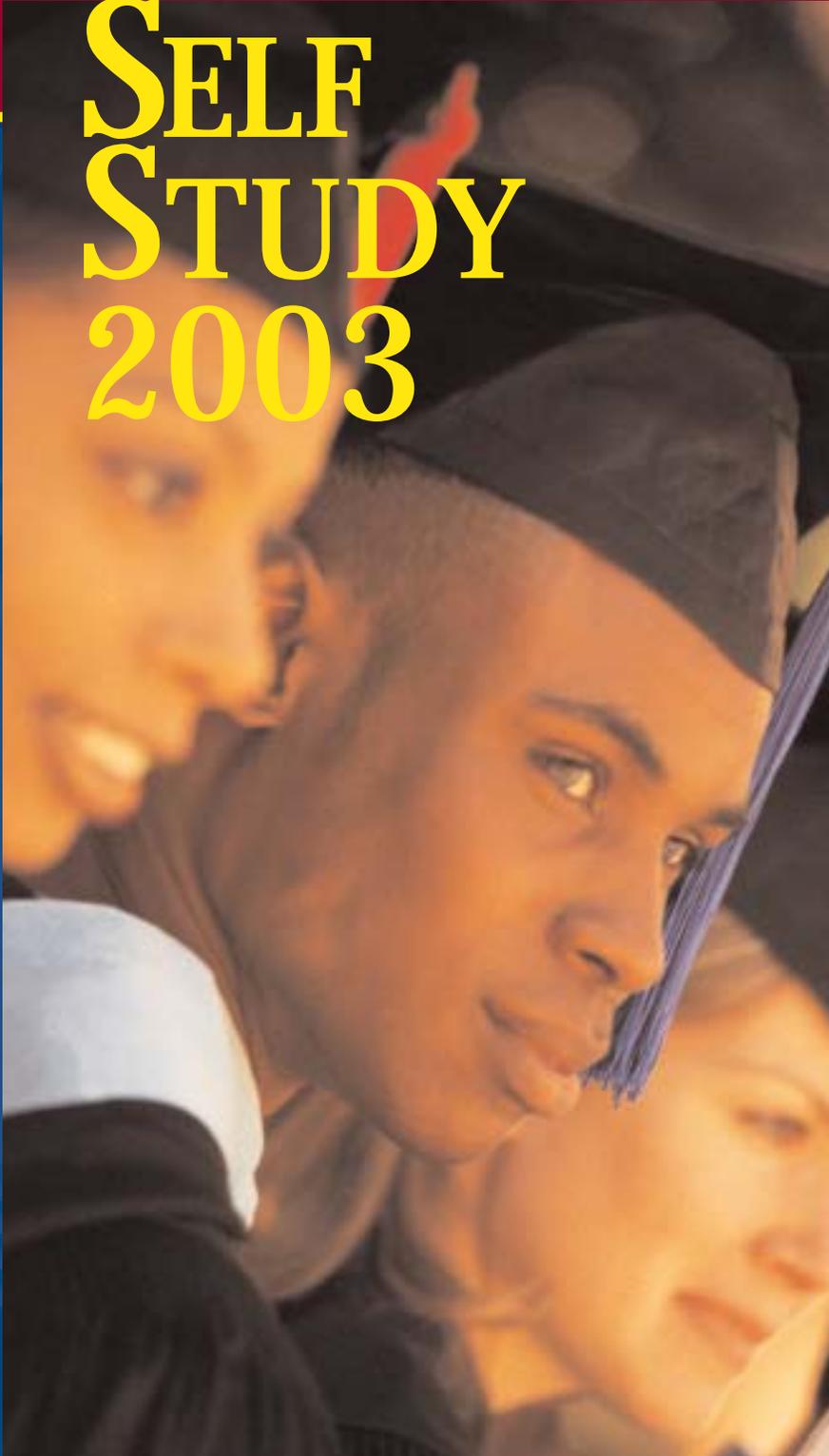




COMMUNITY COLLEGE
of AURORA

SELF STUDY 2003



The Higher Learning Commission
of the
North Central Association

Organizational Self Study

For continued accreditation
with the The Higher Learning Commission of the
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools



COMMUNITY COLLEGE
of **AURORA**

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Profile of the College

The Community College of Aurora (CCA/College) is an open-door, two-year institution that offers associate degrees and certificates for students whose goals include transferring to a four-year institution, preparing for entry or advancement in the workplace, or meeting individual career or educational objectives. *(The College Catalog is Resource Room document 1.1)*

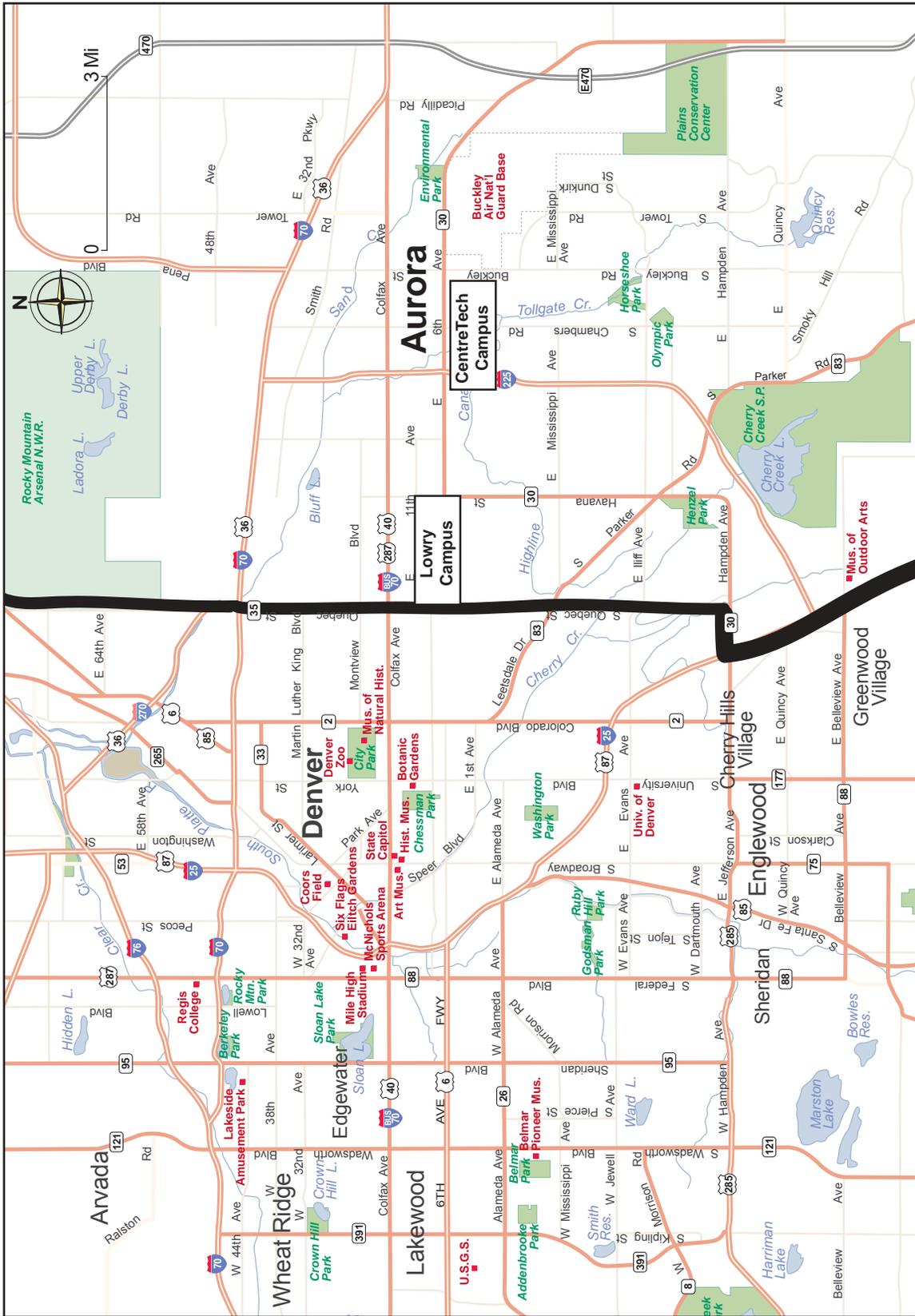
The College is one of 13 community colleges within the Colorado Community College System (CCCS), which is governed by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE or State Board). The governor appoints the State Board's nine voting members with the approval of the state Senate. The State Board appoints the college presidents, who report to the CCCS president. *(Resource Room documents 1.2 and 1.3)*

Located in Aurora, Colorado's third-largest city, CCA serves more than 425,000 residents and more than 10,000 businesses in a 350-square-mile service area that spans portions of three counties (Arapahoe, Adams and Denver). The service area includes the city of Aurora and eastern portions of the city of Denver. *(Resource Room document 1.4)*

Within CCA's service area are large residential and commercial areas, as well as Buckley Air Force Base and Denver International Airport. Three major urban redevelopment projects are within or border the service area: the former Lowry Air Force Base, the former Stapleton Airport, and Fitzsimons Army Medical Center's conversion into the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center and Bioscience Park. This complex mixture provides the College with challenges and opportunities for reaching new populations and for creating new programs. *(Resource Room document 1.5)*



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CCA Service Area Map

CCA offers a variety of programs to serve the Aurora-Denver area. The College's Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Science (AS) degrees prepare students for junior standing in four-year institutions, while the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree prepares students for career entry in 11 different areas. The College also offers an Associate of General Studies (AGS) degree, 20 certificate programs, and a joint AAS degree with four area vocational schools. *(The College Catalog is Resource Room document 1.1)*

CCA seeks to meet students' needs through a varied schedule that includes traditional day and evening courses, online courses, hybrid courses that combine on-site and off-site instruction, and a weekend college. *(The Schedule of Classes is Resource Room document 1.6)*

The College offers courses and a full range of services at two main campuses. The CentreTech campus is in north central Aurora, and the Lowry campus is 4 miles to the west of CentreTech, in the Lowry Redevelopment Area on the Aurora-Denver border. The College also offers courses at the Aurora Small Business Development Center in north Aurora and at Grandview High School in south Aurora. *(See map in Schedule of Classes, Resource Room document 1.6)*

The College serves an increasingly diverse student body. In the spring semester of 2002, CCA enrolled 5,034 students, 73 percent of them part-time and more than 37 percent ethnic minorities. The average student age was just under 30, and nearly 19 percent were older than 39. *(Resource Room document 1.7)*

Profile of the Community

Over the last several decades, Aurora has grown from a modest Denver suburb into a full-fledged city with its own identity. Nearly all of Aurora's growth has come since World War II. In 1950, the city's population was 11,000. By 1980, the population had grown to nearly 160,000, and in 2001, the city government estimated the population had reached 285,000. *(Resource Room document 1.8)*

For CCA, the important story of Aurora's growth in recent years is not only its expanding population, but also its increasing diversity. Between 1990 and 2000, the majority of the city's 54,000 new residents were Hispanic, African American or Asian. In fact, during this decade Aurora's Hispanic population nearly tripled in size, increasing from 7 percent to 20 percent of the city's population. Overall, by the year 2000, minority groups comprised more than 31 percent of the city's population. Reflecting this diversity, the 2000 census found that 25 percent of the city's population spoke a language other than English at home. The city's increasing diversity presents the College with the opportunities and challenges discussed throughout this self-study report. *(Resource Room document 1.8)*

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History of the College

The Colorado Legislature established the statewide system of community colleges and a board to govern them in 1967. One of the colleges, the Community College of Denver (CCD), opened in 1968. In 1972, CCD established the Aurora Outreach Program, which became the Aurora Education Center (AEC). The AEC operated under its own executive director in a building provided by the city of Aurora.

In 1982, the governing board for community colleges and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education approved a master plan for the Community College of Aurora. At the same time, the city set aside 21 acres for the College near a proposed new city center. In 1983, the state Legislature passed the bill permitting the conversion of the AEC to an independent college. (*Senate Bill 170 is Resource Room document 1.9*)

CCA opened at a time when community college growth had leveled off and costs were rising. A thrift-minded Legislature required that the College find economies of operation; consequently, CCA made minimal initial investments and avoided duplication of programs, services and facilities. Some features of the College to result from this mandate are as follows:

- use of the Aurora Public Library (APL) as CCA's main library;
- a high ratio of adjunct faculty members to regular faculty members;
- a campus leased by the CCA Foundation (beginning in 1991); and
- classes meeting at many locations throughout the service area.

CCA continues to use the Aurora Public Library as its library. APL's Central Library, about half a mile from the CentreTech campus, houses most of the College's library material. CCA users also have in-person and electronic access to the entire APL collection, including its college-level materials. The growth of electronic resources, including Web access from campus or home to the APL and to the College's Instructional Resource Center databases, has made the library arrangement more convenient and accessible. (*Resource Room document 1.10*)

Adjunct instructors have always taught a large proportion of CCA classes, and they continue to do so. These instructors bring to the classroom expertise from business, industry and the community. In January of 1986, CCA had seven full-time faculty members, all of whom had release time for administrative responsibilities. Since the completion of CCA's last self-study, the College has increased the number of full-time faculty members from 17 (16.5 FTE) in the spring of 1993 to 33 (29.25 FTE) in the fall of 2002. Reflecting, in part, the quality and contribution of the adjunct faculty, College constituencies have consistently given high ratings to CCA's instruction and to the relevancy of its educational programs. (*Resource Room document 1.11*)

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The Legislature originally designated the College to be a “college without walls,” and until 1991, CCA operated solely in leased facilities. However, in recent years the College has become a dual-campus institution with two full-service campuses, CentreTech and Lowry, both in Aurora.

CCA opened the three-building CentreTech campus in 1991 on land leased by the Community College of Aurora Foundation from the city of Aurora. In the last five years, the College has built a fourth building, the Student Centre, at CentreTech and added a theater and offices to the Fine Arts Building (previously the Forum). Since 2001, the College has discontinued several satellite locations and moved their classes and some CentreTech classes to Lowry. *(Campus maps are Resource Room document 1.12; see also maps in Schedule of Classes, Resource Room document 1.6)*

In 1994, the Air Force shut down its operations at Lowry Air Force Base. The Colorado Community College System (then known as the Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System) took over the northeast corner of the base for use as an education campus. CCA’s former president played an instrumental role in helping the System acquire the 156-acre parcel from the Air Force.

The System originally intended to create a cooperative facility on the Lowry higher education parcel, involving many community colleges as well as four-year colleges and universities. The campus, which was to focus on high technology education and practical skill development, was given the acronym HEAT (Higher Education and Advanced Technology) Center, but is now referred to as Lowry.

Initially the College occupied three buildings at Lowry, where it offered a variety of programs and courses. In 2001, the System changed its plan for Lowry, and CCA greatly expanded its presence there. The College opened a student residence hall, moved most computer courses and many business courses to Lowry, developed a full set of student services, and consolidated existing programs and science labs into a more campus-like setting. The Lowry campus offers many advantages, including space for programs to expand and a location that is an easy 15-minute drive from the CentreTech campus.

The College has developed some of its own occupational programs but has articulated with many existing occupational programs at the Aurora Public School District’s T.H. Pickens Technical Center and other area vocational schools. T.H. Pickens is located about a half mile east of CCA’s CentreTech campus. *(Resource Room document 1.13)*



Accreditation History of the College

In 1983, when the Community College of Denver's (CCD) Aurora Education Center became the Community College of Aurora, CCD was fully accredited by the North Central Association. CCD agreed to oversee the development of educational programs and services at CCA while NCA processed CCA's application for candidacy status.

In February 1984, CCA filed an institutional self-study report with NCA; in March of that year, a three-member evaluation team visited the College. The Higher Learning Commission granted CCA candidacy status in August 1984. An NCA evaluation team made a second visit in April 1986 after CCA's submission of another self-study report. The Commission granted the College continuation of candidacy status in August of the same year.

In consultation with NCA staff, the College determined that it was ready to request accreditation status. CCA filed an institutional self-study report in March 1988, and the evaluation team visited in April. The Commission granted initial accreditation (membership) for five years. In 1993, the College filed a self-study report in February, and an evaluation team visited in March. The Commission granted accreditation for 10 years.

Effective August 8, 1997, CCA's Statement of Affiliation Status was changed to authorize a full-service degree site in Aurora/Denver at the Higher Education and Advanced Technology (HEAT) Center. This change was made after a visit on April 28-29, 1997, that focused on the College's program offerings at the HEAT site at Lowry.

At its meeting of March 5, 1999, the Commission voted to extend CCA's accreditation to include distance delivery of associate degree programs. At its meeting on April 26, 2000, the Commission validated the decision by the Institutional Actions Council of the North Central Association to extend CCA's accreditation to include distance delivery programs coordinated through Colorado Community Colleges Online. (*Resource Room document 1.14*)

Early in 2002, CCA began a comprehensive, collegewide self-study process to prepare for the HLC site visit scheduled April 14 to 16, 2003.



Purpose of the Self-Study

The self-study provides information and analysis to help the College measure itself in relation to the criteria for continued accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC/NCA). The study also provides information about the effectiveness and efficiency of CCA's programs and services, reinforces institutional self-analysis and planning and strengthens the College's sense of community.

The College's self-study report addresses several audiences. The primary audience includes CCA faculty and staff members, administrators and major constituency groups. They will use the report to identify the College's strengths and challenges and to improve programs and services. The report will also prepare the Commission's Consultant-Evaluator Team for its visit to the College. Finally, the report provides information about the College to students and to the public.

The Self-Study Process

In the summer of 2000, CCA's president appointed the vice president for research, development, and information services (now a faculty member) as the self-study coordinator to organize, coordinate and facilitate the College's study. The coordinator developed a self-study plan and timeline and in February 2001 conducted two all-college informational meetings. In August of 2001, the president appointed the director of grants as self-study co-coordinator.

An important goal for CCA's self-study was to involve a wide range of College faculty and staff. To achieve this goal, the coordinators used responses from surveys collected at the all-college meetings to assign both faculty and staff members to all committees. In September 2001, the President's Cabinet reviewed the committee assignments and selected the committee chairpersons. The chairpersons became the Self-Study Steering Committee. During the same period, the self-study coordinators developed questions and job descriptions for each committee based on the HLC/NCA evaluative criteria and oriented committee members and chairpersons. The committees used these questions to guide their study of their assigned area. (*Resource Room document 1.15*)

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Thirteen committees conducted the self-study. These included:

General Committees

1. Introduction and the General Institutional Requirements
2. Steering Committee (chairpersons of other committees)

Criterion One Committees

3. Mission, Purposes and Decision-Making
4. Freedom of Inquiry and Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Criterion Two Committees

5. Governance and Administration
6. Human Resources
7. Physical Resources
8. Financial Resources

Criterion Three Committees

9. Instruction
10. Student Services and Enrollment Management

Criterion Four Committee

11. Strategic Planning Process

Criterion Five Committees

12. Integrity in Institutional Practices
13. Integrity in Institutional Relationships

(Resource Room document 1.16)

The committees met regularly from October 2001 through April 2002 to gather and evaluate information. In February and March 2002, they submitted preliminary reports to the coordinators. The coordinators reviewed the responses, responded with written comments, and met with the chairpersons to discuss additions to the reports. The committees revised their responses and sent them to the coordinators in late April and early May 2002. As they compiled their reports, the committees generally used data from the five years 1996-97 to 2000-01. When available, data for 2001-02 were added. *(Committee Reports are in the bookcase in Resource Room document 1.17)*

Preparation of the Report

The self-study coordinators had primary responsibility for writing the College's report, using as their source material the responses the self-study committees supplied to them. The committee responses provided the basic information and evaluation for each chapter, as well as specific suggestions about institutional strengths and challenges. As they compiled the report, the coordinators also gathered additional information from College documents and personnel.

The self-study report consists of 11 chapters. These include an introduction to the College and responses to concerns identified by the 1993 NCA evaluation team, the General Institutional Requirements, and information and evidence that CCA meets the five criteria for accreditation. Additional information will be available in the resource room and elsewhere at the College, as indicated in the document.



Significant Developments Since the Last Comprehensive Evaluation

Since the last self-study in 1993:

- The College has had major changes in leadership. President Linda Bowman assumed office in the fall of 2000. In 2001, the College hired a new vice president for administrative services, Wes Geary, and a new vice president for student services and enrollment management, Greg Goode. Norine Domenico, who served first as vice president for institutional research and development and then as vice president for instruction, retired in December of 2002. Soon after taking office, the president created a Cabinet Advisory Council that includes faculty, staff and students who advise the Cabinet and share information among College units. In July 2002, the three academic deans became members of the Cabinet. (See Chapter 4)
- The student population has become ethnically more diverse and slightly younger. Over the last few years, the College's service area, particularly north Aurora, has had a great influx of Hispanic immigrants. The African-American and Asian populations of Aurora have also grown significantly since the last visit, and the Aurora Public Schools now enroll students of families who speak 82 different languages. The College has begun to address these changes with additional English as a Second Language courses and community outreach to diverse communities. CCA continues to recognize and celebrate the many cultures represented at the institution. The College has students from 84 countries. (See Chapter 9)

Note: The College would appreciate receiving advice from the visiting team on how to complement what it is already doing to serve this growing minority population, particularly the Hispanic community.

