tutoring occurs for courses in general education and developmental courses, every effort is made to identify tutors capable of tutoring in upper-division courses in academic majors. The mathematics program provides free drop-in tutoring in the Math Lab and the English Program maintains a Writing Studio which aims to provide academic writing support for students, including assistance in developing and writing cover letters, resumes, etc.

The CAMP program (College Assistance Migrant Program) is federally funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Migrant Education. The goal of the program is to provide academic, social, and financial support services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers or their dependents.

In addition to the many student support programs identified above for the on-campus students, ASU works to ensure that students pursuing coursework through the Office of Extended Studies are provided with appropriate levels of support. These efforts include: orientation; a dedicated assigned advisor from inquiry through graduation; access to the Nielsen Library and databases; technology support through AITC; financial aid assistance for distance degree programs; and writing support through the Graduate Center.

### **1.A.3 Response and Evidence**

ASU 2020 drives decisions and priorities related to planning and budgeting. The Executive Council advises the president on implementation of the strategic plan and the development of an annual budget to support the strategic plan. Budget requests from across campus are gathered in a bottom-up approach beginning with individual departments using an online request form and evaluated by Executive Council using many factors, but driven by the goals and initiatives within the strategic plan. Additionally, during the development of ASU 2020, all strategic initiatives and/or action items with fiscal impact were identified and are organized in a summary document.

While securing grant funds is of significant benefit to the university organization and its students, grants are only pursued if they have an appropriate link to the strategic plan. (See sections IV.A.3 and IV.B.1 in the policy on grant application process.)

While the campus strives to utilize the strategic plan as well as the associated mission and vision statements to drive budgeting, several fiscal priorities were clearly identified within ASU 2020. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Establishment of a "Graduate Center"
- The support of visiting scholars and professionals
- The creation of an honors program
- Faculty development that fosters development and retention of diverse faculty
- Implementation of degree audit software

- Establishment of an online writing studio
- Institutionalization of the Center for Teaching, Innovation, & Research

Further discussion of the budgeting and planning process is described in 5.C.1.

## Sources

- Academic Programs (Academic Catalog, 2014-15)
- Accreditation Letter from CCNE (2017\_0519)
- Adams Institutional Learning Outcomes (web)
- AITC (web)
- Art (Academic Catalog, 2014-15)
- Associate of Arts (Academic Catalog, 2014-15)
- Associate of Science (Academic Catalog, 2014-15)
- ASU 2020 BOT Update (2016\_1215)
- ASU 2020 BOT Update (2017\_0622-23)
- ASU 2020 Budget Impact Study
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 3)
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 5)
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 6)
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 8)
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 12)
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 18)
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 19)
- ASU 2020 Timeline
- ASU Doctoral Degrees & Certificates - CO DHE (web)
- ASU Graduate Degrees - CO DHE (web)
- ASU Strategic Plan, 2010-13
- BOT Meeting (2014\_1010)
- BOT Meeting (2015\_1218)
- BOT Meeting (2016\_0513)
- BOT Meeting (2016\_0513) (page number 4)
- Budget Funding Request Form (web)
- CAMP Program (web)
- Change Panel Action Letter (2015\_1217)
- Change Panel Letter (2015\_1102)
- CO Revised Statutes 23-51-101 re ASU
- Data re Goals from Campus Strategic Planning Sessions (2015\_09)
- Extended Studies Online Orientation Outline
- Financial Aid for Distance Students (web)
- Grizzly Testing & Learning Center (web)
- Guaranteed Tuition FAQs (web)
- Languages (web)
- Latino Studies (web)
- Library Services for Distance Learning Students (web)
- Live Chat with an Extended Studies Student Advisor (web)
- Living & Learning Communities
- MAEd Curriculum & Instruction Proposal (2014\_0312)

- Math Help Lab (web)
- NSO Anticipated Course Schedule (Spring 2016)
- Nursing (Academic Catalog, 2014-15)
- Office of Title V Initiatives (web)
- Policy - Grant Application Process & Incentive Pay Plan
- Resources for Veterans (web)
- Sport Psychology (web)
- STEM Center (web)
- Strategic Planning Meeting (2012\_1026)
- Strategic Planning Survey (2015\_09)
- Student Clubs at ASU (web)
- Student Support Services (web)
- TED Boettcher Teacher Residency (web)
- TED Graduate Programs (web)
- TED UG Online Degree Completion (web)
- TED Undergraduate Programs (web)
- The Writing Studio (web)
- Writing Resources for Graduate Students (web)

## **1.B - Core Component 1.B**

The mission is articulated publicly.

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

### **Argument**

#### **1.B.1 Response and Evidence**

Adams State University clearly states its mission in public documents on the web (e.g. the ABOUT tab on the ASU web landing page) and in other public documents such as the catalog, the Faculty Handbook, the Student Handbook, the University Manual, and in on-campus locations such as posters on classroom walls.

ASU's Strategic Plan (ASU 2020) is the overarching document that provides the shared structure that guides all work on the campus. Current working documents have been available on the web during the entire planning process. The Board approved ASU2020 at its May 2016 Board meeting. President McClure and Trustee Arnold Salazar began the practice of linking all agenda items for the Board of Trustees meetings to the Strategic Plan in a very open and clear format. While the day-to-day and

month-to-month operations and efforts are managed and implemented by the faculty and staff of the university, ultimately, the Board of Trustees must set the institutional priorities. As such, it is important for the Board to have its work and discussions tightly linked to ASU 2020. The intention moving forward is that all large units on campus (Facilities Services, Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, Academic Affairs, etc.) will engage in either revising their current plans to align them with ASU 2020 or to develop bold new planning documents to serve ASU for the next five years.

### **1.B.2 and 1B.3**

There are 5 principal goals in ASU2020 that guide all institutional actions:

- **Academic Excellence** – *“Adams State University will provide challenging and responsive curricula that educate, serve, and inspire our diverse populations.”*
- **Student Success** – *“Adams State University will address diverse student needs by offering varied learning opportunities and support services for all students to achieve educational, personal, and career successes.”*
- **Personal and Professional Development** – *“Adams State University will provide educational and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.”*
- **Access and Affordability** – *“Adams State University will develop innovative pricing and aid strategies that will maximize opportunities for our diverse and historically underserved students for all levels and delivery models.”*
- **Community Relations** – *“Adams State University will collaborate with the community to provide culturally responsive and sustainable development opportunities that mutually benefit the campus and the San Luis Valley community.”*

These five statements capture the essence of Adams State. All actions and initiatives ultimately work in concert to strengthen the university’s goals of **Academic Excellence (Goal 1)** and **Student Success (Goal 2)**.

**Personal and Professional Development (Goal 3)** is focused on faculty and staff, but feeds directly into goals 1 and 2. The university acknowledges the critical role this plays in success of the university and our students. The ongoing development of its constituents makes the institution thrive.

**Access and Affordability (Goal 4)** is a cornerstone of the ASU2020 plan. Many undergraduate students at ASU are from the San Luis Valley, a region with a high poverty rate. A large majority of our students are eligible for Pell Grants and other financial aid. Even with significant financial aid assistance, many of our students have difficulty affording college and would be unable to pursue higher education if costs continue to rise at the rates seen across the country during the past 20 years. ASU is committed to both access and affordability. Undergraduate and graduate courses and programs are available in a variety of formats and delivery modes, but perhaps most important for our students is that the university is working to control costs. One mechanism for cost control was announced Fall 2015, a 4-year guaranteed tuition rate, beginning in Fall 2016, the only such program in the state of Colorado. A variety of Extended Studies programs also serve to address many issues related to access and affordability. Some examples include the College@HS program; dual enrollment credit for HS students; professional development programs for teachers; and courses and degrees offered in

partnership with the University Beyond Bars program for incarcerated students.

**Community Relations (Goal 5)** includes five strategic initiatives that focus on developing positive partnerships with the community, working toward sustainable economic development, and drawing upon the natural resources that surround the San Luis Valley. A recent economic development study estimated the annual impact of ASU on the San Luis Valley at \$78 million. This value is consistent with other studies extending back over a decade. The university recognizes the key role that the institution plays in the region as a whole and we strive to strengthen and improve the relationships and partnerships.

ASU Community Partnerships connects the San Luis Valley with the university through a variety of programs including: 1) outreach to disadvantaged farmers and ranchers; 2) USDA proposal writing facilitation in support of disadvantaged businesses; 3) job assessment and business support serving Colorado Vocational Rehabilitation's clients; 4) environmental sustainability programming (green home design coursework, campus carbon reduction, plastic farm twine recycling project, K-12 plastic cap recycling collaboration); 5) incubation of the Southern Colorado Film Commission (supports economic development & tourism); 6) conducting economic development feasibility studies such as SEED Park (Sustainable Environmental Economic Development); and 7) the zero-waste study through partnership with the Dept. of Commerce's Economic Development Administration and Colorado's Advanced Industries.

## Sources

- Academic Master Plan (revised 2009\_03)
- Academic Master Plan (revised 2009\_03) (DUP?)
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 3)
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 9)
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 19)
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 25)
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 29)
- ASU Mission, Vision, Values (web)
- ASU Trustee Policy Manual (amended 2010\_04)
- ASU University Manual, General Regulations (2016\_0826)
- BOT Meeting (2016\_0513)
- Community Partnerships (web)
- Economic Impact Analysis & Report (2015\_12)
- Guaranteed Tuition FAQs (web)
- SEM Plan, 2016-20 (2016\_07)
- Student Affairs Strategic Plan, 2015-20

## 1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

## Argument

### 1.C.1 and 1.C.2 Response and Evidence

Adams State University has a rich history as a diverse institution and has formally incorporated aspirations in this regard into the core purpose and vision statements. ASU was the first public institution in Colorado designated by the federal government as a Hispanic Service Institution (HSI). For ASU, being an HSI is a call to serve, celebrate, and support the advancement of the diverse students who identify as Latino/a, Chicano/a, Mexican-American, and Hispanic. We are proud to offer all students the many benefits derived from funding sources such as Title V, which are available only to those institutions designated as HSIs.

In the past 10 years, ASU has created a budget-line item for a grass-roots initiative--the Community for Inclusive Excellence, Leadership, and Opportunity (CIELO). The mission of this group is to "support the university in its transformation into an institution of Inclusive Excellence, in support of its mission and vision," in particular "to become the institution of choice for underrepresented students and all who value quality education and inclusivity". An initiative proposed and championed by CIELO was for the institution to fund a part-time position, the President's Liaison for Inclusive Excellence. This person serves as a member of the President's Cabinet and the President's Executive Team with the charge to bring the "lens of equity" to bear on decisions made at the highest level of the campus administration. Other projects of CIELO have been to raise the profile of different diversity events on campus and increase the ASU diversity presence on the web.

Through Title V funding, ASU has offered 3-5 day retreats focused on equity and inclusion for the past 15 years, with 10-20 faculty and staff members attending each year. The goals of these events have varied slightly from year to year, but all have been similar to the 2016 equity retreat described as "Professional development that enables leadership to eliminate the barriers created by race, class, gender, and other forms of bias, where faculty and staff will change practices that impede the learning of students from underrepresented groups."

The university maintains a commitment to providing a wide range of programming that focuses on diversity and demonstrates the university's commitment to ongoing discourse related to diversity and inclusion. The university offers a variety of academic coursework focused on diversity and inclusion. For students who are interested in more significant work in this area, the university offers minors in Latino Studies and Women's Studies.

CASA (Cultural Awareness Student Achievement) is a student-focused group that we created to strengthen the university's commitment as a Hispanic Serving Institution. The original goal was to reach out to Hispanic, first-generation students, many of whom are commuters, to make them feel more connected to university life. In 2013, the university provided a physical home for this group, the CASA House, located just west of the library.

The Lifeways Lecture Series explores the cultural richness of the San Luis Valley within the context of the multitude of Southwestern and Upper Rio Grande traditions. Community members form the primary audience for this series of lectures.

ASU has in recent years placed increasing emphasis and value on diversity in the hiring process. ASU 2020 articulates the need and importance of working to develop a more diverse faculty and the hiring

process for exempt staff has recently been revised to mirror the faculty hiring processes. A diversity component has been added to the Exempt Annual Evaluation form and process which ties employee performance to effort and work focused on Inclusive Excellence and modifications to the Faculty Handbook are underway, specifically the annual evaluation components, to include language making Inclusive Excellence work and professional development an expectation on the part of faculty.

The university helps foster a multicultural society by regularly offering study abroad programs led by ASU faculty. These programs carry academic credit and vary from short 1-2 week travel experiences to cultural immersion experiences that include home-stays with families in the host country. Examples of these programs include a recent two-week experience on the natural and cultural history of Costa Rica, and for several summers, an annual study abroad opportunity in Nicaragua through the Sociology program.

## **Sources**

- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 7)
- CASA Center (web)
- CIELO (web)
- Diversity News at ASU (web)
- Equity Retreat (web)
- Exempt Employee Evaluation Form (2016\_0218)
- Exempt Employee Evaluation Form (2016\_0218) (page number 4)
- Latino Studies (web)
- Lifeways - Hilos Culturales Lecture Series (web)
- Minor in Women's Studies (Academic Catalog, 2016-17)
- Office of Title V Initiatives (web)
- Professional Performance Evaluation Training (2016)
- Professional Performance Evaluation Training (2016) (page number 31)

## **1.D - Core Component 1.D**

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

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

## **Argument**

### **1.D.1, 1.D.2 and 1.D.3 Response and Evidence**

Adams State University is a public university and exists solely to serve the public. The focus of the university is to provide a quality, accessible and affordable education as evidenced by goals articulated in the ASU 2020 Strategic Plan.

ASU is defined by state statute (C.R.S.23-51-101) as a “*regional education provider*” and is also expected to “*preserve and promote the unique history and culture of the region*”. The university provides a wide range of services and opportunities to the population of the San Luis Valley.

Examples of programming open to the public include:

- Exhibitions and artists’ talks at the galleries in the Art building;
- Approximately 10 theater productions per year;
- A multitude of music programming, concerts, and events, including high school honor band and honor choir events;
- Regularly scheduled events at the planetarium, provided on a weekly basis to the community, free of charge;
- Weekend workshops in science and mathematics for K-12 students (STEM Saturdays);
- Facilities and judges for the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair;
- Free tax preparation assistance through the School of Business for those with household incomes of less than \$53,000 per year;
- Hosting the Regional History Fair for local high schools and middle schools;
- ASU Cares Day, a project that coordinates volunteers for work in the community;
- The Hilos Culturales retreats.

The strategic plan goal addressing Community Relations includes five strategic initiatives that focus on developing positive partnerships with the community, working toward sustainable economic development, and drawing upon the natural resources that surround the San Luis Valley. As noted above (1.B), a recent economic development study estimated the annual impact of ASU on the San Luis Valley at \$78 million. Please see Criterion 3 for additional discussion and evidence.

### **Sources**

- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan
- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan (page number 29)
- Community Partnerships (web)
- Economic Impact Analysis & Report (2015\_12)

### **1.S - Criterion 1 – Summary**

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

### **Summary**

The ASU mission consists of a statutory mission as well as statement of "core purpose." It is the statement of "core purpose" and the vision statement that most individuals associate with the ASU

Mission. The core purpose and vision statements are found on the web, in a variety of public documents, posted throughout campus, and serve as the foundation upon which the Strategic Plan (ASU2020) was built. ASU2020 serves to guide campus operations and planning, including the setting of agendas for meetings of the Board of Trustees, the development of campus budget priorities, and continuing to the level of campus programming.

## **Sources**

- ASU 2020 Strategic Plan
- Budget Funding Request Form (web)
- Lifeways - Hilos Culturales Lecture Series (web)

## **2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct**

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

### **2.A - Core Component 2.A**

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

## **Argument**

### **2.A Response and Evidence**

The integrity of Adams State University's functions is evidenced through the work of various committees and groups across campus and through bylaws, institutional policies, guides and handbooks that govern the financial, academic, personnel and auxiliary operations, as described below. ASU's organizational chart and shared governance structure promotes collaboration and accountability in the evaluation, development and implementation of institutional policies. Shared governance structures and presidential advisory groups at ASU include a diverse representation of stakeholders: the Board of Trustees, Faculty Senate, Associated Students & Faculty (AS&F), Academic Council, Graduate Council, Professional Administrative Staff Council (PASC), Classified Employees Council (CEC), Institutional Technology Governance Committee, the President's Cabinet and President's Executive Council, and Community for Inclusive Excellence, Leadership & Opportunity (CIELO) advisory group.

## **Financial Function**

Several policies, practices and controls are in place to ensure financial integrity. The Financial Management Guide guides internal financial controls and describes procedures for integrity of financial functions. The Fiscal Administrative Policies contain a Code of Ethics and Roles and Responsibilities ensuring that diversification of internal controls are in place for financial integrity.

Procurement card holders are trained through the Purchasing Office to ethically and responsibly use the cards. Cardholders must sign an agreement of ethical and responsible purchasing use and maintain a log of all purchases which is audited by the Purchasing Office regularly. Procurement cards also have

department and individual cardholder dollar limits.

The institution is PCI Compliant. Several departments such as Computing Services, Finance and Administration, Student Business Services, and Extended Studies have collaborated to ensure ASU is compliant with PCI laws.

The Board of Trustees (BOT) established a Finance and Audit Committee in August 2015 (see page 3 of the minutes) that meets quarterly to ensure priorities of the board are met. This committee presents to the BOT a report comparing the financial position and accounting information via budget to the actual financial statements. Annual audits are presented to the full BOT.

A BOT member also sits on the ASU Foundation Board. The Foundation's financials are audited in addition to the institution's financials each year.

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic policies are presented and reviewed for approval or reapproval by the President's Executive Council and Cabinet with first and second readings according to Policy 100-01-01 Academic Policy Process. The President's Executive Council and Cabinet are responsible for sharing proposed draft policies with their constituencies, then feedback is presented at regularly scheduled meetings. All policies approved at Cabinet are presented to the Office of the President for final approval prior to becoming effective. This policy and the diverse membership of the President's Cabinet reflect ASU's commitment to integrity through shared governance with input from a cross-section of stakeholders.

For example, the recent faculty overload policy revision originated with Academic Council discussions and was vetted through a subcommittee. The subcommittee made final recommendations to Academic Council, which then recommended the policy for Cabinet review and approval, sponsored by the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The revised policy then went through the Executive Council and Cabinet review process and was approved. The policy was then posted on our website and faculty were notified.

For new or changed academic programs, the Curriculum Review Committee (and Graduate Council for graduate programs) is responsible for the integrity of the program change and proposal process. They follow the required procedures as outlined in the "Program Change" policy. This policy ensures all departments are informed and operating with synergy and accountability to achieve goals of the new or changed program and the mission of the institution.

All course syllabi, Blackboard course shells, as well as the Extended Studies study guides have an academic integrity statement. The statement is also on the president's and Extended Studies web pages.

### **Distance Learning**

All online courses require approval through the Quality Assurance process upon initial development and then every three years. These courses must adhere to the Quality Matters (QM) standards and rubric for appropriate rigor. The three-year evaluation ensures alignment with curricular and program changes. Distance education courses are reviewed every semester by the department chair of the content area for adequate rigor and substantive instructor/student interaction within the online environment. Course issues are addressed as they arise due to this regular review. Additionally, all Extended Studies online instructors are required to complete the TEED 589 course prior to developing

and offering an online course.

Several academic programs are offered through Distance Learning at ASU. Under the direction of Academic Affairs, Extended Studies oversees the majority of undergraduate distance learning course and degree offerings as well as educator professional development programming. A few specialized graduate programs such as the correspondence (print-based) MBA are managed by Extended Studies.

The Extended Studies department, governed under the Statewide Extended Studies Policy (CDHE), reports directly to the President of ASU, and, effective Spring 2017, is represented on the Academic Council through the newly adopted shared governance structure. Extended Studies operates as a cash-funded entity of ASU and is required by the institution to maintain an annual balanced budget reporting to the Finance and Administration department. As a part of the institution's shared governance structure, Extended Studies has representation on several committees across campus, including Academic Council, Student Learning Assessment Committee, HLC Steering Committee, Administrative Technology Advisory Committee, Data Integrity Steering Committee, Quality Improvement Committee, CEC, and PASC.

Extended Studies collaborates with academic departments to determine appropriate off-site programming. For example, rural school districts in the region expressed a need for dual enrollment courses for their high school students. Extended Studies met this need by working closely with Adams State's academic departments to develop courses using alternative delivery methods (i.e., live stream video in high school classrooms) while maintaining quality through the course review process along with assignment of courses to qualified faculty.

On a semesterly basis, Extended Studies, the Office of Academic Affairs, and academic department chairs review: faculty load, enrollment, student course evaluations and the grade distribution of distance offerings.

Institutional oversight of non-Extended Studies graduate programs, which are predominantly distance offerings, was lacking after the AVP of Graduate Studies resigned in 2010. During an interim period, graduate programs were maintained and monitored by their respective academic departments. A Graduate Initiative Group (GIG) began in 2014 and proposed reinstatement of an executive position to oversee controls, policies and procedures and best practices of graduate programs. A new AVP was hired in January 2017 and has re-centralized oversight and monitoring of graduate programs.

## **Function of Personnel**

Ethical and responsible behavior is expected of the board, administration, faculty, staff and students. The university's expectations of ethical and professional conduct are described in the financial management guide, the faculty handbook, the student handbook and the professional personnel handbook as well as the State Personnel System Employee Handbook. The board's proposed University Manual also addresses Standards of Conduct.

Processes are in place to address unethical behavior at the institution. Grievances and misconduct can be reported through Human Resources and our Title IX/OEO officer. The process for dispute resolution, including grievances and discrimination, is explained in the various handbooks. Illegal or dangerous activities can be reported to the ASU Police Department.

Classified employees are evaluated twice per year in which the degree of an employee's personal and professional conduct is measured. Effective May 2016, a new standardized evaluation format for exempt employees was implemented due to prior inconsistent evaluation processes. This evaluation process is thoroughly described in the Professional Performance Evaluation Handbook.

Policy 500-003: Information Technology Acceptable Use has been in place since 2004 and was updated most recently in March 2016. University faculty and staff must review the policy and sign a statement of understanding prior to receiving a computing account.

FERPA Training is administered by the Registrar's Office to ensure that the institution and its employees, including student workers, protect student privacy. A tutorial must be passed before employees can access protected student and employee information.

The institution has increasingly recognized the importance of inclusion and equal opportunity. In 2008, the Office of Equal Opportunity was established with a part-time director and a diversity officer. Prior to this, equal opportunity matters and training were overseen by a faculty member who had a reduced course load to fulfill the duties. To further invest in this important role, the institution reorganized the department in 2015 and hired a full-time director of Title IX and Equal Opportunity and an assistant director.

A stringent hiring process exists to ensure integrity in hiring or position changes of all employees, including tenure-track and adjunct faculty, athletic coaches, administrators, temporary employees, and staff. The ASU Personnel Contract Recommendation for Employment Form with an accompanying ASU Justification for Personnel Action Form is completed by the hiring supervisor and submitted to the president's executive council for review of several factors (e.g., budget, safety, mission critical, etc.). If approved, open competitive searches for vacant positions are conducted under the direction of the Title IX/OEO. Search committees are comprised of faculty and/or staff that have direct interactions or expertise with the position. The Title IX officer approves search committee composition, ensuring adequate levels of diversity, and meets with the committee to review the code of conduct, ethics and guidelines of the search process. Each committee member is required to maintain confidentiality and objectivity, and each must sign an agreement of confidentiality. The president has authority from the board to make appointments and position changes when necessary to efficiently and effectively meet the institution's goals and mission.

Supervisor training is under development by the institution's professional development team, and new faculty orientation is offered prior to the start of each semester.

### **Auxiliary Integrity**

Auxiliary Services (AS) includes the Office of Residence Life, the Student Union Building (SUB), the Cafeteria and Summer Conferencing. All of these offices are supervised by the Vice President for Student Services.

Auxiliary Services receives no institutional funding from ASU as all revenues are attained by providing student services (room and board). The SUB receives a small percentage of the student fees collected by the institution while all other departments in this area are self-funded.

Auxiliary Services is audited annually by the independent accounting firm Wall, Smith and Bateman. While all budgets are developed and allocated by the Director of AS, all budgets are submitted to the

Office of Administration and Finance for final approval. All capital cash expenditures and fund accounts are monitored by the ASU Controller. The purchasing office monitors and approves day-to-day expenditures.

The ASU bookstore is now operated by Follett Bookstore Management. Previously, the bookstore was self-operated and audited on an annual basis through a formal ASU annual auditing process. The Director of AS serves as the ASU-Follett liaison. This is a contractual partnership where the revenues are based on a commission structure.

Auxiliary Services also contracts with a third party vendor, Sodexo, to provide all dining and catering services on campus. All revenues are generated from a commission and surcharge structure. The Director of AS serves as the liaison between Sodexo and ASU.

### Athletics

ASU is an active NCAA DII Institution, and as such, complies with all applicable criteria of its division. The institution administers its athletics programs in accordance with the constitution, bylaws and other legislation of the NCAA. As an active member institution, ASU agrees to establish and maintain high standards of personal honor, eligibility and fair play. Institutional oversight for the Athletic Department is provided by the Athletic Council, a 15-member council comprised of campus leadership and administration. The institution is also an active member of the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference, and as such, complies with all aspects of the RMAC constitution. Finances of the athletic department are handled at the institutional level and audited with the institution's finances on an annual basis. Every three years, an NCAA review of best practices and procedures is conducted by an outside auditing firm. Every five years, the athletic department is required to submit an Institutional Self Study Guide (ISSG) to the NCAA for review. The next ISSG cycle will occur in 2018-19.

The Athletic Department strategic plan was implemented in 2016-17, bringing the department in line with the ASU 2020 Strategic Plan. Beginning in 2015-16, a new Athletic Department Drug Testing Policy was implemented, which is included in our Department Policy and Procedure Manual as well as our Student-Athlete Handbook.