- The College has greatly expanded its presence at the Lowry campus and enrollment there has already exceeded projections. The shift to Lowry provided needed space and enabled the College to reduce the number of satellite locations, thereby improving administrative oversight and reducing costs. Furthermore, the shift has enabled CCA to develop a second campus-like setting for students. As part of the most recent changes at Lowry, the College assumed responsibility for the film and video technology program from Red Rocks Community College (RRCC) in 2001. The program operates in collaboration with the University of Colorado at Denver and has a significant enrollment. (See Chapter 11)

Over the last few years, the College's service area, particularly north Aurora, has had a great influx of Hispanic immigrants. The African-American and Asian populations of Aurora have also grown significantly since the last visit, and the Aurora Public Schools now enroll students of families who speak 82 different languages.

- The College has initiated more flexible scheduling, a weekend college, Internet courses, and a series of hybrid courses that combine classroom and off-site instruction. (See Chapter 5)
- The College's institutional culture has begun to change. The organization shows more openness, greater flexibility and higher levels of participation. (See Chapter 9)
- The College has renewed its emphasis on planning. To support this emphasis, the College has adopted a new mission statement and a new set of values. In addition to completing an institutional strategic plan, the College has developed a plan for the Lowry campus. The planning process reaches individual employees through work plans they develop and co-workers' assessments of how well their performance demonstrates College values. (See Chapter 8)
- The College has emphasized increased enrollment and the development of new programs, particularly occupational programs. Enrollment peaked in the fall of 1994 and then declined about 10 percent over the next three years before resuming growth. In the fall of 2001, enrollment surpassed the 1994 peak. To emphasize the importance of enrollment growth and retention, the College changed the title – and responsibilities – of the vice president of student, faculty and staff services to vice president for student services and enrollment management. Since 2001, an enrollment management task force has met regularly under the vice president's leadership. (See Chapter 7)
- The College has progressed with assessment of student learning. CCA's efforts have emphasized integrating the skills students need for employment and further education (lifelong skills) across the curriculum. (See Chapter 6)
- The College is awarding significantly more occupational degrees and certificates and fewer transfer degrees. Between 1997-98 and 2001-02, the number of students earning AA and AS degrees declined from 183 to 153 (16 percent), while the number earning AAS degrees increased from 52 to 92 (77 percent). Overall, the number of degrees earned rose only slightly (4 percent), while the number of certificates awarded grew dramatically from 26 to 323. (See Chapter 5)
- The College has expanded its use of technology with computer access for students, faculty and staff, and has increased use of the World Wide Web for external and internal communication and for student research. The thriving online instruction program is the second largest among Colorado community colleges. (See Chapter 5)

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- The College has made significant investments to strengthen campus community and student life. Since the last visit, CCA has built a student center on the CentreTech campus. The center houses student office and meeting areas, faculty offices, the Learning Resource Center and the Instructional Resource Center. To support increased student activities, the College now has a director for student life. The College has also opened a residence hall at Lowry and provides activities there for students. *(See Chapter 7)*
- Under the leadership of the new vice president for administration, the College has achieved greater financial stability, even at a time of declining state resources. The College has used a more conservative fiscal approach to budgeting. For the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2002, the College had a modest budget surplus, anticipating further reductions in state funding. *(See Chapters 4 and 8)*
- The College has continued to be a major partner in economic development in the Aurora community. The College's Workplace Solutions Center provides training for numerous businesses and industries. The Small Business Management Program offers on-site instruction for business owners and operators. The Center for Workforce Development works with people who want to change or improve job skills in order to secure employment. *(See Chapter 9)*
- The College has continued to build strong, positive relationships with various governmental and educational districts and institutions. These include the city of Aurora, the Aurora Public Schools and the Cherry Creek Schools. *(See Chapter 9)*
- The College has developed a process for credentialing faculty members to assure continued professional development and high quality instructional programs. The faculty development program assists faculty to meet the credentialing requirements. *(See Chapter 4)*

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The College has continued to be a major partner in economic development in the Aurora community.

Responses to the Concerns Expressed in the 1993 Team Evaluation Report

Following its visit to CCA in March 1993, the evaluation team expressed five concerns. Its report stated, “The Team recognizes that three of the following concerns (1, 2 and 3) cannot be corrected by the Community College of Aurora as such; however, the institution must continue its efforts to influence decisions made at the state level and continue to seek to overcome state funding shortfalls through such things as aggressive grant activity.”

- 1. Decisions that are made at the state level in Colorado do not always serve the needs of the Community College of Aurora. Recent decisions have adversely affected funding policies and practices and may affect the ability of the College to continue to respond to enrollment growth through the expansion of programs and quality services; these decisions often render long-range planning null and void.*
- 2. The uncertainty of state funding, namely the state’s inability or unwillingness to fund growth in an appropriate manner, is a serious concern and is likely to negatively impact the ability of the College to continue the expansion of programs and quality of services.*
- 3. Amendment One, which recently established a taxing and spending limitation, is also likely to limit the state resources available to the College.*

As the 1993 team report recommends, the College has continued to make positive efforts to influence funding decisions at the state level. A strong network of community college presidents, in which CCA’s president plays an active role, serves on State Board committees and works with the System president in the allocation of funding. The community colleges also have good relationships with state legislators. The results of these efforts include the expansion of the Lowry campus and the construction of the new Student Centre and the addition to the Fine Arts Building.

The College has also followed the team’s 1993 suggestion to seek other sources of funding, particularly funding for new initiatives. The CCA Foundation has taken the lead in developing a strategy to support student scholarships, recognize teaching excellence and serve underrepresented populations. Government and foundation grants have also funded new college initiatives. For example, a National Science Foundation grant to CCA’s biotechnology program supports the college’s outreach to area high schools. Similarly, a grant from the Dewitt-Wallace Foundation has funded the college’s initiatives with north Aurora middle schools.

The CCA Foundation has taken the lead in developing a strategy to support student scholarships, recognize teaching excellence and serve underrepresented populations.

To date, Amendment One has not limited resources available to the College. However, Colorado, like many other states, has experienced a decline in state revenue in the last year. CCA has moved aggressively to address the related budget tightening while continuing to build new programs and take advantage of new opportunities. For example, the College has adopted a more conservative budgeting philosophy and has begun to use more cautious enrollment and revenue projections. (See *Chapter 8*)

The transformation of the Lowry Campus since the summer of 2001 exemplifies the College's success in expanding quality programs and seizing new opportunities, irrespective of state-level fiscal issues. Lowry includes new certificate programs, reconfigured science labs and classroom buildings, a residence hall, a Cisco networking lab, and improved facilities for the film and video technology program. (See *Chapter 11*)

The Team also expressed the following concerns:

4. Utilization of space in the new [CentreTech] campus facilities has been maximized.

Space is no longer a major concern for CCA. Since the last team visit, CCA has built a Student Centre, added to the Fine Arts Building at the CentreTech campus, and expanded its presence at the Lowry campus. The College has adequate space to conduct its programs and to achieve its purposes, now and into the future.

5. The team has a concern that the advantageous position the College is in with regard to their full-time/part-time faculty staffing will be compromised by moving toward more traditional staffing patterns.

With the growth of the CentreTech campus and the acquisition of the Lowry campus, many regular faculty members are performing administrative duties, as well as teaching classes on both campuses. Therefore, the need for regular faculty has increased. The College, as it balances flexibility with program stability, continues to have a higher ratio of adjunct to regular faculty than do other community colleges in Colorado. The ratio of credit hours taught by regular faculty to the number of credit hours taught by adjunct faculty in the spring of 1993 was 1:9.3. In the fall of 2002, the ratio was 1:5.8. The College has hired a limited number of additional regular faculty members who can chair or coordinate programs and departments. In spring 1993, the College had 17 regular faculty members (16.5 FTE); in spring of 2002, it had 33 (29.25 FTE). (*Resource Room document 1.18*)



Chapter 2

GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

This chapter addresses the General Institutional Requirements (GIRs) for the Community College of Aurora (CCA/College). The Introduction and General Institutional Requirements Committee reviewed College policies and records to determine if the College was meeting the requirements. The committee provided sufficient information and evidence to determine that CCA is meeting the General Institutional Requirements.

Mission

GIR 1. The Community College of Aurora has a mission statement, formally adopted by the governing board and made public, declaring that it is an institution of higher education.

CCA has the following mission statement, revised in 2001:

The Community College of Aurora provides lifelong educational opportunities, prepares the current and future workforce, and promotes excellence in teaching, learning and service to our diverse community.

CCA's mission statement is aligned with the Colorado Community College System's (CCCS) legislated mission as reflected in statute and in State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) policy:

“ ... offering a broad range of general, personal, vocational, and technical education programs ... to fill the occupational needs of youth and adults in technical and vocational fields, to provide two-year transfer educational programs to qualify students for admission to the junior year at other colleges and universities, and to provide a broad range of programs of personal and vocational education for adults.” (Colorado Revised Statutes 23-60-201, SP 2-40) (Resource Room document 2.1)

CCA makes the statement public through the Community College of Aurora Schedule and the College Web site. The College will publish the statement in the 2003-2004 *Community College of Aurora Catalog*. (Resource Room document 2.2)

The Community College of Aurora provides lifelong educational opportunities, prepares the current and future workforce, and promotes excellence in teaching, learning and service to our diverse community.

Five purposes guide the College in the fulfillment of this mission:

1. To provide the first two years of college and university education for students who wish to transfer to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions.
2. To provide occupational education for students who are seeking job preparation, career mobility and/or job retraining along with just-in-time workforce development and on-site customized training for business and industry.
3. To offer education that strengthens the academic backgrounds of the students and prepares them to pursue their educational and career goals.
4. To offer diverse educational experiences that are responsive to the needs and interests of persons in the community who desire to enhance their occupational, intellectual, cultural, social or personal development.
5. To assist students in selecting, entering, continuing and completing their course of study by providing effective academic advising and student support services.

These purposes are based on the legislation establishing the state system of community colleges (Colorado Revised Statutes 23-60-201). Over the years, the wording and order have changed slightly, and CCA added the second part of Goal 2. They appear on Page 6 of the 2002-03 *CCA Catalog*. (*Resource Room document 2.2*)

GIR 2. The Community College of Aurora is a degree-granting institution.

The State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) have approved CCA to award associate degrees and certificates. CCA offers the Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), Associate of General Studies (AGS) and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees. The College granted its first degrees and certificates in May 1983.



Authorization

GIR 3. The Community College of Aurora has legal authorization to grant its degrees, and it meets all the legal requirements to operate as an institution of higher education wherever it conducts its activities.

The State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) has the authority and power to define the requirements of appropriate degrees and certificates and to authorize the awarding of degrees at all community colleges in the Colorado Community College System (Colorado Revised Statutes 23-60-202). SBCCOE's authority related to formal academic programs is subject to review by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE). (*Resource Room document 2.1*)

CCA forwards requests to offer degree-granting programs to SBCCOE, which makes recommendations for approval to CCHE. CCHE's final review and approval gives CCA the authorization to award the degree. All of the degrees the College grants have successfully gone through this approval and authorization process.

The Colorado Revised Statutes 23-60-207 and 23-1-108 and 109 pertain to the authority of CCHE to designate service areas. Board policy, SP 9-20b, defines CCA's service area to include portions of three counties: Arapahoe, Adams and Denver. (*Resource Room documents 2.1 and 2.3*)

GIR 4. The Community College of Aurora has legal documents to confirm its status: not-for-profit or public.

CCA is a public institution and a part of the state system of community and technical colleges (Colorado Revised Statutes 23-60-205). (*Resource Room document 2.1*)

The College has obtained 501(c)3 status for its foundation. Legal documentation confirming not-for-profit status for the CCA Foundation is available in the NCA resource room. (*Resource Room document 2.4*)



Governance

GIR 5. The Community College of Aurora has a governing board that possesses and exercises necessary legal power to establish and review basic policies that govern the institution.

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) is the state policy and coordinating board for Colorado's public higher education system. The Commission's legal authority is referenced in the Colorado Revised Statutes 23-1-102: *"There is hereby established a central policy and coordinating board for higher education in the state of Colorado, to be known as the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, referred to in this article as the 'Commission.'* The duties and powers delegated to the Commission by this article shall apply to all state-supported institutions of higher education, including, but not limited to, all postsecondary institutions in the state supported in whole or part by state funds, and including junior colleges and community colleges, extension programs of the state-supported universities and colleges, local district colleges, and area vocational schools and specifically the regents of the University of Colorado and the institutions it governs. The governing boards and institutions of the public system of higher education in Colorado, including the University of Colorado, are obligated to conform to the policies set by the Commission within the authorities delegated to it in this article." (Resource Room document 2.1)

The State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE), which controls the 13 state system community colleges in Colorado, governs the Community College of Aurora. SBCCOE is the central policy and coordinating board for all system community colleges and establishes policy on legislative, academic and fiscal matters. SBCCOE also controls programs for the state's district colleges and vocational schools.

The Colorado Revised Statutes 23-60-104 defines SBCCOE's legal status: *"There is created a state board for community colleges and occupational education, which is referred to in this article as the 'board.'* The board is a body corporate and has the authority to adopt and seal and to receive, demand, and hold for all occupational educational purposes and for any educational institution under its jurisdiction such money, lands, or other property as donated, bequeathed, appropriated, and/or otherwise made available to the board, and it may use such property in the interest of community and technical colleges and occupational education in this state." (Resource Room document 2.1)

The legal authority of the board is also defined in Colorado Revised Statutes 23-60-201: *"There is hereby established a state system of community and technical colleges, which shall be under the management and jurisdiction of the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education."* (Resource Room document 2.1)



The duties of the board, with respect to the state system, are further defined in the Colorado Revised Statutes 23-60-201 et.seq. The defined duties relate to establishment of new community colleges, physical facilities, tuition and fees, appointment of chief administrative officers, review and approval of curriculum, and transfer articulation. They also relate to capital budget requests, allocation of funds, college policies related to formal academic programs, acquisition of properties and the core transfer program. *(Resource Room document 2.1)*

GIR 6. The Community College of Aurora’s governing board includes public members and is sufficiently autonomous from the administration and ownership to assure the integrity of the institution.

The SBCCOE is a nine-member lay board appointed to four-year terms by the governor of Colorado and confirmed by the Colorado Senate. Two nonvoting members represent students and faculty from the state system community colleges. The governor appoints one board member from each congressional district in Colorado and three at large. *(Resource Room documents 2.1 and 2.5)*

Colorado Revised Statute 23-60-104 states: *“No appointed member shall be an employee of any junior college, community or technical college, school district or agency receiving vocational funds allocated by the board, state or private institution of higher education, or state or private occupational school in the state. No appointed member shall be an elected or appointed statewide official of the state of Colorado or member of the governing board of any state-supported institution of higher education.”* This provision assures that the board is autonomous from the administration and ownership of the colleges within the Colorado Community College System. The current members of the governing board are representative of the public interest and understand the educational and training needs of the College’s service area. *(Resource Room document 2.1)*

Members of the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education as of January 2003:

- Jeannie G. Reeser, Chair
 - Lena A. Elliott, First Vice Chair
 - Andrew B. “Andy” Wyatt, Second Vice Chair
 - Stephen A. Chapman
 - Patricia A. Erjavec
 - Jerry L. Heimlicher
 - Barbara McKellar
 - Greg Romberg
 - Tamra J. Ward
 - Erin McNulty, Nonvoting Student Member
 - Esther Williams, Nonvoting Faculty Member
- (Resource Room document 2.5)*



GIR 7. The Community College of Aurora has an executive officer designated by the governing board to provide administrative leadership for the institution.

Colorado Revised Statutes 23-60-202 grant the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education authority to appoint the “chief administrative officer” of each community college. The SBCCOE appointed CCA’s current president in the summer of 2000 at a regularly scheduled State Board meeting. The College president reports directly to the president of the Colorado Community College System, who reports to the State Board. (*Resource Room documents 2.1 and 2.5*)

GIR 8. The Community College of Aurora’s governing board authorizes the College’s affiliation with the Commission.

The Community College of Aurora is authorized to affiliate with the Commission on Higher Learning of the North Central Association as stated in State Board Policy 2-40: “*State system colleges are authorized to affiliate with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association.*” (*Resource Room document 2.6*)

Faculty

GIR 9. The Community College of Aurora employs a faculty that has earned from accredited institutions the degrees appropriate to the level of instruction offered by the Community College of Aurora.

All CCA faculty members have the appropriate training and experience to teach their courses. The College has clearly stated criteria for hiring regular and adjunct faculty. These criteria differ for faculty who will teach general education core and transfer courses and for those who will teach occupational courses. The College hires general education and transfer faculty with a master’s degree in the subject they will teach. Alternatively, they may have a master’s degree in an area related to the subject they will teach with a minimum of 18 graduate hours in the subject taught. Those teaching occupational courses must have a prescribed combination of experience and education. (*Resource Room document 2.7*)

GIR 10. A sufficient number of the faculty are full-time employees of the Community College of Aurora.

During the fall 2002 semester, CCA employed 33 regular faculty, equivalent to 29.25 FTE, most of whom were performing administrative duties in addition to their teaching duties. All programs for the following degrees—Associate of General Studies (AGS), Associate of Applied Science (AAS), Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Science (AS)—are overseen by at least one regular faculty member.

The SBCCOE appointed CCA’s current president in the summer of 2000 at a regularly scheduled State Board meeting. The College president reports directly to the president of the Colorado Community College System, who reports to the State Board.

All CCA faculty members have the appropriate training and experience to teach their courses.

The 1993 NCA visiting committee cautioned the College against “ ... moving toward more traditional staffing patterns.” The ratio of credit hours taught by regular faculty to the number of credit hours taught by adjunct faculty in the fall of 2002 was 1:5.8, compared with a ratio of 1:9.3 in 1993.

GIR 11. The Community College of Aurora faculty has a significant role in developing and evaluating all of the institution’s educational programs.

CCA faculty members generate many ideas for new courses and programs. To begin the process for gaining approval of these courses or programs, faculty members take their ideas to their deans. Upon receipt of such a proposal, a dean may ask the faculty member to gather evidence supporting the need for the new course or program. The evidence may include the results of an environmental scan or a needs assessment. If the dean approves the concept, the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) reviews the proposal.

The ILT, which includes the vice president for instruction, the deans and the department chairs, then charges faculty with developing the course curriculum for review by the division’s curriculum committee. The curriculum committee checks that the curriculum designers have integrated lifelong skills, defined student learning outcomes, and aligned teaching methodologies and assessment practices with the outcomes. After the curriculum committee approves the program or course, the committee forwards it to the ILT for approval. Proposals for new programs then go to the System for final approval. Part of that approval process includes a review by all of the System colleges’ vice presidents of instruction. *(Resource Room document 2.8)*

Development of courses offered for credit by the Workplace Solutions Center or the Small Business Development Center follow the same procedures as other credit courses. The instructor and the customer usually jointly develop Workplace Solutions’ noncredit courses. The director develops the Small Business Development Center’s three-hour seminars.

At least once every five years, a team of college and/or external reviewers examines each certificate and associate degree program. The team assesses each program based on a report that program faculty members prepare after conducting a self-study of their certificate or degree program. In the case of the AAS degree, the advisory committee for the program is also involved in the review. The program advisory committee, which includes faculty teaching in the program, is also responsible for continual assessment of the program to assure that it is meeting market needs. *(Program reviews are in Resource Room document 2.9)*

At least once every five years, a team of college and/or external reviewers examines each certificate and associate degree program. The team assesses each program based on a report that program faculty members prepare after conducting a self-study of their certificate or degree program.

Educational Programs

GIR 12. The Community College of Aurora confers degrees.

The Community College of Aurora confers four associate degrees, including the Associate of Arts, the Associate of Science, the Associate of Applied Science and the Associate of General Studies. CCA conferred its first associate degrees in 1983. The College awards degrees each semester and posts the appropriate degree on a student's transcript at the end of the semester in which the student completes the degree requirements. State Board policy 9-40 lists the degrees granted. (*Resource Room document 2.10*)

GIR 13. The Community College of Aurora has degree programs in operation, with students enrolled in them.

The Community College of Aurora offers programs with sufficient enrollment to support degree and certificate offerings as indicated in the reports of students by degree and major for spring 2002. (*Resource Room document 2.11*)

GIR 14. The Community College of Aurora's degree programs are compatible with the institution's mission and are based on recognized fields of study at the higher education level.

The degrees the College offers, described in the response to GIR 12, are compatible with its mission described in the response to GIR 1. The Community College of Aurora offers degrees common to institutions of higher education and based on recognized fields of study. Other Colorado community colleges offer virtually all the courses CCA offers. The same system-level mission statement covers these colleges.

GIR 15. The Community College of Aurora's degrees are appropriately named, following practices common to institutions of higher education in terms of both length and content of the programs.

State Board Policy 9-40 identifies the criteria for titles, length and general content of degrees offered by the System's community colleges. The approved associate degree titles are Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), Associate of General Studies (AGS) and Associate of Applied of Science (AAS). Policy 9-40 also identifies the minimum of 60 total semester credit hours for all associate degrees and a minimum of 15 semester credit hours of general education requirements for the AAS degree. The recently enacted "King Bill" (HB 01-1263) made the 60-credit-hour minimum, the credit-hour maximum as well for AA and AS degree programs. (*Resource Room documents 2.12 and 2.13*)



GIR 16. The Community College of Aurora’s undergraduate degree programs include a coherent general education requirement consistent with the institution’s mission and designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry.

All associate degree programs have a designated general education requirement. The College’s general education requirements follow State Board Policy 9-40, which states in part: *“General education is ‘general’ in several clearly identifiable ways: It is not directly related to a student’s formal, technical, vocational or professional preparation; it is part of every student’s course of study, regardless of his or her area of emphasis; and it is intended to impart common knowledge, intellectual concepts and attitudes which every educated person should possess.” (Resource Room document 2.12)*

The Community College of Aurora identifies general education courses for specific degree programs in the 2002-03 *CCA Catalog*. AAS degrees generally require 15 to 21 hours of general education courses; the AGS degree requires a minimum of 30 or 33; and the transfer degrees (AA and AS) essentially consist of general education courses, some of which are included in a statewide “core.” *(Resource Room document 2.2)*

GIR 17. The Community College of Aurora has admission policies and practices that are consistent with the institution’s mission and appropriate to its educational programs.

The Community College of Aurora is an open-access institution. CCA accepts any applicant who is at least 16 years of age and, on occasion and with permission of the College president, accepts applicants younger than 16. The College’s admission practices comply with the admissions policies stated in publicly distributed documents. Some of the associate degree programs have additional admissions policies and requirements that are described in the *CCA Catalog* and other printed publications. The *2002-03 CCA Catalog* spells out the College’s admissions policies in detail on Page 7. *(Resource Room document 2.2)*

GIR 18. The Community College of Aurora provides its students access to those learning resources and support services requisite for its degree programs.

Students have access to laboratories on both the CentreTech and Lowry campuses. All science labs are at Lowry. The equipment and transportation technology program and its shops are at Lowry. The film and video technology program also has intensive hands-on use of equipment at Lowry. The Aurora Public Library (APL) serves as the College’s library, and its main branch is within one-half mile of the CentreTech campus. The APL is building a new facility for its Martin Luther King branch on Colfax Avenue, just northeast of Lowry. The College also has online resources, including access to information through information networks and computer databases at both campuses, electronic media and access to other libraries. Students in the paralegal program have use of the University of Denver Law Library.

“General education is ‘general’ in several clearly identifiable ways: It is not directly related to a student’s formal, technical, vocational or professional preparation; it is part of every student’s course of study, regardless of his or her area of emphasis; and it is intended to impart common knowledge, intellectual concepts and attitudes, which every educated person should possess.”

The College provides student support services such as admissions, registration, assessment, testing, academic advising, tutoring and financial aid counseling at both campuses and housing and food service at Lowry. The Learning Resource Center on the CentreTech campus provides a variety of services that support learning: tutorial labs, career services, job-search assistance and services for students with disabilities.

Finances

GIR 19. The Community College of Aurora has an external financial audit by a certified public accountant or a public audit agency at least every two years.

The Community College of Aurora is subject to an annual audit by the Colorado state auditor as part of the audit of the Colorado Community College System. The state auditor contracts with a national CPA firm to perform this audit. The most recent audit was completed at the end of October 2002. In December 2002, the state auditor forwarded the report to the Legislative Audit Committee, which released it to the public. (*Resource Room document 2.14*)

GIR 20. The Community College of Aurora's financial documents demonstrate the appropriate allocation and use of resources to support its educational programs.

The Community College of Aurora allocates resources into seven major categories, including instruction, academic support, student services, institutional support, operation and maintenance of plant, scholarships and auxiliary. This self-study document provides evidence and documentation of the appropriate allocation and use of resources. (*Copies of recent and current budgets are in Resource Room document 2.15*)

GIR 21. The Community College of Aurora's financial practices, records and reports demonstrate fiscal viability.

The College has demonstrated its fiscal viability in reports of recent audits that an independent accounting firm conducted. The firm completed the last audit for the year ending June 30, 2002. There were no College-specific audit exceptions.

The College develops the budget in the spring based on a complete record of expenses to date and projected for the remainder of the year, previous years' history and plans for the coming year. All units of the College contribute to the process.

The College provides student support services such as admissions, registration, assessment, testing, academic advising, tutoring and financial aid counseling at both campuses and housing and food service at Lowry.

During the year, the College tracks expenditures using the Financial Reporting System (FRS). FRS is a widely used accounting system that enables each unit of the College to monitor its expenditures. FRS also allows the accounting department to monitor the expenditures of all units. The College distributes monthly budget reports to the managers of each cost center. In addition, departments have online access to the most current information. Encumbrances of salaries, large purchase orders and contracts help to control expenses. (*Resource Room document 2.16*)

The Community College of Aurora maintains all financial records in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Public Information

GIR 22. The Community College of Aurora’s catalog, or other official documents, includes accurate descriptions of its educational programs and degree requirements, its academic calendar, its learning resources, its admissions policies and practices, its academic and nonacademic policies and procedures directly affecting students, its charges and refund policies, and the academic credentials of its faculty and administrators.

The College publishes the *CCA Catalog* annually and makes it available, free of charge, to all CCA students. The catalog contains an academic calendar, general College information, admissions requirements and policies, financial aid information, a summary of educational costs, graduation requirements, services and resources for students and general student information. It also includes the student code of conduct, academic regulations, a description of each educational program, certificate and degree program requirements, official course descriptions and the names, titles and academic credentials of all faculty, professionals and technical staff and administrators. (*Resource Room document 2.2*)

The College publishes the *CCA Schedule of Classes* each semester. It includes the academic calendar, new student information, registration dates and information, tuition and fee charges, the College refund policy, general College information and the listing of courses offered for the semester. CCA makes this publication readily available to all students both in printed form and on the College Web site. (*Resource Room document 2.2*)

The *CCA Student Handbook* informs students of the student code of conduct, the academic dishonesty policy, discipline-related policies, the student grievance process and general policies that affect students. The handbook also describes the College’s accreditation status, resources available to the students including clubs and organizations, and housing policies and procedures. The handbook is available to all enrolled students. (*Resource Room document 2.17*)



GIR 23. The Community College of Aurora accurately discloses its standing with accrediting bodies with which it is affiliated.

The Community College of Aurora accurately discloses its standing with accrediting bodies in official documents and publications. The documents indicate the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools accredits the College. The *Community College of Aurora Catalog* and the *CCA Student Handbook* also identify the College programs accredited by specialized accrediting agencies. (*Resource Room document 2.17*)

GIR 24. The Community College of Aurora makes available upon request information that accurately describes its financial condition.

CCA makes its budgets, audits, financial statements and other financial information available to the public. Those who would like the information may make a request to the vice president for administrative services after the state Legislature releases the information. (*Resource Room documents 2.14 and 2.15*)



CRITERION ONE: *The Community College of Aurora has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.*

Chapter 3

MISSION AND PURPOSES

Strengths

The Community College of Aurora (CCA/College) has the following strengths in the areas discussed in this chapter:

- Up-to-date mission statement, values and goals developed through collegewide discussion.
- Commitment to freedom of inquiry and satisfaction with the results of that commitment as confirmed by faculty and staff responses to institutional surveys.
- Commitment to excellence in teaching and learning, as confirmed by student satisfaction with instruction as expressed on institutional surveys.

Challenge

The self-study and the work of the self-study committees assigned this criterion also found a challenge for the future. CCA is challenged to:

- Continue to inform all members of the CCA community about the College's mission, purposes, goals and decision-making.

Issue for the Future

The self-study and the work of the self-study committees assigned this criterion identified an issue for the future. This issue is the following:

- Strengthening excellence in teaching through faculty workshops and external professional development opportunities.

Introduction

This chapter will focus on the College's mission and purposes, values and goals, communication with constituencies, freedom of inquiry, and excellence in teaching and learning. Three self-study committees gathered and analyzed information for this chapter: Mission, Purposes and Decision-Making; Strategic Planning Process; and Freedom of Inquiry and Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

Mission

Before developing its own mission statement, CCA used the mission of the Colorado Community College System (CCCS). The College developed its new statement through discussion with many stakeholders over a number of months in 2001. Advisory boards, students and College employees provided ideas and suggestions. CCA's mission aligns with the legislated mission of the Colorado Community College System (See GIR 1) and reads as follows:

The Community College of Aurora provides lifelong educational opportunities, prepares the current and future workforce, and promotes excellence in teaching, learning and service to our diverse community.

Purposes

Five purposes, derived from the System's legislated mission (See GIR 1), guide the College in the fulfillment of this mission:

- Provide the first two years of college and university education for students who wish to transfer to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions.
- Provide occupational education for students who are seeking job preparation, career mobility, and/or job retraining along with just-in-time workforce development and on-site customized training for business and industry.
- Provide education that strengthens the academic backgrounds of the students and prepares them to pursue their educational and career goals.
- Offer diverse educational experiences that are responsive to the needs and interests of persons in the community who desire to enhance their occupational, intellectual, cultural, social or personal development.
- Assist students in selecting, entering, continuing and completing their course of study by providing effective academic advising and student support services.



CCA continues to use these legislated purposes to categorize its activities but is increasingly emphasizing the College's own strategic goals.

Values

As part of its 1993 self-study, the College formally adopted a set of values (respectful, exemplary, collaborative, empowering and responsive) that focused primarily on interpersonal relations. In 2001, the College's Cabinet Advisory Council considered these original values. After discussing what these values did and did not include, the Council developed new values and distributed them to the CCA community for comment and suggestion. The Council used the responses to develop values that relate to a broader range of College goals and activities. The new values are as follows:

- Respect
- Quality
- Access
- Diversity
- Inclusion
- Collaboration

Goals

CCA develops the College goals through the strategic planning process described in Chapter 6. The strategic plan for 2002 to 2005 includes the following goals, consistent with the College mission:

- Goal 1. Continue to ensure high-quality instruction that is relevant and responsive to the needs of our community.
- Goal 2. Continue to ensure student satisfaction and success.
- Goal 3. Continually improve educational access and service throughout the College service area.
- Goal 4. Increase retention and completion rates of students who seek degrees and certificates.
- Goal 5. Increase the percentage of college-age residents in CCA's service area who enroll in the College, placing particular emphasis on underserved populations and on the changing demographics.

The College adopted the following values in 2001:

- *Respect*
- *Quality*
- *Access*
- *Diversity*
- *Inclusion*
- *Collaboration*

- Goal 6. Improve the financial stability of the College.
- Goal 7. Increase partnerships with P-12 (pre-school to grade 12) educational agencies, business and industry, higher education and community organizations.
- Goal 8. Further develop our human resources to increase diversity and enhance support, recognition and professional development.
- Goal 9. Develop a systematic, integrated planning process that is data-based and outcomes-oriented.
- Goal 10. Further integrate the use of information and technology into decision-making processes.

The self-study Committee on Mission, Purposes and Decision-Making examined these goals. The committee observed that faculty and staff use the goals to develop their unit plans and performance reviews, thereby ensuring the goals' influence in the decision-making process. The committee also found the College goals to be clear, thoughtful and the culmination of a process that began at the state system level and included widespread discussion at CCA. (*Resource Room document 3.1*)

However, the committee also concluded that the College must develop and implement a system to evaluate and report how well it meets these goals each year. Currently, the College does not have a process in place to systematically measure goal attainment. Likewise, there is no annual written report that analyzes how well the College has, or has not, met its goals during the preceding year. The development of such a process and report could include creating measurable objectives for each goal and determining what data and methods of analysis to use to assess outcomes for each objective.

The committee observed that faculty and staff use the College goals to develop their unit plans and performance reviews, thereby ensuring the goals' influence in the decision-making process.

Communication and Constituencies

The process of publicly stating the College's mission, goals and purposes includes messages to both internal and external publics. This information goes to groups that include the following:

Students

The *CCA Catalog* contains the legislated purposes. The *2003-04 Catalog* will include the College's goals. The *2002-03 CCA Student Handbook* contains general information on the College, including limited information on mission and goals as related to student government and activities. The director of student life meets regularly with the Student Government Association and other student groups to share information, which can include the College's mission, goals and purposes. Several students are also members of the Cabinet Advisory Council.

Faculty and Staff

The College informs faculty and staff about its mission and goals through both written and verbal communication. The College's Communication Division uses a printed and electronic publication, *Intercom*, to inform the internal College community about goals, mission and strategic initiatives. (*Resource Room document 3.2*)

The president sends frequent e-mail communication to those employees who are on the College's electronic distribution list and written communication to adjunct faculty. These communications give notice of events affecting the College, offer congratulations for activities or performance, describe current events, or request input on the College's strategic plans, mission and goals. Each unit of the College uses staff meetings to disseminate information on strategic goals and mission accomplishment. The president also conducts well-publicized, all-college meetings and convocations to communicate with faculty, staff and students.

The results from the College's Faculty and Staff Surveys show that in 2002 CCA employees had a clearer understanding of the College's mission and goals than they did three years earlier. In 2002, College faculty members (full- and part-time) responded with a mean rating of 3.16 (where 3 indicates agreement and 4 indicates strong agreement) to the statement, "CCA's mission and goals are clear to me." In 1999, their mean rating for that item was 2.91.

The results from the College's Faculty and Staff Surveys also show that in 2002 CCA employees were more accepting of the College's mission and goals than they were three years earlier. In 2002, College faculty members (full- and part-time) responded with a mean rating of 3.30 (where 3 indicates agreement and 4 indicates strong agreement) to the statement, "I accept CCA's mission and goals." In 1999, their average rating for that item was 2.97. (*Resource Room document 3.3*)

The College's Faculty and Staff Surveys show that in 2002 CCA employees had a clearer understanding of the College's mission and goals than they did three years earlier.

Public

The College informs the public through two main sources: the *CCA Schedule of Classes* and the CCA Web site. The schedule, which the College regularly mails to its service area residents, contains CCA's mission. The College's Web site contains information on mission and goals. In addition, members of both the College Advisory Council and the CCA Foundation regularly meet with other community members to inform them about the College and its mission and goals. The president annually hosts "Latte with Linda" for professional and business leaders in the community. Other events on campus provide the opportunity for the president or other College leaders to present the College to the public. These include Chamber of Commerce events, meetings of community groups and the annual convocation.

Campus officials play an integral role in communicating CCA's mission and goals. The Foundation Board and College Advisory Council host state legislators. The president meets regularly with external groups. Many faculty and staff also disseminate information about the College while sharing their expertise and serving area community, civic and educational groups and service clubs.

The self-study committee on Strategic Planning Process found that CCA keeps its various internal and external constituencies well informed about the College's purposes, mission, goals and values. The College, however, must regularly review current and future communication vehicles to ensure that it continues to inform all groups. *(The committee report is in the bookcase in the Resource Room document 3.4)*

Freedom of Inquiry

The College strongly supports freedom of inquiry for both faculty and students as outlined in State Board Policy BP 3-20 ("Due Process for Faculty") and the AAUP "1940 State of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretive Comments." The faculty handbook refers readers to division deans and to the vice president for instruction for copies of these documents. The student handbook explains students' rights in the classroom, including their right to "inquire about, discuss, or express any view, provided they do not infringe on the rights of others." The handbook also affirms students' rights to express their views, to assemble to discuss issues and to distribute written materials on campus. *(Resource Room documents 3.5 and 3.6)*

Faculty and staff generally believe that they are free to express their views at the College. In the 2002 Faculty Survey, College faculty members (full- and part-time) responded with a mean rating of 3.18 (where 3 indicates agreement and 4 indicates strong agreement) to the statement, "I feel free to express my views on department operations." That response showed a marked increase in faculty confidence in freedom of inquiry from 1999, when the faculty responded to that question with a mean rating of 2.46.

Many faculty and staff also disseminate information about the College while sharing their expertise and serving area community, civic and educational groups and service clubs.

Confidence in the freedom of inquiry goes beyond faculty. On the 2002 Staff Survey, staff members responded to the question about expressing their views on departmental operations with a mean rating of 3.3 (where 3 indicates agreement and 4 indicates strong agreement), up from 3.11 in 1999. (*Resource Room document 3.3*)

Excellence in Teaching and Learning

CCA's commitment to excellence in teaching and learning reflects one of the College's values: quality. To support this commitment, the College has programs and policies that contribute to high-quality teaching and learning. These include the College's lifelong skills, a teaching paradigm, departmental guidelines and standards, sound institutional process for selecting new faculty members, student evaluation of teaching and workshops for new faculty. (*Resource Room document 3.7*)

The College faces challenges in maintaining that excellence. For example, a recent reorganization has affected services that support excellence in teaching and learning. In the spring of 2001, the College eliminated the Faculty, Staff and Organizational Development unit, in part because of concerns the unit was not meeting the needs of regular faculty. Another challenge is the limited budget for faculty members to attend professional conferences and for continuing education.

Current faculty development efforts focus on workshops and mentoring for new faculty, calendars of development opportunities, and the establishment of a Professional Development Advisory Committee. Faculty members now have development opportunities that include tuition scholarships for use at CCA, no-cost courses (on a space-available basis) in the College's Workplace Solutions Center, and computer-related workshops that the System offers at the Lowry campus. (*Resource Room document 3.8*)

Student opinion surveys confirm that the College fosters excellence in teaching and learning. In the spring of 2001, the College surveyed all graduates attending graduation practice about CCA's services and facilities. The survey asked students to rate their satisfaction with services on a scale from 1 ("not at all satisfied") to 4 ("very satisfied."). The graduates' mean response for quality of instruction was 3.40. The College's Survey of Currently Enrolled Students has found similar satisfaction with the quality of instruction. On a scale where students ranked the quality of services from 1 ("low") to 4 ("high"), their mean rating for overall quality of instruction was 3.39 in 1996 and 3.44 in 2001. (*Resource Room document 3.9*)

CCA's commitment to excellence in teaching and learning reflects one of the College's values: quality. To support this commitment, the College has programs and policies that contribute to high-quality teaching and learning.

CRITERION TWO: *The Community College of Aurora has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.*

Chapter 4

GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES

Strengths

The College has the following strengths in the areas discussed in this chapter:

- Competent, motivated employees and systematic processes for their hiring, evaluation and professional development.
- Clearly defined and effectively organized governance for Colorado's higher education in general and community colleges in particular.
- A well-defined College governance structure with responsibilities assigned to specific administrators and to various committees and advisory groups.
- A financial management approach that has dealt successfully with austerity and continues to accomplish the College's purposes.
- A growing and increasingly diverse student body.
- A Learning Resource Center that provides critical services to students and an innovative, largely electronic Instructional Resource Center run in collaboration with the Aurora Public Library.
- Technology integrated into administration and instruction and updated for student learning.

Challenges

The self-study and the work of the self-study committees assigned this criterion also found challenges for the future. CCA is challenged to:

- Increase funding for faculty members' professional development.
- Staff and otherwise upgrade the Lowry Instructional Resource Center.
- Remain current with the College's inventory of personal computers.
- Improve the College's networking structure and capacity for electronic-based instruction.
- Increase access to technology-based instructional support services for students with special needs.

Issue for the Future

The self-study and the work of the self-study committees assigned this criterion identified an issue for the future. The issue is the following:

- To continue to address campus security issues.

Introduction

This chapter will focus on the College's organization and on its human resources, including full- and part-time faculty, administrators, technical and professional staff, classified employees and students. The chapter will also focus on the College's financial and physical resources, including the CentreTech and Lowry campuses, satellite facilities, campus security, the Instructional Resource Center (library), the Learning Resource Center, and technology. Four self-study committees gathered and analyzed information for this chapter: Governance and Administration, Human Resources, Physical Resources and Financial Resources.

Organization

The Colorado General Assembly exercises ultimate authority and responsibility for public higher education in Colorado. CCA's governance structure also includes the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education, the Colorado Community College System, CCA's College Advisory Council, and the College administration.

Colorado Commission on Higher Education

Under the Legislature's direction, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) plans and coordinates the state's public higher education. State statute delegates CCHE's duties and powers, which apply to all state-supported institutions of higher education, including CCA. The Commission has the following areas of responsibility and authority:

- appropriations;
- capital construction and long-range planning;
- program approval, review, reduction and discontinuance;
- systemwide planning;
- off-campus instruction; and
- accountability.

The governor, with the consent of the state Senate, appoints the Commission's nine members who are politically and geographically representative of the state. (*GIRs and Resource Room document 4.1*)



State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education

The State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE or State Board) governs the Colorado Community College System (CCCS or the System), Colorado's system of 13 community colleges, including CCA. It also has limited authority, such as program approval, over the local district community colleges and the state's area vocational schools. Among the State Board's duties are those related to the following:

- establishing new community colleges;
- reviewing physical facilities and capital budget requests;
- setting tuition and fees;
- appointing college presidents;
- reviewing and approving curriculum;
- overseeing transfer articulation;
- appropriating and allocating funds;
- setting college policies related to formal academic programs;
- acquiring properties; and
- overseeing the core transfer program.