Bi-annually, a transcript review of each student-athlete is completed to ensure continued eligibility and compliance with all NCAA DII provisions. Included in our Policy and Procedure Manual is the Athletic Department policy regarding online courses for student-athletes. The ASU standard is that no more than 25% of enrolled credit hours for undergraduate student-athletes can be in online courses.

In 2011 and 2015, the Athletic Department requested that an NCAA Compliance Blueprint Review of the department's procedures be conducted by an outside consultant. These reviews resulted in creation of numerous policies and procedures. Annually, the Associate Athletic Director for Compliance and Eligibility is required to attend an NCAA Regional Rules Seminar, and every three years staff and coaches of the department must attend.

The SWA is certified as a facilitator for Step-Up Bystander Intervention training and has, in conjunction with the Director of Title IX/OEO, conducted several trainings for the campus community this past year, with mandatory training administered to student-athletes, coaches and athletic staff before the academic year begins. Currently, the Athletic Council has undertaken a Title IX Gender-Equity self-evaluation of the department that is due to be completed in the next six months. A five-year

Gender-Equity plan will be developed following the completion of the self-evaluation.

## Sources

- ASU Faculty Handbook (amended 2016\_0826)
- ASU Faculty Handbook (amended 2016\_0826) (page number 6)
- ASU Financial Management Guide (web)
- ASU Professional Personnel Handbook (amended 2008\_0829)
- ASU University Manual, General Regulations (2016\_0826)
- Athletics - Compliance (web)
- BOT Meeting (2015\_0827-28)
- BOT Meeting (2017\_0216)
- CCHE Statewide Extended Studies Policy (2012\_0607)
- CompSvcs Acct Request Form + Policy 500-003 - IT Acceptable Use (2016\_0317)
- CRC (web)
- FERPA Tutorial (web)
- Hiring Justification Form (2015\_0701)
- Job Description - Director of Title IX & EOE (2015\_0630)
- Memo from Farley re University Manual (2015\_0317)
- Organizational Chart (2016\_07)
- Organizational Chart (2016\_17)
- PAWS Professional Development Framework
- PCI Compliance Self-Assessment + Attestation V3.0 (2014\_02)
- PCR Form (revised 2012\_1025)
- Person of Concern Form (web)
- Police Dept. (web)
- Policy - Fiscal Code of Ethics (2006\_0615)
- Policy - Fiscal Roles & Responsibilities (2006\_0615)
- Policy 100-01-01 - Academic Policy Process (revised 2014\_1023)
- Policy 100-08-04 - Program Changes (revised 2015\_0605)
- Policy 100-10-08 - Faculty Overload (2016\_0519)
- Policy 500-003 - IT Acceptable Use (2016\_0317)
- President's Cabinet (web)
- Press Release - Office to Increase Diversity (web)
- Procurement Card Training
- Search Committee Code of Ethics & Confidentiality Agreement
- Shared Governance at ASU (web)
- State of CO Cardholder Agreement (2011\_0929)
- TEED 589 Instructor Completion Report (2008-17)
- TEED 589 Syllabus
- US Dept. of Education ECAR Report (2016\_1004)

## 2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

## **Argument**

### **2.B Response and Evidence**

Adams State University presents itself clearly and completely by maintaining transparency and timely communication. ASU uses electronic and traditional media as well as in-person workshops and meetings to communicate with students and the public. Our website ([www.adams.edu](http://www.adams.edu)) details academic programs and requirements, costs, faculty, governance, and accreditation. There are redundant links to web pages with this information throughout the site as well as a search tool in the header of every web page. The links to Academics, Admissions, and Distance Learning are prominent on the home page, as are links geared to Future Students, Current Students, and Distance Learners. Our Consumer Information for Families and Employees web page provides links to required disclosures and other helpful information.

Class schedules and the annual academic catalog are linked from numerous pages within the Adams State site, including One Stop Student Services, the main Academics page, and individual academic program pages.

This information is also presented in person to students and their families through New Student Orientation every semester or via online orientation modules for distance learners, in-person with advisors and the One Stop Student Services Center, and at special events such as Advising Weeks.

### **Programs and Requirements**

The primary source of academic program information for undergraduate students comes from assigned academic advisors. Students are required to meet with their advisor each semester to obtain a PIN for course registration. These meetings ensure that students are aware of course and degree requirements. An electronic degree auditing tool, Degree Works, was launched in August 2017, allowing students to view personalized degree plans and requirements.

Each undergraduate and graduate academic program is linked on the Academics web page. The main academic web page includes graduation requirements, general education requirements, transfer requirements, and placement in English and math courses. Links are also provided for academic policies, four-year degree maps, and the academic catalog, which includes degree plans and course descriptions. Student testimonials, academic information and campus events are also shared through the institution's YouTube channel.

Pages for individual academic programs provide detail on Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes. Academic program pages also include course requirements for various majors and redundant links to "Apply" and "Cost/Tuition." Individual programs present additional links to their degree plans, as well as detail on unique program features, faculty, scholarships, scholarly organizations, and other relevant resources. For example, the Nursing Department web page links to Career Resources and the Colorado Nurses Association, and include information on required books and supplies.

The Distance Learning web page has sections regarding undergraduate distance degrees and courses, graduate distance degrees, resources for K-12 educators and dual-enrolled high school students, as well as redundant links to cost/tuition, financial, and application information. Advisors work closely with

distance students to share program requirements and information throughout admission and registration.

## **Faculty and Staff**

The majority of the Academic Program pages provide links to detailed information on their individual faculty (e.g., Department of Human Performance & Physical Education). These may include education credentials, academic rank, photos, links to professor webpages, brief biographies and contact information. Faculty are also listed in the Academic Catalog with their position title, degree(s) and institution name, and year of conferral. Contact information, department name, and office locations of staff and faculty are listed in the searchable online directory accessible in the header of all ASU web pages.

## **Costs to Students**

Tuition, fees, and overall cost of attendance are prominent on several web pages, especially Admissions, Financial Aid pages, and Academic program pages. The Cost/Tuition page provides the mandated Net Price Calculator, cost estimators, and tuition schedules by residency type for on and off-campus undergraduate and graduate students. It also links to information for housing and meal plans and contracts. Extended Studies has a cost estimator for undergraduate students in the distance degree program on their web page.

The Financial Aid page also provides information for loans, grants, work study, and institutional scholarships, as well as to aid applications, financial aid policies, Colorado's College Opportunity Fund (COF), and resources on financial literacy and for distance students.

The Veterans Center at ASU provides many resources for veterans, including the Veterans Center web page that lists educational benefits such as Chapter 30 Montgomery GI Bill and Chapter 33 Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits.

## **Control**

ASU's Shared Governance web page provides links to various governing groups, including the Board of Trustees; Academic and Graduate Councils; the Community for Inclusive Excellence, Leadership, and Opportunity (CIELO); faculty, staff and student governance groups; Institutional Technology Governance, and president's advisory groups. The president's executive council web page lists names, photos and titles of each member and hosts all executive council meeting minutes.

The web page on Shared Governance can be accessed via Administrative Resources listed on the menu at the bottom of each page on the site. A link also appears on the About page. There are direct links to the Trustees page from this list, the President's page and the About page. The University's organizational charts are available on the Human Resources web page.

The ASU Police Department (PD) discloses its annual Clery Act Security and Fire Report, crime statistics, and the daily crime and fire logs online. The PD also shares resources for safety, counseling and sexual assault prevention with students and the public on their site.

## Accreditation Relationships

Information about the university's regional accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission is provided via the About and Academics pages, including disclosure about our probation status. The university's accreditation process is also documented via the About page. University memberships and affiliations are listed on the Fast Facts page.

The following academic programs have relevant accreditation for the academic area and list the accreditation status on their web pages:

- Counselor Education Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling: CACREP
- Music: National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)
- Nursing: Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)
- Teacher Education Reauthorization - Colorado Department of Higher Education

Adams State University is a member of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and has been working closely with the organization to reform the general education curriculum and institutional goals. The university is also approved by the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

## Sources

- AAC&U Listing for ASU (web)
- AAUW Listing for ASU (web)
- Academics (web)
- Accreditation Letter from CCNE (2016\_0527)
- ASU Directory - Faculty & Staff Search (web)
- ASU Response to CO State Board of Nursing Report (2016)
- ASU YouTube Channel (web)
- CACREP Accreditation (web)
- Campus Fast Facts & Information (web)
- CCNE Listing for ASU (web)
- Chapter 30 Montgomery GI Bill (web)
- Chapter 33 Post 9-11 GI Bill (web)
- Consumer Info for Families & Employees (web)
- Cost/Tuition to Attend ASU (web)
- Decision Letter from CO State Board of Nursing (2016\_1028)
- Distance Learning (web)
- Executive Council Meetings (web)
- Extended Studies UG Cost Estimator (2016-17)
- Faculty Listing (Academic Catalog, 2016-17)
- Financial Aid (web)
- HLC Comprehensive Evaluation Intro (web)
- HLC Comprehensive Evaluation Process (web)
- HPPE Faculty (web)
- NASM Accreditation Action Report (2008\_0626)
- NASM Listing for ASU (web)
- Nursing (web)
- One Stop Student Services (web)

- Organizational Chart (2016\_17)
- Police Dept. (web)
- Reauthorization Letter from CO DHE (2013\_0729)
- Shared Governance at ASU (web)
- Veteran's Educational Benefits (web)

## **2.C - Core Component 2.C**

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

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

### **Argument**

#### **2.C.1 Response and Evidence**

The ASU 2020 Strategic Plan was developed in 2015-16 and approved by the Board in May 2016. Board agendas began aligning with the strategic plan in October 2015. On the agenda at each Board meeting is an open public comment item for external and internal constituents bringing forth issues or ideas.

To ensure the Board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution, the board began a Policy Review Project in 2013. This multi-year project will create an improved model of governance and better define the institution's relationship to the Colorado Constitution, Colorado Revised Statutes, Trustee Bylaws and the board's delegation of administrative duties to the president. The project was on hold during the presidential search process, but resumed with vigor in Fall 2015 after the new president was hired. A Policy Review Committee convened and drafted an updated governance model for ASU. The guiding document for the model, under the authority of the Colorado Constitution, Colorado Revised Statutes, and Trustee Bylaws, is a new "University Manual" with the following parts:

- PART ONE: General Regulations
- PART TWO: Administration
- PART THREE: Academics
- PART FOUR: Faculty Handbook (including Nursing Faculty and Parental Leave)
- PART FIVE: Professional Personnel Handbook
- PART SIX: Classified Staff Handbook
- PART SEVEN: Student Handbook (incl. Graduate, Nursing, HEAL students))
- PART EIGHT: Athletic Handbook

The Board reviewed this new model in May 2016, shared it with the campus for input and comment throughout that summer, and approved the General Regulations of the manual at the August 2016 meeting. Part One: General Regulations replaces sections of the Trustee Policy Manual and is reserved solely to the Board. Parts Two through Eight are delegated to the president by the board and have been undergoing a thorough review since mid-2016.

For a more appropriate fit, the principle of shared governance was approved by the board as an amendment to be moved from the Trustee Policy Manual and to the “General Regulations” section of the University Manual.

Sections of the Trustee Policy Manual will be in effect until the University Manual project is complete. This Manual is a university publication that incorporates policies adopted by the Board pursuant to §23-51-102, C.R.S.

### **2.C.2 Response and Evidence**

By policy, the Board assures substantial administrative authority and autonomy at ASU, to guarantee a minimum of external involvement in the affairs of the University, and to encourage the development of the distinctive role of the University as it strives to fulfill its mission of achieving academic excellence.

In light of this, the Board, especially with their Economic & Community Development Committee, reviews and considers institutional and program needs with relationship to external constituencies at local, state and national levels.

The Board also reviews and takes action for large financial transactions and personnel matters including faculty tenure recommendations (i.e., Sabbatical, Tenure, Emeritus, Faculty Promotion). The governing board of ASU highly values shared governance with internal and external constituencies in its deliberations. The General Regulations of the Board’s University Manual add clarification to decision-making deliberations, specifically describing the scope and purpose of shared governance as well as the board’s delegation of administrative duties to the president.

To improve shared governance, the composition of the President’s Cabinet was adjusted in Spring 2017 to avoid duplication with the President’s Executive Council. Cabinet now consists of representation from official committees and employee groups across campus. This new shared governance structure ensures broader review of policies and discussion of campus activities, initiatives and strategic planning. Proposed policies now go before both Executive Council and Cabinet for a minimum of two readings before being approved.

The last presidential search conducted by the Board is an excellent example of how ASU “lives” this core component. In July 2014, the Board commenced a search to replace retiring president, Dr. David Svaldi. In the spirit of shared governance with one of the board’s most important decisions, the Board established a search committee comprised of a diverse group of trustees, faculty, administrators, professional and classified staff, students, community, and foundation leaders. The Board charged the committee with analyzing the university’s current needs and future challenges, creating a position announcement, and overseeing a national search for candidates. The Board also retained a search consulting firm to assist the committee in carrying out its responsibilities. After nearly a year-long, rigorous search process, the Board named its first female president, Dr. Beverlee J. McClure, in April

2015, based on the research and recommendation of the search committee with input from internal and external stakeholders.

### **2.C.3 Response and Evidence**

ASU, as a public system of higher education in Colorado, is obligated to conform to the policies set by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, established through Colorado Revised Statute §23-1-102. Under this statute, the Board of Trustees is the governing authority appointed by the Commission for the University. The Board consists of nine voting members appointed and sworn in by the Governor with the consent of the Senate, and two non-voting members elected by the faculty and the students, respectively, as provided in §23-51-102, C.R.S.

The role and mission of our state-supported institution is determined in conjunction with the Commission within statutory guidelines. The Board establishes policies designed to enable the University to perform its statutory functions in a rational and systematic manner. To assist the Board in meeting its responsibilities, the Board delegates to the President of the University the authority to interpret and administer the Board's policies in all areas of operations. A Colorado Assistant Attorney General provides legal orientation to the board. The board's general counsel attends every board meeting and provides advice to the board on legal matters.

The Board of Trustees meets five times per year according to its bylaws and calls special meetings as needed. A board retreat is held annually in the summer. Regular meetings as well as meetings of the Finance and Audit, Policy Revisions, Legislative Affairs, and Economic & Community Development Committees are open to the public, according to Colorado Sunshine open records laws (§ 24-6-402, C.R.S.). Agendas and minutes of each meeting are made available to the public. The Board may appoint committees and task forces from time to time on an ad hoc basis.

To keep the mission and institutional goals at the center of board deliberations, the board began aligning meetings with the strategic plan in October 2015.

The Board's policies and procedures, administered by the President of the university and staff, are designed to ensure effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability.

Article 1, Section 2 of the Board of Trustees Bylaws clearly states that, "It is the policy of the Board to assure substantial administrative authority and autonomy at the University, to guarantee a minimum of external involvement in the affairs of the University, and to encourage the development of the distinctive role of the University as it strives to fulfill its mission."

### **2.C.4 Response and Evidence**

Sections 1 and 2 of the University Manual General Regulations define the board's relationship to state statute and the board's delegation of administrative duties and day-to-day management to the president and administration of the institution.

The Vice Presidents of Academics and Student Services, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer manage their respective programs but bring matters that require board review and approval forth to the board.

The board named Dr. Beverlee J. McClure as Adams State's president in April 2015. She began her

new role upon retirement of Dr. David Svaldi in June 2015. The president is evaluated annually by the board.

Board agendas and discussion are directly connected to the ASU 2020 Plan for strategic discussion rather than to day-to-day management.

## **Sources**

- ASU Bylaws (adopted 2013\_0711)
- ASU Trustee Policy Manual (amended 2010\_04)
- ASU University Manual, General Regulations (2016\_0826)
- BOT Agenda (SAMPLE) (2016\_0218)
- BOT Agendas + Minutes (web)
- BOT Meeting (2015\_0827-28)
- BOT Meeting (Approval of Strategic Plan) (2015\_1002)
- Memo from Farley re Scope of Policy Revision Comm (2015\_1122)
- Memo from Farley re University Manual (2015\_0317)
- Organizational Chart (2017\_01)
- Shared Governance Organizational Chart (2016\_12)
- Shared Governance Policy Approval Flow Chart (revised 2016\_1216)

## **2.D - Core Component 2.D**

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

### **Argument**

#### **2.D Response and Evidence**

Adams State University believes that freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is the cornerstone of an academic institution and encourages freedom of expression in its community, especially in the classroom. ASU's commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is demonstrated in our core governance documents.

- The Faculty Handbook states that the Trustees endorse the principles of academic freedom, including faculty's full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; however, research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution. Faculty are free in the classroom to discuss their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching any subject matter that has no relation to their student learning outcomes.
- The following publications emphasize the importance of freedom of expression: the Student Handbook, the Code of Conduct, Academic Policies, Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy, and Student Publications and Communications section.
- The Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy (500-003 page 1) requires that "Freedom of Expression and the existence of an open environment conducive to inquiry and learning will be

respected by the college with regard to the use of computing resources; however, behavior contrary to established policy will not be protected.”

- Violence in the Workplace Policy Section M addresses Freedom of Expression as an individual right so long as that expression does not constitute “Violent Behavior” as defined in the policy’s procedures.

### **Sources**

- ASU Faculty Handbook (amended 2016\_0826)
- ASU Faculty Handbook (amended 2016\_0826) (page number 9)
- Excerpts from various ASU publications re Freedom of Expression
- Policy - Violence in the Workplace (2012\_04)
- Policy 500-003 - IT Acceptable Use (2016\_0317)

## **2.E - Core Component 2.E**

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

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

### **Argument**

#### **2.E.1 Response and Evidence**

Adams State University encourages and expects faculty and staff to stay current in their discipline and continue their professional development through active engagement in scholarly research and creative endeavors. In addition to personal research, a number of University professors have designed courses that engage students in conducting active research of various kinds (e.g., PSYC 355 Research Methods in Psychology, GEOG 440 Senior Capstone, ED 571 Educational Research, COUN 744, 746, 750 Dissertation). As part of this learning experience, ASU’s Institutional Review Board works with the faculty member(s) and student(s) so that students learn how to appropriately engage in human subject research. The primary function of the IRB is to ensure protection of the rights of all human participants who participate in research endeavors conducted by ASU faculty, professional staff, and/or students. The policies and regulations of the IRB are guided by federal rules and regulations and are based on Title 45 CFR part 46: Protection of Human Subjects and the Belmont Report. This requires all research involving human participants be reviewed and approved by an IRB. Any research not approved by the IRB and not subject to the exceptions to IRB oversight may not be conducted on the ASU campus.

To further ensure research integrity, the institution has policies in place that address conflict of interest and code of ethics regarding finance, purchasing, and procurement. The intent of these policies is to remove any improper influence that hiring and purchasing may have on scholarly research and creative endeavors.

## **2.E.2 Response and Evidence**

The institution provides abundant support for students to ensure ethical use of information resources.

- The “Institutional Syllabi” Policy requires that course syllabi state policies about academic honesty and integrity as well as address consequences of plagiarism.
- Behavioral science majors are required to complete LS 225: Research Skills in Behavioral Science. A primary student learning objective is that students ethically use information resources.
- Nielsen Library offers writing and citing research guides.
- Nielsen Library adheres to ALA and ACRL policies and standards.
- Citation manuals are available on a “ready reference shelf” by the library’s reference desk.
- Individual library instruction with students or in classes is available upon request.
- Ethical use of information is conducted in all librarian interactions with students at the reference desk, in reference consultations, etc.
- The ASU Academic Integrity and Academic Dishonesty Policy, reviewed every two years, is available online in the academic policies section of the University Manual.
- The Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy sets forth the institution’s policy with regard to the use of information technology resources. This policy was reviewed and amended March 17, 2016, by Cabinet to ensure academic integrity was appropriately addressed with regard to proper use of computing resources.
- The Center for Graduate Studies provides free workshops which include research integrity.

## **2.E.3 Response and Evidence**

Academic integrity is of utmost importance at ASU and is woven throughout all that we do. Adams State does not tolerate academic dishonesty or misconduct and closely abides by the Academic Integrity and Academic Dishonesty Policy. Statements emphasizing the institution's resolve to preserve academic integrity can be found in the president’s statement on academic integrity and the distance learning web site.

The Student Handbook further reinforces our academic integrity policy and states that "all students are required to practice academic honesty. Students should refrain from any form of academic dishonesty or academic misconduct, including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized possession or disposition of academic materials, falsification, or facilitation of acts of dishonesty. A student may be subject to disciplinary action for any violation of the general Code of Conduct requirements, as well as any violation of written University policies and any violation of federal, state or municipal law committed on or off campus, in connection with University activities, or that affects the campus community, whether committed on or off campus property.” Academic integrity is enforced by faculty and the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

In addition to institutional policies and guidelines, academic departments have implemented policies to safeguard honesty and integrity in the classroom.

The English department implemented a policy in the Fall 2015 requiring that all ENG 101/102 Communication Arts I and II classes require a high-stakes writing assignment in a secure, proctored environment requiring a photo ID. The English department also approved a plagiarism detection policy during spring semester of 2015. This policy applies to all courses given in all formats, including online, print-based, and on-campus delivery.

Several other efforts are in place to protect academic integrity. In TEED 589: From the Classroom to the Web, faculty of online courses are trained to monitor academic integrity. In Athletics, student athletes are monitored for academic integrity by a designated academic advisor. An identity verification committee was established in Fall 2015 to further implement safeguards for academic integrity related to student identity in courses.

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## **2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary**

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

### **Summary**

*There is no argument.*

### **Sources**

*There are no sources.*

## **3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support**

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

### **3.A - Core Component 3.A**

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

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.

3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

## **Argument**

### **3.A.1 Response and Evidence**

#### **GT Pathways & Transferability of Courses**

One means of ensuring ASU's students perform at an appropriate level is participation in a statewide program that guarantees transfer of general education courses within Colorado. Adams State University participates in the State of Colorado's Guaranteed Transfer program for general education, GT Pathways. GT pathways includes 31 credits of general education coursework in Communications, Arts & Humanities, Social & Behavioral Sciences, History, Science and Mathematics. Adams State's own general education curriculum includes all the GT Pathways requirements plus six additional credits in Arts & Humanities, and Social & Behavioral Sciences or History, which meets GT Pathways requirements. Initial approval occurs at the campus level through the General Education Coordinating Committee (GECC), a committee comprised of tenured and tenure track faculty. After campus approval courses are submitted for state approval at which time a statewide committee of faculty from two-year and four-year schools reviews the course. Courses must meet state established criteria for general education competency in Critical Thinking, Math, Reading, Technology and Written Communication, as well as content. Six common outcomes are specified and courses must demonstrate that students acquire these skills through instruction and assignments in the relevant content area. Beginning in 2014, faculty at the state level began revising the competencies to align with AAC&U's LEAP Value Rubrics. Revisions to content areas and competencies are complete. Full state implementation shall be phased in over the next three years. ASU followed this lead and adopted Adams Outcomes in 2016. These goals and outcomes align directly with the state approved GT Pathways outcomes used by all public two-year and four-year institutions in Colorado.

#### **Program Review & Assessment**

A second means of ensuring program and course quality is via undergraduate and graduate program evaluations/reviews, required by ASU's Academic Assessment Plan, and the Trustees Policy Manual(p.38). This is detailed more extensively in the narrative for Criterion 4. The President has charged a task force to examine the program review process and establish a revised program review process that adopts best practices to ensure currency and appropriate level of learning.

#### **External Accreditation & Major Field Tests**

A third indicator of meeting appropriate program standards comes from review by external sources and student performance on nationally normed tests and exams.

Several programs hold specialized accreditation. These include:

- Counselor Education (Masters & Doctoral degrees) - CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs) (2010 Self Study Part I, II, III, IV, MA Approval, PHD Approval)
- Nursing - CCNE (Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education) 2011 (2011 Self Study, 2105 Self

Study)

- Teacher Education - CDE (Colorado Department of Education) and CDHE (Colorado Department of Higher Education (List of Authorized Ed Prep Programs in Colorado)
- Music - NASM (National Association of Schools of Music) 2008 (Self Study I & II, Accreditation letter)

These programs meet standards established by these disciplinary accrediting bodies. The Department of Counselor Education renewed its CACREP accreditation for its Master's programs under more stringent standards in 2011. It was approved for the maximum eight-year renewal. The doctoral program in Counselor Education was approved by CACREP accreditation in 2017. During the 2008 NASM visit, the Music program was reaccredited and found to be "continued in good standing and does not need to submit any further progress reports. The reaccreditation cycle for institutions in good standing is once every ten years." The Nursing program was approved by CCNE in 2011 and was reviewed again in 2015. Poor pass rates on the Nursing licensure exam resulted in CCNE issuing a 'Show Cause' order requiring evidence of improvement by June 2017. The Show Cause order was vacated in spring 2017 and the Nursing program was granted accreditation for 10 years. Teacher Education was re-authorized in 2012 with a follow up report required in 2015. Teacher Education was re-authorized by the Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Department of Higher Education in 2012 and will be reviewed again in 2017.

Many undergraduate programs use an ETS Major Field Test, or other standardized tests to assess student performance and ensure that students are meeting expectations for students in that discipline at the national level. Assessment reports and Assessment Summaries include results from major field tests and are described in more detail in Criterion 4. All graduate programs require some kind of culminating experience, whether a thesis, research project or exam.

Students in Teacher Education K-12 licensure programs must pass the relevant licensure test for their discipline. In some disciplines this is the PRAXIS and in others the state PLACE test. These standardized tests ensure that students graduating from ASU as licensed K-12 teachers in all disciplines are knowledgeable in their content area. Graduate level endorsements for the MA in Education also use PLACE exams to ensure qualifications for Initial Principal licensure, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse, Reading Teacher and Special Education Generalist endorsements. The Teacher Education Self Study describes how pass rates in PLACE and PRAXIS are monitored.