The governor, with the consent of the state Senate, appoints the nine members of the State Board who are politically, occupationally and geographically representative of the state. (*GIRs and Resource Room document 4.2*)

College Advisory Council

Each System college has a local College Advisory Council, as specified in state statute and SBCCOE policy. Made up of representatives of the College's service area and constituencies, CCA's Council advises the College president and the State Board on the area's education needs. The Council also serves as a liaison between the College and service area employers, school boards and governments.

The Council includes the following members:

Jay Gershen, D.D.S., Ph.D.	University of Colorado Health Sciences Center
Renee Gullickson	Wells Fargo Bank
Kevin Hougén	Aurora Chamber of Commerce
James Lewien	Commerce Bank of Aurora
Edna Mosley	Aurora City Council
Father Michael J. Sheeran, Ph.D.	Regis University
Paul Suss	Suss Pontiac

(*Resource Room document 4.3*)

Each System college has a local College Advisory Council, as specified in state statute and SBCCOE policy. Made up of representatives of the College's service area and constituencies, CCA's Council advises the College president and the State Board on the area's education needs.

College Administration

CCA's administration operates through a well-defined organizational structure (*Resource Room document 4.4*). The College has qualified, experienced administrators who oversee College activities and exercise responsibility for College programs. The College's administration informs constituencies and involves them in decision-making. The College administrators include the following:

- PresidentLinda S. Bowman, Ph.D.
- Vice president for instruction.....Vacant
- Vice president for student services
and enrollment management.....Greg Goode, M.S.
- Vice president for administrative services....Wes Geary, M.S.
- Associate vice president for the Lowry
campus and dean of public service,
science and workforce developmentLes Moroye, M.A.
- Dean of computers, mathematics
and businessBob Fulcomer, M.B.A.
- (Interim) dean of humanities, fine arts
and social sciencesGeoff Hunt, Ph.D.

CCA's chief executive officer is the president, who reports to the president of the Colorado Community College System, who reports to the State Board. Reporting directly to the CCA president are the three vice presidents and the directors of the Communications Office, the College Foundation, the Grants and Planning Office and the Human Resources Office.

The president, vice presidents, and the academic deans form the President's Cabinet, the body responsible for institutional leadership and policy development. The deans were added to the Cabinet in July of 2002. The Cabinet Advisory Council, which includes staff, student and faculty representatives, meets with the Cabinet monthly. (*Resource Room documents 4.5 and 4.6*)

Each vice president leads one of the College's three units: Instruction, Student Services and Enrollment Management, and Administrative Services. The vice presidents work with faculty and staff in the unit to determine the organization that best meets student needs and best enables the College to meet its mission.

The Cabinet Advisory Council, which includes staff, student and faculty representatives, meets with the Cabinet monthly.

Community College of Aurora Foundation

The Community College of Aurora Foundation is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation that provides funding and other resources for the development of the College. The Foundation board serves as property holder for the CentreTech campus. The Foundation supports instructional programs, College facilities, student scholarships, faculty and staff projects, and cultural activities.

Established in 1985, the CCA Foundation is governed by a voluntary board of business and community leaders from the College's service area. The Foundation occupies space at the CentreTech campus. The Foundation's executive director reports to the board and to the College president. The board meets five times each year, and the executive board and the executive director meet monthly with the College president. Members serve three-year, renewable terms. (*Resource Room document 4.7*)

The Foundation's role has evolved over the past decade. The Foundation was involved in planning the CentreTech campus from 1985 to 1991 and then became its landlord. Between October 1997 and February 2000, the Foundation conducted a successful capital campaign, "Partnership for Excellence," which raised \$1 million for the College. From 2000 through 2002, the campaign raised an additional \$350,000. In the late 1990s, the Foundation often provided specific necessities for the College, such as laboratory equipment. The Foundation Board has identified four priority areas: expanding student access, recognizing and retaining faculty, improving instructional facilities and equipment, and expanding outreach efforts to underrepresented populations. (*Foundation minutes and financial documents are in its offices.*)

Human Resources

The College follows State Board Policy 3-10 and uses the following employee categories: faculty, administrator (exempt), technical/professional (also exempt), and classified. Definitions are provided below. The categories have a number of common benefits, hiring practices, professional development activities and evaluation practices. The subsequent discussion of each category describes any variations from these common elements. (*Resource Room document 4.8*)

Benefits

All regular faculty and classified and exempt staff are eligible for health, dental, life and disability insurance. All nonstudent employees, including adjunct faculty, participate in the Public Employee Retirement Association (PERA) and are eligible to participate in various tax-sheltered annuity plans (401K, 403b, 457). PERA members contribute a fixed percentage of their salary to the retirement trust fund, and employers contribute a percentage of pay to the trust fund. PERA is a substitute for Social Security for many Colorado public employees. (*Resource Room document 4.9*)

The Foundation Board has identified four priority areas: expanding student access, recognizing and retaining faculty, improving instructional facilities and equipment, and expanding outreach efforts to underrepresented populations.

Hiring Practices

CCA's hiring practices emphasize participation by co-workers, immediate and higher levels of management, and persons with diverse perspectives. Consequently, the process tends to be thorough, labor intensive and time consuming, with a history of good results. Hiring is virtually always competitive and may draw applications from an in-house, regional or national pool. Direct appointment by the president is possible but rarely occurs. Typically, the College makes considerable effort to publicize employment opportunities to diverse populations. (*Resource Room document 4.10*)

Professional Development

All regular College employees (those receiving benefits) attend an orientation session and have professional development opportunities available from in-house programs. Employees can attend training offered by Workplace Solutions, the College unit that markets classes to businesses and other organizations in the community. They can also take professional development courses offered by other elements of the Instructional unit, by the Human Resources Department and by the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) office.

Regular College employees and nonstudent employees employed at least 30 hours per week may also take up to 9 credits per fiscal year without paying tuition. Part-time instructors may take up to 6 credits per year without paying tuition. Employees take the classes on their own time or, if the class is relevant to their job and their supervisor approves, on paid time. The state no longer provides general fund support for this benefit; however, the College continues to offer it. (*Resource Room document 4.11*)

Evaluations

Supervisors administer a performance evaluation for each administrator, professional/technical and classified employee. The evaluations are based upon a previously agreed-upon work plan that outlines goals and objectives, employee self-appraisals, constituency evaluations, and supervisors' overall assessment of goals, accomplishments and performance of job duties. Each unit determines the details of its evaluation process. The ratings are linked to compensation through separate salary pools for classified staff, administrators, and technical/professional staff and faculty. A new plan for faculty evaluations is under development, in accordance with State Board directives. (*Resource Room document 4.12*)

CCA's hiring practices emphasize participation by co-workers, immediate and higher levels of management, and persons with diverse perspectives.

Administrators

Administrators include the president, vice presidents, directors and deans. CCA employs 23 administrators. Personnel file information (in Human Resources offices) shows that all of them have a degree, as itemized below:

Table 4.1: Degrees Held by CCA Administrators, Spring 2003

Highest Degree	Number	Percent
Ph.D.	3	13%
Master's	15	65%
Bachelor's	5	22%



Technical and Professional Educational Staff

This category of employee encompasses staff members who are exempt from the state personnel system and are not faculty or administrators. CCA employs 15 technical/professional staff members. Personnel file information shows that the technical/professional employees have degrees, as itemized below:

Table 4.2: Degrees Held by CCA Technical and Professional Staff, Spring 2003

Highest Degree	Number	Percent
Master's	10	67%
Bachelor's	4	27%
None	1	6%

The College adheres to the Colorado State Department of Personnel's *Guidelines for Exemption of Positions in Educational Institutions and Departments.* (Resource Room document 4.13)

Classified Employees

Classified employees are employees who are included in the state personnel system. CCA employed 63 classified employees as of the summer of 2002. The College hires and promotes classified employees according to the standards of the statewide, classified employee system.

Faculty

Hiring Practices

The College has clearly stated criteria for hiring regular and adjunct faculty. These criteria differ for faculty who will teach general education core and transferable courses from those who will teach occupational courses. (*Resource Room document 4.14*)

Qualifications

All CCA faculty members have the appropriate training and experience to teach their courses:

Table 4.3: Degrees Held by CCA Regular Faculty, 2002-03

Highest Degree	Number	Percent
Doctorate	5	15%
Master's	22	67%
Professional	2	6%
Bachelor's	4	12%

Professional Development

To ensure continuing high-quality instruction, the College has a systematic pre-service and in-service professional development program for all faculty members.

Upon hire, all new regular and adjunct faculty members meet with their division deans or department chairs. The deans or chairs use a checklist (*Resource Room document 4.15*) to explain basic information about the College and teaching at the College.

The College also requires that all new faculty members attend a three-hour orientation session that covers:

- the College's mission and goals;
- adult learning and learning styles;
- the College's teaching paradigm; and
- instructional and assessment strategies.

(*Resource Room document 4.16*)



As new faculty members begin their first semester of teaching, they enter the College's faculty mentoring program. The program pairs experienced CCA faculty with new instructors to:

- answer questions about College policies and procedures;
- observe the new instructors in the classroom and comment on their teaching performance;
- suggest instructional methods, materials and resources; and
- assist with instruction-related questions or problems.

During the mentoring period, the division dean or a faculty peer may also observe a new faculty member's teaching. (*Resource Room document 4.17*)

The College has a Professional Development Committee comprised of faculty from each division. The committee is responsible for assisting regular and adjunct faculty to move from one pay level to the next (there are three levels of pay for adjunct faculty). The program encourages faculty members, with the approval of their dean, to engage in a wide range of professional development activities that will help them improve both content knowledge and teaching expertise. These activities may include:

- specific faculty events at CCA;
- training offered by the College's Workplace Solutions unit;
- college or university course work; and
- workshops, conferences and seminars.

(*Resource Room document 4.18*)

In addition, the College requires regular faculty members to attend—and invites adjunct faculty to attend—the annual faculty in-service day, which faculty plan.

Funding to support faculty members' professional development is a challenge. A limited amount of funding is available from Perkins monies and from the College's general fund. The CCA Foundation and specific grants have sometimes paid for faculty members to attend conferences. The self-study committee assigned to human resources noted that faculty members miss valuable information if they do not attend conferences outside of the Denver-metro area. The committee recommended that the College allocate funds for regular faculty to attend such conferences.

As new faculty members begin their first semester of teaching, they enter the College's faculty mentoring program.

Performance Evaluation

Each regular faculty member submits an annual work plan to his or her dean describing what he or she will do throughout the coming year. The dean approves the plan or requests revisions. The work plan does not follow a specific format but must address the following:

- use of assessment to improve instruction;
- teaching paradigm;
- integration of academic and vocational learning;
- institutional service;
- professional development;
- department and division initiatives; and
- instructional unit goals.

(Resource Room document 4.19)

To date, deans have used the annual work plans to evaluate each regular faculty member in his or her division. All faculty members rated “distinguished” can prepare a portfolio that the Instructional Annual Adjustment Committee (IAAC) uses to evaluate their performance to determine if it is “exemplary.” The ratings the Deans and IAAC give to regular faculty are the basis for raises through the annual faculty salary pool. The College currently allocates pool funds as follows:

- 40 percent to faculty evaluated as “performance level” or above;
- 50 percent to faculty evaluated as “distinguished level” or above; and
- 10 percent to faculty evaluated as “exemplary level.”

In accordance with the plan, if the annual pay raise is less than the increase in the Consumer Price Index, the College may give across-the-board raises, as it did for 2002-2003. *(Resource Room document 4.20)*

A new performance plan for faculty, mandated by the State Board, is currently under development. *(Resource Room document 4.21)*

Compensation

The College has a standard compensation schedule for the hiring of regular faculty that includes higher pay for additional levels of education and years of experience. The entry-level salary for 2002-03 is \$35,215. Regular faculty members receive standard benefits, including 9 credits per year of tuition exemption. There is a Systemwide benefit package for all employees in the System. *(Resource Room document 4.22)*



The College's base salary ranges and benefit packages for faculty compare favorably with other community colleges in Colorado but lag behind the national average. In FY 2001, CCA's average full-time faculty base salary was \$42,912. In the same year, the average for Colorado's 13-college system was \$38,710. In FY 1998, when the average full-time instructional faculty salary for CCA was \$38,594, the national average was \$45,919. (*Resource Room document 4.23*)

Job Satisfaction

The results from the College's 2002 Faculty Survey illustrate faculty members' views about their work and their employment at the College. On a scale from 1 (strong disagreement) to 4 (strong agreement), faculty members indicated that they:

- like their jobs (mean = 3.63);
- feel their jobs are important (3.67);
- understand their duties and responsibilities (3.62);
- understand how their jobs fit into the College (3.46); and
- believe they receive adequate on-the-job training (3.15).

Faculty members were less likely to agree with a statement about the opportunities their jobs offer for growth (mean = 2.78). Part-time faculty (2.69) and full-time faculty (3.17) responded quite differently to this item. (*Resource Room document 4.24*)

Students

CCA has sufficient students to meet its educational purposes. In the fall semester of 2002, the College enrolled 1,333 annualized student FTE, surpassing the previous FTE high of 1,138 in the fall of 1994. The College enrollment dropped somewhat following the last accreditation visit but has since reached a level higher than it was at the time of that visit.

In the fall semester of 2002, the CCA student body had the following characteristics:

- 5,034 students enrolled.
- Over 95 percent of students were Colorado residents.
- Nearly three out of every four students attended part time (73.3 percent).
- More than one in five students (21.7 percent) were receiving financial aid; 1.7 percent were receiving veterans' benefits.
- Nearly three out of every five students (59.2 percent) were female.

The College's base salary ranges and benefit packages for faculty compare favorably with other community colleges in Colorado but lag behind the national average.

In the fall semester of 2002, the College enrolled 1,333 annualized student FTE, surpassing the previous FTE high of 1,138 in the fall of 1994.

- The average age of the students was almost 30 years (29.6 years).
- Students were ethnically diverse with 56.5 percent White, 19.3 percent African American, 9.8 percent Hispanic, 7 percent Asian, and 1.2 percent Native American.

Since the last accreditation team visit, the student body has changed in a number of ways. Among these changes are the following:

- The ethnic composition of the student body has changed steadily. In the fall of 1993, 73.7 percent of students were White. By 2002, less than 57 percent were White.
- Students were much more likely in 2002 to have declared they were in a certificate program than they were a decade earlier. In 1993, 3.3 percent of students declared they were in a certificate program; in 2002, the figure was 7.3 percent.
- After reaching a 10-year low of 36.2 percent in the fall of 1995, the percentage of the student body that was male rose to 40.3 percent in the fall of 2002.
- The percentage of students attending full time increased from 18.8 percent in the fall of 1993 to 26.7 percent in fall 2002.
- The percent of those 16 to 19 years of age increased from 17.1 percent in the fall of 1993 to 19.6 percent in the fall of 2002. (*Resource Room document 4.25*)

In recent years, students have expressed satisfaction with the instruction and services they receive at CCA. On the last three administrations (2000, 2001, 2002) of the College's Survey of Currently Enrolled Students, which uses a scale from 1 (low) to 4 (high), the mean ratings for overall quality of instruction have been 3.50, 3.44 and 3.42. The mean ratings for overall quality of student services have been 3.20, 3.29 and 3.24. (*Resource Room document 4.26*)



Financial Resources

The College receives the majority of its revenue each year from state-appropriated unrestricted funds, which consist of state appropriations, tuition and fees. From 1997 to 2002, the total state-appropriated unrestricted funds increased 27 percent, from approximately \$10.93 million in 1997 to \$13.88 million in 2002. During the same period, total unrestricted revenue for the College rose from \$14.48 million to \$16.91 million, an increase of 16.8 percent. (See chart below.)

Community College of Aurora								
Unrestricted Funds - Revenues by Source								
Fiscal Year	Tuition and Fees	State Appropriation	Interest Income	Sales and Services of Educ Depts	Other Income	Auxiliary Sales and Services	Transfers from State Board	Total
2002	7,086,201	6,791,571	34,238	1,029,647	143,289	347,464	1,473,943	16,906,353
2001	5,654,490	6,679,821	26,896	1,068,506	55,843	77,002	916,814	14,479,372
2000	5,526,661	6,139,697	15,271	21,624	68,606	1,571,301	519,840	13,863,000
1999	4,801,373	6,288,378	35,641	786,326	261,302	61,149	1,414,503	13,648,672
1998	4,451,988	6,414,411	4,002	0	157,915	997,242	0	12,025,558
1997	4,442,782	6,487,887	0	0	69,565	1,857,429	1,623,171	14,480,834

The College's largest expenditure each year is for instruction. From FY 1998 to FY 2002, funding for instruction increased each year after a decrease from FY 1997 to FY 1998. Overall, the instruction expenditure increased from \$6.58 million in FY 1997 to \$7.36 million in 2002, an increase of 11.8 percent. The increase reflects growing enrollments and the development of new programs as enrollment shifted from general education to occupational programs. Much of the new money went to occupational programs such as Cisco, emergency medical provider, film and video, and the Fire Academy.

Community College of Aurora								
Unrestricted Funds - Resource Allocation								
Fiscal Year	Instruction	Academic Support	Student Services	Institutional Support	Operation & Maintenance of Plant	Scholarships and Fellowship	Auxiliary Operating Expenses	Total
2002	7,361,177	1,168,194	1,646,550	2,070,195	3,282,022	236,096	311,298	16,075,532
2001	7,190,781	1,170,273	1,520,457	2,058,636	2,588,178	112,010	477,577	15,117,912
2000	6,748,365	1,217,786	1,528,333	1,106,157	2,517,005	123,296	625,368	13,866,310
1999	5,774,108	1,747,695	1,472,634	1,515,340	2,591,367	146,772	345,107	13,593,023
1998	5,680,706	1,337,894	1,472,150	2,447,076	1,633,038	170,731	347,489	13,089,084
1997	6,581,430	1,096,690	1,366,147	2,231,334	1,204,591	181,625	541,446	13,203,263

The College receives the majority of its revenue each year from state-appropriated unrestricted funds, which consist of state appropriations, tuition and fees. From 1997 to 2002, the total state-appropriated unrestricted funds increased 27 percent, from approximately \$10.93 million in 1997 to \$13.88 million in 2002.

Overall, the instruction expenditure increased from \$6.58 million in FY 1997 to \$7.36 million in 2002, an increase of 11.8 percent.

In light of the budgetary restrictions of the past several years, the College has re-examined its organizational structure, academic programs and priorities for serving various constituencies, increasing enrollment and improving service to students. The examination led to staff reductions in each unit of the College during the latter part of the 2001 fiscal year. As part of that \$1.2 million budget reduction, the College eliminated or reduced some programs, such as Faculty, Staff and Organizational Development and Media Services. Other departments in the College absorbed these programs' functions.

The budget reduction included the elimination of 19 positions from the college's general fund. Six positions were exempt administrative and technical-professional positions, seven were classified (clerical, accounting and security), and six were provisional faculty positions (four full-time and two half-time). The faculty positions were in speech communication, philosophy, management, biology, metrology and heavy equipment. The College made the reductions through a combination of layoffs, elimination of vacant positions, and transfer of staff to non-general fund revenue sources such as grants and auxiliaries. The metrology and heavy equipment position reductions resulted from the elimination of those programs. The College also reduced operating, travel and student hourly budgets by approximately \$150,000.

After balancing the budget and considering the increased revenues from tuition increases and state support for the next year, the College reallocated about \$200,000 in the 2002 fiscal year to enhance programs such as the emergency medical provider.

The reduction had little impact on the percent of unrestricted funds allocated to instruction. In FY 2001, 46.6 percent of unrestricted funds went to instruction, while in FY 2002, the portion was 45.8 percent. *(Resource Room document 4.27)*

Although the College eliminated some programs with low enrollments, some high-cost, low-enrollment programs remain open. Biotechnology, for example, has high costs and low enrollment. However, biotechnology is an emerging field in Aurora, one with which the College believes it needs to remain involved. The field is also one for which the National Science Foundation has awarded the College a grant to work with area high schools. *(Resource Room document 4.28)*

In light of the budgetary restrictions of the past several years, the College has re-examined its organizational structure, academic programs and priorities for serving various constituencies, increasing enrollment and improving service to students.

Budget Process

The College develops an operating budget each spring and finalizes it after the Colorado General Assembly passes the annual appropriations bill. The General Assembly makes annual appropriations to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE), which allocates funds to the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE). The SBCCOE, in turn, allocates funds to the community colleges using a complex funding formula. The General Assembly sets the ceiling for tuition increases, and the SBCCOE sets tuition rates. Groups outside the College also make decisions that affect CCA expenditures, such as compensation levels for state classified employees.

The College strives to involve many people in determining how it spends resources. For example, instructional faculty and staff have significant input into their unit's budget process and may request additional positions, operating funds, equipment and supplies. Likewise, as the administrative services and the student services and enrollment management units develop their budgets, department directors may request additional funding through their vice president.

Evaluation

The self-study Committee on Financial Resources concluded that funding for specific programs appears to be appropriate. However, the College retains the flexibility to transfer funds across cost centers when opportunities arise. This allows CCA to proactively address the educational needs of the community and the changing needs of the College's departments. The self-study committee also concluded that management of the College's financial resources has improved dramatically over the past two years (2000-2002).

The College's faculty and staff surveys provide information on how these groups view the College's distribution of financial resources. On a scale from 1 (strong disagreement) to 4 (strong agreement), the means of faculty members' responses to the item, "resources of the College are distributed appropriately," have been as follows:

1997 – 2.33

1999 – 1.90

2000 – 2.45

2002 – 2.58

In 2000, the survey reported, for the first time, responses for full-time and part-time faculty. In 2000, full-time faculty members agreed more strongly (mean = 2.53) with the statement, "resources of the College are distributed appropriately," than did part-time faculty (2.00). In 2002, full-time faculty members agreed less strongly (2.28) with the statement than did part-time faculty (2.68).

The College strives to involve many people in determining how it spends resources.

The self-study committee also concluded that management of the College's financial resources has improved dramatically over the past two years (2000-2002).

The means of staff members' responses to the item, "resources of the College are distributed appropriately," were as follows:

1997 – 2.46
1999 – 2.29
2000 – 2.36
2002 – 2.61

In 2000, the survey reported, for the first time, responses for classified and exempt staff. In 2000, classified staff agreed more strongly (mean = 2.51) with the statement, "resources of the College are distributed appropriately," than did exempt staff (2.15). In 2002, classified staff once again agreed more strongly (2.66) with the statement than did exempt staff (2.57). (*Resource Room document 4.24*)

Physical Resources

The Community College of Aurora has operations at the CentreTech campus, the Lowry campus and satellite locations. During the past several years, the College has made major additions at CentreTech, improved and expanded its presence at Lowry, and changed the use of satellite sites. The greatest change in facilities has been in response to the large increase in the number of course sections taught at Lowry. Together, these changes and additions mark a major shift in the location and use of College facilities. (*Resource Room document 4.29*)

The College's faculty and staff surveys show increasing satisfaction with College facilities but also indicate some differences in satisfaction among various employee groups. The surveys asked faculty and staff members to rate, on a scale from 1 (strong disagreement) to 4 (strong agreement), their agreement or disagreement with the statement: "The physical environment in my department is conducive to the type of work that I do." In 2002, staff agreed more strongly with the statement (mean = 3.41) than they did in 2000 (3.23) and 1999 (2.85). In the 2002 survey, classified staff members were somewhat more likely (3.44) to agree with the statement than were exempt staff members (3.36). (*Resource Room document 4.24*)

In 2002, faculty also agreed (mean = 2.99) with the statement, "The physical environment in my department is conducive to the type of work that I do," to a much greater extent than they did in 1999 (2.30) and to nearly the same extent as they did in 2000 (3.01). In 2000, adjunct faculty members were more likely (3.03) to agree than were regular faculty members (2.83) that the physical environment was conducive to their work. (*Resource Room documents 4.24*)

In 2002, the surveys asked, for the first time, that faculty and staff rate their agreement or disagreement with the statement: "The College's physical plant supports teaching and learning." Part-time faculty (mean = 2.95) expressed greater agreement with the statement than did full-time faculty (2.66). The overall faculty rating was 2.86. Staff expressed stronger agreement (3.09) with the statement than did faculty. (*Resource Room document 4.24*)

During the past several years, the College has made major additions at CentreTech, improved and expanded its presence at Lowry, and changed the use of satellite sites.

CentreTech Campus

In 1991, the CCA Foundation collaborated with the city of Aurora to sell \$11 million in bonds to build the 35-acre campus in the CentreTech Business Park in north central Aurora. The CentreTech campus opened in 1991 with three buildings: a classroom building, an administration building, and the Forum (now the Fine Arts Building). The College has a lease on the buildings. The city of Aurora owns the land and leases it to the CCA Foundation for \$1 per year.

The 26,500-square-foot Student Centre opened in 2000, funded with state capital construction funds and student fee revenue bonds. In 2001, the College, using state capital construction funds, expanded the Forum by 8,000 square feet to include a theater, faculty offices and classroom space and renamed it the Fine Arts Building. (*Resource Room document 4.30*)

The Lowry Campus

In 1995, the U.S. Air Force deeded 156 acres in the northeast quadrant of the former Lowry Air Force Base on the Aurora-Denver border to the state of Colorado to use for higher education. During the late 1990s, CCA participated in the first effort to utilize that acreage, the Higher Education and Advanced Technology (HEAT) Center. The HEAT vision was that many Colorado two- and four-year institutions would bring specific technology programs to the Lowry campus, which would operate with a separate administration. CCA used space at Lowry to operate high technology programs such as metrology, as well as to offer general education and science courses. CCA also housed—and continues to house—various community outreach programs and public service academies at Lowry.

In 2001, the Colorado Community College System analyzed the low enrollment and the opportunities at HEAT. CCCS decided that only two community colleges and CCAOnline should operate at Lowry. Thus, CCA now has an expanded presence at Lowry, and the Community College of Denver operates its health sciences program in two Lowry buildings. This change presented opportunities and risks. The Lowry expansion was, and continues to be, a dramatic challenge to CCA's organizational and financial skills and resources, as the College implements structures to promote future enrollment growth (by January 2003 Lowry enrollment had already exceeded projections). As part of the change, CCA assumed responsibility for additional programs and facilities at Lowry.

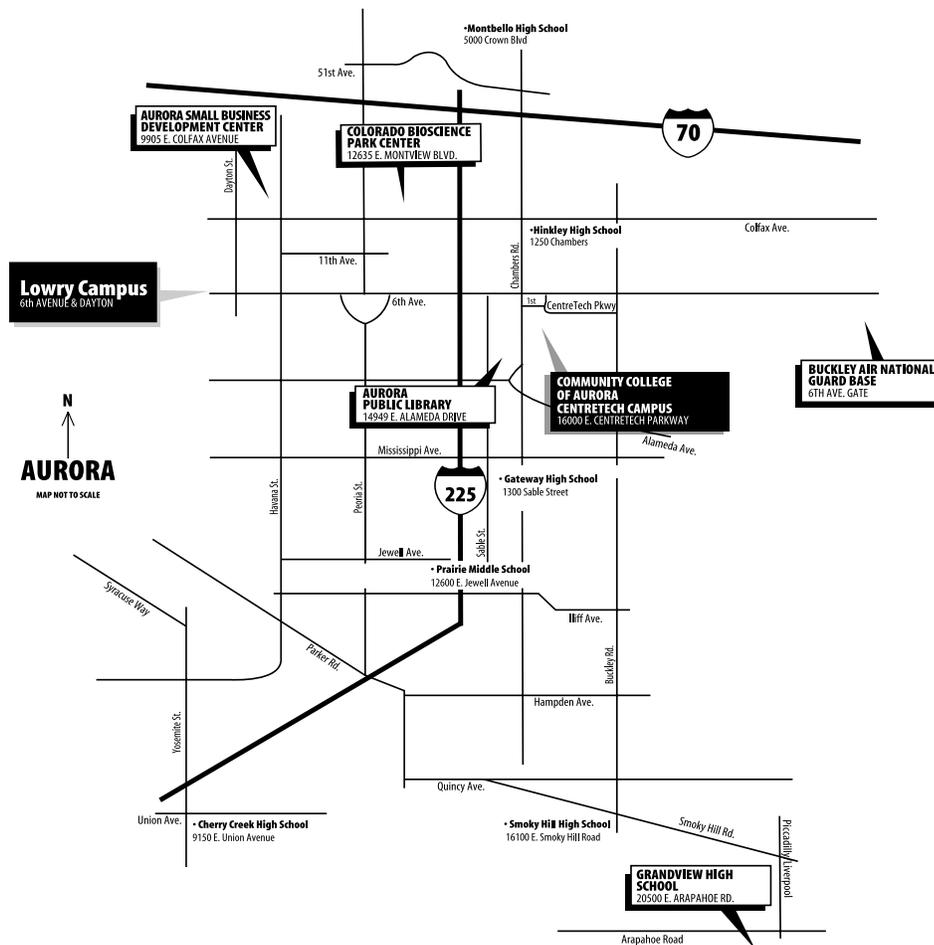
The Lowry expansion was, and continues to be, a dramatic challenge to CCA's organizational and financial skills and resources, as the College implements structures to promote future enrollment growth.

CCA is a tenant at Lowry and the landlord, the Colorado Community College System, is responsible for all maintenance, custodial services and security. Thus, the College has less control over many aspects of day-to-day operations at Lowry than it does at CentreTech. Administrators must regularly clarify to faculty, staff and students how responsibilities and procedures at Lowry differ from those at CentreTech.

The self-study committee responsible for gathering and evaluating information about College facilities concluded that the addition of the Lowry campus allows the College to meet its goals and mission and provides many programs with much-improved facilities. It alleviates the concerns over space expressed by the 1993 visiting team. The committee's main concerns for Lowry were the need for additional outside lighting and directional signs and maintenance issues stemming from the fact that people not directly affiliated with the College provide the maintenance. Since the committee completed its work, CCCS has added outside lighting, and security is now available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. (Resource Room document 4.31)

The self-study committee responsible for gathering and evaluating information about College facilities concluded that the addition of the Lowry campus allows the College to meet its goals and mission and provides many programs with much-improved facilities.

Other Facilities and Satellite Locations



Facilities and Satellite Locations Map

Aurora Small Business Development Center

The Aurora Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is a cooperative venture between CCA and the city of Aurora. To house the center, the College leases a building on East Colfax Avenue in the north (“Original”) Aurora district. CCA shares the space with the city. In addition to street-level offices, the center has classrooms and meeting rooms. The College provides maintenance and custodial service for the SBDC. The SBDC location is of particular importance because of the visibility it gives the College in the revitalized north Aurora commercial area.

Colorado Bioscience Park Center

The College leases lab, office and conference room space from the Fitzsimons Redevelopment Authority in the Colorado Bioscience Park adjacent to the new campus of the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center (UCHSC). The park is an incubator for research-oriented bioscience and biotechnology companies. Because CCA’s Biotechnology program has sufficient space at the Lowry campus and the Bioscience Park space remains underused, the College subleases the Bioscience Park space. However, because of the importance of the Bioscience Park and the larger Fitzsimons redevelopment to Aurora, the College is also exploring ways to maintain a presence at Fitzsimons. The College does not have custodial or maintenance responsibilities at the Bioscience Park.

Grandview High School

The College rents space by the hour at Grandview High School and schedules approximately 40 course sections there each semester. Grandview is in the far south of Aurora, serves students who otherwise would have to drive some distance to the College, and enables the College to serve the fast-growing area to the south of the high school. The College pays for security at Grandview.

Montbello (Lowry Family Center Satellite)

This is office space used by the Family Center to serve northeast Denver, including its Montbello neighborhood.

Buckley Air Force Base

The College has, on occasion, offered classes on the base, which is located less than a mile to the east of the College’s CentreTech campus. (*Resource Room document 4.32*)

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Campus Safety and Security

The umbrella organization and resource for matters related to safety of people and material is the state's Office of Risk Management. The office was created in September 1985 and has managed state employees' workers' compensation claims since July 1, 1989. The state has been self-insured for workers' compensation claims since July 1, 1996. CCA's director of human resources is the College's risk liaison officer and is the College's main contact person with the state Risk Management Office. The liaison is responsible for keeping the College president and the College's employees informed on all risk management issues. The risk liaison officer has a safety committee to help him carry out his responsibilities. The committee was established in 1991 and has met as needed since then. (*Resource Room document 4.33*)

The self-study committee charged with examining campus safety and security found that CCA relies on individual departments to maintain their own procedures to assure compliance with safety codes. The committee cited the following examples:

- Individual instructional departments maintain their own hazardous waste and safety procedures. Most instructors create their own format for presenting procedures to students – there is no standardized format. The biology department has a safety procedure in a folder in the prep lab.
- The facilities department keeps all of its material safety data sheets (the information about the different chemicals and related safety concerns) in a folder in the office for the supervisors of the grounds crew and the building maintenance crew. When new employees are hired, the supervisors for the grounds and building maintenance departments conduct on-the-job training on the chemicals the new employees will be using. In addition, there are periodic training sessions on how to read the data sheets. (*Resource Room document 4.34*)

The committee also found that departments often do not write down procedures or disseminate them to outside constituencies.

The *CCA Catalog* explains the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990, suggests actions individuals should take to ensure campus security, tells how to contact security guards at CentreTech and Lowry and includes crime statistics.

The College also publishes its crime statistics report, as mandated by the act, in the *Schedule of Classes*. The schedule for spring 2002 reported the statistics from 1998 to 2000, a period in which there were no murders, arson, aggravated assaults, hate crimes, liquor law or drug abuse violations, forcible or non-forcible sex offenses or vehicle thefts. In 1999, there were two reported thefts and two reported burglaries. The report in the summer 2003 schedule will report the statistics for calendar years 2001 and 2002, a period which included 10 thefts and one murder. (*Resource Room document 4.35*)



The self-study committee noted both positive developments and concerns related to campus security. These included:

- Many employees are not aware that the Safety Committee has a form for reporting safety concerns.
- CCA's policies and procedures manual has a section on workplace violence prevention procedures. This manual is in the president's office and in the human resources office.
- The CentreTech campus has 18 security cameras providing both exterior and interior surveillance.
- The College has installed emergency telephones in the parking lot on the CentreTech campus.
- Notices relating to safety and security cannot be sent to part-time faculty members who are not on campus e-mail.
- Security personnel are trained in CPR and oxygen usage.
- There are forms for reporting thefts. The College investigates all thefts, including those of less than \$1,000, and turns thefts of over \$1,000 over to the insurance company for investigation and reimbursement.

The residence hall at Lowry has security cameras, security locks on the outside door, resident assistants living in the hall, and a full-time security guard on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. (*Resource Room document 4.36*)

Learning Resource Center

The Learning Resource Center (LRC) plays a critical role in supporting student success at CCA. Located on the second floor of the Student Centre on the CentreTech campus, the LRC houses a computer lab with 32 PCs and adaptations for students with disabilities. The LRC services include:

- study skills development through workshops and individualized assistance;
- assessment and placement in reading, math and English;
- career planning and exploration;
- tutoring in math, writing, accounting, computers and chemistry;
- testing for a variety of purposes, including distance learning, classroom course exam makeup, GED pretests, course equivalency exams, and outside testing for other colleges;
- support services and resources for special-needs students; and
- media resources, including classroom equipment, instructional materials, technical support to faculty and staff, videotaping and satellite downlinking. *Chapter 7 has additional information on the Learning Resource Center.*



Lowry Campus One-Stop Center

Support activities at Lowry provide services to enable students to attain their educational goals on the Lowry campus without having to travel to the CentreTech campus. Student needs that require personal contact with a College representative are met at Lowry at times convenient to students.

The Lowry Campus One-Stop Center provides admissions, registration, financial aid, advising and assessment services, and takes tuition payments. Three employees and a work-study student are cross-trained so that each can provide many of the services. Each reports directly to their vice president, ensuring close supervision, support and administrative awareness of the needs at Lowry. The office has direct Internet and telephone contact with the CentreTech campus and has access to all of the College and System information technology services necessary to do its work. *Chapter 7 has additional information on the Lowry one-stop center.*

Instructional Resource Center (Library)

By contractual arrangement, the major holdings of the CCA library are contained within the main branch of the Aurora Public Library (APL), which holds approximately 6,500 CCA-owned books. The APL also makes all its resources available to CCA students, including 100,000 classified nonfiction and literature titles. CCA students can obtain an APL library card and check out materials from any APL library.

College library resources are also in the Instructional Resource Center (IRC) on the CentreTech campus, and limited resources are available in the Lowry campus IRC in Building 903. Physical information resources in the CentreTech IRC include approximately 2,000 books, 100 periodical subscriptions, 1,700 videotapes, 100 audiocassettes and several laser discs. Faculty members may place these and other materials on reserve for their students and during 2001, 15 did so. The IRC has four computers to access eight Web-based subscription services with full-text articles from over 6,000 periodicals, several encyclopedias and various databases. CCA students, faculty and staff can also access these resources and the Aurora Public Library catalog via the Web from campus or from home.

The IRC staff housed at CentreTech consists of one half-time professional librarian and one part-time library assistant. Staff members assist students in selecting appropriate information resources, efficiently using those resources, and locating additional resources that CCA does not provide. The IRC staff, at the request of CCA faculty, conducts class sessions on selecting, locating and using library resources. During 2001, CCA library staff members conducted 30 class orientations for 555 students. APL staff members also conduct class sessions at the request of CCA faculty and provide research assistance to individual CCA students. In 2001, APL staff members conducted 13 CCA class orientations in the APL Central Library for 150 students.

Support activities at Lowry provide services to enable students to attain their educational goals on the Lowry campus without having to travel to the CentreTech campus.

All items purchased with College funds—whether housed at CCA or at the APL Central Library—relate to the College’s programs of instruction. Instructors specifically request all videos and other audiovisual items. Instructors also request books, print periodical subscriptions and online resources for purchase. The College librarian selects most books, print periodical subscriptions and online resources. He bases these selections on the relevance of the materials to the College’s instructional programs, the need for information in a particular format, and affordability. Online periodical collections, for example, are particularly appropriate for their broad coverage of information related to the range of CCA courses.

In recent years, the greatest influence on the collection has been the shift from paper resources to electronic resources. From 1995-96 to 1999-00, the annual budget for materials ranged from \$35,000 to \$40,000. During these years, expenditures for books fell, while spending for online services rose dramatically. For example, in 1995-96 the expenditure for books was \$25,000 and for online services \$1,000. By 1999-00, the expenditure for books had fallen to \$17,000, while the expenditures for online services had risen to \$7,000.

Driving the change from paper to electronic resources have been students’ research needs, the growing number of resources available in electronic form, and the greater ease with which students can access Web-based resources from their homes, offices, classrooms and labs. To manage the change from paper to electronic resources, IRC staff:

- work with faculty to identify their students’ research needs and specific electronic resources that faculty believe will meet those needs;
- maintain an awareness of available electronic resources;
- obtain resources that are the most cost-effective; and
- conduct a class orientation program that builds student awareness of these resources and demonstrates their use.

CCA online subscription services can now track the number of searches students at a particular institution conduct in a given period. During 2001, for example, CCA users conducted 5,835 searches in FirstSearch and 1,155 in the Electronic Library. By way of comparison, during the same year, CCA CentreTech IRC users checked out 576 items through the APL integrated library system and checked out 660 videos, 65 books and 120 periodical issues (there is some overlap of books with the integrated system checkout numbers). The relatively small number of checked-out items reflects the fact that the IRC holdings are primarily reference materials.

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The Aurora Public Library's integrated library system collects information on checkouts of CCA-owned items housed at the APL Central Library, but it cannot determine whether the checkout was by a CCA student or another APL borrower. In the early 1990s, APL conducted a usage survey at the Central Library and found that CCA students made about 10 percent of all APL checkouts. APL is conducting another survey. (*Resource Room document 4.37*)

The College is currently developing an Instructional Resource Center at the Lowry Campus but has limited resources for the expansion. All CCA online subscriptions are available from Lowry PCs connected to the Internet via the CCA local area network. This includes five PCs in the Lowry LRC. The Center has shelving for about 1,000 volumes. During 2002, the librarian began selecting older editions of general reference books as well as older books relevant to programs at Lowry to send to that campus's IRC. Because of security concerns, the IRC staff does not plan to house recent books, videos or other audiovisual materials at Lowry.

The College does not expect that additional library staff will be available to staff the Lowry IRC. When the Lowry IRC is operating, existing library staff members plan to be available there for a limited number of hours per week. In addition, library staff will be available to instructors or students at Lowry by appointment.

In 2002, the College surveys asked faculty and staff members to rate, on a scale from 1 (strong disagreement) to 4 (strong agreement), their agreement or disagreement with the statement: "The College's library resources support teaching and learning." Part-time faculty (mean = 2.95) showed stronger agreement with the statement than did full-time faculty (2.45). Staff members also showed stronger agreement (2.90) than did full-time faculty members. (*Resource Room document 4.24*)

The self-study committee assigned to gather and evaluate information on physical resources recommends that:

- students have additional quiet study areas near the Instructional Resource Center;
- the College provide additional funding for online resources; and
- the College hire additional staff and work-study students for the Lowry IRC.



Technology

Since the last self-study, CCA has greatly advanced its use of technology. CCA has created a networked computer environment, increased use of the College Intranet to conduct business between departments, and increased student, faculty and staff access to technology. CCA maintains systems for three types of electronic information: voice, data and video. This information is communicated both internally and externally. Over the past few years, the College's information technology (administrative) and computer services (instructional) departments have:

- installed a video distribution center to support classroom instruction;
- installed wiring, phone service and networking in the new Student Centre and the expanded Fine Arts Building on the CentreTech campus;
- increased bandwidth to support Internet access between the campuses;
- established network connectivity to newly acquired buildings at Lowry;
- established new computer-assisted classrooms at the Lowry campus;
- created and staffed an instructional computer lab at Lowry; and
- established telephone and television cable services for dormitory rooms at Lowry.