## **Curriculum Maps**

Over the past three to four years, the Assessment Coordinator has been working with academic departments to develop curriculum maps that indicate how and where in the curriculum, and at what level students meet the student learning outcomes for each program. These were also made a requirement for approval of any new programs. Development of curriculum maps has identified a few departments that will need to revise goals and SLOs to distinguish between various programs within the department. Adoption of Adams Outcomes in 2016 and the overhaul of the curricular path of all students via the Pathways project necessitates a revision of all curriculum maps over the next two years. General education courses are mapped to the general education goals (2007-17, Pathways). Draft degree maps for Pathways show how an undergraduate student progresses through the curriculum using the Pathways model.

## **Course Approval Processes**

A fourth indicator that ASU offers quality programs comes from the well-defined expectations for course approvals that includes a review of course level. All undergraduate courses are developed by the academic department and sent to the Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) for review under Academic Policy 100-08-01 Curriculum: New Course Approval. The General Education Coordinating Committee (GECC) also reviews general education courses to ensure student learning outcomes and course content aligns with, and measures goals for general education. For courses in the major, the faculty in the department develop the course and align it to academic program goals. Graduate courses are sent to the Graduate Council, which is comprised of representative faculty from each department offering a graduate degree. All course and program changes must be submitted using a standardized course change form or a program change form. The relevant review committee ensures that courses address all requirements for institutional syllabi, identify goals and learning outcomes, and include assessment measures and rubrics. The addition of assessment measures and sample rubrics to the Institutional Syllabus of all undergraduate (HPPE 141 Sample) and graduate (ED 513 Sample) courses provides evidence that levels of learning are appropriate for that level of course. The rubrics also demonstrate benchmarks for performance in specific assignments as determined by the consensus of faculty in the academic department. Instructions for the review committees were revised in the 2016-17 academic year to explicitly state that SLOs should reflect the levels of learning exemplified by Bloom's taxonomy, with higher upper division and graduate courses expecting outcomes that demonstrate higher level learning. Additionally, the New Program Checklist provides a rubric for the review committees to assess whether the SLOs in the institutional syllabus are appropriate to the level of the course.

Extended Studies Curricular Processes are an extension of the on-campus course approval process. The Extended Studies course approval process starts with completion of a course initiation form. The proposal is reviewed by the relevant department chair to ensure the instructor is qualified and the course meets the learning outcomes in the institutional syllabus. If approved, the potential instructor is notified of the course and credential approvals and is sent the guidelines for course development, print-based or online course templates, and a copy of the approved institutional syllabi for the course. All courses, regardless of delivery method, are expected to align to the same institutional syllabus.

Review of online courses, whether through Extended Studies, Graduate Studies or through the main campus, are reviewed by AITC Instructional Designers and the department chair using a Quality Assurance rubric based on Quality Matters® best practices. This review ensures federal compliance in Distance Education. In addition, department chairs monitor courses each semester to ensure instructors are meeting the approved course expectations and faculty/student interaction. This additional rubric is submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs for additional monitoring. If concerns are not addressed, the instructor is removed from teaching that course in an online delivery mode.

### **Student Successes**

A final indicator of ASU's success in providing quality programs comes from the performance and successes of our students. All academic departments cite examples of student performance on the campus level and at the regional and national level. Each department has completed an Academic Department Questionnaire for Criterion 3 that gives specific examples of activities, competitions and performances undertaken by ASU students. These success are described in more detail in section 3.B. and in the Assessment Summaries included in Criterion 4.

### **3.A.2 Response and Evidence**

## **General Education Goals**

One indicator of articulation and differentiation of learning goals is evident with regards to general education courses. Adams State University has clearly stated goals for general education, which are publicized in the academic catalog and on the ASU website. They form the basis for course specific student learning outcomes in general education courses. The adoption of Adams Outcomes in 2016 will result in revisions to the general education goals and SLOs. Curriculum maps for general education before and after the adoption of Adams Outcomes are provided in 3.A.1. Revision of general education and program curriculum maps will occur over the next two years. Assessment of general education goals is discussed in Criterion 4.

A General Education task force, now known as the Pathways project, was created in fall 2015 to focus specifically on General Education goals at ASU. The task force is guided by the American Association of Colleges and Universities' (AAC&U) LEAP Value rubrics which were adopted by the State of Colorado in June 2016 and are in the implementation stage for the Gt Pathways program. At ASU the Adams Outcomes align with the state outcomes for general education and add additional outcomes as institutional outcomes. While the Adams Outcomes form the basis for institutional goals across levels, the competencies (learning outcomes) differ for graduate programs. Those selected are most relevant to graduate level programs. Rubrics are being developed that add higher level benchmarks for graduate programs.

## **Program Goals**

A second indicator of ASU's commitment to articulating and differentiating learning goals is demonstrated with academic programs. Each academic program has specific program goals which are assessed according to the Academic Assessment Plan. These goals are also stated on the website for each academic department along with the associated learning outcomes for each goal. While the assessment plan ensures that each goal is assessed over the course of five years, the Academic Council of department chairs has determined that it is essential to state more explicitly the program goals for students. Beginning in 2015 and continuing over the next two years, revisions will be made to undergraduate and graduate institutional syllabi to include relevant program goals for each course and to align those goals to course specific student learning outcomes (100-08-02-institutional-syllabi). The institutional syllabus from an Art Criticism class demonstrates how all institutional syllabi will now be aligned to program goals.

Graduate syllabi have aligned student learning outcomes to specific assessment rubrics since 2011. Program goals will also be added to institutional syllabi as new courses are developed, and both undergraduate and graduate programs will include degree maps as part of their five-year program review. These additions demonstrate ASU's commitment to continually strengthening all curricula and ensuring program goals are articulated, communicated to students, and met.

## **Extended Studies Course Development guidelines**

A third indicator of ASU's articulation of goals is its commitment to ensuring that Extended Studies courses and degrees are aligned to on-campus programs. In order to ensure the consistent quality of ASU's courses and programs, distance courses are modeled upon the goals and learning outcomes approved for corresponding on campus courses. As described earlier, the review process includes a

review and approval by Extended Studies personnel, by the department chair of the content area, who is considered a subject matter expert, and by the Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs. This process ensures to the best of our abilities that distance courses have the same learning outcomes and rigor as our on-campus courses. The approval process is detailed in 3.A.1. Sample syllabi from an ENG 102 class demonstrate the consistency between learning outcomes across delivery methods

### **3.A.3. Response and Evidence**

#### **Approval of Degree Programs/Program Changes**

One indicator of consistency of goals is provided by the program and course approval process. Approval of degree programs and courses requires both departmental and campus review. Academic departments are responsible for the curriculum. The Academic Assessment Plan clearly states that all goals and learning outcomes begin with the faculty: “Clearly defined program goals against which student learning outcomes can be evaluated are essential. Statements of desired program educational goals of all academic programs will originate with, and be approved by, the faculty of those programs.” Likewise new degree programs are first developed by the department and are then reviewed and approved by a campus faculty committee. The Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) reviews all undergraduate programs and all graduate programs are reviewed by Graduate Council (GC). The New Course and Program Approval Process was revised in 2017 to ensure that all possible delivery methods are identified in the approval process. Changes to existing programs also start at the department level and then require approval by the relevant campus committee. Both committees use the same forms to ensure consistency for all programs and delivery methods. General Education courses must first pass an additional step, approval by the General Education Coordinating Committee (GECC). This committee ensures alignments to GT Pathways and Adams Outcomes.

Programs offered at additional locations, and degree programs offered through Extended Studies, whether distance delivery or correspondence delivery, follow the curriculum approved through the on-campus process. Likewise graduate programs offered both face-to-face and online follow the same degree plan and institutional syllabi. The approval process mirrors that of course approvals as described in 3.A.1.

#### **Institutional Syllabi & Course Changes**

A second indicator of consistency of goals comes from the alignment of all courses to institutional syllabi, regardless of delivery method. Academic departments and their faculty are responsible for development of institutional syllabi. Institutional syllabi provide detailed course information and identify student learning outcomes for every course. The template for Institutional syllabi identifies all required components. After departmental approval, all undergraduate institutional syllabi are reviewed by the Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) and all graduate institutional syllabi are reviewed by Graduate Council (GC). All courses must be approved by CRC or GC. The institutional syllabus provides the model for development of all courses delivered via distance delivery, correspondence delivery and dual credit. (See ES course development guidelines. See the sample syllabi for ENG 102 referenced earlier.)

#### **Extended Studies Course Approval Process**

A third means by which ASU ensures consistency of goals comes from the approval process for

distance education and correspondence education courses and programs which was described in 3.A.1. and 3.A.2.

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### **3.B - Core Component 3.B**

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

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

#### **Argument**

##### **3.B.1 Response and Evidence**

###### **Core Purpose**

ASU's core purpose is 'to educate, serve, and inspire our diverse populations in the pursuit of their lifelong dreams and ambitions'. Our vision statement reflects this: 'To become the university community of choice for diverse and historically underserved groups and all who value quality education and inclusivity'. ASU offers associate through doctoral programs using face-to-face delivery, correspondence delivery and distance delivery methods. The variety of delivery methods is a direct response to meet ASU's designation as a regional education provider and a way of implementing this vision statement.

###### **General Education Curriculum**

The content of the general education curriculum at ASU provides evidence that it is appropriate to the mission of the institution. State statute established ASU in part as "a general baccalaureate institution with moderately selective admission standards. Adams State University shall offer undergraduate liberal arts and sciences" CRS Establishing ASU. General education forms an essential component in delivering undergraduate liberal arts and science education. As stated in the Academic Assessment Plan "Adams State University has prescribed a program of general studies for all students seeking associate and baccalaureate degrees. This is done in the belief that our graduates must possess college level skills, competencies, and an acquaintance with major areas of knowledge commonly possessed by

educated persons in a free society. Students pursue the general education program goals detailed below through a range of formal and informal activities including, but not limited to, the successful completion of the general studies curriculum and the academic major.” Adams State graduates must demonstrate satisfactory attainment of the goals and student performance outcomes. The general education goals and student performance outcomes are listed in the ASU catalog.

The General Education Degree Plan demonstrates a mix of coursework in Communications, Arts & Humanities, Social & Behavioral Sciences, History, Science and Mathematics that ensures that all undergraduate learning is based in the liberal arts framework specified in statute.

### **Participation in GT Pathways**

A second example that ASU’s general education curriculum is appropriate to its mission, educational offerings and degree levels is the institution’s decision to align its general education curriculum with the state of Colorado’s GT Pathways curriculum. As described in Criterion 3A, GT Pathways is the state of Colorado’s guaranteed transfer program. When GT Pathways was established as a result of §23-1-108.5 (3) Colorado Revised Statute, ASU was required to adopt the approved general education curriculum of GT Pathways to ensure that our two-year degrees paralleled that of Colorado’s public two-year institutions. In order to prevent confusion for students resulting from variations in ASU’s two-year and four-year general education requirements, both follow the same model. GT Pathways includes 31 credits of general education coursework in Communications, Arts & Humanities, Social & Behavioral Sciences, History, Science and Mathematics. As described in 3.A.1, ASU added six credits to the general education curriculum to provide students with a broader based education. A curriculum map for Adams Outcomes also aligns existing general education courses to the new state and institutional SLOs. Courses in Written Communication and Mathematics have been revised to align with state changes to GT Pathways. For other areas, state level alignment of specific course SLOs in to the new GT Pathways goals and outcomes is being phased in over a two year period according to the state’s schedule.

Associate degrees and Applied Associate degrees from any Colorado community college are accepted as meeting general education requirements, out-of-state students with Associate degrees are also considered to have met ASU’s general education requirements if they have completed coursework in every category of GT Pathways. Additionally students beginning their pursuit of an Associate’s or Baccalaureate degree at ASU can easily transfer to a different four-year institution within Colorado because of the similarities between requirements.

### **Pathways Project**

The ASU adoption of Adams Outcomes and the Pathways project aligns the entirety of the student’s curricular path to the institutional mission and goals. Place and diversity provide an overarching context for the Pathways project as seen in Area II and III of the new Adams Outcomes. The effort to move to a curricular path that more explicitly makes connections to place is a direct connection to our statutory mission as a regional education provider with a rural underserved population. It also aligns with Goal 5 of ASU 2020: Community Relations. The Pathways emphasis on diversity recognizes our role as an Hispanic Serving Institution and draws on our diverse student body as a strength to be promoted. The Adams Outcomes and the incorporation of high impact practices into the general education curriculum are designed specifically to foster academic excellence (ASU 2020 Goal 1) and student success (ASU 2020 Goal 2).

## **General Education Course Approval Process**

The approval process for general education courses at ASU provides a third means of determining that ASU's general education curriculum is appropriate to its mission, educational offerings and degree levels. New courses are reviewed to ensure that learning outcomes are aligned to the campus general education goals. All ASU general education courses are also approved for GT Pathways. Any courses that have undergone significant revision must submit a notification of changes form. Most of ASU's general education courses were initially reviewed at the state level in 2003-2006 when GT Pathways was established. During the period of this self study three courses have submitted minor revisions (BIOL 209,210, POLS 291). Five courses have been submitted for initial approval. All have been approved (CHEM 103, GEOG 101, PHYS 150, COMM255 and PHIL 201). The submission forms for PHIL 201 and COMM 255 include documentation outlining how the GT Pathways criteria are met, and the instructor syllabus and supporting documents such as assignments and a course schedule demonstrate how these courses meet GT Pathways criteria. The state level approval process changed in 2016-17.

### **3.B.2 Response and Evidence**

#### **General Education Learning Outcomes**

The first indicator that ASU articulates intended purposes, content and learning outcomes comes from the demonstrated skills identified for each of the learning outcomes. These are stated in the ASU catalog. A General Education Taskforce was established in 2015-16 to embark on general education reform using the AAC&U LEAP Value rubrics as a guide. This aligns with state reforms which have identified and adapted 9 LEAP Value rubrics as competencies for GT Pathways. This effort has been identified as the Pathways project. The recently adopted Adams Outcomes includes the 9 state general education outcomes and adds several additional outcomes. All draw on the LEAP Value rubrics and emphasize the use of high impact practices espoused by AAC&U. The Pathways timeline indicates how each phase is being developed and implemented. Criterion 4 outlines the process, results, and steps taken by ASU to ensure that general education assessment is effective.

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) provides a toolkit aligning NSSE questions with the overall outcomes for Criterion 3.B. and 3.E. Multiple aspects of the NSSE align with ASU's General Education Goals and outcomes. In mapping NSSE results to HLC outcomes, it is evident that ASU students perform at or above the comparison groups on many of the outcomes connected with General Education. NSSE results show that ASU students performed higher than all other comparison groups when it came to including diverse perspectives, which demonstrates that ASU successfully meets aspects of General Education Goal 2, by demonstrating an understanding of diverse moral and ethical philosophies and one's place within a larger historical and multicultural framework. Aspects of Goal 3--demonstration of an increased awareness of diverse cultures, persons and ideas--also are areas where ASU seniors ranked higher than all other comparison groups in the 2104 survey. NSSE trends show that ASU students continue to rank at a similar or higher level than peers on questions related to diversity.

#### **GT Pathways Content & Competency Criteria**

A second indicator that ASU identifies content and learning outcomes is ASU's commitment to GT Pathways since its inception in the early 2000s. The content and competency criteria required for gt

Pathways have been in place for most of the period of this review. They are described in Criterion 3A. GT Pathways has remained largely unchanged during most of the period of this review; however, revision of competencies and content criteria began in 2015. At the state level, the Colorado Department of Higher Education's GE Council prioritized revising the content and competency criteria to include more measurable outcomes. In 2015-16 ASU faculty participated in the state Faculty-to-Faculty conference and helped establish new competencies and content criteria for each area based on the AAC&U LEAP Value rubrics. Implementation of these revised criteria will be phased in over the next three years. The ASU Essential Learning Task Force began parallel campus discussions starting in Fall 2016 and identified institutional and general education student learning outcomes known as Adams Outcomes that also use LEAP value rubrics as their basis. This effort, now known as the Pathways project, includes faculty, students and staff. It embeds SLOs into specific courses, develops new courses and phases in embedded assessment practices according to an established timeline. Revision of the general education goals/Adams Outcomes is described in Criterion 4.

### **Institutional and Instructor Syllabi**

A third means of determining that purpose, content and learning outcomes are clearly stated for all undergraduate general education courses is provided by a review of institutional and instructor syllabi. All undergraduate general education courses are approved on the basis of an institutional syllabus. The GECC reviews and approves new and revised general education courses to ensure the institutional syllabus provides evidence that the course meets the purpose (General Education goals), content (content area criteria) and learning outcomes (Adams Outcomes and GT Pathways competencies). The institutional syllabus provides the framework on which instructors base their own course syllabus. The template for the institutional syllabus includes categories that specifically state purpose, content and learning outcomes. Department chairs review individual instructor syllabi each semester to ensure they include the expected outcomes and content stated in the institutional syllabus. Instructor syllabi align with the institutional syllabus as described in the Syllabus Policy.

### **3.B.3 Response and Evidence**

#### **Academic Coursework**

One of the most important indicators of student engagement in collecting, analyzing and communicating information comes from expectations and requirements in their academic coursework. The Academic Department Questionnaires cite examples of this in every department. The table Academic Department Engagement in Analysis shows how, and in which courses, that discipline promotes collection and communication of information, research, analysis, and inquiry. For example, economic impact studies for Athletics and ASU in the San Luis Valley were conducted by students for their business class under the supervision of the professor. NSSE trends also show that ASU students rank similarly to peer institutions when comparing the degree of analysis expected. For freshman the trend shows an increased expectation for analytical tasks, whereas for seniors in all peer groups a decrease was seen in the most recent survey.

#### **Student Scholar Days**

Student Scholar Days celebrates its 10th anniversary the year of ASU's HLC site visit. Faculty established Student Scholar Days to promote and highlight the research and creative activity of undergraduate students. Students apply for Student Scholar Days and work with mentor faculty to develop and present their research during two days of oral presentations. The Schedule of Events

indicates the wide range of presentations from across academic disciplines. In 2015 Student Scholar Days expanded to include poster presentations in addition to oral presentations. All these are judged by a panel of faculty according to rubrics for their abstract, poster, and oral presentation. SSD Presentations 2013-2015 provides links to videos of all the presentations at Student Scholar Days, as well linking each student to the academic department housing their major. A glance shows the breadth of presentations, representing nearly every department on campus. The Student Scholar Days website includes interviews with participating students and video records of past presentations. Multiple examples of student presentations and poster presentations from Students Scholar Days are provided as evidence.

### **National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Data**

The NSSE includes a set of questions that assesses the student academic experience at their institution against multiple comparison groups. For ASU, students are compared to other public institutions in the Rocky Mountain region, other institutions with the same Carnegie classification, and an NSSE comparison group made of NSSE respondents from the same year. Seven additional institutions made up the Carnegie classification group. The NSSE group includes all other institutions participating in the 2013 and 2014 survey. The NSSE Snapshots for the last three years show that ASU meets or exceeds its peers in all Engagement Indicators.

#### **3.B.4 Response and Evidence**

##### **Diverse Student Population**

ASU has a very diverse student population. The 2016-17 Common Data Set Enrollment by Racial/Ethnic category shows that 61% of students are non-white. Because the student population has a diverse racial profile students are exposed to diverse perspectives throughout their experience on campus, both in the academic and non-academic aspects of campus life.

### **National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Data**

NSSE data confirms that ASU students' campus experience encourages recognition of the human and cultural diversity of the world in which they live and work. NSSE data mapped to Criterion 3 and NSSE Trend Data indicate strengths in ASU's inclusion of diverse perspectives throughout the educational experience. ASU students rate higher than all other comparison groups in the following areas related to diversity:

- Including diverse perspectives in course discussions or assignments;
- Examined strengths or weaknesses of their views or perspectives;
- Had discussions with people of a race or ethnicity other than their own;
- Had discussions with people of an economic background other than their own;
- Had discussions with people of a religious background other than their own.

##### **Curriculum & Academics**

All academic departments cite specific courses that promote recognition of the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work. The Academic Department Questionnaires cite specific examples of how they integrate diversity into their curricula. Examples of courses that directly address human and cultural diversity are:

- AR 103 Art Appreciation
- BUS 397 Women & Power: Gender, Leadership & Business
- COUN 515 Multi-Cultural Issues
- COMM 430 Diversity in Media
- MUS 100 Introduction to Music Literature
- PSYC 315 MultiCultural Issues
- PSYC 360 Psychology of Gender
- SOC 318 Race, Class & Gender
- SOC 365 Race, Culture & Ethnicity
- TED 549 Educating Diverse Learners
- CLD 516 Multicultural Narratives & Educational Reform

Institutional and instructor syllabi for these courses provide details as to how these courses contribute to meeting the criteria. Title V grants sponsors an elective course 'Lifeways of the San Luis Valley and the American Southwest' that provides students with additional opportunities to explore human and cultural diversity. This class focuses on the cultural richness of the San Luis Valley. It features speakers and storytellers from the region as well as field trips to culturally significant places in the SLV. The Pathways project also has been developed to include diversity and place as underlying themes for the ASU student experience. These themes will be threaded throughout the curriculum.

Additionally, many academic departments promote recognition of diversity through co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Art exhibitions in the art department galleries include work by regional, national and international artists whose work reflects a wide array of perspectives and cultures. English book selections include authors from diverse backgrounds. Student learning is supplemented by bringing in authors such as Laura Pritchett and Maria Melendez. The department of History, Anthropology, Philosophy, Political Science and Spanish embeds human and cultural diversity in most classes, but especially in those dealing with world civilization and anthropology. It also sponsors the Model UN group which had three of its six members recognized as 'Best delegate' at the 2015 Mediterranean Model UN in France.

Most academic departments feature programming related to human and cultural diversity. The department of Human Performance and Physical Education also embeds diversity related content in many of its classes, including content related to gender, age, and disability. Music department performances feature a variety of genres and cultures including Mariachi, the Semillas de la Tierra dance group is well established on campus, and Theatre plays are selected to encourage audience members to think about the diversity of human experience. Additionally, a number of departments also provide students with study abroad options, usually through summer course offerings. For example, each summer former Sociology Professor Ben Waddell organized a three-week study abroad program to either Nicaragua or Cuba. The schedule and syllabus for the 2015 trip to Cuba demonstrate how the course addressed human and cultural diversity by exposing students to people and organizations in varied socio-economic and cultural contexts.

### **CASA, Student Clubs & Campus Events**

ASU offers many opportunities outside the classroom for students to interact with people of diverse backgrounds, as well as support for students from diverse backgrounds. The C.A.S.A. (Cultural Awareness and Student Achievement) Center was established specifically to reach out to Hispanic,

first-generation students to make them feel more at home and connected with university life. Through its programming and welcoming environment, the C.A.S.A. Center promotes learning, celebrates cultures, and develops leadership and student success with a global perspective. Involvement with C.A.S.A. has provided students leadership opportunities, as well and each year students attend the HACU conference. Increased participation in CASA programming indicate that CASA provides the welcoming environment that is its goal. The student Multicultural Governance Committee promotes diversity and a safe environment for all students.

ASU also has over 25 students clubs, some with academic connections, others representing diverse students experiences such as El Parnaso (Spanish Club), SLV Pride, All Nations, the Black Student Union, Veterans club, and the Society for Advancement of / Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS). A glance at student events for SACNAS for the 2014-15 academic year highlights the degree of involvement by students, including eleven students attending the national conference. Minutes also reflect a mix of fundraising events, participation with CASA, and collaboration with the STEM academy programs for K-12 students.

ASU hosts many campus events and speakers throughout the year that promote diversity and provide their human and cultural perspective. The 2015 Fall semester began with Convocation where Dr. Mario Rivas and Thomas Brown described their own challenges to succeed in higher education as minority students and motivating ASU freshman to persist. The Common Reading Experience (CRE) also challenges students through speakers and reading series reflecting diverse experiences and cultures. CRE selected *The Other Wes Moore* as the book for 2014-15. Author Wes Moore was a featured speaker on campus addressing issues of circumstance, economics, and race as components of identity. The 2014-15 Annual Report provides a summary of committee processes and all events related to the CRE for the year. Posters and flyers are used to ensure the campus community is aware of these activities.

Additional speakers and events on campus include programming around Hispanic Heritage month, Martin Luther King Day and International Women's Day, which are just a sampling of opportunities for students to engage with issues surrounding human and cultural diversity. Campus Ministries also sponsors a number of speakers. Recent topics have included *Laughter is a Sacred Space* and *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality*. The campus Events Calendar on the website provides a much more detailed look at the extensive number of events available to students, staff and faculty. A sampling of weekly events is provided.

### **Trips, Study Abroad and Exchanges**

In addition to experiencing diversity through the variety of campus programming and activities, students at ASU have the opportunity to participate in a number of learning experiences that take them to different parts of the nation and world. Academic departments in Art, Biology, Psychology and Sociology have all regularly offered 1-3 credit classes in the summer session that immerse students in an experience that blends disciplinary knowledge with the context of another culture. Locations include a variety of European countries, parts of Africa, Australia, and central and South America.

Several other opportunities are also available to students. ASU was a member of the National Student Exchange until 2016. NSE enabled students to enroll at other member institutions for a semester or an academic year. These experiences gave ASU students the opportunity to observe and participate in other campus and regional cultures. Between 2006 and 2016 ASU sent an average of three students to other higher education institutions across the state while hosting two or three students. The low number

of participants led to the decision to stop this program. Campus Ministries offers an alternative spring break trip that is focused on service learning and immersion into different cultures. The follow-up report and an article by student Chelsea Henderson highlights the role alternative spring break can play in developing students' awareness of human and cultural diversity. Other campus events involving students, such as ASU Cares Day and Women's Week events, also contribute to our students' ability to recognize and embrace human and cultural diversity.

### **3.B.5 Response and Evidence**

#### **Student Scholar Days, Conferences and Presentations**

As cited earlier, Student Scholar Days provides an opportunity for undergraduate students to actively engage in and participate in scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge. Sample presentations from the following departments demonstrate student participation in scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge in the following disciplines: Biology, Business, Chemistry/Physics, History, Psychology. A complete list of Student Scholar Days presentations shows that students from most departments are presenting their scholarly and creative work. Many ASU students carry scholarship further by taking their research into the greater academic community. Many Psychology students present at the regional Rocky Mountain Psychology Association conference. Others have presented nationally at the conferences for APA (American Psychology Society), and NEEPS (North Eastern Evolutionary Psychology Society). The Psychology department has tracked their students' research and travel over the past 5 years: Student Research and Travel.

Graduate students also engage in scholarship both on and off campus. All students in the first cohort of PhD students in Counselor Education had their presentation proposals accepted at the national conference. The department of Counselor Education has provided a list of Master's and Doctoral students' presentations nationally, regionally and at the state level. Clearly these students contribute significantly to scholarship in their discipline. HPPE graduate students regularly present posters at the Rocky Mountain College of Sports Medicine (RMACSM) conference.

#### **Retention, Promotion & Tenure; Annual Evaluations**

Scholarly/Creative Activity is a crucial component of the faculty Retention, Tenure, Promotion process, as well as the annual evaluation process. The Faculty Handbook cites three categories in which faculty members are expected to engage:

- Teaching
- Scholarly or Creative Activity
- Service

Faculty must demonstrate 'Satisfactory' or better performance in all three categories in order to be considered for tenure and promotion. Likewise, tenured faculty must demonstrate satisfactory or higher performance or face the possibility of post-tenure review. Faculty members submit an evaluation folder that outlines their scholarly/creative accomplishments for the year. Faculty vitae for each academic department summarize the scholarly/creative accomplishments for each tenured and tenure track faculty member. Some highlights from each department are summarized as evidence in addition to individual CVs for each full-time faculty member.

## **Sabbatical Reports**

Sabbaticals provide an opportunity for faculty to concentrate on their scholarship in a manner that is impossible for many during the regular academic year when teaching four or more classes/semester. Since 2007, 28 different faculty members have been awarded sabbatical leaves. One faculty member was awarded sabbatical leave in 2008 and seven years later in 2015. Faculty must apply for sabbatical leave as specified in the Faculty Handbook. Upon completion of the sabbatical all faculty members are required to submit a sabbatical report that describes how they have accomplished the goals set out in their sabbatical plan. Sabbatical reports for the following faculty provide evidence of the scholarship and creative work completed during a sabbatical:

- Astalos
- Brink
- Centeno
- Christian
- Doell
- Hilwig
- Martin
- Provence
- Stout

Some faculty members are also asked to present their sabbatical report to the Board of Trustees (BOT minutes).

## **Faculty Lectures**

Two faculty lecture series have been ongoing over the period of this review. "Lunchtime Talks in Science and Math" has been ongoing since 2007 and features hour-long presentations primarily by science and math faculty. Geared to a general interest audience, they provide faculty a chance to share their research and passions with the public. A summary of Lunchtime Talks is provided as evidence. Youtube links to most lectures provide an opportunity for those who missed the lecture to share in the experience. The "Faculty Lecture Series" has also been ongoing since about 2011. This evening lecture series is open to the public and provides faculty from across campus the opportunity to share their expertise. Schedules for the Faculty Lecture series provide evidence of the variety of lectures faculty have delivered. The continuance of both series over time attests to their success and importance on campus.

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### **3.C - Core Component 3.C**

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

1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.
2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and

procedures.

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

5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

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

## **Argument**

### **3.C.1 Response and Evidence**

#### Number and Continuity of Faculty

Adams State University ensures that it has sufficient, highly qualified faculty. The Faculty Handbook describes expectations for all tenure and tenure-track faculty in regards to teaching, scholarly / creative activity and service. These three areas provide the basis of evaluation of tenured and tenure-track faculty and encompass both the classroom and non-classroom roles of faculty. Part-time and distance faculty must also meet minimum qualifications in their discipline in order to be considered as an adjunct instructor at ASU.

The number of faculty has remained fairly consistent during the review period, despite the economic downturn of 2008. The spreadsheet Faculty Summary Data indicates the number of total full-time faculty employed, as well as number by rank, gender and minority status. A comparison shows increases in the number of women and minority faculty in tenure/tenure track positions. A spreadsheet tracks faculty arrivals and departures from 2008-2015 and summarizes reasons for departures as well. Faculty lines and changes of personnel in each from 2007-2016 may be found here. Part-time numbers show some variation in data and indicate less rigorous record keeping in regards to qualifications. These numbers may also be found in our Common Data Sets from 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17. Academic Department Questionnaires indicate that departments do expect faculty to meet HLC expectations in regards to qualifications.

The number of women has fluctuated from a low of 41% in 2006 to a high of 52% in 2011 to the current number of 46%. The number of minority faculty has remained constant at 18-21%. The Common Data Set for 2016-17 shows a student to faculty ratio of 17:1, one that ensures sufficient numbers of faculty to carry out all faculty responsibilities. A comparison of student:faculty ratios with ASU's Colorado Peer Group indicates a stable student:faculty ratio, and one that is comparable to our peer group.

The Faculty Handbook clearly identifies specific minimum qualifications for faculty. With only a few exceptions these align with HLC's Qualified Faculty Guidelines. Section VI.B specifies the expected qualifications for faculty in terms of both college teaching experience and education and experiential qualifications. Generally tenured and tenure track faculty must hold a terminal degree in their field. The rank of instructor requires no minimum college teaching requirement but generally requires a master's degree. Exceptional qualifications for hire that do not match the preceding specifications for education and experience are based on criteria identified as appropriate for judging such exceptional qualifications. These criteria can be found in Section VI.B.2 and VI.C.2. In 2015, HLC made revisions to Assumed Practice B, which also articulates expectations for faculty credentials. ASU strengthened its policies and practices as a result. ASU passed academic policy 100-10-10 Faculty Qualifications which aligns with HLC requirements and provides guidelines for faculty to meet tested experience

requirements. Department chairs approve the qualifications for all adjunct and off-campus program faculty with the expectation that such faculty meet the requirements for on-campus faculty.

All instructors are involved in the assessment of student learning. At the individual course level, they develop course syllabi which specify course expectations and assessment measures. These follow an institutional syllabus template that was revised in 2014 to specify assessment methods for each learning outcome and to include sample rubrics for each non-test based method. In addition to this, faculty in each department work together to develop the curriculum and provide input to their department chair for the annual assessment report. The Plan for Assessment of Student Learning is detailed in Criterion 4, but relies on faculty participation in all phases of student assessment.

### **3.C.2 Response and Evidence**

As stated above, ASU follows the HLC's Qualified Faculty Guidelines under Assumed Practice B, as well as its own Faculty Handbook criteria to ensure that faculty are appropriately qualified. While ASU has always tried to meet the expectations of Assumed Practice B, with HLC's revision of that practice in 2015, more concrete protocols were implemented to ensure we are in compliance. Approval of adjunct faculty credentials was decentralized and allocated to the academic departments who maintained their own personnel files. In preparing for this report, and in reviewing the Common Data Sets, it was recognized that by decentralizing this process faculty credentials had never been entered into our Banner database. ASU spent the year collecting transcripts for all adjunct faculty, as well as full-time faculty for whom transcripts were missing. The Temporary Faculty Hiring and Evaluation policy was approved in 2017 and specifies that adjunct hires must now provide transcripts to the Office of Academic Affairs, which will create adjunct files for all temporary personnel and enter the credentials into Banner. The Faculty Qualifications Inventory and 16-17 Academic Year Instructor Credentials show the qualifications for all full-time and part-time faculty teaching in the fall 2016 and spring 2017 semester. Faculty vitae for all full-time instructors are included that show faculty qualifications as well as research and scholarship activity.

Faculty teaching in dual credit, contractual and consortial programs must meet the same criteria as seen in the Fall 2017 Dual Credit Instructor credentials.

### **3.C.3 Response and Evidence**

Evaluation of Faculty is specified in the Faculty Handbook, section IV. All tenured and tenure track faculty are evaluated annually according to these criteria, which include evaluation on Teaching, Scholarly or Creative Activity, and Service. Performance in Teaching is given the most weight in the annual evaluation. The Department Chair's Evaluation of Faculty specifies additional sub-criteria in each of the evaluation categories. Additionally, the Handbook clearly states Teaching Performance Standards which elaborate on expectations for faculty in regards to teaching. Performance Standards for Scholarly / Creative Activity and Service are also specified.

Tenure track, or probationary faculty submit an annual evaluation folder with evidence of their performance in teaching. The annual evaluation folder also contains a self-evaluation for scholarly/creative activity and for service. These self-evaluations also identify accomplishments and areas for improvement. The final component of the annual evaluation is the Professional Performance Plan, which identifies plans for improvement and growth in all areas of evaluation. Tenured faculty follow a streamlined evaluation process consisting of a self-evaluation that identifies accomplishments/strengths and areas for improvement in all three evaluation areas. The P2 file of Dr.

Brian Zuleger, Assistant Professor of HPPE, provides an example. Department chairs review all annual evaluation folders using a common form. Faculty are rated 'Exemplary', 'Meritorious', 'Satisfactory', or 'Needs Improvement' in the three areas of evaluation. They are also given an overall rating using the same descriptors. Faculty who receive more than one 'Needs Improvement' in any of the evaluation areas must undergo Post Tenure Review procedures. The post tenure review requires the development of a Professional Improvement Plan that will be carried out by the faculty member and reviewed annually for three years by a Post Tenure Review Committee. There is not such a formalized evaluation process for instructors and adjunct instructors, although satisfactory performance is expected as described in the Temporary Hiring policy.

### **Ratings of Faculty by Students/Course Evaluations**

All courses except individual studies, internships and student teaching are available for students to rate, using an online rating system. The Faculty Handbook provides guidelines for rating of faculty by students. The same evaluation form is used for all courses. ASU noted that after the switch to online ratings evaluation, participation rates dropped despite efforts to encourage students to evaluate their classes. Given an aging software program and poor response rates, ASU piloted a new course evaluation platform in the spring 2017 semester. The existing questions were used in order to ensure consistency in the evaluation process over the academic year. However, new pilot questions were also included that better address current pedagogy. The new platform also allows ASU to include questions specific to delivery method. The pilot will be reviewed and full implementation is expected in fall 2017.

### **Peer Reviews**

All tenured and tenure track faculty are provided an opportunity to evaluate their peers via a Peer review form. Peer evaluations are included in the annual evaluations folder and are noted in the Department Chair's Evaluation of Faculty.

### **Classroom Observations**

Probationary faculty members are also evaluated via classroom observations by the department chairs. Probationary faculty in their first year are observed twice each semester. Faculty in probationary years two to five are observed once each semester, as are faculty applying for promotion. No set form is required for classroom observations; however, regardless of the format, the written report will include a summary of the observation as seen in the sample classroom observation form. In spring 2016, department chairs began reviewing all online courses mid-semester to ensure online course quality and faculty-student interaction. This included all online courses in graduate programs and in Extended Studies. The Department Chair Online Course Semester Review Form is used to evaluate the course and provide feedback to the instructor. Extended Studies instructors complete self-evaluation forms and are also evaluated by the Quality Assurance staff using the Extended Studies Course Review form. These provide the basis for discussions on performance and course improvements. The May 2017 HLC probation update provides detailed examples of the Extended Studies evaluation process.

## **3.C.4 Response and Evidence**

### **Annual Evaluation**

The Annual Evaluation form completed by department chairs includes a sub-category under 'Scholarly

Activity' that provides a place for the chair to evaluate currency. See Department Chair's Evaluation of Faculty in the Handbook.

## **Faculty Development & Training**

Over the past eight years, ASU has made a concerted effort to increase the scope of faculty development opportunities related to teaching and scholarship. Two primary avenues for training and funding are available to faculty:

- 1) Campus & Department Faculty Development Funds – ASU allocated \$40,000 annually for faculty development with \$10,000 of that earmarked for leadership development. Faculty may apply for funding using the Faculty Development Request Form. Applicants must describe the relevance of the activity and the benefit to them professionally. Standard allocations are \$500 to attend a conference or similar meeting, and \$750 to present at such a venue. Approved funding may or may not be supplemented by departmental funding.
- 2) Professional Development Programming (Center for Teaching, Innovation, and Research) -- ASU has made ongoing, substantive changes to professional development support since 2011. See here for a historical review. Currently, the professional development director (general job description) is a shared position (.25 grant funded) between the institution and our Title V grant. The director chairs and is advised by the Faculty Development Committee and receives a two-course release each semester. This position was formalized with the award of the 2015 Title V grant, along with the creation of a center, The Center for Teaching, Innovation, and Research (CTIR). The Title V award enables ASU to begin institutionalizing a professional development director position.

The Faculty Development Committee's Annual Report provides a good overview of their goals and accomplishments regarding faculty development for 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-2016 and 2016-17. Originally, much of the programming delivered by the Faculty Development Committee was supported by funding from Title V. Beginning in 2015, \$20,000 in annual institutional programming funds were established (beyond the \$40,000 noted in item #1). Title V funds specific aspects of programming, aligned with the current grant. The projected budget for Title V expenditures supporting CTIR during 2016-17 demonstrates some of this support. Programming is open to all faculty regardless of rank. Recently, there have been more concerted efforts to include staff-relevant programming as well. The number of programming opportunities as well as attendance, has steadily increased since the inception of the CTIR. See here for attendance and programming data. Faculty Development in 2016-17 and planning for 2017-18 includes significant training aligned with the Pathways project, and pedagogy and curriculum design using High Impact Practices.

New Faculty Orientation (NFO) -- Beginning in 2013, the Faculty Development Committee has designed and delivered the NFO. This committee continued to refine programming in 2014, and in 2015 and 2016 offered teaching and learning institutes to kick off the event. Evaluation data indicates this programming to be impactful (2016, 2015, 2014, 2013).

Workshops & Retreats -- Faculty also have opportunities to participate in a number of retreats and workshops. As stated above, the Faculty Development Committee has organized faculty retreats focused on pedagogy and active learning strategies in 2014, 2015, and 2016. Evaluation data indicates these experiences to be impactful (2016, 2015, 2014). In addition, ASU holds multiple Title V grants that sponsor workshops for faculty and staff including HILOS Summer Institute, Lifeways Lecture Series, and UNIDOS equity leadership retreats. HILOS evaluation data for 2013, 2014, and 2015 is

available. PAWS Program -- In conjunction with the CTIR Professional Development Director, the University President convened a campus-wide ad-hoc committee in May 2016 with representatives from Inclusive Excellence, Human Resources, Athletics, Health & Wellness, Title IX/OEO, Title V, Professional Administrative Staff Council, Counseling Services, Student Life, and Housing to develop a comprehensive professional development program. This programming is being dubbed “PAWS”— Professional Advancement and Workplace Success. As of June 2017, this project is in the final development stages with administrative support over summer 2017 to work toward implementation during the next two academic years. Domains of professional training include Leadership, Wellness, Teaching and Learning, Compliance, and others. See here for a draft of programming. Leadership support is a key area of PAWS.

### **Leadership Training and Development**

ASU has supported a number of faculty and staff in pursuing leadership training. Women faculty members have been sponsored to attend Higher Education Resource Services (HERS), which provides leadership institutes for women. Similarly multiple women staff have attended the Academic Management Institute (AMI), a Colorado based leadership program for women in higher education. ASU also sponsored one faculty member/department chair to participate in the ACE Fellows program for the 2012-13 academic year. This individual subsequently assumed an administrative position.

### **Integration of Professional Development into the Strategic Plan**

During the 2015-16 academic year, the Professional Development Director was tasked with chairing a subcommittee for Goal 3 of the 2020 Strategic Plan. This allows better alignment between our Title V, CTIR, and PAWS programming goals. Supports for both Faculty and Staff professional development are explicit in this Goal. See here for initiatives associated with this goal.

#### **3.C.5 Response and Evidence**

##### **Office Hours**

During the entire period of this assurance argument, ASU has required faculty to hold a minimum of 10 office hours per week for full-time faculty. Adjunct faculty are expected to hold one office hour per class. While the ASU Faculty Handbook states that faculty are expected to “Maintain office hours as stipulated by the Vice President for Academic Affairs’ Office,” it did not provide specific details. Historically, an email was sent specifying that five hours were to be scheduled and five hours arranged. In Fall 2015, Academic Council approved a more detailed Office Hour policy. While this policy specifies the number of hours faculty are required to be available for student inquiry, in reality most faculty are readily available in person and via email far in excess of the required hours.

##### **Course Evaluations**

One of the questions on all course evaluations relates to “Instructor Availability.” This gives all students an opportunity to assess whether faculty members have been available, and provides feedback for department chairs in this regard. The spring 2017 Course Evaluations show that a majority of faculty rate 4 or higher on a five-point scale, indicating students find them to be generally accessible.

#### **3.C.6 Response and Evidence**

## **Center for Teaching, Innovation, and Research**

Programming offered by the center in conjunction with the Faculty Development Committee (which includes staff representation) strives for inclusion of staff. For example, staff attended our annual mid-year retreats. See Faculty Development Committee annual reports ( 2016-17, 2015-16) for more detail. Moreover, a requirement of the newest Title V grant is providing training in Appreciative Advising for all staff and faculty members with an advising role. Two sessions were offered in 2016-17, including a Blackboard Zoom webinar option for our distance (Denver-area) advisors.

## **Departmental Training and Professional Development**

A roundtable discussion in 2014 provided the opportunity to share gaps in professional development programming for staff. Since that time, there has been a concerted effort on the part of the FDC to offer programming aimed at Classified and Exempt Staff. For example, aside from staff representation and inclusive programming at the annual winter retreat (e.g., our 2016 agenda) programming such as "Brainy Breakfasts" for google applications, conflict management, and appreciative advising sessions have been designed to address gaps in professional development programming for staff. Moreover, the President's ad hoc professional development planning group, noted above, is developing inclusive programming with a variety of theme tracks (working draft), an effort now known as the PAWS Program.

As noted above, both Strategic Plan Goal 3 and the proposed PAWS programming specify professional development supports for staff.

Beyond local programming, many offices and departments provide opportunities for their staff to participate in regional and national conferences and training. Recently, the Faculty Development Committee surveyed both faculty and staff about their current professional development pursuits off campus and areas for improvement of offerings on campus.

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### **3.D - Core Component 3.D**

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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

#### **Argument**

##### **3.D.1 Response and Evidence**

Each unit identified below supports student engagement and success. In addition to the descriptions below, each unit's 5 year assessment summary specifies their goals or outcomes and highlights actions undertaken to accomplish them.

#### **Student Success Center**

A number of programs to support students are housed within the Student Success Center in the Neilsen Library. The Student Engagement and Success program provided oversight for Early Alerts, First Year Interest Groups, New Student Orientation and Academic Advising until fall of 2015 when these programs were restructured into the First Year Immersion Program. The Student Success Center now houses Academic Advising, CAMP, Student Support Services and the Grizzly Testing and Learning Center. Academic Advising will be discussed in detail in section 3.D.3., the others are included below.

#### **First Year Immersion**

New Student Orientation and First Year Interest Groups had stagnated under its existing leadership. In Fall 2015 responsibility for these programs moved from Student Engagement and Success to Student Life programming. Whereas schedules for the past decade had remained largely unchanged and did little to connect students with ASU, the 2015 New Student Orientation was carefully planned including articulating Learning Outcomes, using a planning guide from NODA (National Orientation Directors Association) as a resource. Students were put into 'Sleuths,' the term for a group of grizzlies. Each Sleuth group circulated between orientation activities together, helping form connections with other students and the university immediately. Participation rates in student government and other students clubs in fall 2015 exceeded past rates, suggesting that the revised NSO was successful at fostering a connection between new students and ASU. First Year Interest Groups (FIGs) are also undergoing revision with three Living/Learning Community models: Grizzly Learning Communities, Living/learning Communities, and Themed Housing placement. The Student Life & Recreation

proposal to E-team describes the vision informing the new approach to FIGs and to establishing Interest and Affinity groups.

### **Grizzly Testing & Learning Center**

The Grizzly Testing & Learning Center (GTLC) is dedicated to supporting students by providing assistive technology, testing services, and peer tutoring in a low stress and accessible environment. Tutors are recommended and/or approved by professors and must have completed the coursework with a minimum final grade of a "B". Job descriptions for Graduate Assistants, Note Takers, Peer Assisted Study Session Leaders, Supplemental Instruction Leaders, Supplemental Support Leaders, Tutors, and Student Associates help elaborate of the qualifications and types of support provided by the GTLC.

### **Counseling & Career Services/Office of Accessibility Services.**

Counseling & Career Services is committed to supporting student persistence and success in academic endeavors and in career selection and attainment. The 2013-14 and 2014-15 Student Affairs Assessment Plan/Report for this division describes in detail the programs and outcomes related to supporting students academically and emotionally. The 2014-15 Year End Report provides greater detail as to how ASU Counseling, Career, Prevention and Accessibility Services support students. The Strategic Plan identifies goals for the future.

*Counseling & Career Services.* Counseling services are provided by two qualified counselors as well as graduate assistant interns. See Utilization Stats and the Year End Report for additional information. Other services include individual counseling services, workshops and outreach, crisis counseling, mental health awareness week, supporting Safe Zone training, and therapy/service pets on campus including "Paws and Relax" sessions. Additionally, in conjunction with the Psychology Department, a 1-credit course, Prevention Awareness Crew is offered annually to assist in service projects related to prevention.

*Suicide Prevention and Outreach.* As described in the year-end report, three components make up suicide prevention efforts: The Campus Health and Safety team, a student led suicide prevention group (SWAG) and prevention programming. The Campus Health and Safety Team has offered education for faculty regarding disturbing writing and behavior, as a professional development option during the past three academic years. In 2011, ASU received a grant to assist in suicide prevention efforts. Two suicide prevention trainings (safeTALK and ASIST) are regularly offered on campus and available for faculty, staff, students and community members.

*Accessibility Services.* The Office of Accessibility Services provides equal education opportunities for persons with a variety of disabilities. All course syllabi also include a statement to students regarding the role of the Office of Accessibility Services and remind students to meet with their professors regarding any required accommodations.

### **Math Lab**

The Math Lab provides free tutoring for any student needing assistance in any math class through Calculus II. During the 2015 fall semester, the lab was staffed by student tutors from 5-8 hours daily Monday to Friday.

### **Writing Studio**

The Writing Studio in McDaniel Hall helps students improve their writing skills and supports campus Writing Across the Curriculum efforts. The Writing Studio offers tutoring and collaborates with the Nielsen Library and the GTLC to offer additional services in the Library.

## **Veterans Services**

Over the past five years, ASU has made an effort to better serve veterans and military service personnel. In 2011, a Veterans Action Team was established to assess the climate for veterans at ASU. Their report called for the establishment of a Veterans Center on campus and a variety of other actions. ASU participated in the Department of Defense's Voluntary Education partnership until an In-State Tuition policy for veterans was established. Updates to Presidents Svaldi and McClure detail progress made on the original recommendations made by the Veterans Action team.

## **Grant Funded Student Support Efforts**

Additional grant-funded programs provide academic support services including SSS (Student Support Services) a Federally funded TRIO program, a Department of Education grant to fund support for migrant students (CAMP), and a Title V grant focusing on STEM.

*Student Support Services.* The Adams State University (ASU) Student Support Services (SSS) TRiO program supports students in their cognitive and non-cognitive skill development and offers some financial support to its participants.

Cognitive support comes in the form of tutoring, classes, and workshops offered through SSS and the ASU Summer Scholars program. Non-cognitive support is offered through a mentoring program for freshman participants and in other cultural based programming. Financial support is offered through participation and merit based scholarships as well as employment.

*CAMP.* CAMP (College Assistance Migrant Program) is a federally funded program through the US Department of Education, Office of Migrant Education, which supports students who are from migrant worker families. The CAMP Second Semester report gives a good indication of the goals and objectives for the CAMP program and describes the type of support it provides for students.

*STEM Center.* The STEM Center in Porter Hall was established as part of a Title V grant *Increasing Student Engagement and Success in STEM (ISES STEM)*. The grant narrative provides an overview of the grant which focuses on promoting STEM fields, and engaging and supporting students in those disciplines. Demographic and usage data is calculated using TutorTrac. Reports include information on the number of students who visit the STEM Center for tutoring services, the courses they are enrolled in, as well as gender and ethnicity information. The STEM Center is also equipped with laptops, graphing calculators, and LCD projectors available for student check out to support students in their academic pursuits. See external reports for more information (2012, 2013, 2014).

*Supplemental Instruction (SI).* SI is an academic support that uses peer-assisted study (see leader job description) sessions to improve student retention and success within targeted historically difficult courses. Courses selected for SI tend to be gatekeeper courses for first and second year students. Tracking data from fall 2012-2014.

*Peer Led Assistants (PLA)* PLA are recruited by STEM faculty to become peer leaders. These are

students who have done well in the course and are available to facilitate small-group learning. STEM faculty make the PLA model an integral part of the course. Each week, with the support and guidance from the professor, PLA leaders meet with their group to discuss, debate, and engage in problem solving related to course material.