The College's information technology department has responsibility for all administrative technology, including telecommunications, the network infrastructure, application development, database management, teleconferencing, administrative and Instructional Resource Center PCs and inventory management. The department also coordinates the many external links from the College and collaborates with the Colorado Community College System's computer department.

CCA's computer services department supports network infrastructure, database management, and instructional technology, including 25 computer classrooms and labs with approximately 700 PCs.

Three dedicated T1 lines (two serving CentreTech and one serving Lowry) support telephone communication and provide redundancy in case one fails. Each line supports 23 simultaneous telephone calls. Two dedicated T1 lines connect Lowry to CentreTech, providing Lowry with capacity for an additional 29 telephone calls. Two dedicated T1 lines connect the College with the offices of the Colorado Community College System. The College provides DSL connectivity beyond the Lowry and CentreTech campuses to the Small Business Development Center in north Aurora and to the Lowry Family Center office in northeast Denver.

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The College upgraded its telephone system in 1994. With the new system, each faculty and staff member has a direct line and a variety of voice mail options. All full-time and part-time faculty members have voice mail, if requested.

CCA maintains the Aurora cable television's educational access channel. Presently, the College scrolls education announcements on the channel. The Aurora Public Schools has used the channel in the past and plans to do so again.

CCA conducts an annual inventory of computing technology and forwards this information to the System. The 2001 survey showed the College had 950 PCs, a number that grew to more than 1,000 in 2002. The College has 14 servers located in the information technology department's server room at CentreTech, the computer service server rooms at Lowry and CentreTech, the Instructional Resource Center, media services, and the Small Business Development Center.

CCA faculty members select instructional software for appropriateness, market demand and cost. The College purchases the majority of software through a Microsoft academic select agreement. The information technology department and computer services manage site licenses. The College encourages the use of Windows 2000 and Microsoft Office XP requirements for desktop instructional support and administrative use. The information technology department supports these versions through site licenses, installation and training.

In November 2001, the College published an Information Technology (IT) Master Plan that defines the overall vision and role for technology at CCA. The plan follows a template developed by the Colorado Community College System and reflects CCA's strategic plan and academic master plan. The College's technology committee oversees implementation of the IT Master Plan and the introduction of new technologies. The IT Master Plan envisions that CCA will have: (*Resource Room document 4.38*)

- an information technology environment that promotes technology-assisted learning across disciplines;
- an efficient, centralized network management system that allows quick response to the user and works well with the two campuses;
- a homogenous environment of Windows 2000 or Windows XP to allow IT technicians to specialize in one operating system; and
- an emphasis on shared information for better access from multiple sites.



The College will seek to reach three objectives in order to accomplish this vision:

- increased student access to instructional technology;
- improved student access to technology-based support services; and
- a plan for replacement of existing inventory of personal computers.

Web-Based Technology

The College put a new Web site online in June 2002 to provide students with better information in a user friendly navigation design. The new Web site provides transfer information and improved degree information. Adobe Acrobat software was purchased so documents can be converted to this format, improving their Web appearance. The site's design also allows for marketing messages to be easily changed, added or updated.

Organizational changes were also made so the College could provide Web services in a more efficient and effective format. The College has transitioned from two Webmasters using two servers in two locations to one server and one location, and is transitioning to one Webmaster. A joint administrative and instructional Web team reviews and makes recommendations for major changes in the site's design.

The College intranet, which is accessible to administrative network users, has been in operation since 1999. It offers information about the College (meeting minutes, schedules, etc.) and is increasingly being used by College units and departments to conduct business. For example, in 2002 the information technology department launched its telephone billing system on the intranet.

College faculty and staff who have College e-mail accounts can use the Web to access their e-mail from home or from anywhere else in the world. Since early 2002, CCA faculty members have had access to a course management program developed by the System. With a password, faculty can check course enrollment and submit course grades online.

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CRITERION THREE: *The Community College of Aurora is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.*

Chapter 5

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Strengths

The College has the following strengths in the areas discussed in this chapter:

- A student-centered approach to pedagogy evident in the lifelong skills, model syllabus and teaching paradigm used throughout the College and promoted through faculty orientation, professional development and mentoring programs.
- Talented and committed faculty who contribute to the College's program quality and student achievement.
- High levels of student satisfaction with the quality of CCA instruction.
- Instructional decision-making that is increasingly inclusive, fosters collaboration and can make the difficult decisions needed to improve instruction.
- A close and positive relationship with the community and its residents that helps the College to develop new programs and to improve existing programs.
- A commitment to expanding access to the College's educational programs for all segments of the community, as evidenced by the large increases in ethnic minority students earning certificates and AAS degrees in recent years.
- Growing enrollment, including dramatic increases in certificate programs.
- The highest rating for community colleges on the 2000-01 Colorado Commission on Higher Education's Quality Indicator System (QIS).

Challenges

The self-study also found challenges for the future. CCA is challenged to:

- Continue to improve assessment of student learning across the institution, including systematic data collection and rigorous analysis of that data.
- Maintain the quality of instruction, including faculty quality, in an era of diminishing resources.
- Increase instructional support for students, including support for students taking online courses.
- Take better advantage of opportunities to market the College's educational offerings as the community and the economy change.
- Increase the numbers of students, particularly minority students, who complete AA and AS degrees.

Issues for the Future

The self-study identified issues for the future. These issues include:

- Maintaining effective communication with the large number of part-time faculty members.
- Assisting increasing numbers of online students with home computer, software and other technical support questions.
- Testing and placing students whose first language is not English in appropriate English as a Second Language courses.
- Understanding the effectiveness and quality of general and basic education courses.
- Clarifying the parameters of the College's certificates, including the range of minimum credits required, the general education credits needed and the role of lifelong skills.
- Applying the customer service expertise of the College's workforce training and development programs to other instructional programs.
- Understanding more thoroughly the implications of the changing enrollment patterns for instructional programs and support services.

Introduction

This chapter begins with the major issues related to the College's educational programs that emerged from the self-study process. The chapter then describes the data sources the College uses to evaluate its educational programs, along with examples of what these sources show about program quality. A summary of enrollment trends precedes major sections on transfer programs, occupational programs, general education and basic skills courses, and distance education. Each of these sections has information on enrollment, descriptions of information used to evaluate the programs and examples of what this information shows about program quality. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the College's workforce development and training efforts.

The Community College of Aurora is a comprehensive community college that offers transfer and occupational educational programs. The College awards certificates and degrees in the Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of General Studies and Associate of Applied Science. Four of the College's five stated purposes are instructional, and instruction is central to CCA's mission statement and to its strategic plan. The College offers more than 600 courses each semester to an annual unduplicated headcount that exceeded 8,200 credit students in 2001-02. Noncredit programs serve more than 3,000 students and clients annually. *(Resource Room document 5.1)*

To accomplish its educational purposes, the College has developed a coherent, student-centered approach to pedagogy. As part of this approach, CCA's faculty has integrated a series of lifelong skills, a model syllabus that includes these skills and a teaching paradigm across all three instructional divisions. New faculty orientation sessions, a new faculty mentoring program and ongoing faculty professional development opportunities ensure that instructors are familiar with this pedagogical approach. Building upon this approach, instructional programs have recently added capstone courses, including Humanities 220 for the AA and AS degrees, to help assess student learning and improve instructional quality. Chapter 6 discusses the College's plans to accomplish its assessment goals. *(Resource Room document 5.2)*

Approximately 360 full-time and part-time faculty members provide the College's for-credit educational programs. Noncredit programs employ approximately 60 full- and part-time staff members. In keeping with the high quality expected of CCA instruction, faculty credentials vary by program. In general, the College requires master's degrees to teach transfer courses and bachelor's degrees or portfolios to teach in nontransferable or vocational classes. Additional information about faculty credentials and the faculty development program is in Chapter 4. *(The list of faculty and their credentials is Resource Room document 5.3)*

Part-time faculty members teach approximately 85 percent of the College's courses. From 1993 to 2002, the number of regular CCA faculty grew from 17 to 33, and the number of adjunct faculty grew from 222 to

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330. The part-time faculty positions provide the instructional units with flexibility and bring specialized expertise into many occupational programs. At the same time, communication with part-time faculty requires considerable effort, as does their hiring and supervision. Not surprisingly, the College's 2002 Faculty Survey shows substantial differences between the opinions of regular faculty (who are almost all full-time) and those of adjunct faculty members. Full-time and part-time faculty members' opinions differed widely on the degree of freedom they feel to express ideas and criticism, the opportunities their jobs hold for growth, and the degree to which the college's library supports teaching and learning. (*Resource Room document 5.4*)

CCA students express high levels of satisfaction with the instruction they receive at the College, as documented in the surveys discussed in this chapter. Student satisfaction with the quality of instruction has also been consistent over time. For example, the four surveys of currently enrolled students, which the College conducted between 1997 and 2002, showed mean ratings from 3.42 to 3.50 on a scale from 1 (low) to 4 (high). Moreover, other surveys show that CCA faculty and staff are well aware of students' satisfaction with instruction. (*Resource Room document 5.5*)

The College faces several challenges related to instructional quality. One challenge is to better understand specific aspects of student satisfaction with instruction and related student support services. In part, the College can meet that challenge by more thoroughly and consistently utilizing data it already collects, including those from the 33-question Student Evaluation of Instruction. The College also faces the challenge of maintaining instructional quality during a period of diminishing state resources. (*Resource Room document 5.6*)

CCA's instructional decision-making has changed over the past year. The instructional structure is increasingly inclusive and fosters collaboration, as evidenced by the recent faculty-led progress on the College's assessment plan. At the same time, the College has had to make difficult decisions about instructional programs with a focus on efficiency and benefit to students. In the College's formal structure, a vice president for instruction (the position is currently vacant due to retirement) reports to the president. The vice president oversees three instructional deans in the divisions of computers, math and business; public service, science and workforce development; and humanities, fine arts and social sciences. The deans ensure program quality and support assessment efforts in their divisions. Department chairs and program directors report to the deans and provide day-to-day oversight, instructional leadership, and support for assessment for their departments. To broaden instructional decision-making in 2002, the College added the three deans to the president's cabinet, invited program chairs to join the Instructional Leadership Team, and convened "summer summits" to discuss faculty concerns and ideas for the future. (*Deans and their credentials are listed in Resource Room Document 5.7; Program directors and their credentials are listed in Resource Room Document 5.8*).

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An important aspect of the College's educational programs is its close, positive relationship with the community. The College makes particular efforts to respond to industry needs through the advice of its program advisory committees. The College also collaborates with community businesses and organizations in programs such as criminal justice and emergency medical provider. In response to more general needs in the community, the College has begun offering students more choice and convenience in the last several years with 100 new Internet courses, 40 hybrid courses and a weekend college. An ongoing issue for CCA is how to seize marketing opportunities brought on by economic and other changes. (*Resource Room document 5.9*)

The College is committed to expanding access to its educational programs to all segments of the community. This chapter discusses a number of successes in this area, including large increases in the number of ethnic minority students earning certificates and AAS degrees in recent years. The College has continued to improve community access through several initiatives, including an English as a Second Language Institute and increased scholarship funds through the CCA Foundation. (*Resource Room document 5.10*). At the same time, the self-study found that the College faces a number of challenges when it comes to expanding access, including those related to minority enrollment in the transfer degree programs and enrollment by gender in various certificate programs.

Enrollment in the College's instructional programs has changed significantly over the last five years. Overall, growth has been a very positive development. Most striking, however, is the shift in enrollment among programs, with a dramatic increase in the number of people earning certificates and a decrease in the number of people earning transfer degrees. These changes raise issues for the future, including the impact on campus life and the need to take a fresh look at some aspects of the College's assessment program. Later sections of the chapter provide more details about these changes.

Assessment of Instructional Programs

To assess the quality of its instructional programs, CCA relies on program reviews, data from the College's Office of Institutional Research (OIR) and information from other sources.

Program Reviews

The College reviews each of its programs (AA, AS, AGS, AAS, and certificates contained within these programs) every five years and submits the results to the Colorado Community College System. Program faculty, program advisory committees, employers and students participate in the review process. As part of the review, the College collects and analyzes a variety of data, including student achievement of competencies; rates for course completion, transfer and employment; enrollment numbers, trends, diversity; student evaluations of instruction; accessibility and cost. The State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education

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approves program revisions and continuation, which ensures program quality and viability. *(The program reviews are in the bookcase in the Resource Room.)*

CCA's most recent reviews provide evidence of the quality of the instructional programs. The reviewers commended the College on the caliber of its faculty, its excellent faculty development programs, the high retention rate, the weekend college, online courses and the academic performance of CCA's graduates when they transfer to four-year institutions. *(Resource Room document 5.11)*

While the program reviews provide periodic evaluations of instructional quality, the achievements of specific College programs demonstrate in other ways that CCA is achieving its educational goals:

- Instructors in the emergency medical provider program have recently received state awards for excellence.
- The early childhood program has expanded its services and its ties to the community. In 2002, the program developed three new certificates to meet the needs of area child-care programs. The program's director participates in the Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council and regional and state early childhood groups.
- Over the past two years, the theater program has developed one of only two community theaters in the city, expanded course enrollment and staged productions that drew record-breaking audiences. Large numbers of students, faculty, staff and community members participated in these productions. Three performers from the fall 2002 production of "Cabaret" were nominated to compete in the Rocky Mountain Theater Association's 2003 best actor competition.
- "Humanities Presents" is a faculty-initiated program that provides an opportunity for students, faculty, administrators and community members to participate in the intellectual life of the College. The College funds two to four presentations each year. Students are strongly encouraged to attend.
- The film and video technology program, a partnership with the University of Colorado at Denver (UCD), is a national leader among community college programs. The program attracts an international student enrollment, receives excellent ratings on film student Web sites, and has about 40 graduates now enrolled in the bachelor's of fine arts program at UCD.

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Data Sources

Data from the Office of Institutional Research and other sources include: (*Resource Room document 5.12*)

- annual Office of Institutional Research (OIR) surveys of enrolled students, vocational graduates, faculty and staff;
- surveys of graduates attending graduation practice (last completed in 2001) and a community leadership survey (last completed in 2000);
- the Student Evaluation of Instruction surveys that all divisions administer near the end of each semester;
- statistical data the College or the Colorado Community College System collects and which the Office of Institutional Research accesses from a central database, including demographic information, enrollment figures, retention rates, and completion rates;
- information that individual programs or divisions collect such as graduate pass rates on professional examinations, program completion rates, job placement rates, program advisory committee recommendations, and faculty and program awards; and
- the results of special evaluation efforts such as the CLARUS Report (a commercial enrollment and instruction research effort done at all Colorado community colleges in 1998) and reports from various Colorado colleges and universities on how CCA transfer students perform when they transfer to those institutions.

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education's Quality Indicator System (QIS) is also a data source, but QIS data are, for the most part, a compilation of information from the sources listed above. (*Resource Room document 5.13*)

Instructional Program Quality

The data from these measures demonstrate the quality of the College's instructional programs and provides faculty and staff with insight into instructional challenges and issues for the future. Among the highlights derived from this data are the following:

- The quality of CCA's instructional programs compares favorably to those of other Colorado public higher education institutions. In 2000-01, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's public education scorecard, the Quality Indicator System (QIS), ranked CCA first among Colorado community colleges and second among all public higher education institutions in the state. (*Resource Room document 5.14*)

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- The success of CCA's student-centered approach to pedagogy and its emphasis on teaching the lifelong skills is evident in the responses to the 2001 Graduate Survey. The survey asked graduates to rate – on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 4 (very great extent) – the extent to which their CCA experience helped them to improve in each of the six lifelong skills. The respondents' answers (provided as a mean score) were as follows:

- personal/interpersonal responsibility skills (3.32)
- communication skills (3.31)
- critical thinking skills (3.27)
- practical and artistic creativity skills (2.98)
- technology skills (2.93)
- numeracy skills (2.92)

(Resource Room document 5.15)

- The College's occupational programs lead to high levels of employment and further education, as well as to tangible economic benefits for graduates. The College's 2001 Vocational Graduates Survey (mandated by CCCS and conducted by the College's Office of Institutional Research) polled all persons who completed an AAS or certificate program at CCA in 2000. The survey found that 99 percent of respondents were working and/or continuing their education a year after graduation. Those employed in a job related to their CCA training were earning \$4.43 more per hour than those employed in a job not related to their CCA training. *(Resource Room document 5.16)*
- The College's instructional program has an excellent retention record. The 2000-01 Quality Indicator System (QIS) report ranked CCA first among Colorado's community colleges in overall retention (66.6 percent) and second in minority retention (65.2 percent). CCA's three-year retention averages – overall and minority – are above the Colorado Community College System average and the national retention rate average. *(Resource Room document 5.14)*
- CCA students and graduates give high ratings to the quality of the College's instructional programs. Respondents to the 2002 Survey of Currently Enrolled Students gave a mean rating of 3.42 to "overall quality of instruction" on a scale from 1 (low) to 4 (high). On the 2001 Graduate Survey, graduates responded to the question, "Are you satisfied with instruction?" with a mean rating of 3.4. *(Resource Room documents 5.15 and 5.17)*

The College's 2001 Vocational Graduates Survey found that 99 percent of respondents were working and/or continuing their education a year after graduation.

- CCA students give high ratings to the quality of the College's course scheduling and meeting locations. Respondents on the 2002 Survey of Currently Enrolled Students rated "days/times at which courses are offered" with a mean rating of 3.14 and "locations where courses are offered" with a mean rating of 3.29. The scale ranged from 1 (low) to 4 (high). (*Resource Room document 5.17*)
- The College's instructional programs and related services compare well to those of other area community colleges. The 1998 CLARUS Report ranked CCA above the community college norm on classroom instruction measures such as quality of instruction, relevance of course content, class size, quality and use of textbooks, and availability of instructors. (*Resource Room document 5.18*)
- The College, through its Office of Institutional Research, conducted community satisfaction surveys in 1993, 1995, 1998 and 2000. In all four surveys, community leaders expressed a high level of agreement (ranging from 87 percent in 1998 to 100 percent in 1993) that "CCA provides the types of educational programs and services desired by the community it services." The survey found equally high levels of satisfaction with CCA's educational quality and its efforts to keep the community informed of its educational programs and services. (*Resource Room document 5.19*)

Over the five years 1997-98 to 2001-02, FTE enrollment increased by 27 percent.

The sections that follow include additional data on individual instructional programs.

Enrollment

Enrollment in CCA's educational programs changed significantly over the five years 1997-98 to 2001-02. The changes included the following:

- FTE enrollment increased by 27 percent.
- FTE enrollment increased most rapidly among Hispanic (72 percent), Asian/Pacific (58 percent) and African-American (36 percent) students.
- The number of students earning certificates increased dramatically (1,142 percent).
- The number of students earning degrees increased only slightly (4 percent).
- Male enrollment grew considerably more quickly than did female enrollment.
- Enrollment of students with 30 or fewer credits ("freshmen") rose by 41 percent, while enrollment of those with more than 30 credits ("sophomores") remained unchanged.

Table 5.1: Degrees and Certificates Awarded

	Academic Year					%Change 97/98-01/02
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	
Certificates	26	29	130	204	323	+ 1,142%
Degrees	90	271	256	271	301	+ 4%
Total	316	300	386	475	624	+ 97%

CCA's total annual full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment increased from 2,290 in 1997-98 to 2,908 in 2001-02. (Annual FTE is calculated by taking the total credit hours for which students have enrolled and dividing by 30.) During the same period, freshman (students who have earned fewer than 30 credit hours) FTE enrollment increased by 41 percent while sophomore enrollment remained even. The freshman and sophomore enrollment trends appear to reflect the dramatic increase in students earning certificates during the same period and the very small increase in those earning two-year degrees.

Table 5.2: Annual Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment by Class Level

	Academic Year					%Change 97/98-01/02
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	
Freshman	1,499	1,682	1,864	1,833	2,117	+41%
Sophomore	790	767	729	755	790	-
Total*	2,290	2,449	2,593	2,588	2,908	+27%

*Columns may not total exactly due to rounding or to incomplete responses.

The College's male FTE enrollment increased at a steady rate from 925 to 1,335 (44 percent). Female FTE enrollment had greater fluctuations but increased from 1,364 to 1,565 (15 percent). The greater increase in male enrollment reflects the large number of males completing some certificate programs.

Table 5.3: FTE Enrollment by Gender

Gender	Academic Year					%Change 97/98-01/02
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	
Female	1,364	1,434	1,454	1,406	1,565	+15%
Male	926	1,014	1,137	1,175	1,335	+44%
Total*	2,290	2,448	2,593	2,588	2,790	+27%

*Columns may not total exactly due to rounding or to incomplete responses.