### **3.D.2 Response and Evidence**

#### **Accuplacer and English Placement Exam**

Students are placed into courses based on their ACT/SAT scores and/or ACCUPLACER® exam, administered by the GTLC, according to specified placement criteria. Traditionally, the ACCUPLACER Elementary Algebra portion was used to assess a student's knowledge in Mathematics. Beginning fall 2016, the ALEKS placement assessment is used for Math (see policy). The ACCUPLACER® Sentence Skills portion is used to assess a student's knowledge in English and writing areas. Students can place into ENG 096 or ENG 101 based on this exam. If a student does not immediately place into ENG 101, they are provided the option of taking the English Placement Exam (EPE), an institutional writing exam scored by the on-campus English department faculty. These processes align with the policies on reading/writing placement and math placement.

#### **Developmental Coursework Options**

ASU offers developmental coursework in mathematics and composition each semester, both in person and via extended studies, to students who are underprepared. ENG 096 College Preparatory Reading and Writing assists students in building skills required for college-level reading and writing. MATH 095, MATH 097 and MATH 099 build math skills needed to succeed in various subsequent college level math classes relevant to the student's chosen major. In 2013, these course were restructured to provide alternate math pathways that were not as heavily focused on algebra. A Math advising guide, posted on the ASU website explains which options are best for different majors. In 2016, a DevEd Taskforce was established to make recommendations for revisions to our Developmental Education structure. After an initial workshop on developmental education in December 2016, a smaller group was charged by the President to review best practices and recommend some pilot programs. The first of these, the use of Supplemental Instruction in Math 104 Finite Math begins in Fall 2017. Likewise, for the scheduled ENG 096 course offerings, three to four supplemental instructors will be available. Additional recommendations will be developed over the next year in conjunction with the Pathways projects.

#### **AAA 101: Academic Achievement Strategies**

The AAA 101 class 'Academic Achievement Strategies' was developed in 2009 specifically to support incoming students in their transition to college. 250-350 new students enroll in AAA each fall semester. Learning outcomes focus on developing strategies for academic and personal success, goal setting, knowledge of university support services, policies and procedures and student engagement. An instructor syllabus for a fall 2015 class provides more detail on the content and methods by which AAA 101 supports student's college level learning.

#### **Library**

Nielsen Library staff members teach information literacy instruction in all AAA 101 classes and most

ENG 101 and ENG 102 classes. Sessions include topics such as database research, source evaluation, or a general library orientation. A summary of library instruction sessions 2005-2015 demonstrates sessions provided. Moreover, the library provides LS 225 to assist in information literacy in a number of courses (see pre-test post-test data). The library also participates in New Student Orientation and recently implemented the Personal Librarian Program in an effort to ensure that new and first-year students are aware of the services the library offers.

### **Supplemental Instruction**

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is offered by the GTLC in many general education and gateway courses for majors. In addition, some academic departments offered independent variations of SI during the 2014-15 academic year. The job descriptions for SI Leaders and Supplemental Support Leaders provide a more detailed account of expectations for these positions and how they support student learning. SI in STEM fields transitioned to the STEM Center from the GTLC when it opened. GTLC SI data shows several hundred students make use of SI in the semesters tracked.

### ***Graduate Student Support***

Graduate student support was not formalized centrally at ASU until recently. From 2005 until 2011, the Graduate School provided centralized services related to initial admission of students, oversight of graduate assistantships and scholarships, and awarding of graduate degrees. In 2011, with the departure of the Assistant Provost for Graduate Studies, most of these processes were decentralized to the academic departments offering graduate programs.

In 2014, in an effort to increase Hispanic participation and completion of graduate degrees, ASU submitted and was awarded a Title V grant specifically focused on providing support for graduate students. The PPOHA grant focuses on graduate student support and the development of a Graduate Center that centralizes such efforts.

In 2016, a task force of graduate faculty made recommendations (see the “GIG Summary”) to re-establish an Office of Graduate Studies and Assistant Vice President for Graduate Studies. This position was filled in January 2017 and the appointment is responsible for oversight of graduate processes, assessment, and curriculum development.

### **Extended Studies Support**

Extended Studies supports students through the ‘cranium cafe’, an Online Chat and video feature that provides advising support to students. Distance faculty are supported in course development and training through a number of professional development opportunities which include ‘TEED 589 From the Classroom to the Web’ and ‘Professional Development Online: Theory to Practice’ courses. Additionally, Extended Studies students have access to many campus student services and specialized advising efforts to meet their needs. ‘Net Tutor’ services were added in 2017, making tutoring services available to online students.

### **3.D.3 Response and Evidence**

Recognizing that Advising is essential to student success, the Board of Trustees approved purchasing Degree Works in December 2016, with full implementation to begin for the fall 2017 semester. This comprehensive degree audit software will enable students and advisors to monitor student progress

towards their degrees.

### **Early Alerts/Academic SOS**

Early Alerts were a web-based reporting structure that enabled faculty to identify students who were struggling or failing to attend their classes. Once faculty submitted an early alert, graduate students reporting to the Director of Student Engagement and Success contacted the students to follow up with the concern. In Fall 2015, as a result of staffing changes and recognition that faculty had lost confidence in the existing Early Alert system, the process was revamped as an Academic SOS. Now a committee follows up with students according to the process for Academic SOS.

### **Undergraduate On-Campus Advising: Undeclared Students and Conditional Admits**

Undergraduate on-campus students admitted into associate degree programs, conditionally admitted or with an Undeclared majors are advised by advisors in the Student Success Center. One advisor works primarily with undeclared majors, and the other with conditional admits. These advisors also provide advisor training sessions for faculty advisors, meet with academic departments, and are responsible for major/minor changes and advisor assignments within the major. The Advising Handbooks from 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13 provide more details on advising at ASU. Surveys on advising were also conducted in 2011 and 2014.

### **Undergraduate On-Campus Advising: Declared Majors**

Undergraduate students enrolled in classes on campus are assigned a faculty advisor within their declared major(s). The faculty advisor assists students in scheduling and sequencing their courses as well as mentoring students regarding career and/or graduate school options. Faculty are responsible for submitting final degree checks and ensuring students have completed degree requirements. In Fall 2014, ASU began to stress to faculty the importance of Appreciative Advising. Joe Murray visited campus and gave several presentations to faculty and staff regarding best practices in Appreciative Advising, which stresses helping students identify goals and how to achieve them rather than simply enrolling in required courses.

### **Undergraduate Distance Degree Seeking Students**

Three advising staff advise distance degree seeking students. Each has a general advising role plus assigned roles for one of the following: incarcerated students, international students, College @ High School and Early College students, and MBA correspondence students. Checklists for the MBA and Undergraduates provide a description of how student advisors work with distance students. Cranium Cafe provides online video and chat features to provide advising support to distance students.

### **Transfer Student Coordinator**

All incoming transfer students are initially advised by a transfer coordinator, who assesses their incoming credits and assigns general education and elective credit. Guidance for transfer is provided by policies for: CLEP/DSST, AP, IB, Vocational Credits, Military Credits, BA/BS degrees, AA/AS degrees, AAA/AAS degrees, transferrable courses, credits from non-accredited institutions, credits over 10 years old, transferrable grades, and for ASU Courses to the Home Institution. The transfer coordinator also consults with department chairs to determine appropriate transfer of major credit. Following initial advising by the transfer coordinator, students with a declared major are assigned to a

faculty advisor in that area for subsequent advising.

## **Graduate Advising**

Advising for graduate programs occurs within the academic department, primarily by program faculty. Several larger graduate programs (Teacher Education, Counselor Education) have dedicated advisors for their graduate students.

### **3.D.4 Response and Evidence**

#### **Construction & Improvement Projects**

The ASU campus has been transformed through \$104 million in improvement projects over the last seven years. While most of the projects undertaken were initially identified in a 1993 Campus Master Plan and revised in a 2007 Campus Master Plan, changes in personnel have resulted in retention of very few program plans documenting the details of each project. A new Campus Master Plan is underway.

Academic buildings have improved technology and teaching spaces, some dedicated to specific disciplinary requirements that provide additional student support. Improvements were completed in the following spaces:

- McDaniel Hall, Music, Leon Memorial Hall, Library
- Porter Hall, STEM Center, Planetarium & Observatory
- East Campus
- Nursing

Instruction occurs in several other campus buildings. The School of Business was renovated prior to the period of this review, but also features multiple general technology enhanced classrooms, seminar rooms and meeting spaces. The art building was renovated in 2000 and features studio spaces specific to various art media. In addition to the existing lecture room, a TEC was added during the period of this review.

Non-academic buildings have also been renovated or constructed to improve workspace, recreation/athletic spaces and living space for faculty, staff and students. Improvements have been made to these spaces:

- Richardson Hall
- Residences at Rex/Rex Stadium/North Campus
- Plachy Hall
- High Altitude Training Center

#### **Technology**

ASU has worked to keep pace with technology and has made campus improvements to support teaching and learning. Computing Services, the Academic Instructional Technology Center, and IT Governance structure work in collaboration to oversee, identify and prioritize technology use across campus. Improvements are guided by the IT Strategic Plan and are presented to campus constituents. The IT Governance Charter describes the role of various constituent groups in informing IT decisions. These include the Administrative Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC) and Faculty Technology Advisory Committee (FTAC). A summary of technology infrastructure and support is provided.

## **Library**

With the exception of holidays and intersession periods, the Nielsen Library is open seven days a week (84 hours per week during spring and fall semesters and 67 hours per week during the summer). The library offers extended hours during finals week, providing reference and circulation services to students until 2 a.m.

Nielsen Library offers a variety of print, multimedia, and electronic resources, including academic journals and online databases. The library maintains dedicated funds for each academic department at Adams State as well as a general collections fund. As of November 2015, the library provides access to over 118,000 print books and 140,000 electronic books. The library also holds 1,357 print journals and over 156,000 electronic journals organized into 62 databases. Library resources are organized by EBSCO Discovery Service, which optimizes both discovery and access, particularly for online students. All students and faculty have complete access to the library's print and electronic resources. All students and faculty have access to the Interlibrary Loan service. Nielsen Library belongs to a borrowing group called RapidILL that guarantees a 24-hour turnaround time for article requests.

### **3.D.5 Response and Evidence**

#### **Library Services**

Nielsen Library staff provide students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources through online (24-hour chat, email) and in-person reference services, teaching, liaison services, the library website and other online services. The library provides reference services seven days a week and offers the opportunity to schedule in-depth one-on-one or small group research consultations. Instruction Statistics show a drop in usage over time with a slight increase in the past year. This may coincide with increased online reference resources. In addition, the library's "Research on the Run" program reaches out to students who might not otherwise come to the library. Library staff teach information literacy concepts and the use of information resources. LS 225: Research Skills in the Social Sciences, which is taught by librarians, is open as an elective to all students and is a required course for psychology and sociology majors. Library session feedback responses provide evidence of how this course guides students in the use of information and resource services. Pre & Post Tests indicate some variation in students' improved ability to conduct research before and after, suggesting that students are more comfortable with the process. Each Adams State student has an assigned librarian to help with research through the personal librarian program and all students can obtain discipline-specific assistance through designated subject librarians.

The library provides distance services to students both through online services such as 'Ask a Librarian', access to databases, research guides of specific courses, and the 'Ask Academic' chat reference service. The library website and online research guides provide students with point-of-need help. The library has a comprehensive strategic plan and assessment plan which it uses to guide services. Floor counts show that the library is most heavily used during Finals Week.

#### **Curricular**

Many academic departments include instruction in the effective use of research and information resources within their curriculum. For example, art theory classes at both the undergraduate and graduate level require students to conduct research and include in-class and library instruction in the

effective use of research and information resources. Art Research Specific classes give examples of syllabi and required annotated bibliography assignments that demonstrate student understanding. Most Graduate programs have courses that focus on research methods specific to that discipline. Syllabi for the following undergraduate and graduate classes exemplify integration of research and information literacy in the curriculum:

- ENG 102 Communication Arts II
- ENG 495 Senior Seminar
- NURS 210 Nursing Research
- PSYC 355 Research Methods in Psychology
- SOC 455 Sociological Research Methods
- ED 571 Educational Research
- HPPE 503 Introduction to Research
- COUN 503 Introduction to Research
- COUN 708 Quantitative Research Methodology

### **Center for Graduate Studies**

As described in section 3.D.2., the Center for Graduate Studies offers a workshop on Library Research and Information Literacy, which is available to all graduate students.

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### **3.E - Core Component 3.E**

The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

#### **Argument**

##### **3.E.1 Response and Evidence**

ASU's co-curricular programming is extensive. Student Services programs incorporate learning outcomes, program evaluations, and assessment strategies. ASU provides students with opportunities for engagement through involvement in student government, clubs, and programming. ASU immerses undergraduate students into the educational environment beginning with their recruitment process. In line with ASU's 2020 Strategic plan, Goal 2, Student Success Strategic Initiative 2.1 focuses on providing flexible avenues and entry points from which to engage in and progress toward their educational, personal, and career goals.

#### **Student Life & Recreation**

As described in Criterion 3.D.1, the New Student Orientation and First Year Immersion programs are designed to engage and support students and align with ASU 2020 Goal 2. 'Check I'm Here' provides students with a one stop resource to identify programming and co-curricular opportunities. A dashboard suggests high numbers of students have made use of this tool.

#### **Adventure Leadership & Programming Apprenticeship (ALP)**

Students may apply for acceptance into a co-curricular leadership certificate program entitled the "Adventure, Leadership, and Programming Apprenticeship." Students receive a variety of training and mentoring, and are given responsibility for the design and leadership of programs and activities. This program has a systematic design for learning assessment that aligns with the Council for the Advancement of Standards including rubrics for student self-assessment in numerous domains of learning, peer assessments, and instructor assessments. Student learning outcome assessment occurs regularly each semester. The ALP Field Handbook provides a comprehensive description of the program. Each student's progress is documented for the student's personal record and for the program coordinator's monitoring.

#### **Adams State Adventure Programs**

Our Adams State Adventure Programs (ASAP) offer a number of adventure sports events, intramurals, adventure leadership programs, opportunities for personal recreation, wellness programs and adventure

sports programs like cycling and climbing.

## **Student Government**

AS&F (Associated Students and Faculty) is a student government organization. Student Government also has a co-curricular piece in which student government members sign up for a GOVT 379 course to receive one credit hour for their work. AS&F's Strategic Plan and end of year reports describe their current goals and outcomes and the degree to which each was accomplished. AS&F bills, presentations and retention activities show an engaged and active student government. Many student organizations' activities and programs strive to promote student interactions, integration into the community, and success at ASU and beyond.

## **Housing and Residence Life**

Housing and Residence Life supports the overall university mission by connecting students to involvement opportunities that promote student engagement. The Quality of Life Survey is conducted annually to assess students' living/learning experience. Results are used to identify areas for improvement. The academic experience is enhanced by additional programs and services within Housing such as the following: student-staff members who mentor first year students; Living Learning Environments that encourage programming and educational cohorts; an active Residence Hall Association to develop leadership skills; and in-hall programming surrounding diversity and inclusive activities. The housing staff are grounded in social justice principles through an intensive two week training program which includes ongoing staff development opportunities.

## **Leadership**

Adams State links learning inside and outside the classroom with a robust Co-Curricular program. The course SLOs link to the student's participation and engagement in AS&F, the Grizzly Activity Board, the Multicultural Student Governance Committee, and National Society for Leadership and Success. Syllabi for the following six courses describe the outcomes of these co-curricular experiences:

- ID/LEAD 179 Grizzly Activity Board Leadership
- ID/LEAD 279 Introduction to Student Leadership
- ID/LEAD 279 New Student Orientation Leadership
- ID/LEAD 379 Applied Student Leadership
- ID/LEAD 479 Internship in Leadership
- ID/LEAD 479 Leadership Capstone Course

The Student Life and Leadership Strategic Plan outlines the efforts made to connect co-curricular activities with institutional goals.

## **Service / Co-Curricular Service Trips**

Service based programming is another area that gets our students out in the community. ASU Cares Day, Alternative Spring Break, and academic trips abroad with service components are all described in more detail in section 3.B.

## **Clubs & Services**

Besides the availability of a variety of clubs and services, our campus also has a number of organizations that provide individual needs to specific groups like Campus Ministry, Veterans Center, CASA, and student clubs and organizations for special interest groups. Although these organizations are designed to meet the needs of specific students, anyone is welcome. These are described in more detail in sections 3.B. and 3.D.

### **3.E.2 Response and Evidence**

#### **Mission, Vision & Values**

ASU's Mission, Vision and Values convey a commitment to access, diversity & inclusivity, academic excellence, a caring community, and responsible behavior.

#### **Hispanic Serving Institution Role**

ASU works hard to ensure that it is an Hispanic Serving Institution rather than merely an Hispanic enrolling Institution. To this end it has prioritized diversity through the establishment of a Liaison for Diversity & Inclusion position, and by changing the approach to faculty hiring practices through revised job descriptions, evaluation rubrics, and the inclusion of a diversity liaison on search committees. The CIELO group actively promotes diversity and inclusion practices including those that define ASU's HSI role. This group includes both a working group and President's Advisory Group. Faculty development opportunities such as Hilos Culturales, the Unidos Equity retreat and the annual Faculty Development Retreat include programming aimed at helping faculty better understand Hispanic, first-generation students as well as students from other underrepresented populations. Elective courses such as 'Lifeways of the Valley', 'Mariachi', and 'Semillas de la Tierra: Dance' celebrate Hispanic culture and are open to all students. ASU has also implemented numerous student support services geared at promoting student success. These are described in detail in section 3.D.2.

#### **Caring Campus Culture**

The opportunity for students to get to know their faculty, along with support services, student clubs, cultural events and recreation activities described throughout Criterion 3 contribute to a caring campus culture that promotes students' success. The EARTH Group promotes responsible stewardship to our planet by promoting recycling and awareness. ASU Cares Day gives back to the community through community service. New Faculty Orientation and New Student Orientation have both been expanded and revised to emphasize establishing connections to the ASU community. The Pathways Project strives to carry this further by emphasizing Diversity and Inclusion, and Place as themes to be embedded in courses as new curriculum is developed. The faculty mentoring program also welcomes new faculty to ASU and helps them acclimatize to the campus culture.

#### **Regional Education Provider**

As the Regional Education Provider for southern Colorado, Adams State is crucial to enhancing the area's educational opportunity, economic development, and cultural enrichment. Adams State emphasizes its historic commitment to under-served populations, including underrepresented minorities, first-generation, and low-income students. Beginning in fall of 2016, ASU implemented a Guaranteed Tuition program for on-campus undergraduate students to help ensure predictable costs and promote completion in 4 years. ASU also contributes to the economy of the entire San Luis Valley.

## Economic Impact

Economic Impact studies for Athletics and the entire University show how crucial ASU is to this region. Additionally, ASU has become more active in the region, leading economic growth through Value Added Agriculture and Healthcare Sector Partnerships, hosting an Economic Summit, and working with external partners to promote the development of an Industrial Hemp industry in the region.

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### **3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary**

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

#### **Summary**

ASU has worked to ensure high quality of its programs in all delivery formats. In the past two years is has embarked on an ambitious reworking of its general education curriculum stemming from the development of both institutional and general education outcomes. These outcomes align to a revamping of the state's GT Pathways guaranteed transfer curriculum as well.

ASU's curriculum is developed and approved by faculty through established faculty committees. Distance courses must align with approved institutional syllabi and must additionally undergo a rigorous Quality Assurance review by Extended Studies staff and department chairs. All online courses are reviewed mid-course to ensure appropriate faculty-student interaction.

Faculty and students in all academic departments are engaged in scholarship and research, much of which is showcased during Student Scholar days. Faculty sabbatical reports also demonstrate scholarship.

Faculty qualifications are governed by HLC guidelines as well as the faculty handbook, which also prescribes evaluation of faculty. ASU has worked to develop practices on hiring, qualifications and faculty load into clear policies for faculty.

ASU provides many opportunities for student support and has recently added DegreeWorks advising software to ensure that students are able to see their progress towards a degree at all times. Achieving the first two ASU 2020 goals of Academic Excellence and Student Success are at the forefront of all decisions.

## **Sources**

*There are no sources.*

## **4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement**

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

### **4.A - Core Component 4.A**

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

## **Argument**

## **4.A.1 Response and Evidence**

### **Yearly Reviews**

At the time of the 2009 HLC's Focus Visit, ASU was working to implement a more solid process for assessing and reporting student learning. As cited in the Focus Visit Report, "The institution [ASU] has developed a 'Plan for Assessment of Student Learning: An Academic Assessment Plan,' which outlines procedure and process for program and general education assessment."

Since the 2009 Focus Visit, ASU has continually improved upon the oversight and follow-through of regular reviews of undergraduate programs, graduate programs, and General Education. The 2013 update and staff review verified significant progress in meeting assessment goals. All yearly program reports and five-year program reviews occur in accordance with ASU's assessment plan that was established in 2009 and revised in 2012, 2015 and 2017 (now titled "Assessing Student Learning at ASU"). The plan, which is currently under review to improve the five-year program review process, will include new processes for yearly assessment of programs and General Education which will then inform the departmental five-year program reviews.

All academic departments complete a program assessment report each fall. The departments review the previous academic year with regard to program goals, student learning outcomes, assessment strategies, benchmarking, and the time frame for each measure. The "Student Learning Assessment Committee" (SLAC) oversees the review of yearly program reports using a scoring rubric. The results of the program reviews are shared with the Assessment Coordinator and the VP for Academic Affairs. Since beginning this annual assessment practice in 2012, 100% of all undergraduate programs completed a yearly program report. 100% of graduate programs also completed annual reports by 2016. These yearly program reports allow for a more frequent departmental review and have helped departments make curricular or pedagogical changes on an ongoing basis, leading to a more comprehensive five-year program review.

### **Five-Year Program Review**

Evaluation of the departmental five-year program reports is currently completed by the Curriculum Review Committee (CRC), a subcommittee of the Faculty Senate. This occurs in three phases as outlined in the Assessment of Student Learning plan. Graduate program reviews are conducted by the Graduate Council. A rubric was developed by Graduate Council to provide feedback.

As evidenced in the following program review samples, inconsistencies existed with regard to reports and feedback, hence, the collaborative call for a one-year hiatus to rewrite guidelines. A sample of former program review documents and CRC feedback includes:

- Biology report and feedback
- Earth Sciences report and feedback
- Human Performance & Physical Education report and feedback
- Music report and feedback
- Psychology report and feedback
- MA Humanities: US History report & feedback

Beginning in Spring 2016, all yearly and five-year program reports were uploaded into Blackboard Outcomes and subsequently evaluated by the CRC or Graduate Council. Using Outcomes provides

ASU a more efficient means of collecting, storing, analyzing and generating assessment reports. Also, prior to 2015, an external evaluation of the five-year program review was optional. This became mandatory effective Spring 2016. The 2015 program review from Art includes an external review.

In Spring 2017, the Student Learning Assessment Committee (SLAC), Curriculum Review Committee (CRC), and Academic Council (AC) recognized that the five-year program review process and guidelines were dated and not reflective of ASU's recent efforts to improve assessment practices. The SLAC met and proposed that ASU take a one-year hiatus from conducting five-year program reviews so that a committee could be formed to update these processes and guidelines. The committee was charged by President McClure with reviewing current guidelines, researching best practices, and writing new guidelines, timelines, and rubrics for undergraduate, graduate, and General Education programs. Given the significance and scope of this work, the process should be completed and approved by AY 2018-19 as per the timeline.

#### **4.A.2 & 4.A.3 Response and Evidence**

ASU has institutionally established policies with regard to the credit we transcript, including experiential learning or other forms of prior learning. These policies are published on the ASU website.

ASU provides the necessary forms and clearly outlines the process of evaluating the transfer of credit or degrees in the online catalog and on the transfer website.

Policies address credit regarding the transfer process for courses from other post-secondary institutions, minimum grade accepted, number of transfer credits accepted, general education courses, upper division credits, and elective credits. The policy also outlines the process for undergraduate degree transfers that are both in-state and out-of-state.

- 100-13-01 Eligibility for Admission
- 100-13-02 Transferable Grades
- 100-13-03 CLEP/DANTES Scores
- 100-13-04 AP/Scores
- 100-13-05 Vocational Credits
- 100-13-06 Coursework Transfers
- 100-13-08 Associate of Arts/Associate of Science Transfers
- 100-13-09 Associate of Applied Science/Associate of General Studies Degrees
- 100-13-10 Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science Degrees
- 100-13-11 Transfer Credits Over 10 Years Old
- 100-13-12 Credit from Non-Accredited Schools
- 100-13-13 International Baccalaureate Recognition Policy
- 100-13-14 Transfer Credit: ASU to Home Institution

Quality of transfer credits are also assured in the following three ways: a) a third party review for international credits; b) articulation agreements in which a content expert has done a review; c) pre-approval to take a course at another institution, and; d) department chair approval of coursework transfer in the major.

#### **4.A.4 Response and Evidence**

ASU has policies and procedures that guide academic departments and General Education with regard

to prerequisites, course rigor, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Prerequisites for courses, course rigor, and student learning outcomes are developed by academic departments that then submit documentation for the course review and approval process managed by the CRC. Courses being considered for inclusion in General Education must be approved by CRC and the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC). All courses for graduate programs follow the same processes using similar paperwork but submit documentation to Graduate Council for final approval. Each academic department is responsible for assessing instructor qualifications and establishing appropriate teaching assignments, which are subsequently approved by the Office of Academic Affairs.

All academic programs (as per policies for new programs or changes to existing programs), course descriptions including course number, and prerequisites are determined by the faculty member(s) primarily responsible for teaching the course and the program. All new courses, programs, course descriptions and prerequisites are reviewed and approved by the CRC or Graduate Council before they appear in the course catalog.

The policy regarding institutional syllabi (IS) allows for CRC to check appropriate course rigor by reviewing the level of SLOs and the proposed course assignments. Every new or modified course sent to CRC for review must include an IS that clearly outlines the intended SLOs for the course and the proposed course assignments for each SLO. CRC determines if the written SLOs are at an appropriate level (100 vs. 400 level courses) by using Bloom's Taxonomy, and assesses rigor for the course level based on assignments (e.g., T/F exams vs. research papers). A rubric was developed in 2017 to assist CRC members in evaluating Institutional syllabi. Graduate courses follow the same policy but are reviewed by Graduate Council.

Through Banner, the Registrar's Office enforces prerequisite requirements at the time of registration. However the department chair can waive prerequisites for students who are adequately prepared for the course.

The review and approval of Extended Studies courses and instructor credentials require review and approval by the relevant academic department chair, VP for Academic Affairs, Extended Studies Director of Quality Assurance, Associate VP for Extended Studies-Academics, and the Operations Manager for Distance Learning as detailed in the following flowchart. A current list of approved instructors of dual credit courses offered at Alamosa High School is located in the evidence file. Extended Studies instructors are required to follow course development guidelines which are provided once a course is initiated through a course initiation form and process.

All ASU faculty meet required qualifications as discussed in Criterion 3.

### **Learning Resources for Faculty and Students**

- Accessibility Services
- Academic Instructional Technology Center
- Center for Teaching, Innovation, and Research
- Counseling Center and Career Center
- Math Lab
- Nielsen Library

- STEM Center
- The Writing Studio
- Grizzly Testing and Learning Center

Dual credit courses that meet both high school and college requirements are known as concurrent enrollment courses. Qualified high school students may be eligible to register for courses on campus at Adams State. To be eligible for the concurrent enrollment program, students must be approved by their high school and meet all prerequisites, including minimum placement testing requirements, for each course they choose to take. There are three ways for high school students to take ASU courses: 1) video courses at the high school; 2) online-dual enrollment semester-based courses; and 3) concurrent enrollment on the ASU campus. These students are also eligible for an ASU scholarship.

#### 4.A.5 Response and Evidence

Four academic programs have achieved specialized accreditation. Specialized accreditation reviews supplement ASU’s five-year and yearly program reviews to inform program improvement and resource allocation.

| Program                            | Accrediting Body   | Review Cycle  |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Counselor Education - graduate     | Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Education Programs<br><br>CACREP PHD accreditation | Accredited since 1995<br><br>Current accreditation through 2011 - 2019  |
| Music - undergraduate and graduate | National Association of Schools of Music   | Accredited since 1988<br><br>Current accreditation cycle is 2008 - 2018 |
| Nursing - undergraduate            | Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education   | Current accreditation cycle is 2016-2026                                |
| Teacher Education                  | Colorado Department of Higher Education  | Current accreditation cycle is 2012 - 2017                              |

#### **4.A.6 Response and Evidence**

ASU academic departments track graduates for a variety of purposes including program assessment, accreditation, and grant writing: Business, Nursing, English, Earth Sciences. The university is aware of and publicizes individual graduate success stories, but to date, ASU, like many institutions with limited resources, has struggled with systematically collecting, analyzing, and publicizing data related to graduates' success.

To explore the role of skills and competencies achieved through the General Education curriculum, GECC designed and administered an alumni survey in 2010, and re-administered it in 2015, which included questions about continuing and graduate education pursuits of graduates. ASU plans to administer this survey every five years in order to evaluate the success of our graduates.

The 2010 alumni survey was updated and administered in 2015, and a total of 426 surveys were completed. Of those 426 surveys, 216 were completed by students who finished our undergraduate program within the last 10 years. The remaining surveys were completed by graduates of our master's programs or by those who graduated more than 10 years ago. Of those who have been out of school for at least two years, 30% have since completed a master's degree. Almost 40% of our alumni have taken additional courses since graduation. Of those graduating at least 10 years ago with a baccalaureate degree, 9% have since completed a doctoral degree. For those who graduated at least two years ago, 71% are working within their major area of study.

The Alumni Relations office collects information from graduates from all programs at ASU. The office tracks employment and additional degrees from other institutions and currently utilizes information from a survey given three weeks before students graduate. Information is saved in the alumni database. A selection of San Luis Valley (local) graduates shows employment records for 40% of alumni. Though this system allows the institution to collect some self-reported data, the information is not robust enough to support significant analysis. Data from 2012. Data from 2014.

By acknowledging the need to better measure the success of our graduates, the Alumni Relations Office has implemented a more involved process for tracking graduates. Starting in Summer 2016, the Alumni Relations Office began surveying three groups of alumni at these intervals: 6-12 months after graduation, at two years and five years. This survey link is sent via email and direct mail, plus a request via Facebook. Alumni identification numbers are used to reduce duplication. The 2016 online results (65 responses) indicated that 65% were employed in 1-6 months after graduation, 100% were currently employed, 91.1% felt they were somewhat or adequately prepared for the work force. In Fall 2016, an intern was hired to research employment as part of a prospect screening project which utilized LinkedIn Premium. The intern researched 1676 graduates from 2013 to 2016 that had missing employments. The intern was able to find 882 employment titles or companies. The Alumni Relations Office will work with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness on additional ways to collect and report employment and additional degrees received from other institutions.

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#### **4.B - Core Component 4.B**

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

#### **Argument**

##### **4.B.1 & 4.B.2. Response and Evidence**

As described in 4.A.1. in 2009, HLC completed a Focus Visit to review ASU's "strategic planning, assessment, and its governance and administrative structure." After the initial review and a progress report and staff analysis in 2013, ASU's assessment plan was considered satisfactory.

Since 2009 the university updated the assessment plan in 2012, 2015 and 2017 (now titled "Assessing Student Learning at ASU"). It identified institutional learning outcomes (Adams Outcomes), appointed a part-time Assessment Coordinator, and created an Office of Institutional Effectiveness. All updates to the university assessment plan were the result of feedback from academic departments and our increased understanding of best practices in assessment of student learning. The assessment plan is under review.

#### **General Education & Institutional-level Program Review and Assessment**

The process for reviewing the General Education program is also outlined in the Assessing Student Learning plan. Prior to 2011, assessing General Education was completed by each department but not reported in systematic or formal ways. In 2011, based on research by GECC in looking at best assessment practices used on other campuses, three tools were chosen to measure student learning: NSSE, ACT CAAP, and an alumni survey. A summary report on CAAP from 2012 demonstrates the intended use of CAAP for Gen Ed assessment. Although CAAP was administered for four years, extremely low participation rates negated the usefulness of the results and they were not summarized.

In 2015, the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) and the Assessment Coordinator realized that significant changes were needed on the General Education curriculum, on program review and on assessment. The shortcomings of the General Education assessment plan used between 2011 and 2015 (specifically the use of ACT CAAP) were outlined in the final report from GECC to Faculty Senate. Beginning in Fall 2015, ASU, with the work of the General Education Revitalization Task Force (now titled Essential Learning Task Force), embarked upon a two-year endeavor to align our

entire curriculum (ASU “Pathways Project”) and outline a plan for regular General Education and institutional-level program review and assessment. This realignment coincided with state efforts to revise its GT Pathways curriculum as described in Criterion 3. The Pathways Project timeline should be completed by 2018.

Up until Spring 2016, ASU’s General Education Program Goals represented the institution-wide goals for all students graduating from associate and baccalaureate degrees. Given the increasingly assessment-focused culture at ASU, GECC, under the directive of the Faculty Senate in 2014-15, re-evaluated its role in approving general education courses and the assessment of the General Education outcomes. These dialogues resulted in the formation of the “General Education Revitalization Task Force”, now titled the “Essential Learning Task Force/ELTF”. The ELTF began work with a three-day retreat (link) in December 2015 and, subsequently, in Spring 2016, began outlining proposed institutional learning outcomes (“Adams Outcomes”), and the Pathways Project. ASU's Institutional and General Education outcomes, Adams Outcomes, were identified and approved by Faculty Senate and the Board of Trustees in Fall 2016.

One key element of Pathways is the integration of more High Impact Practices in General Education and major courses. The ELTF is currently using results from the NSSE and FSSE that compares results from 2014-16 in order to structure the proposed new curriculum. ELTF will use these data to educate the campus on the impact of HIPs on student learning to date. This Pathways Project is in progress with an implementation plan set for 2018.

### **Department Student Learning Goals**

All academic programs engage in assessment of their stated outcomes as described in “Assessing Student Learning at ASU”. Assessing learning within academic departments now occurs on a yearly and five-year basis.

All academic departments identify program goals and student learning outcomes which are articulated in curriculum maps and in Institutional Syllabi. Guided by the Assessment Coordinator, departments will update these program goals and SLOs to better align with the newly established Adams Outcomes. This will be a multi-year process. The "Assessing Student Learning at ASU" plan outlines the process for assessing these outcomes at the undergraduate, graduate, and General Education levels. Current program goals are posted on each department's website and are housed in the "Assessment" folder on the shared/C-drive and the SLAC Google Drive.

Examples of Departmental Goals:

- Art
- MA in Music Education
- Chemistry
- Math
- Sociology

The 2014-15 Summary Reports, Scores by Department, and Scores by Rubric (based on the report rubric) were prepared by the Assessment Coordinator, and shared with the VPAA and Department Chairs. The Summary Report outlines the cumulative results of all yearly reports including number of SLOs measured, the most frequently used direct assessment measure, and the most common assessment tools used. Processes for improving assessment practice in departments not deemed to be

adequate in one or more aspects of their assessment of student learning are detailed in 4.B.4.

With the establishment of the Student Learning Assessment Committee (SLAC) in 2015, the review of yearly reports is completed by SLAC, thus offering more comprehensive university-wide feedback to each department. The SLAC shares the yearly report reviews and scores with the Assessment Coordinator and the VP for Academic Affairs (VPAA). The VPAA then shares the SLAC feedback with each department.

All graduate programs have SLOs and these are assessed on a yearly and five-year basis. Graduate Council reviews and provides feedback on annual assessment reports for graduate programs. In Spring 2016, the Graduate Program Initiative outlined Adams Outcomes for graduate programs. The assessment of graduate programs is outlined in the Assessing Student Learning plan.

Several graduate programs, including Art, Counselor Education, and HPPE, require successful completion of capstone courses (thesis, field-based research project, practicum, portfolio, etc.) that aid in assessing program effectiveness.

### **Course-Level Goals**

At the course level, listing course-specific SLOs in the Institutional Syllabus (IS) has been a practice at ASU since before 2005. In 2015, this policy was updated to state that all undergraduate and graduate ISs must list relevant program and/or General Education goals, course-specific SLOs, and sample course assignments that align with each goal and outcome. As per the directive of the VPAA in 2016, all departments updated their IS using the new IS template.

### **Student Affairs**

To improve student retention, the Office of Student Affairs designed an assessment plan that would result in a comprehensive, outcome-based assessment program for seven departments. The assessment program reflects the division's success in moving from a program-improvement/student-satisfaction-based initiative to a student-learning-based initiative. This process relied on the submission of an "Annual Activities Summary," designed to capture a department/program's perspective of their successes and achievements, challenges, status of current program goals and professional development goals. Some areas, such as Counseling and Career Services, submitted comprehensive reports. Others were less detailed; however, 5-Year summaries provide an overview of current practices.

This assessment plan will be updated in the near future to reflect alignment with the new Adams Outcomes and the curricular work being done in the Pathways Project. This plan was presented to ASU's President by the VP of Student Services in Spring 2017. Work revisions to student affairs and co-curricular is already underway with a comprehensive presentation on assessment from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Several units have already completed unit assessment plans and set benchmarks.

The Office of Housing & Residence Life conducts an annual Quality of Life Survey that includes questions pertaining to the learning outcomes of department-sponsored programs, events, and activities. The survey also asks questions regarding the student's experience with the student conduct process, and

whether learning outcomes are met with regard to students who are in violation of residence hall policies. Results are used to plan programming and inform changes in housing practices as described earlier in the five-year summaries.

## **Extended Studies**

Degree programs and discrete courses in Extended Studies use the same program and course SLOs as those programs and courses delivered in face-to-face classes on campus. On-campus programs that also offer a distance version of a degree or course must address those outcomes in their five-year program reviews. While the program outcomes themselves do not vary, the content delivery method does.

### **4.B.3. Response and Evidence**

ASU used the results of the ASU Campus Climate Report in 2014 to begin the Pathways Project using the lens of Inclusive Excellence and diversity. Results of the Climate Survey revealed that despite reporting high levels of satisfaction with the campus climate at ASU, there existed low levels of satisfaction at ASU for persons of specific racial, ethnic, social class, gender, and sexual backgrounds. Such findings provided the impetus for the Pathways work to begin with inclusion and diversity at the center.

With the Pathways Project, ASU is increasing attention to finding ways to use information gained from assessment to improve student learning. Recognizing gaps between collecting assessment data and using those data resulted in the formation of the Student Learning Assessment Committee in 2015. In addition, the Essential Learning Task Force has a two-year goal of outlining the Pathways Project that will include an improved assessment plan for institutional learning outcomes and general education. The Graduate Initiative Group's (GIG) work in 2015-16 focused discussion on these same gaps existing for graduate programs. As a result, the GIG proposed to hire a Vice President of Graduate Studies who will work closely with Graduate Council to strengthen the use of assessment data in improving student learning at the graduate level.

## **Departmental Assessment**

Individual departments collect assessment data to support decision-making related to curriculum and learning. Most departments rely on course-embedded assessments, portfolios, culminating experiences, and comprehensive exam results in order to gather information about student learning. Regardless of the artifacts and tools selected, the yearly and five-year program reviews serve as the basis for course and program improvements. 5-Year Assessment summaries describe how departments have made changes based on assessment results.

By 2015, 100% of all undergraduate programs collected and compiled assessment data with only a few programs struggling with documenting and reporting results. On the Yearly Report form, programs are asked, "What, if any, changes might you make to the curriculum or pedagogy to improve student learning based on the results of your assessments?" Each year, programs must reflect upon these decisions and how they "closed the loop" with regard to student learning. The "comments" section of the yearly reports shows how departments apply assessment results directly to curricular changes.

Examples of academic departments using assessment data to improve student learning include:

- Developmental Math Curriculum Redesign
  - o Pass rates in developmental courses
  - o Math 104 pre-requisite change
  - o Change from Accuplacer to ALEKS
- Biology Department 5-year Program Review
- English Department Yearly Report
- 2015-16 Summary of Yearly Reports

## **General Education**

The Gen Ed assessment program between 2011 and 2015 relied on the ACT CAAP, NSSE, and alumni surveys. The ACT CAAP was administered for several years but the report generated in 2012 for the campus provided insignificant data for ASU to make any decisions regarding General Education. The NSSE 2014 High Impact Practices and 2010 & 2015 Alumni Survey results provided more useful data in terms of what skills and competencies students and alums believed important for career success and whether these skills were developed at ASU through High Impact Practices.

Following analysis of these data and review of our General Education curriculum assessment processes in 2015, we recognized that weaknesses existed in the aforementioned assessment of General Education. Therefore, during the 2014-15 academic year, the GECC decided to form the General Education Revitalization Task Force (now titled “Essential Learning Task Force”). As this is a significant issue facing ASU, the VPAA, Senate, and GECC collaborated to define the charge and timeline for the Task Force’s work with Pathways. A large component of the Pathways Project from now through 2019 will focus on reviewing best practices in assessment, and, subsequently, determining how ASU will gather and use data to support student learning in General Education.

## **Student Affairs Report**

As described earlier, the Student Affairs assessment plan has been inconsistent in its use and reporting. A new plan has been implemented and several units have already created unit assessment plans. The full description can be seen above.

One example of the improvement in Student Affairs assessment is the Adventure Program. This program has a systematic design for learning assessment including rubrics for student self-assessment in numerous domains of learning, peer assessments, and instructor assessments.

The Adventure Program reviews the status of its program outcomes twice a year and provides a model for co-curricular assessment. It utilizes data collected during student learning assessments, formal debriefs of student led programming, and program evaluations completed by participants. This information, coupled with feedback received verbally, is then carefully reviewed by the leadership of adventure programs, which includes students who are in manager roles within the program and the program director. Data indicating progress toward achievement of SLOs is considered. This information is used to modify program strategies so that there is a continual cycle of feedback, assessment, and redesign of the program strategies.

## **Report Repository**

In 2015, ASU purchased Blackboard Outcomes, which adds an assessment module into the campus LMS. Prior to obtaining Outcomes, assessment reports were shared via e-mail and stored on the

university's "shared drive." Blackboard Outcomes integrates SLOs developed for specific programs and courses with assessment rubrics that have been aligned to those goals. Once the assessment rubrics have been entered into Blackboard, the Outcomes module collects data enabling assessment reports to be run without additional work by the instructor. In Fall 2015, all academic departments were required to submit yearly reports in Outcomes, which helped to streamline the process and serves as a repository for reports, scoring, and feedback comments. Each department chair now submits his/her yearly report and/or five-year program review to Outcomes. The Assessment Coordinator then shares the Outcomes data with SLAC for their review of reports. One model program that uses Outcomes on a regular basis is Counselor Education:

- COUN 503
- COUN 528
- COUN 546
- COUN Practicum

Having this system in place makes the assessment process more streamlined and makes the sharing of assessment data more efficient.

#### **4.B.4. Response & Evidence**

Over the past five years, ASU has worked towards adopting best practices in assessing student learning throughout the institution. The part-time Assessment Coordinator was added prior to the 2009 Focused Visit, and became a half-time faculty position in 2014. In 2017 ASU committed to hiring an Assessment Director. The position is currently being advertised and will enable ASU to provide dedicated support for assessment across campus.

Faculty are highly involved with assessment activities within their departments and many faculty serve on critical committees that are responsible for the assessment of General Education and other programs.

The Assessment Coordinator assumes responsibility for meeting with department chairs and the VPAA, providing professional development sessions, reviewing yearly reports, assisting CRC and GECC, updating the "Plan for Assessment of Student Learning," maintaining the Assessment webpage, etc. The Assessment Coordinator offers professional development opportunities to educate the campus on best practices occurring at other institutions. In Spring 2015, the Assessment Coordinator organized the first "Student Learning Assessment Committee" (SLAC), which is charged with determining how evidence of student learning can strengthen programs and enhance accountability. In Summer 2015, the current and past Assessment Coordinators held the first "Summer Assessment Workshop" to provide instruction and advice for faculty and Student Affairs professionals on best practices in setting outcomes and assessing student learning.

ASU continues to use best practices in assessment. As described earlier, the adoption of nationally standardized tools in 2012 such as the NSSE and ACT CAAP represented a step forward in utilizing best practices to assess student learning at ASU. NSSE has been administered since 2008 and CAAP since 2011. NSSE will continue as an assessment tool, but CAAP will no longer be used as per the recommendation of GECC, the Assessment Coordinator, and the Essential Learning Task Force.

In 2014, GECC completed the first five-year follow-up of the alumni survey (first administered in 2010 and re-administered in 2015). The "Plan for Assessment of Student Learning" (updated in 2015 and re-

named Assessing Student Learning at ASU), is reviewed and updated at least every five years. The fact that it is currently under review as part of the Pathways projects provides another example of ASU recognizing that changes to assessment practices are needed.

While oversight of assessment resides with the VPAA, a substantial portion of all assessment-related activities falls directly into the hands of faculty and department chairs. Individual faculty members are responsible for their particular course-level assessments and they are also deeply involved with shaping program-level goals and assessment activities. Conversations about program level assessments occur either through departmental meeting minutes or retreats. The yearly assessment report requires that each department report on these discussions. This system means that faculty are engaged in assessment at all levels of the institution. Examples of meeting minutes and retreat/workshop notes that documented discussions on assessment include (each department houses meeting minutes):

- Art
- Biology
- Chemistry Department retreat workshop (also completed for Earth Sciences, Biology, and Business)
- Earth Sciences
- English, Theatre, Communication
- Human Performance & Physical Education
- Nursing

All departments have articulated learning objectives that are consistent with practices in their respective fields and include both direct and indirect measures. As seen in the assessment reports, cited earlier, all departments discuss and document their assessment activities in department meetings, via e-mail, or at annual retreats and through participation in CRC, GECC, Graduate Council, and SLAC.

For co-curricular learning, professionals within Student Affairs and Enrollment Management are involved in all steps of assessment planning, data collection, analysis, and program planning. Personnel from Student Affairs and Enrollment Management are deeply involved with the Essential Learning Task Force work and will begin to align co-curricular activities with the Adams Outcomes and appropriate assessment tools.

In 2015, ASU transformed the Institutional Reporting Office into the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and hired a full-time Senior Research Analyst to oversee this office. This critical move is further demonstration of ASU's commitment to improving the assessment of student learning. This office will work closely with the Assessment Director, once hired, and the Pathways Project in the coming years.

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#### **4.C - Core Component 4.C**

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

#### **Argument**

##### **4.C.1.**

In 2013, based on a decade's worth of student recruitment and retention data and a thorough market analysis contracted through Noel Levitz in 2012, ASU Enrollment Management 'shifted gears' from a checklist method to development and implementation of a comprehensive retention effort. The 2013

ASU Retention Plan focused on using best practices in recruitment and retention to gain higher retention rates and increased degree completion rates of students. Multiple data points were considered in creating the new 2013 plan including: (1) Undergraduate Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates by Class, (2) Undergraduate Degrees Awarded by Type, (3) Fall-to-Fall Retention of First-Year Students, (4) First-Time Full-Time Four-Year Retention by Residency, and (5) First-Time Full-Time Retention by Admission Index Score. CCHE's performance contracts with each public higher education institution also required ASU to make progress with degree completion and student success.

Subsequent to the 2013 Retention Plan, Enrollment Management established six retention subcommittees to further research the goals and recommend strategies. After the subcommittees reported their recommendations, a retreat of about 25 individuals from across campus was held in Fall 2014 to prioritize these recommendations.

In Summer 2015, ASU's VP of Enrollment Management vacated this post. This transition, and the naming of our new ASU President, put the work of the six subcommittees on hold until Fall 2015. Recognizing that the previous recruitment and enrollment plans lacked measurable goals, ASU's new President appointed a new director to establish a Recruitment and Retention Committee with representation from across campus. This committee continued the work of the previously established subcommittees, developed a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, and defined measurable outcomes for student retention, persistence, and completion that are consistent with ASU's mission, institutional goals, student populations, and educational offerings.

In addition to the aforementioned activities, ASU's Quality Improvement Committee (QIC) incorporated some of the 2013 retention goals into the Quality Initiative Proposal (QIP) submitted to the Higher Learning Commission in 2014. The goals included:

- Development of four-year degree maps. Goal met in Fall 2014; all maps are on academic web pages and regularly updated.
- Increased Supplemental Instruction availability.
- Required completion of general education mathematics within first 30 credits.
- Review of current math requirements. Goal met: the math department changed general education math prerequisites to better align with academic majors.
- Follow up with students who withdraw.
- Faculty development in career advising.

Probationary status and the transition to the Standard Pathway eliminated a formal QIP report; however, outcomes of the QIP are still being implemented and evaluated. Results show an increase in declared majors, decrease in completion times for both associate and bachelor's degrees.

#### **4.C.2.**

Student retention studies are conducted annually to track academic progress and to make improvements in programming and resource allocation. These studies were used to analyze student success in terms of GPA, retention, and, ultimately, six-year graduation rates.

In Fall 2014, Student Life began tracking employment data of graduates who were involved in leadership roles within student life. Responses from 2011 through 2015 show incomplete data for the cohort but do show a significant number of employed students and many with plans for additional education. A new survey will be implemented in 2017. Several academic departments also track

employment of their graduates however this is not consistent across programs.

Recognizing the need to better utilize data analytics for research and assessment, ASU's Office of Institutional Reporting was renamed the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) in Spring 2016. Last year, OIE collected and analyzed a comprehensive set of data on student outcomes, which include retention, persistence and completion rates. These rates were calculated not just by student types in terms of gender, ethnicity and aid recipient, but also by different academic programs. This information allowed us to detect which academic programs do a better job at retaining and graduating students and which ones need more institutional support. In addition, OIE has compiled the latest graduation and post-graduation outcomes data. Particularly, the transfer-out and employment rates gave us insights into how ASU adds value to the journey of our students.

ASU administers the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) every three years to incoming and graduating students. The NSSE results provide ASU with student engagement data and indirect evidence as to why students persist and which activities they engage in throughout their college career.

In addition, ASU employs the Common Data Set initiative and posts the data set on OIE's website in early Spring every year. CDS helps us improve the quality and accuracy of information for prospective students as well as for parties that would like to get official Fall data.

#### **4.C.3.**

Recruitment, retention and graduation data informs our decisions to implement initiatives and programs, mostly targeted at underclass students, to increase enrollment and program completion. First-year programs that are assessed have included STAY, First Year Immersion (formerly First Year Interest Groups), AAA 101: Academic Achievement Strategies, Summer Scholars and athletics.

In 2009, data indicated that students needing two or more developmental courses had the lowest retention rates of all students. In response, STAY (Structured Transitional Academic Year) was implemented that fall semester. STAY's purpose was to support underprepared students for success through a prescribed learning community/cohort course schedule based on test assessments, tutoring, small group and individual study time, and service-learning. It also provided a mechanism for students to comply with Colorado regulations for completing developmental coursework within the first 30 attempted credit hours. While higher-than-average retention data showed program success, 2014 graduation rates of STAY students were only equivalent to (not above) STAY eligible students. Due to lower than expected results and lack of institutional support, the program was terminated.

AAA 101 (Academic Achievement Strategies at Adams) was developed in 2010 to assist first year students in their adjustment to college. More than 250 first-year students are enrolled in AAA 101 each fall. Students enrolled in that course retained at about the same rate as those who did not take the course.

Results of the NSSE provide ASU with student engagement data and indirect evidence as to why students persist and which activities they engage in throughout their college career. In 2015, a faculty workshop was held to analyze the relationship between our NSSE results and recommended high impact educational practices to improve student engagement. In 2016, OIE analyzed NSSE-FSSE results thoroughly and shared the findings with key administrators from the Office of Academic Affairs and Student Services.