CCA's FTE enrollment grew faster for most ethnic minority groups than it did for the college as a whole (27 percent). American Indian enrollment grew at a rate comparable to that of the College. Over the five years, White enrollment grew by 12 percent, while ethnic minority enrollment grew by 49 percent.

Table 5.4: FTE Enrollment by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Academic Year					%Change 97/98-01/02
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	
African Amer.	395	420	447	455	539	+36%
Hispanic	182	219	256	259	313	+72%
Amer. Indian	32	39	36	43	41	+28%
Asian/Pacific	130	146	166	180	205	+58%
White	1,508	1,572	1,609	1,558	1,692	+12%
Total*	2,290	2,449	2,593	2,588	2,908	+27%

*Columns may not total exactly due to rounding or to incomplete responses.

The greater enrollment increases for ethnic minorities mean the student body became ethnically more diverse. From 1997 to 2002, the percentage of minority students (headcount) at CCA increased from 33 percent to 41 percent.

Table 5.5: Enrollment by Ethnicity as a Percentage of Total Enrollment (Headcount)

Ethnicity	Academic Year				
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02
African Amer.	16%	16%	16%	17%	18%
Hispanic	8%	9%	9%	10%	11%
Amer. Indian	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%
Asian/Pacific	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%
White	67%	65%	63%	61%	59%

*Columns may not total 100% due to rounding or to incomplete responses.

CCA's FTE enrollment grew faster for most ethnic minority groups than it did for the college as a whole (27 percent).

Transfer Programs

The first of CCA's five purposes is "to offer the first two years of college and university education for students who wish to transfer to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions." The College offers three transfer degrees: the Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS) and Associate of General Studies (AGS). All require a minimum of 60 semester hours. (*The College Catalog*)

The AA degree transfers into a baccalaureate degree program with junior standing in the arts, humanities, social or behavioral sciences, or a professional field with such disciplines as its base. The AS degree transfers into a baccalaureate degree program with junior standing in one of the mathematical, biological or physical sciences, or a professional field with one of these disciplines as its base.

The College also offers two types of AGS degrees – articulated and general. The articulated degree has a designated occupational emphasis such as paralegal or criminal justice and a written transfer agreement with specific four-year institutions. The general degree is to meet individual career goals. (*Transfer agreements are in the Resource Room document 5.20*)

The majority of CCA transfer students go to the following four-year schools (ranked by number of students transferring): Metropolitan State College of Denver, the University of Colorado at Denver, Colorado State University in Fort Collins, the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley and the University of Colorado at Boulder.

CCA students who transfer to these institutions have done well academically. For example, in the fall semester 2002, the grade point average (GPA) for all Metro State juniors was 2.90, while CCA transfers to Metro who were juniors had a GPA of 3.02. For seniors at Metro, CCA transfers had a GPA of 3.09, above the overall GPA for Metro seniors of 3.06. (*Resource Room document 5.21*)

The first of CCA's five purposes is "to offer the first two years of college and university education for students who wish to transfer to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions."

CCA students who transfer to these [four-year] institutions have done well academically.

Transfer Program Enrollment

AA and AS degrees

Approximately one-half of all degree-bound CCA students seek AA and AS degrees. However, as Table 5.6 shows, the number of AA and AS degrees awarded declined over the period 1997-98 to 2001-02. The decline was greater for AS than for AA degrees.

Table 5.6: AA and AS Degrees Awarded

Degree Awarded	Academic Year					%Change 97/98-01/02
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	
AA	133	118	99	129	120	-10%
AS	50	47	48	43	33	-33%
Total	183	165	147	172	153	-16%

Table 5.7 shows that the decline in AA and AS degrees CCA awarded was greater for male students than for female students.

Table 5.7: AA and AS Degrees Awarded by Gender

Gender	Degree	Academic Year					%Change 97/98-01/02
		97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	
Male	AA	35	27	24	30	29	-17%
	AS	21	19	23	18	11	-48%
Female	AA	98	91	75	99	91	-7%
	AS	29	28	25	25	22	-24%

The largest numerical decrease in AA degrees awarded was among White students. However, the percentage of decrease was larger for ethnic minority students (42 to 36 or 23 percent) than for White students (90 to 80 or 11 percent). The AS degree shows a similar pattern, although with larger percentage decreases. The number of White students awarded AS degrees dropped from 36 to 26, a decrease of 28 percent, while the number of ethnic minority students awarded AS degrees dropped from 14 to 7, a decrease of 50 percent.

Table 5.8: AA Degrees Awarded by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Academic Year				
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02
African Amer.	26	15	16	26	24
Hispanic	9	11	11	3	9
Amer. Indian	2	0	4	1	1
Asian/Pacific	5	4	9	13	2
White	90	88	55	85	80
Total*	133	118	99	129	120

*Columns may not total exactly due to rounding or to incomplete responses.

Table 5.9: AS Degrees Awarded by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Academic Year				
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02
African Amer.	9	4	5	7	3
Hispanic	2	4	4	3	2
Amer.Indian	0	0	1	0	0
Asian/Pacific	3	3	7	3	2
White	36	36	30	30	26
Total*	50	47	48	43	33

*Columns may not total exactly due to rounding or to incomplete responses.

One possible explanation for the decline in AA and AS degrees is the rapid expansion of CCA's certificate programs during the economic boom of the late 1990s. During this period, people wanted training for immediate job advancement and the relatively good salaries that resulted from that training, particularly in computer-related fields. Results from the College's 2001 Survey of Vocational Graduates show, for example, that respondents who completed an AAS degree at CCA in 2000 were earning an average hourly wage in 2001 of \$17.77. The same survey showed that respondents who completed a CCA certificate that year were earning an average hourly wage of \$18.28.

Another possible explanation for the decline in AA and AS degrees is that students who start their studies at CCA seeking those degrees transfer to four-year institutions before they complete their degrees. The structure of Colorado's public higher education core curriculum and the four-year schools' aggressive recruiting of community college students may contribute to early transfer.

The decrease in the number of AA and AS degrees earned by minority students from 1997-98 to 2001-02 was particularly surprising, given the large increases in their overall enrollment at CCA during the same period. While FTE enrollment of ethnic minority students increased by 49 percent, the number of AA and AS degrees earned by minority students decreased by 23 percent. The most dramatic example of this was the 72 percent increase in Hispanic FTE enrollment over the five-year period with no parallel increase in the number of AA and AS degrees awarded to Hispanic students (11 in 1997-98 and 11 in 2001-02). However, the number of certificates earned by Hispanic students during the period increased from zero to 57.

Given the importance and economic benefits of four-year degrees, CCA is challenged to increase the AA and AS degree graduation rate for all students. Of particular concern is the need to better understand why the College's degree completion rates for ethnic minorities fell during this period when their overall enrollment numbers increased. At the same time, the dramatic increase in minority completion rates for certificates is a very positive development.

Results from the College's 2001 Survey of Vocational Graduates show that respondents who completed an AAS degree at CCA in 2000 were earning an average hourly wage in 2001 of \$17.77. Respondents who completed a CCA certificate that year were earning an average hourly wage of \$18.28.

AGS Degrees

Data are not available separately for the articulated AGS degree. However, during the five-year period used for the self-study, the number of general and articulated AGS degrees CCA awarded increased by only 2 percent. An increase in the number of female students earning AGS degrees accounted for the overall increase.

Table 5.10: AGS Degrees Awarded by Gender

Gender	Academic Year					%Change 97/98-01/02
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	
Male	18	13	13	16	18	--
Female	37	26	28	24	38	+ 3%
Total	55	39	41	40	56	+ 2%

AGS degrees earned by CCA ethnic minority students declined slightly from 23 to 21, while the number earned by White students increased slightly from 32 to 35. The most significant change was among African-American students, who earned 17 AGS degrees in 1997-98 and 11 in 2001-02.

Table 5.11: AGS Degrees Awarded by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Academic Year				
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02
African Amer.	17	15	8	11	11
Hispanic	4	3	4	1	6
Amer. Indian	0	0	2	1	3
Asian/Pacific	2	1	3	1	1
White	32	19	23	26	35
Total	55	39	41	40	56

*Columns may not total exactly due to rounding or to incomplete responses.

General Education Core Curriculum

The Colorado Community College System and Colorado public four-year colleges and universities have agreed on a fully transferable general education core curriculum (the Core). The agreement makes it possible for CCA students to complete a general education curriculum guaranteed to transfer (if students complete the courses with a grade of “C” or better) to the state’s public four-year higher education institutions. (*College Catalog*)

CCA requires that to earn an AA degree, students must complete 34 credit hours (33 hours for an AS degree) in the general education core curriculum as part of the 60 credit hours needed for the degree. After CCA officially certifies that a student has completed these credit hours, regardless of whether the College confers a degree, all other Colorado public colleges or universities will accept these courses. However, if a student does not complete all the core credit hours prior to transfer, the receiving institution reviews and accepts the credits earned on a course-by-course basis and may require the student to complete additional general education credits.

Thus, the Core is a mixed blessing for the College. The transferability of the core courses encourages students to stay at CCA to complete these courses, but may also encourage students to transfer to four-year schools once they have completed the 33 or 34 credit hours without completing the AA or AS degree.

A faculty-driven project, GE 25 (GE for general education and 25 for the total number of two- and four-year institutions involved) is continuing the work of the committee that originally developed the Core. GE 25’s major significance is that some general education core courses will be designated as “guaranteed to transfer” among all public two- and four-year institutions of higher education in Colorado, regardless of whether or not a student completes all of the core credit hours before transferring. (*Resource Room document 5.22*)

The State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education has been trying for a number of years to ensure that the entire AA and AS degrees transfer to all four-year public colleges in Colorado and that graduates can transfer with junior standing. The results have been uneven, especially in certain disciplines. However, it appears at the time of this writing that the 60-hour transfer of AA and AS degrees has been accomplished.

The Colorado Community College System and Colorado public four-year colleges and universities have agreed on a fully transferable general education core curriculum.

Assessment of Transfer Programs

The positive outcomes from CCA's student-centered pedagogy and faculty members' expertise are evident in the success of the College's transfer programs. The self-study has found evidence for these outcomes in the data sources discussed earlier. The evidence includes the following:

- CCA prepares students well to transfer to four-year institutions. CCA transfers to the University of Colorado at Denver graduated with a GPA of 3.12. (*Resource Room document 5.23*)
- CCA students who transfer to Metropolitan State College of Denver generally earn higher grade point averages, especially in their senior year, than do non-transfer Metro students. (*Resource Room document 5.24*)
- For transfer programs, fall-to-spring and spring-to-fall retention rates remained relatively stable from 1996-97 to 2000-01. (*Resource Room document 5.25*)
- CCA graduates indicate that the College programs and services have helped them transfer. Graduates completing the 2001 Graduate Survey responded with a mean rating of 3.14 to the item, "The experience at CCA helped the student transfer," on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 4 (a very great extent). (*Resource Room document 5.26*)

As CCA further develops its assessment program (see Chapter 6), the College will continue to use information collected about student learning to make changes and improvements in transfer programs. As part of this process, CCA will need to integrate assessment results more closely into transfer program planning and budgeting processes.

Occupational Programs

Part of the legislated mandate for the community colleges in Colorado is that they should "... offer a broad range of ...vocational and technical education programs ... to fill the occupational needs of youth and adults in technical and vocational fields ... " (Colorado Revised Statutes 23-60-201). CCA's second of five stated purposes is to provide "occupational education for students who are seeking job preparation, career mobility, and/or job retraining ... " Students earn an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree or a certificate upon successful completion of these programs. (*Resource Room document 5.27*)

The college awards AAS degrees in accounting, applied technology, computer information systems, criminal justice, early childhood education, equipment and transportation technology, film and video technology, management, marketing and public service. CCA also awards nearly 40 different certificates in accounting, biotechnology, computer information systems, criminal justice, early childhood, film and video technology, management, mediation, paralegal, public service and real

CCA students who transfer to Metropolitan State College of Denver generally earn higher grade point averages, especially in their senior year, than do non-transfer Metro students.

CCA's second of five stated purposes is to provide "occupational education for students who are seeking job preparation, career mobility, and/or job retraining ... "

estate. Approximately 30 percent of all student applications indicating an educational goal specify the AAS degree, and approximately 7 percent specify a certificate. *(Catalog and Resource Room document 5.28)*

AAS degrees

The AAS degree prepares students for immediate entry or advancement in the workplace. The degree requires 60 to 72 semester credit hours, depending upon the program. These programs are not intended for transfer, but many four-year institutions accept courses from them. State Board policy 9-40 requires that AAS degrees have a minimum of 15 credit hours of general education. *(The College Catalog and Resource Room document 5.29)*

The number of AAS degrees CCA awarded increased by 77 percent from 1997-98 to 2001-02. The increase varied considerably by gender, with the number of degrees awarded to males increasing by 112 percent and the number of degrees awarded to females increasing by 61 percent. However, the five-year increase in the number of degrees awarded was actually greater for females (22) than for males (18).

The number of AAS degrees CCA awarded increased by 77 percent from 1997-98 to 2001-02.

Table 5.12: AAS Degrees Awarded by Gender

Gender	Academic Year					%Change 97/98-01/02
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	
Male	16	22	21	17	34	+112%
Female	36	45	47	42	58	+ 61%
Total	52	67	68	59	92	+ 77 %

All ethnic groups showed an increase in the number of AAS degrees earned at CCA over the five-year period. However, there were some relatively large fluctuations by group from year to year. For example, the number of White students earning AAS degrees fell to 35 in 2000-01, but rose dramatically to 64 the following year. Likewise, while no Hispanic students earned AAS degrees in 2000-01, the College awarded eight AAS degrees to Hispanic students in 2001-02, the highest number during the five-year period. The reasons for these fluctuations are not clear.

Table 5.13: AAS Degrees Awarded by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Academic Year				
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02
African Amer.	6	11	15	13	13
Hispanic	5	4	4	0	8
Amer. Indian	0	0	1	0	1
Asian/Pacific	0	3	3	2	6
White	41	48	45	35	64
Total*	52	67	68	59	92

*Columns may not total exactly due to rounding or to incomplete responses.

Certificates

The dramatic growth in certificate completions is one of the major developments in CCA's instructional programs in the last few years. However, unlike degrees, certificates vary widely in the number of required credit hours. CCA certificates require between 10 credit hours (real estate) and 48 credit hours (emergency medical provider). Approximately two-thirds of the College's certificates require 30 or more credit hours. Certificate requirements may include both occupational and general education courses. Among the issues needing review related to certificates are the wide range in the number of credits needed to earn certificates and the role of the lifelong skills and assessment in certificate programs. (*College Catalog*)

Over the last five years, CCA has developed new certificates in response to community needs. During this period, the College began to offer certificate programs in computer information technology (including Cisco), the police academy and the fire academy, resulting in a significant increase in the number of CCA students completing certificates. The increase was much greater for males than for females and helped to reduce the gap between male and female enrollment at the College. (*Resource Room document 5.30*)

The dramatic growth in certificate completions is one of the major developments in CCA's instructional programs in the last few years.

Table 5.14: Certificates Awarded by Gender

Gender	Academic Year					%Change 97/98-01/02
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	
Male	4	8	103	140	210	+5,150%
Female	22	21	27	64	113	+414%
Total	26	29	130	204	323	+1,142%

The number of certificates CCA awarded to students in all ethnic groups increased substantially from 1997-98 to 2001-02. Whereas in the first year of the period only four ethnic minority students (including no African Americans, Hispanics or American Indians) earned certificates, 128 did so in the last year of the period.

Table 5.15: Certificates Awarded by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Academic Year				
	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02
African Amer.	0	1	11	28	48
Hispanic	0	2	16	26	57
Amer. Indian	0	0	1	2	7
Asian/Pacific	4	2	2	14	16
White	22	24	96	129	191
Total*	26	29	130	204	323

*Columns may not total exactly due to rounding or to incomplete responses.

Program Advisory Committees

Program Advisory Committees (PAC) are the primary outside element assuring rigorous review and relevance in occupational programs. In addition to helping the College meet its high expectations for program quality, they strengthen CCA's relationship with the community and provide information to support more inclusive instructional decision-making. The vocational programs with a program advisory committee are accounting, biotechnology, business/management/marketing, computer information systems, equipment and transportation technology (diesel mechanics), early childhood education, emergency medical services, film/video technology, mediation, paralegal, and public service/criminal justice, including police and fire academies. (*Resource Room document 5.31*)

A PAC's primary purpose is to advise CCA faculty on establishing, operating and evaluating programs that serve the needs of students, businesses and industry and to provide technical expertise pertaining to the changing needs of the workaday world. For example, the advisory committee for the equipment and transportation technology program recommended program changes to attract more students.

A program advisory committee is composed of five to eight individuals whose experience and abilities represent a cross section of a particular occupational program area. The committees generally meet two times each academic year.

To ensure and improve the quality of its occupational offerings, the College regularly modifies programs using information from advisory committees, faculty and program reviews. For example:

- Film and video technology, equipment transportation technology, and computer information science all moved into significantly larger facilities with more and updated equipment.
- Based on industry needs, the business/marketing/management program updated its curriculum by adding and removing outcomes and changed the requirements for courses needed for degree completion.
- Early childhood education developed new partnerships in the community.

A Program Advisory Committee's primary purpose is to advise CCA faculty on establishing, operating and evaluating programs that serve the needs of students, businesses and industry and to provide technical expertise pertaining to the changing needs of the workaday world.

Certificate and Degree Program Development

The close, positive relationship the College has with the community is essential to occupational program development. Industry demand drives the development of new certificates and degree programs. Generally, new programs are created when a program advisory committee member or a faculty member identifies a need. Because the majority of occupational faculty members are adjunct and work in the field where they teach, they see needs as they emerge. Once an instructor or a committee member has identified a need, regular faculty members discuss it among themselves and then with their dean. If faculty members and the dean believe that the new program or certificate meets a real industry need, they take the proposal to the program advisory committee. Alternatively, in new program areas, a dean may convene a group of industry experts to discuss the proposed program or certificate. With input and suggestions from the committee or panel of experts, faculty members begin work on developing the program. If new courses are needed for the program, faculty members develop them in coordination with the dean and submit them to the college curriculum committee and the Instructional Leadership Team for review and approval. After faculty members have put all of the courses in place and met the program requirements, CCA submits the new program to CCCS for approval. (*Resource Room document 5.32*)

Assessment of Occupational Programs

The College uses a variety of assessment data to measure the quality of its occupational programs. The data include placement rates for specific AAS degrees and certificates, professional examination pass rates, program awards, enrollment data, retention data, graduation statistics and graduate survey data.

Among the highlights derived from this data are the following: (*Resource Room document 5.33*)

- Eighty-nine percent of respondents to the College's 2001 Vocational Graduates Survey said that their CCA training and education had met their goals.
- Of those respondents to the 2001 Vocational Graduates Survey who were employed at the time of the survey, 74 percent said that their CCA education or training had helped them to get or to keep their jobs.

The close, positive relationship the College has with the community is essential to occupational program development. Industry demand drives the development of new certificates and degree programs.

Eighty-nine percent of respondents to the College's 2001 Vocational Graduates Survey said that their CCA training and education had met their goals.

- Fall-to-spring and spring-to-fall retention rates remained relatively stable from 1996-97 to 2000-01 for AAS degree and certificate programs.
- Law Enforcement Academy students have passed the Colorado state certification examination at an average annual rate of 88 percent. Of the 514 persons who have graduated from the Law Enforcement Academy since its inception, 76 percent were employed in law enforcement as of December 2002.
- The rate of completion for the firefighter program is almost 100 percent. Of the 228 students who have graduated since the program's inception, 98 percent were employed as of December 2002.
- The equipment transportation and technology program has placed 100 percent of its graduates. Since this program changed from a night program to a day program, its attrition rates have dropped from 80 percent to the current 5 percent.



Occupational Program Accreditation

CCA has three occupational programs with outside agency accreditation or training standards. The programs include the following:

- The emergency medical provider program, which is accredited by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Education, has applied for national accreditation with the Commission on Accreditation on Allied Health Education Programs. A site visit is scheduled for May 22-23, 2003. (*Resource Room document 5.34*)
- The Basic Law Enforcement Training Academy, which is approved by the Colorado Peace Officers Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.) Board, an arm of the Colorado Attorney General's Office. (*Resource Room document 5.35*)
- The Fire Academy, which must meet training standards set forth by the National Fire Protection Association. (*Resource Room document 5.36*)

General Education

CCA's third of five purposes is “to provide education that strengthens the academic background of the students and prepares them to pursue their educational and career goals.”

CCA supports the philosophy that general education courses should be a part of every student's course of study, regardless of the major, and that general education courses impart the broad base of knowledge that society expects of college graduates.

The State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education has defined the minimum number of general education credits required for each associate degree. Consequently, all degrees CCA offers have a minimum general education course requirement in English/speech, social and behavioral science, mathematics, science and humanities. Each academic division teaches some of the general education courses. The GE 25 Project continues the core concept and integrates it with the four-year college and university degrees. GE 25 expands the number of required social science credits to nine, but otherwise retains the spread of required credits across the various clusters of disciplines.