Another example of utilizing retention data was the design and implementation of the Adventure Program's "First Year Free" initiative. Through consideration of data presented in several roundtables and engagement in critical review sessions in committees, it became evident that there were barriers to first year students finding means of being engaged in campus activities. The leadership of the Adventure Programs gleaned findings from these sessions and decided to eliminate a financial barrier for incoming students as a means of increasing engagement with the campus. The "First Year Free" initiative was initiated Fall 2014 and data is being collected to provide a means of evaluating its success.

The Office of Housing surveys its on-campus students annually through a Quality of Life Survey. The Housing 5 year Summary describes how results have been used.

ASU's Grant Writing Specialist regularly uses data on student retention, persistence, and completion to obtain outside funding. In particular, grants written for Title V must include institutional data regarding the success of our Hispanic students. Over 15 years, ASU has acquired numerous grants that have totaled more than \$32 million. The work of Title V at ASU assists with strengthening institutional programs, facilities, and services to expand the educational opportunities for Hispanic Americans and other underrepresented populations. The Title V grants have enabled ASU to expand and enhance our academic offerings, program quality, and institutional stability. For example, the establishment of the Grizzly Testing & Learning Center, and the STEM Center in Porter Hall.

#### 4.C.4.

Given the fact that ASU serves a large proportion of historically underserved students, the commonly used retention and graduation rates have limited meaning for the performance of our institution. As a result, OIE has conducted extensive research and proposed a new metric called "Successful Learning Rate," which is achievement of an academic credential or progression towards the credential within six years among students who have transferred prior to degree attainment or are still enrolled at our institution. This definition effectively captures the diversity of our at-risk student population, their enrollment patterns, and the role ASU played in the transfer process. For all cohorts from 2009 to 2013, the one-year rate has been higher than 80%. Based on these data, OIE has mapped student cohorts. These maps gave us an in-depth understanding of how students flow through our institution over a six-year period.

OIE has expanded their research further and signed up for Student Achievement Measure (SAM) in order to benchmark ourselves against our peer institutions. SAM gives us detailed information on the outcomes of different student cohorts. These data sets also inform the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan and goals for recruitment and retention.

To get robust comparative views on retention and enrollment trends, OIE has utilized the hierarchical cluster analysis and discriminant analysis in choosing peer institutions. This peer list has been useful for our strategic planning and decision making, especially pertaining to enrollment management.

To streamline data sharing and tracking, OIE is in the process of developing interactive dashboards. All external audiences will be able to view these dashboards and get specific answers for their questions on retention and enrollment trends.

OIE is also implementing the short- and long-term predictive analytical tools for use in more effectively recruiting and retaining students. The predictive enrollment model was pilot-tested in Fall

2016 and will be upgraded to full-scale implementation in upcoming years. The predictive retention model was developed in Fall 2017 and plans for its implementation phase have been discussed and finalized.

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## 4.S - Criterion 4 – Summary

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

## Summary

ASU has demonstrated a growing commitment to ensuring and improving upon the quality of educational programs, learning environments, and student support services. This commitment is evident in (a) having defined student learning outcomes at all levels of the institution, (b) improving on assessment practices at the undergraduate and graduate levels, (c) increasing our data informed decision making, (d) creating the Assessing Student Learning Plan, and (e) offering numerous student support services.

The assessment plan has been in place since 2009 and is updated as changes in curriculum and assessment have occurred. It serves as a blueprint for undergraduate, graduate, and General Education systems to conduct program review and assessment. The assessment plan is under revision as the Pathways Project leads to new institutional curriculum and revised program goals and outcomes. Additionally the five-year program review process is being revised. The assessment of co-curricular activities has improved and is being refined further as assessment of these areas continues.

A new focus on enrollment management and institutional research regarding retention, persistence, and completion rates promises greater success in these areas, paired with a dedication to continued improvement. The addition of a full-time assessment director will ensure that assessment practices expand across the institution.

## **Sources**

*There are no sources.*

## **5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness**

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

### **5.A - Core Component 5.A**

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

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

## **Argument**

### **Criterion Five. Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness.**

## **Sub-component 5.A.1. Response and Evidence**

### Fiscal Resources

In 2016, after an audit finding, the Colorado Office of the State Auditor mandated performance evaluations for two public universities: Adams State University and Colorado Western State University. The performance evaluation was conducted by Huron Consulting Group and confirms the need for ASU to ensure its pricing serves the underserved market. Both the Huron report and Moody's reports emphasize the need to maintain a tuition rate that encourages underserved and first-generation students to enroll in college. ASU also recognized that declines in enrollment corresponded with increases in tuition and took action by limiting the tuition increase in 2016 and enacting a guaranteed tuition policy. Tuition rates for undergraduates were held flat for 2017 to further ensure ASU meets its mission. With another decline in undergraduate enrollment in fall 2017, the Board of Trustees approved a Financial Plan of Action in their August 2017 meeting. This will determine a course of action to 'right size' the institution.

ASU's revenue is driven by enrollment. The university experienced several years of enrollment growth between 2008 and 2013, followed by declines in undergraduate enrollment in subsequent years. Declining revenue and weakened liquidity led to a Moody's Rating downgrade from A3 to A2 in 2016. The report notes the challenges ASU faces in balancing its mission to serve underserved students while maintaining adequate revenues. Although the Moody's rating in 2017 is unchanged, the report does note that liquidity is a notable improvement. Debt restructuring, approved at the April 2017 board meeting will add nearly \$1 million a year over the next three years.

Despite enrollment challenges, ASU has grown its net assets from \$51,427,693 in fiscal year 2006-2007 to \$61,696,530 in fiscal year 2015-2016 (excluding GASB #68). Audited Financials for the period of the review illustrate the changes in assets over the course of this review. ASU has invested a substantial amount of money in capital infrastructure, as can be seen in the audited financial statements for FY2006-2007 and FY2015-2016. These investments were made in large part by the implementation of a student capital fee in FY2006-2007. Students voted on a referendum recommending the fee to the Board of Trustees, with 603 students voting, 475 of whom voted in favor of the fee. The fee was designed to increase over the course of the following ten years. As the fee continued to escalate each year, ASU began to price ourselves out of our market. Thus, in FY13-14, the components of the capital fee that were not used for bonding were discontinued.

### Human Resources

ASU's staffing levels have remained fairly constant over the past decade. The number of full-time, non-tenure track positions has increased as ASU has filled vacant positions on a temporary basis, allowing departments to assess the teaching assignments and need for the position. The number of exempt staff positions has increased very slightly, primarily in grant-funded positions. Staff positions are down nearly 10 positions since a high in 2012-13.

During the 2007 Accreditation Affirmation visit, reviewers noted concern about low faculty salaries. The economic downturn in 2008 made it difficult for ASU to address the issues immediately. However, in 2014, at the direction of the Board of Trustees, a campus Compensation Committee was formed to study compensation issues across campus. Committee membership consisted of representation from the

Board of Trustees, Business & Governmental Relations, Faculty Senate, Classified Employees Council (CEC), Professional Administrative Staff Council (PASC), Budget, and Human Resources.

The committee reviewed and updated our College and University Professional Association (CUPA) peer group. This resulted in a CUPA Peer group of 89 institutions that the compensation committee endorsed. \$200,000 was set aside in the FY15-16 budget to address compensation concerns across campus, including faculty, administrative staff, and classified staff.

The compensation committee reviewed preliminary CUPA data and recommended that the \$200,000 set aside be used to bring all positions up to 72.5% of the CUPA PG average for faculty and administrative staff, address compression issues caused by adjustments and address compression issues within classified staff. As a result, 17 administrators received corrections totaling \$56,825 and 33 faculty (all but one at rank of Professor) totaling \$136,428. The remaining portion of the \$200,000 was allocated to address compression issues within the classified employees pending completion of a state review of salary ranges for classified positions. This has not been completed.

Through the budget process, ASU continues to evaluate every permanent position, re-configuring duties to ensure it meets needs, assessing whether it is essential, and adjusting salary as needed. We are currently in the process of consulting with the Colorado Department of Personnel and Administration (DPA) to develop a policy that is consistent with state rules, and developing a sub-committee with classified employees to review and evaluate the classified salary data.

### Physical Infrastructure

ASU currently has the physical infrastructure necessary to support operations. Because of the investment in infrastructure, the book value of buildings rose from \$46,118,818 to \$108,478,464. The average age of our buildings is 11.3 years, while the median average age of buildings for other A3 rated institutions is 15.2 years as cited in the most recent Moody's Rating Report.

There is in place a deferred maintenance plan based on a five year controlled maintenance plan that utilizes monies for deferred maintenance control. Deferred infrastructure issues such as deficiencies (boilers, sewer, electrical distribution systems) are planned for and application is made to the state controlling authority based on priorities identified in phase I and II of the Master Planning process.

Classroom utilization meets industry norms. Criterion 3.D.4. describes in more detail the infrastructure improvements made in academic areas. Currently, faculty and staff have sufficient office space. With lower than anticipated enrollment, housing is sufficient to meet demand. Currently, the University is at 80% of available occupancy. With current enrollment numbers, student affairs space is adequate in respect to the number of students. The University is exploring options for room scheduling software to better identify capacity.

In Fall 2016, ASU created an updated draft Facilities Master Plan. This plan identifies housing and auxiliary buildings as a priority for replacement or renovation. ASU's leadership is actively exploring public/private partnerships to create new housing without adding to the debt structure and to create new revenue streams to retire the existing debt. These partnership projects will assume maintenance costs and replace existing outdated housing. They mirror successful partnerships implemented by higher education institutions nationwide. Currently, the VPAA is working to update the Strategic Academic Master Plan, which will inform and update the Facilities Master Plan.

Adams State University has 1,193,787 gross square feet of building infrastructure. Of that, 670,253 square feet is purposed for academics and 523,534 for student housing and the Student Union building. The current replacement value for the campus infrastructure is valued at \$112,902,990.

In 2009, the administration created the Capital Renewal and Planning Committee to work through questions and concerns that arose after approval of the Capital fee (sample minutes and sample project). This committee united a group of people that represented the campus as a whole. Faculty, students, staff/administration and construction leaders met regularly to discuss capital construction and renovation projects. The committee recently disbanded because the number of renovation projects has decreased and most are small enough to go through campus construction processes without feedback from campus members. A Space Allocation Policy now guides decisions. ASU continues to submit larger requests to the state for consideration as they fund capital projects.

Facilities Services submitted a budget request to better help them maintain our campus building infrastructure. This request was funded in FY2017-2018, allocating additional resources to building maintenance.

### Technological Infrastructure

Computing Services provides a wide array of technology infrastructure services provided by four distinct teams: Support Services, Network/Telecommunications, Systems Administration, and Banner Applications Development. An overview of all technology services is available in the IT service catalog.

The Academic Instructional Technology Department (AITC) is the academic counterpart to Computing Services. AITC's primary role is administering the campus Blackboard learning management system and providing hands-on training and support for faculty and staff in using technology for teaching.

Computing Services and AITC base improvements on surveys and feedback tools to ensure effectiveness in providing support for teaching, learning and overall campus IT service. These include the Computing Services customer service survey, AITC's tech survey, and evaluating effectiveness of training offered to campus. Further, AITC assists with design of online courses, and also teaches TEED 589, a course in best practices in online teaching. Students in TEED 589 evaluate the course as well.

Since 2007, ASU has made significant upgrades to the campus technical infrastructure. These include major upgrades to our campus wireless network, an increase of campus bandwidth from 33 MB/per second in 2007 with a single provider, to 2,300 MB/per second in 2017 with two providers, both with redundant pathways to ensure highly available internet services. ASU utilizes Ellucian's Banner ERP for the student information system, including the functions of student services, financial aid, finance, human resources and housing. ASU utilizes a campus how-to wiki and work ticket system in addition to face-to-face, online and phone technical support to all students, faculty and staff. Staff from Computing Services, AITC, and Creative Relations meet weekly to collaborate and discuss technical maintenance, operations and debriefings.

Through our campus IT Governance model, ASU is able to solicit input and feedback from all campus constituents for use in the technology strategic planning and resource allocation decisions. The IT Governance function, as outlined in their charter, is the primary communication link between Computing Services and AITC to all campus constituents for identifying and prioritizing technology-related projects to improve the campus. Computing Services also provides a \$5,000 faculty technology

grant each year to encourage innovation and creativity with technology. In 2016-2017, IT Governance formalized the Technology Research and Implementation Proposal (TRIP) process to assist campus constituents with researching and identifying IT systems and processes that align with the campus strategic direction. Also in 2016-2017, Computing Services updated their IT Strategic Plan and instituted quarterly campus project portfolio updates from each of the four teams in Computing Services. ASU is currently implementing DegreeWorks, an advanced advising system that faculty, staff and students brought to the IT Governance group as a priority. The implementation of DegreeWorks helps achieve Academic Excellence (Goal 1) and Student Success (Goal 2) in ASU 2020.

Long-range technology planning is integrated into ASU's campus strategic planning processes. Through the President's Cabinet and membership on several other committees, the CIO works closely with campus constituents to ensure current technology infrastructure meets the needs of campus. Computing Services utilizes project management software to manage the various mid-term and long-term IT Strategic Initiatives. To more efficiently use institutional technology funds, ASU has instituted a five-year computer replacement plan, for both desktop computers and server replacements.

### **Sub-component 5. A. 2. Response and Evidence**

ASU has an independent Board of Trustees; therefore, no resources are allocated to a superordinate entity. Furthermore, ASU follows a detailed annual budget policy and process. All budget decisions are approved by ASU's Executive Council, which represents all areas of campus. Executive Council members serve as the liaisons for communication between the council and the area of campus they represent. The President meets individually with Trustees to review the proposed budget. The final budget, as well as tuition and fee rates, is approved by the Board of Trustees. Any changes to the final budget over \$50,000 go back to the Board of Trustees for approval. The Board established a Finance & Audit Committee to better oversee resource allocation.

ASU's budget process also allowed the University to develop a plan to address capital needs. A capital fee, approved by student referendum and implemented Fall 2008, provided much-needed updates to several of the university's buildings as evidenced by ASU's 2007 Facilities Master Plan, campus construction website and construction project archive. To minimize the impact on students, only the portion of the fee dedicated to debt service is currently being assessed to students.

During years in which funding fell short of budgeted expenditures, Executive Council met regularly to identify any cost-savings initiatives and necessary cuts to balance the budget. For example, in FY2013-2014, cuts were made across campus to operating non-recruiting travel budgets and senior administration reserve budgets. In FY2015-2016, the cuts made to the campus operating travel budgets were restored once funding recovered. The institution also intentionally holds unfilled positions open for two months to both review the need for the position, and accrue vacancy savings which are used to fill budget shortfalls.

Education and general revenues go to support the primary educational mission of the University. Student fees primarily fund elective resource allocations such as student government and student activities. These fees and their use must be approved through a formal resource allocation process overseen by the Associated Students and Faculty (AS&F) student government. Course-specific fees must also be formally approved.

### **Sub-component 5.A.3. Response and Evidence**

As described in Criterion 1, ASU's core purpose statement and related vision and values statements were recently revisited and revised in an extensive, inclusive campus-wide process. The process incorporated the input of all major stakeholders, including, but not limited to, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, Academic Council, Faculty Senate, Student Affairs, Athletics, the ASU Foundation, and Cabinet. The ASU Board of Trustees formally approved the University's updated core purpose, vision, and values statements on October 10, 2014.

As a federally designated HSI, Colorado's first four-year Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) serving a rural, diverse, and low-income population that has been historically underserved by higher education, these updated core purpose, vision, and values statements articulate the highest aims of the University and establish context for setting institutional priorities. For this reason, ASU's new core purpose/mission and vision statements are re-stated on every page of the working plan. They underpin and drive all organizational planning and resource allocation processes at all levels. Proposals for new academic programs, budget requests and Board of Trustees agenda items are all linked to Strategic Plan goals.

As an HSI, the University qualifies for multiple Title V programs and takes full advantage of these competitive grant opportunities. ASU has expanded education resources and services for Hispanic and low-income students via one Title III and five Title V grants in the past decade, in addition to providing professional development opportunities, many centered around equity and diversity issues. Additional federal grants include Upward Bound, Title IV TRIO (Student Support Services), and previous, completed Title V grants. These grants have been instrumental in beginning student success initiatives (Goal 2) which have subsequently become institutionalized.

ASU, per its creation by state statute, is a regional access institution dedicated to serving local students from the San Luis Valley and Upper Rio Grande. Per Board of Trustee Bylaws, the university "has a significant responsibility to provide access to teacher education in rural Colorado, to serve as a regional education provider, and to offer programs, when feasible, that preserve and promote the unique history and culture of the region." The expansion of online graduate programs over the past decade is a direct response to serving a rural population (Goal 1). Graduate programs in Teacher Education, the Master of Public Administration, and the robust Counselor Education program attest to the demand for programs accessible to rural students and were a direct response to stakeholder demand.

The University's dedication to its Hispanic-serving mission led to the formation of the Cultural Awareness and Student Achievement (CASA) Center. CASA is discussed in more detail in Criterion 3.

The College Assistance Migrant Program at Adams State University (CAMP@ASU) is a program federally funded by the US Department of Education, Office of Migrant Education, designed to provide academic, social, and financial support services to migrant and seasonal farm workers or their dependents, to assist them in the successful completion of their first year of college and persistence toward degree attainment. To further demonstrate its commitment to access and affordability (Goal 4) and community support (Goal 5), ASU partnered with the the SLV Migrant Education program in 2016, to house the program on the ASU campus. ASU became one of the only institutions nationwide to provide seamless support for migrant students from childhood through college. The program benefits from ASU resources and indirect costs from the program's grant funding ensure adequate resources to support the partnership.

The strong focus of ASU's core purpose, vision, and values of fostering inclusivity and opportunities for the region's diverse population is directly supported by the Community for Inclusive Excellence,

Leadership, & Opportunity (CIELO), a presidential advisory group that leads the campus in building intensive, intentional best practices in support of our core purpose. Institutional funds support CIELO and professional development programming with supplemental funding provided by Title V grants. Professional development training (Goal 3) is described in more detail in Criterion 3.

#### **Sub-component 5.A.4. Response and Evidence**

ASU has established policies and procedures for hiring appropriately qualified and experienced faculty and staff. This includes guidance on faculty search procedures and best practices.

According to the 2016-17 Common Data Set and 10 Year Staffing Pattern, ASU employs 419 people, including 235 full- and part-time instructors and 278 non-teaching staff. Of the teaching staff, 110 are full-time and 125 are part-time (adjunct) instructors. Faculty qualifications are governed by HLC Assumed Practice B.2., Adams State University Faculty Handbook and academic Policy 100-10-10. A full description can be found in Criterion 3.C.1 and 3.C.2.

Professional administrative (exempt) staff qualifications are established by ASU and include minimum educational and experiential qualifications for all exempt professional positions; these requirements are determined according to the responsibilities, knowledge, and skills required for the position and are documented in professional staff job description documents. All professional personnel policies and procedures are documented in the Professional Personnel Handbook. ASU has over 170 professional administrative staff.

Colorado state classified staff positions are governed by the Personnel Board Rules and Administrative Procedures of the State of Colorado Division of Human Resources (DHR) documented in the Classified Employee Handbook. Minimum qualifications for classified staff positions are determined by DHR's Department of Personnel and Administration (DPA). ASU employs 101 classified employees.

#### Evaluation

ASU engages in employee performance evaluation and professional development plan processes for all classifications of employees in order to facilitate the continuous improvement of employee skills.

All faculty members holding the rank of assistant professor or above are evaluated annually as described in 3.C.3.

Instructors may be assessed via student evaluations and classroom observation, but are not typically evaluated annually unless they are being considered for the rank of Assistant Professor. Policy 100-10-09 Temporary Faculty Hiring & Evaluation policy provides a description of additional methods used to evaluate temporary faculty. Individual departments may maintain additional discipline-specific guidelines for the evaluation of faculty. These guidelines are in full accordance with the policies and procedures of the Faculty Handbook.

All professional personnel undergo an annual performance review, guided by the development and assessment of an annual Professional Management Plan. The process, updated in 2015-2016 includes a self review, evaluation of job description and annual evaluation and planning document. ASU state classified employees are evaluated according to the state-mandated policies and procedures for the evaluation of classified system employees.

Classified employees are evaluated on their ability to follow prescribed job duties according to state guidelines. If they fail to do so, a Performance Improvement Plan is developed.

### Professional Development

The ASU 2020 Plan, Goal 3 states “Adams State University will provide educational and professional development opportunities for all faculty and staff.” ASU is committed to continuous improvement through ongoing, targeted professional development opportunities for both faculty and staff. A full description of professional development for faculty is described in section 3.C.4. Efforts to establish a more comprehensive institutional plan to support staff development is underway based on survey results by the CTIR. The Professional and Workplace Success (PAWS) program will offer all employees access to a variety of training, including leadership, regulatory compliance, and inclusive excellence.

The PAWS initiative will complement the formal and informal professional development opportunities that exist in units across campus. Most administrative offices send staff to conferences and trainings in their professional realm. The University President holds periodic campus-wide roundtables, typically one or two per semester, on significant issues impacting all employees. Additional roundtables have been held on a variety of topics including the Pathways project, shared governance, and the HLC criteria for accreditation.

### Background Checks

Adams State University performs background checks as a condition of employment for prospective employees and current employees seeking certain promotional opportunities. Offers of employment are contingent upon completion of an acceptable background check. Applicants are asked to provide personal data and sign a release form before the background check is conducted. Applicants who fail to provide the data and consent form will not be considered for employment or promotion. Background checks include review of criminal records and sex offender registry background. Credit and driving record background may apply to certain positions.

### Diversity

In keeping with its mission, the University places a high priority on developing and maintaining a pool of faculty and staff whose diversity reflects the population we serve. ASU is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. Applications are sought from all qualified persons regardless of race, color, sex, disability, and, as covered by law, veteran status. In addition, University policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sexual orientation including transgender status and gender expression, marital status, and parental status. Revisions to the exempt hiring process and the exempt evaluation process in 2015-17 incorporate methods to ensure employees recognize the importance of diversity to ASU, and in their interactions with colleagues and students.

## **Sub-criterion 5.A.5: Response and Evidence**

### Budgeting Process

The Budget Office, which reports to the Chief Financial Officer, is responsible for developing and reporting the University budget. The budgeting process is based on the principles of shared governance.

It is an active process with involvement from many levels of the organization.

ASU's budget process is defined in detail in the Budget Process policy. Prior to 2015, budget requests were submitted to the relevant Vice President who prioritized them and submitted them for review by Executive Council. These were reviewed according to agreed-upon priorities and funding recommendations were made to the President, who had final approval. An updated policy with procedures was adopted in Fall 2015, described in a campus-wide email. New budget requests, which must be aligned to Strategic Plan goals, are prioritized by the Executive Council, with unfunded requests assigned a timeline for future review and consideration. Supplemental budget requests are submitted to Executive Council and undergo a rigorous prioritization process as well as a recommendation from the Council to the President. Every spring, the CFO presents the proposed budget to the Board of Trustees for adoption in the next fiscal year.

Additionally, the Board of Trustees created a Finance and Audit Committee, which reviews the financials on a regular basis. This committee works closely with administration to identify potential revenue-generating opportunities, as well as possible cost-cutting measures. The Trustees consider the financial health of the institution as one of their greatest priorities (example: December 2016 Board of Trustees minutes). The Board of Trustees provides the final approval for the annual budget (example: board action item to approve the annual budget).

The staff in the Budget Office provide budget training, and work with departmental budget managers on general budget administration. Departmental budget managers receive their upcoming budget sheet prior to the start of the next fiscal year. Requests beyond continuation budgets must follow the budget request process. Departmental budget managers have the responsibility of allocating and monitoring their annual budget resources effectively and in alignment with University goals.

### Monitoring Expense

Departmental budget managers have access to the University's Banner system for monitoring and allocating expenses appropriately, according to the University's accounting code system. This includes the ability to transfer between budgets and to correct any revenues or expenses that were incorrectly recorded.

At the University level, the Budget Office monitors overall institutional expenses and proactively works with budget managers on budgetary issues. These include such issues as non-sufficient funds or incorrectly allocated expenses. Additionally, all salary and benefits expenses are monitored and verified by the Budget Office and Executive Council to ensure effective management and allocation of institutional budget.

At an institutional level the Board of Trustees is committed to monitoring expense. The Financial Plan of Action scheduled for the August 2017 board meeting is a first step to creating an intentional plan to ensure the institution is not outspending its resources. This plan will draw on the recommendations of the Huron report referenced above.

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## **5.B - Core Component 5.B**

The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

### **Argument**

#### **Sub-component 5.B.1. Response and Evidence**

ASU Trustees and administration are committed to shared governance. This section reviews the support mechanisms for sharing information and perspectives to enhance communication and give prompt attention to University matters.

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statute 23-51-102, the ASU Board of Trustees includes nine voting members serving staggered four-year terms who are appointed by Colorado's Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Board members are term-limited after two consecutive terms. New board members are

invited to an orientation that includes a briefing by legal counsel on the Open Meetings Act and a review of financial, organizational structure, and shared governance policies. They are also informed of the statutory mission of the University and their fiduciary role. Legal counsel is present at every Trustee meeting and provides guidance to the Board on each decision and ensures compliance. Because the Trustees are appointed by the Governor, they are accountable to the Governor's office for their conduct, in and outside of meetings. The Board attends regular meetings held for Trustees and Presidents conducted by the Colorado Commission of Higher Education that includes training on the roles and responsibilities of the Trustees. The Board agreed at their 2017 retreat to forego a retreat in 2018 and attend the Association of Governing Boards conference instead.

ASU faculty and the student body each elect one non-voting member to serve two- and one-year terms on the board, respectively. The ASU Board of Trustees meets regularly, as shown in the FY15-16 Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule and interacts with stakeholders to solicit input prior to making decisions. All board meetings are announced in advance and open to the public. (See Board Agenda and Minutes).

The ASU University Manual (Section 3: Shared Governance) describes the roles of various entities in the Shared Governance process. The Board reaffirms its policy of delegating to the President the authority and responsibility for administering the University.

### **Sub-component 5.B.2. Response and Evidence**

As the Chief Executive Officer, the President establishes a working accord among trustees, faculty, staff, administration, and students, eliciting optimal contributions from each individual and group to achieve success in the educational process. The quality and intensity of the consultation process is central to shared decision-making, which varies according to the situation. In some instances, an initial exploration or recommendation is made by the President with consideration by the faculty or staff at a later stage; in others, recommendations originate with the faculty or staff, subject to the endorsement of the President and the Board; and in still others, student leaders are involved.

During the past decade, three Shared Governance surveys have been conducted, two by faculty senate (2009, 2015) and one as part of an ACE Fellows project (2013). All surveys showed a fair amount of dissatisfaction with the shared governance practices at ASU. Faculty Senate surveys focused on faculty concerns only, advocating for greater faculty voice in decision-making. Specific recommendations included more voice in the selection and evaluation of academic administrators. Since those recommendations were made, selection committees for the Vice President for Academic Affairs search and subsequent search for an interim VPAA have been made up of faculty representatives. Open forums and surveys have been used to provide an opportunity for feedback to all campus constituents. Similar processes were used for the 2015 Presidential search and two faculty representatives were included on the search committee. Comments in all surveys highlighted the need for improved communication. Recognizing that faculty and staff had differing visions for shared governance, efforts in 2016-17 focused on shared governance. A consultant, Sheila Trice Bell was hired to review shared governance practices and make recommendations. Ms. Bell met with each of the representative governing groups (Faculty Senate, Classified Council (CEC), Professional Administrative Staff Council (PASC), Associated Students & Faculty (AS&F), and Executive Council). She also presented and led a roundtable discussion at the Fall 2016 all-campus meeting. Based on those meetings, Ms. Bell offered two primary recommendations: 1) prepare a decision flowchart, and 2) reorganize the President's Cabinet. Both of these measures have been completed. The flowchart for policy approval parallels the broader decision-making process. Cabinet was reorganized to remove Executive Council members and

include representatives from various constituent groups based on employment class and special interest groups such as CIELO and the Latinx Caucus, rather than reporting structure. The new structure provides two avenues for concerns to reach the President, either through the reporting structure via Executive Council, or based on employment status or special interest via Cabinet. Governance groups will be charged to conduct additional surveys once the new structure has been in place for a full academic year.

Executive Council advises the University President on matters of broad institutional significance, with these responsibilities:

- Implement the strategic plan;
- Develop an annual budget to support the strategic plan;
- Advise on day-to-day operational and personnel matters.

Members are responsible for serving as a communication link between Executive Council and University constituents. This communication, which must be reciprocal, involves anticipating issues, seeking perspective and advice, and sharing information before and after decisions are made. (See sample minutes and archived summaries.)

The President's Cabinet is the primary planning body of the University, responsible for setting the strategic vision and writing the strategic plan. It votes on policies and procedures that affect the institution and advises the President. It also reviews and recommends approval of other major planning and policy documents to the University President. (See sample minutes and archived summaries.) Cabinet has cross-campus representation and all members vote. They are urged to engage their constituents in all facets of decision making. Changes to Cabinet were implemented in January 2017 and added representatives from the following groups to the Cabinet: Latinx Caucus, Contingent Faculty & Staff Council (CFIC), Strategic Planning, Technology/IT Governance, Title V, and Student Athletic Advisory Council (SAAC).

The CIELO President's Advisory Group is a subgroup of CIELO (Center for Inclusive Excellence, Leadership and Opportunity community). This group meets regularly with the President to discuss matters of equity and inclusive excellence and has a seat on Cabinet.

The Associated Student & Faculty Senate (AS&F) is the collective voice for the ASU student and faculty body at the campus, local, and state levels. AS&F holds open forums to initiate innovation, creativity, and change to protect education and rights of students and faculty. As student and faculty advocates, they promote student involvement, positive student interests, and community service. AS&F has representation on the Cabinet and Faculty Senate. The AS&F Vice President for External Affairs also serves as the Student Trustee. (See AS&F Constitution, sample minutes and archived minutes.)

The Classified Employees Council (CEC) is committed to improving quality service and communication throughout campus, representing classified staff and increasing awareness of their concerns. A representative of this council sits on the Cabinet. (See archived minutes.)

The Professional Administrative Staff Council (PASC) represents all non-faculty personnel who are exempt from the Colorado State Personnel System. The Council supports the vision, mission, values and goals of ASU and participates in developing policies that affect the professional administrative staff. It is an advisory or recommending body for the University President, President's Executive Team members, Cabinet and other groups or organizations whose policies and/or procedures affect the

professional administrative staff. PASC members are elected by their peers from within 5 different administrative areas on campus. Representatives from PASC participate on the Cabinet. (See PASC Constitution, sample minutes and archived minutes.)

Faculty Senate and Academic Council (described below) also participate on the President's Cabinet to discuss faculty concerns. In addition to Cabinet, the President meets with the larger constituent groups of faculty senate, PASC and CEC each semester.

### **Sub-component 5.B.3. Response and Evidence**

Academic Council includes all academic department chairs and representatives from Extended Studies, the Library and AITC. It is responsible for overseeing academic policies, approving the academic calendar, and advising the VPAA on how institutional decisions may affect academic departments and students. As the primary faculty governing bodies, Academic Council and Faculty Senate support faculty and staff responsibilities and provide leadership and support for assessment activities. The Academic Council, working with Faculty Senate, the General Education Curriculum Committee, the Graduate Council, the Curriculum Review Committee, the Student Learning Assessment Committee, and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, is responsible for the coordination, review, and follow-up of assessment activities in each academic unit. (See Meeting Schedule, sample minutes and archived minutes.)

The Graduate Council is facilitated by the Assistant Vice President for Graduate Studies (AVPGS) and includes Graduate Program Directors or their designees. Graduate Council determines institution-wide graduate policies and evaluates the five-year graduate program reviews. It meets with program representatives and makes recommendations to the AVPGS. In addition, Graduate Council reviews and approves all curricular changes to graduate programs, including student-learning outcomes. (See Meeting Schedule, sample minutes and archived minutes.)

The Faculty Senate represents the faculty and serves an integral and vital role in shared governance at ASU. Each academic department elects a senator from their tenured ranks. The faculty's primary rights and responsibilities are the development of curriculum content, the determination of methods of instruction, the conducting of academic research, and the assessment of faculty status. The Senate ensures effective support of faculty rights and responsibilities through shared governance by the Board of Trustees, the administration, and other campus entities or constituents. (See sample minutes and archived minutes.) A student representative from AS&F serves on this body.

The Curriculum Review Committee reports to the Faculty Senate and reviews, approves, and critiques academic program reviews, changes, or additions to all courses and/or curriculum; annual student assessment and accountability; and addresses other curriculum issues. The committee helps ensure the integrity of the academic curriculum in the spirit of shared governance. (See sample minutes and archived minutes.)

The General Education Curriculum Committee reports to Faculty Senate. It reviews and critiques annual student assessment and accountability data for general education, and reviews and approves revisions to the general education curriculum and ensures the curriculum is aligned to GT Pathways. (See sample minutes and archived minutes.)

The Student Learning Assessment Committee (SLAC) also reports to Faculty Senate. The SLAC reviews annual assessment reports for academic programs and makes recommendations for improved

assessment processes. Its role is described in more detail in Criterion 4.

The Faculty Technology Advisory Committee reports to the Faculty Senate and serves as a liaison to communicate the instructional technology needs of faculty to the University administration and help determine instructional technology priorities for campus-wide planning purposes. The committee includes faculty members representing various disciplines. (See sample minutes and archived minutes.)

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## **5.C - Core Component 5.C**

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

### **Argument**

#### **Sub-component 5.C.1. - Response and Evidence**

ASU engages in systematic and integrated planning that is guided by its 2020 Strategic Plan, developed in 2015, and by strategic initiatives approved by the Board of Trustees in December 2015. The complete plan was approved on May 13, 2016. The plan derived from work of committees representing the University's various stakeholders. Built around five broad institutional goals, the plan articulates a vision for ASU in the year 2020. The budget planning policy and process, described in the evidence items for Sub-component 5.A.5, requires all budget requests to be linked to the Strategic Plan.

With the completion of the ASU 2020 Strategic Plan, the next progression of strategic planning efforts are underway. The most recent Academic Master Plan was initially adopted in 2006 and revised in 2009 with the intention of a subsequent revision in five years. With some turnover in leadership in the VPAA

position, it was decided to delay the development of a new Academic Master plan until Fall 2016. The existing plan remained the overall planning document for academic development in the interim. While initial conversations began Fall 2016, academic department chairs focused their efforts on a series of planning sessions in Spring 2017. These sessions identified the strategic priorities over the next three years. A comprehensive Academic Master Plan building on these priorities will be part of the next Strategic Plan beginning in 2019. The Academic Master Plan will help guide the Strategic Enrollment Plan, Technology Strategic Plan, and Facilities Master Plan.

As discussed in 5.A.1, resources are allocated in alignment with ASU's core purpose and strategic plan through the budget request and development process. The addition of a professional development programming budget is just one example of aligning resources with the strategic plan and Goal 3 of ASU 2020.

### **Sub-component 5.C.2: Response and Evidence**

In 2014, ASU conducted an in-depth assessment of student success that included an all-campus Town Hall meeting, and nomination of representatives to a year-long committee to address concerns. Subcommittees were formed to audit specific areas for improvement. A retreat established the priorities that became the framework used by the recruitment and retention committee to develop the current Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan. The SEM Plan provides context for recruiting and retaining students, and links initiatives to ASU 2020. The committee meets monthly to review strategies. The June 2017 update to the Board of Trustees shows improved retention, graduation rates and number of degrees awarded, although the percent of new enrollments has decreased. The committee will use this data to develop recruitment/retention strategies.

As described in Criteria 3 and 4, ASU conducts five-year program reviews of all programs. These reviews identify academic program needs which are submitted through the budget review process. For example, requests for additional faculty positions have been added to the budget timeline. While resources are tight, an additional faculty line identified in a 2004 program review was funded in 2017 through reallocation. Additionally, the 2016 work of the Graduate Incentive Group reviewed operations, admission, and assessment procedures for graduate programs and made recommendations to improve graduate program delivery. This additional review of graduate education resulted in the hiring of an Assistant Vice President for Graduate Studies, and the re-establishment of an Office of Graduate Studies. This office will provide dedicated staff to oversee graduate program development and assessment.

Since 2015, when the Chronicle of Higher Education articles first highlighted issues with distance education at ASU, the institution has worked to improve program quality. To ensure appropriate faculty-student interaction and achievement of student learning outcomes, chairs evaluate all online courses mid-semester. Extended Studies also implemented an instructor self-review to better evaluate instructor performance and ability to meet learning outcomes. Most instructors have responded positively to suggestions. The update submitted to HLC in May 2017 describes the changes made to directly address HLC concerns, including instructor responses to self-evaluation, and course reviews by Extended Studies and chairs. The update contains documentation of all reviews completed for distance courses. Ongoing changes in distance and correspondence delivery are a direct result of evaluating operations and making changes to guarantee improvements in student learning and assessment. Staff recommendations led to the changes to the print-based correspondence program.

### **Sub-component 5.C.3. Response and Evidence**

As the primary planning body of the University, the President's Cabinet meets monthly to create and carry out the strategic vision. As outlined in section 5.C.1, the ASU 2020 Strategic plan is complete. Goals 1, 2, and 4 directly align with the goals in the 2012 CCHE Master Plan. The Academic Master Plan, the Facilities Master Plan, the SEM plan and the Information Technology Plan align with ASU 2020. While the Strategic Plan was developed with involvement from the entire campus, other plans were developed by a more targeted group of stakeholders. For example, the Academic Master Plan was developed by academic department chairs with input from their faculty members. The IT Strategic Plan involved input from the Administrative Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC), the Faculty Technology Advisory Committee (FTAC), and the Student Technology Advisory Committee (STAC), as well as staff from Computing Services and the IT Governance Committee.

The Academic Master Plan guides academic programming and reflects the goals and priorities of the State of Colorado, the ASU Board of Trustees, the Office of Academic Affairs, and University faculty. As mentioned above, the 2009 Academic Master Plan remained in place until the completion of the newest Academic Master Plan in 2017. As seen in the summary table aligning the 2009 Academic Master Plan goals with action, many of the strategies to achieve the goals have been accomplished. The foci identified for the new Academic Master Plan were developed as a result of departmental discussion and collaboration among department chairs. These foci provide detailed ways in which ASU 2020 Goal 1 Academic Excellence and Goal 2 Student Success can be supported and achieved.

As described in 5.B.2., ASU has conducted several surveys on shared governance to ensure continued evaluation of its planning processes which include input from a variety of perspectives. The institution values shared governance and continually assesses its ability to include perspectives of internal and external groups. Goals and actions in the current Strategic plan drew heavily on feedback from an all-campus meeting in Fall 2015.

#### **Sub-component 5.C.4. Response and Evidence**

ASU's institutional budget policy revolves around the State of Colorado's budget cycle. Because ASU is very dependent on state support, the economy, legislation, and other factors are closely monitored. The budget process cannot be finalized until state support is determined. Planning incorporates assumptions about the state budget that are provided by the Colorado Commission for Higher Education. For example, the State of Colorado underwent several budget reductions in 2008-2012. ASU made cuts in anticipation of these reductions, enabling growth in the fund balance and establishment of a cash reserve. This reserve was used to offset some cuts made by the State of Colorado for three years during economic recovery, before returning to a balanced budget.

While the strategic plan drives budget planning, mandated cost increases play a major role in resource distribution. Dwindling state support, which drives increases in both tuition and fees, compound the issue caused by mandated cost increases, as it jeopardizes access and affordability, a key component of ASU's mission. The legislative branch appropriations committee (Joint Budget Committee or JBC) and the Governor's budget office (Office of State Planning and Budget or OSPB) often request information describing prioritized funding expenditures. In fiscal years FY11-12 through FY15-16, the JBC required institutions to submit a Financial Accountability Plan (FAP) to justify large tuition increases to compensate for declining state support. These were updated on an annual basis. For example, see FY14 FAP Amendment. For FY15-16 the OSPB requested priorities based on every 1% of revenue. The JBC requested a scenario in which a 5% cut in state support is combined with a 6% tuition increase. These documents illustrate how much mandated costs limit ASU's resource allocation flexibility. Annual

hearings provide ASU with an opportunity to advocate for state support.

To minimize any impact of enrollment fluctuations, the ASU budget office requires all budgets that are primarily funded by student enrollments to hold a 5% reserve that is only released after revenue projections have been reached. Fund balances are monitored closely, requiring both President and COO approval to expend up to \$50,000, and over \$50,000 also require BOT approval. See example BOT request from FY09-10.

The Huron Report, commissioned by the State of Colorado, identifies many of the factors ASU needs to consider in regards to capacity, enrollment trends, revenue sources, state support and the economy. ASU has used many of the considerations in the report as it makes planning decisions. For example, the report notes that above market tuition increases are not likely to result in increased revenue. ASU decided to maintain a flat tuition rate in 2017-18 as a result. The report also notes extensive capital expenditures and debt service fees. ASU restructured several bonds to reduce the debt service budget impact. Board authorization to develop a financial plan of action precipitates a concrete plan based on the recommendations in the Huron report. Academic Council has included program prioritization on its 2017-18 agenda.

#### **Sub-component 5.C.5. Response and Evidence**

In recognition of the overall importance of the role that technology plays in supporting the mission, the University maintains an Institutional Technology (IT) governance structure that scans the horizon for emerging trends in instructional and administrative support that are both cost-effective and high value. Key strategic IT investments are determined through IT governance. A three-committee structure represents appropriate constituent groups: the Faculty Technology Advisory Committee (FTAC) identifies and prioritizes needs in academic areas; the Administrative Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC) does the same for the administrative support areas on campus and the Student Technology Advisory Committee (STAC) represents ASU students in the IT governance process. Collectively, they craft recommendations and policy, which are in turn evaluated by the overarching IT Governance Board, which relays final recommendations to the President's Cabinet.

ASU's SEM Plan for 2016-2020 includes goals of 2% annual growth in recruitment, retention and four-year graduation rates. These goals are set to help address Colorado's attainment gap, increased costs for students, increased workforce needs for post-secondary education and a "leaking education pipeline" in which fewer than 25% of Colorado's 9th graders earn a college degree. As an HSI focused on Hispanic students, we can support education attainment of Colorado's fastest growing segment of the population, one which is least likely to earn a degree. The share of college costs paid by students has doubled in 10 years. Offering guaranteed tuition and our generous tuition window of 12 to 20 credits helps to keep a college education affordable. Holding tuition flat in 2017-18 is also an effort to keep college affordable for the economically disadvantaged and underserved students served by ASU.

Graduate programs were identified for potential enrollment growth through a comprehensive research project completed in 2011. That research noted many opportunities to expand on ASU's academic qualities in recruiting students. It also noted that there was considerable capacity to grow online graduate programs. The resulting expansion of graduate offerings achieved an increase in graduate degrees programs from four in 2007 to eleven in 2016, including one PhD program.

ASU plans for increased globalization by ensuring that its programs are accessible to students around the globe. Online graduate programs attract students from across the country. ASU has facilitated students' ability to enroll in online programs by participating in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). Additionally, ASU facilitates the enrollment of international students in distance and on-campus programs in accordance with its International Admission policy.

On-campus students are encouraged to increase their global perspectives by enrolling in courses which involve study abroad. These opportunities are described in 3.B.4. Additionally, the Pathways project promotes the inclusion of Diversity and Global Learning throughout the curriculum.

ASU broadens the global and cultural horizons of students via hands-on, experiential trips to foreign locations. Examples in the last ten years include a sociological view of Cuba, Model United Nations competition at conferences in Europe and Venezuela, a psychology group trip to Turkey and Greece, and immersive science trips to Costa Rica, Australia, Peru and Africa. Participating students and faculty are encouraged to share their experiences with other students and the campus at large. Further, the ASU Extended Studies department offers courses to students in 37 countries.

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## **5.D - Core Component 5.D**

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

### **Argument**

#### **5.D.1. Response & Evidence**

ASU created the ASU 2020 strategic plan which gives voice to issues raised by a broad cross-section of campus constituents. The Trustees were active in approving the institutional Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan goals. The institution measures its effectiveness by reviewing the Strategic Plan regularly and providing quarterly updates to the Trustees and cabinet that indicate the status of each initiative. Status updates are also posted on the web site.

Most ASU areas of operations develop their own strategic plans to identify goals and priorities aligned to the institutional strategic plan. These include: Student Affairs Strategic Plan and update, Institutional Technology, Facilities Master Plan Phase I, and II, Strategic Enrollment Management Plan and update, Extended Studies Strategic Plan, and the Quality Initiative Proposal. ASU follows and revises the Performance Contract and the Fee-for-Service Contract as required by the State of Colorado. While many items in the 2009 Academic Master Plan have been completed, formal documentation is absent as a result of changes in leadership at both the VPAA and Presidential level. A summary table provides examples of how strategies were accomplished. The Academic Master Plan is in the process of being updated.

ASU's data collection between 2008 and 2016 was inconsistent and focused solely on mandated state and federal reporting. With a turnover of staff in 2016, and a change in office from Institutional Reporting to Institutional Effectiveness, more emphasis has been placed in the collection and accuracy of data. The development of a successful learning rate that includes the sum of three indicators - graduation, transfer out, and continued enrollment - shows that many ASU students are still very invested in their education whether here or at another institution. Overall persistence rates have been creeping up over the past 5 years. Rates by program vary dramatically; small sample sizes sometimes result in a single student representing a high percentage. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness serves as a clearinghouse for data collection and provides this data to decision makers when requested. It is now analyzing student outcomes, conducting peer analysis and surveys, and providing dashboards for use in decision-making. Both NSSE surveys and peer analysis show that ASU performs similarly to peers institutions. Links in these evidence items lead to current data.

ASU has sporadically discussed NSSE results which show that ASU meets or exceeds peer performance on engagement indicators. A FSSE/NSSE analysis of 2016 data does indicate that faculty and students do not agree on all measures. ASU acknowledges that a more intentional effort to discuss results is necessary. To address weaknesses in systematic assessment across the institution, ASU has committed to hiring an Assessment Director to oversee assessment of performance across the institution. This individual will work closely with the Vice Presidents and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to develop a comprehensive approach to collecting, disseminating and discussing such results.

Summaries from key operational areas also identify how operations are assessed and changes are implemented as a result.

### **5.D.2. Response & Evidence**

During the past period, Adams State has actively learned from its operational experiences and used that to improve institutional effectiveness, capabilities and sustainability.

Since the last review, ASU has undergone several changes in organizational structure in efforts to improve its operations. At the time of the last review, and the 2009 follow-up visit, the adoption of a

Provost model was fairly new. In 2010, President Svaldi sent an email announcement to the campus notifying them of changes in the organizational structure and in position titles aimed at maximizing the strengths of the senior leaders on campus. This re-organization included a move away from the Provost model and the adoption of a Vice President model. This structure remained in place with some changes in titles over the next six years. Between 2008 and 2011, the VP for Institutional Advancement and the Assistant VP for Graduate Studies positions were eliminated to address budget challenges associated with declining state support. In 2013, an Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs position was added to address the increased workload in that area. In 2015, just prior to President Svaldi's retirement, the Senior Vice President for Enrollment Management position was eliminated when the individual holding that position opted to return to faculty.

With the arrival of President McClure in 2015, some restructuring of the upper administration occurred. The VP for Student Affairs absorbed oversight of Enrollment Management and the unit was renamed 'Student Services.' The Assistant VP for Graduate Studies position was reinstated in 2017, following the recommendations of a campus committee. Government Affairs were assumed by the President, and the VP for Administration and Finance was designated COO, while the Assistant VP for Finance & Administration assumed the CFO duties. Organizational charts from 2015, 2016, and 2017 show changes in titles and responsibilities over this time. Most recent changes were undertaken to streamline services and increase vacancy savings.

ASU has worked to improve its shared governance and communication model to ensure all stakeholders are represented in various levels of decision making. As described in 5.B.2., after multiple surveys, and the recommendations of an external consultant, the President's Cabinet was revised to include a broader spectrum of campus constituents and reduce redundancy with the Executive Council. The approval process for policies also reflects this change. Noting criticism of communication as an ongoing concern reflected in shared governance surveys, the administration has made an effort over the past eight years to increase opportunities for faculty, staff and students to participate in the decision-making process through campus meetings and roundtables.

This effort to include campus constituents is evident in the Retention Committee '13, formed to address declining student retention particularly among upper-class students. The committee, which includes representatives from all campus departments, analyzed evidence and created six subcommittees that made recommendations for improvement. These recommendations were prioritized in a day-long retreat and funded based on the priorities which were used to develop the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan.

The Quality Initiative Proposal is another example of using assessment evidence to inform improvements in institutional effectiveness. As an outcome of the evidence gathered surrounding low retention and persistence to graduation, the administration created a plan to add degree maps, implement invasive advising, institutionalize supplemental instruction, and an initiative encouraging students to "Finish in Four" years. Results show an increase in declared majors, decrease in completion times for both associate and bachelor's degrees, quicker achievement of 24 credit hours, and increased graduation rates for declared majors.

In order meet our mission and to address the rising costs for students and maintain affordability for the underserved students, ASU has promoted our full-time tuition window (flat tuition rate from 12-20 credits) and promotion of "Finish in Four." These efforts led to an 11% increase in average credits taken per semester by undergraduates from 2010 to 2015. On average, students are now taking 13.6 credits per semester. The addition of Guaranteed Tuition and keeping tuition rates flat in 2017-18 also

demonstrate that the institution has learned from its operational experience to improve institutional effectiveness.

The decision to establish a part-time faculty fellow responsible for Academic Assessment and another for Faculty Development was a direct result of needs identified through the last accreditation visit. As shown in HLC Criterion 4, program creation has utilized data (NOEL\_LEVITZ) to expand programs based on enrollment interest and persistence. In particular, ASU has grown graduate and online programs significantly. ASU has continued to assess new programs to determine their viability. As a result, relationships with the Public Education Business Coalition (PEBC) and Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History to provide access to an MA degree were assessed. Relationships with both entities were dissolved when it became apparent that ASU was losing money and these entities did not respect ASU's efforts to ensure rigor and control the curriculum.

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## **5.S - Criterion 5 – Summary**

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

### **Summary**

ASU has experienced a lot of change over the past decade. The economic downturn coincided with enrollment increases and declining state support. ASU implemented a capital fee to provide resources for much needed campus improvements. While these provided improved spaces for teaching and learning and campus life, declining state forced ASU to increase tuition rates. As shown in the Huron report increased tuition rates have jeopardized the access mission of the university. ASU has taken steps to counteract the negative impact on students by enacting Guaranteed tuition in 2016 and holding tuition flat in 2017.

ASU has maintained a staffing patterns, with a slightly higher number of total faculty and staff coming from grant funded positions. The evaluation process has been improved and efforts have been made to expand professional development opportunities for all employees.

The Board of Trustees provides oversight of the financial and academic policies. The development of a University Manual and an Audit and Finance Committee are the primary actions taken to strengthen oversight.

The President has worked to meet regularly with the various employees groups and has reconfigured the Shared Governance structure to provide multiple avenues for participation in the governance of the university.

ASU 2020 was completed within the first year of the President's arrival and efforts have been made to

develop and implement additional strategic plans that align with ASU 2020. Plans for Strategic Enrollment Management, Facilities Master Plan and an Academic Master Plan are complete or in progress.

ASU has undergone several restructuring efforts over the past decade in order to streamline operations.

### **Sources**

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