Colorado employs a statewide system of basic skills assessment and mandatory placement to determine the appropriate English and math course for each student. Students whose college entrance examination scores or basic skills assessment scores are below the threshold for ENG 121 (English Composition I) or MAT 121 (College Algebra) are placed into the appropriate developmental English or developmental math courses. A separate Level of English Proficiency (LOEP) test is used, when appropriate, to place students in English as a Second Language courses. While developmental courses do not transfer, they do impart the skills needed for success in general education courses.

Outside of class, students can receive extra assistance through the Writing Studio, designated tutoring areas for accounting, math, science, the English Language Institute, and the developmental lab. Specialized tutoring assists students for whom English is not their primary language in their math, science, and computer courses. Besides live tutors, software in the various labs helps students improve their skills.

Within disciplines, CCA tailors the offerings to reflect student demand, at the same time encouraging experimentation and exploration. As one example, the foreign language department has seen steady growth in the demand for Spanish courses, while still offering single sections of German, French and Japanese. Predictable offerings of Introduction to Literature

CCA's third of five purposes is “to provide education that strengthens the academic background of the students and prepares them to pursue their educational and career goals.”

and Masterpieces of Literature are augmented by the occasional Shakespeare course. The Maymester study-abroad program has taken history, humanities, and art students to Italy, France, and Spain for an enriched version of courses usually confined to the classroom.

Community college students juggle work, family and school commitments. Given the importance of general education courses, CCA schedules a complete range of those offerings at the CentreTech, Lowry, and Grandview campuses, and at different times. CCA offers the general education courses in a variety of formats, including: face-to-face and Internet; hybrid courses with research, field work, or internet delivery paired with face-to-face instruction; weekend college; late start courses; fast track compressed courses; and guided individual studies. In many of the general education courses, students can obtain credit for prior learning using standardized tests, portfolios, or a combination of the two.

Studio arts, acting, dance, and instrumental music do not fall in the Core curriculum, although art appreciation, art history, theatre history, music appreciation, and music history do. Despite that, such hands-on courses are commonly described in the statewide common course numbering system, and do count as electives. The arts are vital components in a well-rounded education, and in the life of the college. The new Larry D. Carter Theatre, a black-box experimental space, has had a catalytic effect on the fine arts program at CCA. The quality and complexity of theatre productions has jumped exponentially, as have enrollments in acting classes. The same space has prompted rapid growth in the dance and music programs, with the fall 2002 show *Cabaret* merging all three art forms into a triumphant celebration of what students and faculty can achieve when they dare. Conversion of former science labs into ceramics and photography studios is having the same effect on those arts.

Basic Skills

The primary vehicles for strengthening the academic preparation of students are face-to-face tutoring and a series of developmental (i.e. pre-college-level) courses in English composition, math, reading, study skills and English as a Second Language (ESL). *Tutoring services are explained in Chapter 7.*

For several years, CCA operated its developmental studies program in accordance with a State Board policy that mandated assessment of academic skills but not placement into courses suggested by assessment scores. Although many students enrolled in appropriate developmental



courses, others chose to waive the recommendations and placed themselves in higher-level courses. The College implemented a revised State Board policy in July 2001. The new policy not only requires assessment but mandates placement in the recommended course.

The community's rapidly growing immigrant population offers new challenges for the College's basic skills program. The College has taken a number of steps in the past year to improve the quality of its ESL and other basic skills classes:

- CCA uses the Levels of English Proficiency (LOEP) placement test to assign students to appropriate ESL courses. When a surprising number of students tested at low proficiency, the College began to offer an introductory ESL course in spring 2003.
- Some immigrant and international students begin college courses and then realize they lack the needed English language skills. To accommodate these students, the College has begun to offer additional weekend and late-starting ESL courses.
- The College created a new English Language Institute (ELI)—headed by a full-time director—to support the existing for-credit ESL academic program and other ESL initiatives on campus and in the community. In one such initiative, the ELI has established specialized tutoring sessions for ESL students taking math, science and computer courses.
- The English 030 classes have been filled, not with English-speaking students lacking skills in grammar and composition, but with non-English speaking students lacking English. In response, the College is expanding its ESL offerings.
- The College has created a shared laboratory space for developmental English, basic skills and LOEP testing.
- Developmental English (which includes ESL) offers multiple sections of six courses at both campuses in traditional and intensive formats. In response to course feedback and LOEP performance scores, the department will offer a new introductory reading course in summer 2003.
- To measure the quality of its basic education courses, the College collects basic skills assessment and mandatory placement data, LOEP scores and statistics on the number of degree-earning graduates who have taken developmental courses. (*Resource Room document 5.37*)



- State-ordered basic skills assessment and mandatory placement into math and English courses have helped in those areas but do not take into account ESL placement. The LOEP tests are beginning to fill that need, but testing and placing all those who need such assistance remains a challenge.

Distance Learning

The fourth of CCA's five stated purposes is to provide "diverse educational experiences that are responsive to the needs and interests of persons in the community who desire to enhance their occupational, intellectual, cultural, social or personal development." Distance education makes courses accessible to students who are not able to attend traditional classes on campus and provides an alternative medium for other students. CCA first offered classes over the Internet in the mid-1990s, and online enrollment has grown since then. In 2001-02, the College ranked fifth in online enrollments of all Colorado public institutions of higher education. There were 1,220 students enrolled in Internet courses in the spring of 2002. (*Resource Room document 5.38*)

The College has changed distance education formats in response to changing technology and changing demand. Telecourses, in which enrollment declined as other options emerged, were last offered in the spring of 2001. Hybrid courses, which combine classroom meetings with out-of-class activities that may be over the Internet, began in the spring of 2002 with an initial enrollment of 185 students.

The distance learning instructional committee oversees the distance learning program and is composed of faculty members from all three instructional units. (*Resource Room document 5.39*)

To ensure and improve the quality of the College's distance learning programs, CCA has made the following changes:

- Appointed a half-time director of distance learning in July 2002 to manage the program's growth more effectively.
- Brought the administrative and instructional Webmasters together in one department in the summer of 2002 to provide Web support for both the instructional and administrative needs of the College.
- Conducted distance learning workshops each semester for faculty currently teaching online courses and for those interested in teaching them. Workshop topics include online course development and online course management.

The fourth of CCA's five stated purposes is to provide "diverse educational experiences that are responsive to the needs and interests of persons in the community who desire to enhance their occupational, intellectual, cultural, social or personal development."

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- Conducted informational meetings at the start of each semester for students interested in taking distance learning classes.

To measure the quality of its distance education courses, the College collects enrollment and course evaluation data.

Among the findings of the self-study are that CCA will need to upgrade its equipment and infrastructure to support the increased numbers of students wanting to connect to the Web server for course materials and exams. The current networking infrastructure is adequate, but the College will need additional bandwidth and speed to and from the Internet in the near future.

Workforce Development and Training

Included in CCA's second of five purposes is "Just-in-time workforce development and customized training on-site for business and industry." CCA responds to this purpose by providing community education and training through the Workplace Solutions Center, the Center for Workforce Development, and the Aurora Small Business Development Center/Small Business Management Program. Taken together, these units provide a continuum of workforce development to a broad range of people and organizations. Chapter 9 presents additional information about all three units and their partnerships in the community.

Among the contributions of these programs are the following:

- An active presence in the community in an extremely wide range of locations and venues from a store-front on Colfax Avenue in north Aurora to training activities in the area's largest corporations.
- A variety of relationships with governmental units, companies, non-profit organizations and individuals.
- A model useful to all the College's instructional programs of how to provide ongoing nurturing and support to individuals, small businesses, and larger organizations.
- A substantial contribution to the economic development of the College's service area.

Workplace Solutions staff members provide both credit and noncredit customized training to business, government and community organizations. The training includes areas such as leadership,

CCA's community education and training programs provide an active presence in the community in an extremely wide range of locations and venues from a store-front on Colfax Avenue in north Aurora to training activities in the area's largest corporations.

management, supervision, computer software use, oral and written communication, problem solving, English language acquisition and designations for insurance professions.

The Center for Workforce Development provides case management, job training, and college credit classes to Adams County Social Service recipients and low-income working families. Some program participants go on to enroll in additional CCA classes. As of May 2002, the Center's Essential Skills program generated over 52 annual FTE.

The Aurora Small Business Development Center is a joint venture between the College and the City of Aurora offering business planning and analysis to its clients. The Small Business Management Program offers college credit for on-site instruction for business owners/operators. To enhance the hands-on business visits, the program offers evening seminars and workshops on a variety of business-related topics.

To understand how effectively the College is providing community education and training, CCA collects enrollment data, information on revenue generated, participation rates, and awards received. The data show that

- from 1999 to 2002, the Workplace Solutions client base increased from 23 business partners to 65.
- from 1999 to 2002, the number of employees trained in Workplace Solutions doubled to over 3,000 and training grew from single offerings to multiple-year programs.
- in 1998, Workforce Development's first contract with Adams County Department of Social Services was \$45,000 for one 3-credit hour class that served 45 participants. The current contract (2002-03) is over a half a million dollars and offers a 19-college credit program to over 150 participants.
- in 2001-02, Workforce Development had the highest federal work participation rate of 32 contractors, and the highest job placement in Adams County (57 placements). As a result, the county awarded the center a \$46,000 bonus.
- the director of the Aurora SBDC has won the prestigious SBA Home Base Business Advocate of the Year Award, the Colorado State Star Award, and the Rural Trailblazer of the Year Award.

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To ensure and improve the quality of its community education and training programs, the College has made the following changes:

- Increased external environmental scanning to identify community needs. Example: offering GED preparation in Spanish to north Aurora Hispanics.
- Improved collaboration with other community colleges to develop and provide community education and training.



CRITERION THREE: *The Community College of Aurora is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.*

Chapter 6

ASSESSMENT

Strengths

The College has the following strengths in the areas discussed in this chapter:

- The College has integrated the lifelong skills across the curriculum.
- The faculty has aligned student learning outcomes, teaching methods and assessment strategies through development and widespread implementation of a model syllabus and a teaching paradigm.
- The faculty has aligned student evaluation of instruction with the lifelong skills.

Challenges

The self-study also found challenges for the future. CCA is challenged to:

- Strengthen the College's data collection, analysis, and storage infrastructure to support the work of the Instructional Assessment Committee.
- Collect program- and institutional-level data on student achievement of the lifelong skills.
- Move rapidly to develop pilot projects that use the results of assessment to improve teaching and learning and the quality of instructional programs across the institution.
- Utilize assessment outcomes in the College's annual budgeting and planning processes.

Issues for the Future

The self-study identified issues for the future. These issues include:

- Continuing to focus the College's efforts on program- and institutional-level assessment.
- Specifying the procedures and responsibilities for turning assessment results into instructional change.
- Continuing to provide regular and adjunct faculty with training on the lifelong skills to ensure their use in all College courses.
- Broadening the scope of assessment to include occupational skills and knowledge, using existing external measures (licensing exams, for example) as well as internally developed measures.

Introduction

CCA's program to assess student learning achieved early success, lost some momentum in the late 1990s, and is now reinvigorated. Over the last decade, the College's efforts have emphasized skills students need for employment and further education (the lifelong skills). Although the College has integrated the lifelong skills across the curriculum, assessment efforts have tended to focus on students who are completing transfer degree programs. More recently, CCA has recognized the importance of assessment in its occupational programs and for nondegree students. The College has begun to develop capstone courses as a major means of assessing student learning.

CCA's mission and goals drive the College's assessment efforts. These statements describe the College's commitment to student achievement, diverse teaching and learning environments, high academic standards, and the use of data-driven assessment. For example, the College mission states, in part: "The Community College of Aurora ... promotes excellence in teaching, learning, and service to our diverse community." CCA's strategic goals include the following:

- Continue to ensure high quality of instruction that is relevant and responsive to the needs of our community.
- Continue to ensure student satisfaction and success.
- Develop a systemic, integrated planning process that is data-based and outcomes-oriented.

A high level of faculty involvement also characterizes the College's assessment program. Among their many contributions, CCA faculty members have:

- conceived the program's framework and goals (lifelong skills);
- led workshops and in other ways shared knowledge with colleagues;
- developed and now use an outcomes-based model syllabi format;
- integrated the teaching of the lifelong skills into their courses;
- aligned student evaluation of instruction with the lifelong skills;
- included assessment in their annual work plans; and
- incorporated assessment elements as they developed new courses and programs. (*Resource Room documents 6.1*)

Important recent developments are the emergence of new leadership and faculty attendance at local assessment conferences and at the American Association of Higher Education Assessment Conference.

As a part of its site visit in March 1993, NCA approved CCA's Academic Achievement Assessment Plan identified in the College's Guide to Self-

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Study for Commission Evaluation, 1991-1992. (*Resource Room document 6.2*). Following this approval, the College faculty identified lifelong skills as the centerpiece of CCA's assessment efforts after extensive conversations with community employers and faculty visits to Alverno College. The process of identifying and adopting the skills included discussion at faculty forums, industry focus groups and the Faculty Council. The lifelong skills include the following:

- **Communication:** abilities to effectively express, impart or exchange feelings, thoughts, opinions and information both orally and in writing.
- **Critical Inquiry:** abilities to examine and utilize reasoning strategies in order to select, apply and evaluate evidence in multi-disciplines.
- **Personal Responsibility:** abilities to work independently or cooperatively in a group setting on situations and issues that affect the common welfare and one's own welfare in relationship to others.
- **Aesthetic Perception:** abilities to identify characteristics of and to judge qualitatively a creative work.
- **Quantitative Reasoning:** abilities to perform mathematical operations and to reason and draw conclusions from numerical information.
- **Technology:** abilities to make use of various technology-based applications.



What the College Has Accomplished

With the decision to focus on the lifelong skills, the goals of the College's assessment program became the following:

- Goal 1: Integrate lifelong skills across the curriculum.
- Goal 2: Align student learning outcomes, teaching methods and assessment strategies.
- Goal 3: Implement multiple measures to assess student learning and mastery of the lifelong skills.
- Goal 4: Utilize the results of assessment to improve teaching and learning quality.

CCA's faculty members, in collaboration with instructional administrators and other College staff, have accomplished a great deal in pursuit of three of these four goals. Among the specific accomplishments have been the following:

Goal 1: Integrate lifelong skills across the curriculum.

- Identified general education courses that emphasize a lifelong skill.
- Implemented a syllabus audit to ascertain progress toward integration of lifelong skills into the curriculum in both new and existing courses.
- Conducted professional development activities related to each of the lifelong skills.
- Revamped new-faculty orientation to emphasize lifelong skills.
- Developed a capstone course integrating lifelong skills as a graduation requirement for the AA/AS degrees and piloted the course in spring 2002.

(Resource Room documents 6.3)

Goal 2: Align student learning outcomes, teaching methods and assessment strategies.

- Devised a teaching paradigm that identified good practices and suggested teaching methods and assessment strategies connected to cognitive levels.
- Developed an outcome-based syllabi format (model syllabus) that reflects lifelong skill objectives and competencies and implemented the syllabus in all general education and occupational courses.
- Inventoried existing strategies for teaching and assessing lifelong skills and data sources for student performance information.
- Defined broad student learning expectations pertaining to each of the lifelong skills.

(Resource Room documents 6.4)

CCA faculty members implemented a syllabus audit to ascertain progress toward integration of lifelong skills into the curriculum in both new and existing courses.

Goal 3: Implement multiple measures of assessment to evaluate student performance.

- Conducted faculty development workshops in outcomes design, assessment theory and strategies, technology, and innovation. *(Resource Room document 6.5)*
- Revised a survey of CCA graduates and the student evaluations of instruction to include items related to the lifelong skills and collected data with these instruments.

The comparison of information collected with these two revised instruments demonstrates the College's progress to date and the potential for the future. This type of comparison can be the basis of future modifications of instructional priorities and design.

The CCA Graduate Survey provides student perspectives on the extent to which the College prepared them to pursue their future goals. Respondents rank the extent to which CCA prepared them on each of the lifelong skills on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 4 (very great extent). In the 2001 survey, graduates gave a relatively high mean rating to their preparation in critical thinking skills (3.27). They gave a somewhat lower rating to their preparation in numeracy skills (2.92). *(Resource Room document 6.6)*

Student evaluations of instruction suggest a possible explanation for the differences in graduates' ratings of their preparation in these two lifelong skills – differences in the emphasis placed on these skills across the curriculum. In the most recent evaluation of instruction (summer of 2002), 87.7 percent of students surveyed (n = 1,634) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I was challenged to think, analyze and evaluate ideas." In contrast, 62.5 percent of students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I was expected to interpret numerical data for use in papers and class discussion." *(Resource Room document 6.7)*

Goal 4: Utilize the results of assessment to improve teaching and learning quality.

- Used recommendations from program advisory committees to improve instruction. For example, based on committee recommendations, management and marketing added additional lifelong skills to each course and syllabus, made several courses prerequisites for others, eliminated a business policy course, and added an ethics course.
- Used information about rates of course incompletes to switch from a series of self-paced, one-credit modules in developmental math to instructor-taught, three-credit courses. *(Resource Room document 6.8)*



What the College Still Must Accomplish

Through the process of self-study, the College has learned that much work remains to be done. Among the specific steps that need to be accomplished are the following:

- train assessment committee members, division deans, program chairs and faculty members on integration of the lifelong skills into the curriculum, data collection and analysis, and use of assessment results to improve instruction;
- continue to encourage all faculty members, including adjunct faculty members, to emphasize lifelong skills in their courses;
- collect, distribute and use more program- and institutional-level assessment data;
- develop and implement a strategy to bring Institutional Research more fully into the assessment process;
- clarify the specific responsibilities of division deans and program chairs for integrating the lifelong skills into all courses in their programs and for assessing student learning and mastery of the lifelong skills at the course, program and institutional levels;
- clarify the responsibilities of division deans, program chairs, and faculty (regular and adjunct) for using assessment results to improve instruction;
- develop and implement rubric guides to assist faculty members and institutional researchers in assessment of lifelong skills;
- develop and implement strategies to increase student understanding of lifelong skills and their involvement in assessment processes;
- design multiple assessment approaches, including those for program- and institution-level assessment of lifelong skills, as well as student academic achievement portfolios and capstone courses for transfer and occupational programs;
- devise strategies to use assessment results to enhance teaching and learning excellence;
- establish student support services that augment student academic achievement; and
- identify existing assessment tools in occupational programs and the employment fields.

Among the specific activities now under way are the construction of an assessment Web page that includes PowerPoint workshops, the use of e-mail to update faculty on assessment, and the publication of an assessment handbook.

The college must continue to develop and implement rubric guides to assist faculty members and institutional researchers in assessment of lifelong skills.

Comparison to Levels of Implementation

In the spring of 2002, CCA evaluated its assessment efforts in relation to the Levels of Implementation described in the March 2002 Addendum to the Handbook of Accreditation Second Edition. The levels from this self-evaluation and a brief summary of the College's patterns of characteristics follow. (*Resource Room document 6.9*)

Institutional Culture – Collective/Shared Values

CCA's regular faculty and administrators share an increasingly complex understanding of the purposes, advantages and limitations of assessment. Within the last several years, this understanding has become more uniform and is spreading beyond the instructional unit. However, assessment is not yet "a way of life" at CCA. Some academic programs still need to develop statements of purpose and instructional goals, as well as formal assessment plans and goals. Assessment findings are not yet the basis of institutional decision-making. College's self-evaluation: Level Two.

Institutional Culture – Mission

CCA's mission and goals clearly indicate the value the College places on student learning. Assessment program materials (available from the assistant to the vice president of instruction) reflect these values. Over the past several years, faculty and staff have renewed discussion of assessment in the context of the College's mission, vision and values. College's self-evaluation: Level Two.

Shared Responsibility – Faculty

CCA regular faculty members have been, and continue to be, the major element in the College's assessment efforts. To learn more about assessment, faculty members have attended local and national workshops and conferences. Responsibility for assessment is in their job descriptions. Faculty members also work with committees to ensure that direct and indirect measures of student learning are aligned with educational goals and measurable outcomes. These committees include the Instructional Assessment Committee, the Professional Development Committee, and the Instructional Curriculum Committee. A major challenge is to bring the College's adjunct faculty — who teach 85 percent of the College's courses — into the assessment effort. College's self-evaluation: Level Two.

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Shared Responsibility – Administration and Board

The College Advisory Council has supported lifelong skills since their origin. The president supports assessment in many ways, as do noninstruction members of the President’s Cabinet. Division deans have become more knowledgeable about assessment. College’s self-evaluation: Level Two

Shared Responsibility – Students

Students are aware of assessment within individual courses but are not able to place it in a broader context. Increased student involvement in the assessment process is an Assessment Committee priority. College’s self-evaluation: Level One

Institutional Support – Resources

Although there is no specific budget line item for assessment, resources are integrated into other budgets. Resources to attend conferences are available, for example, from the professional development budget. Some regular faculty work on assessment during their institutional service time. Assessment resources such as the teaching paradigm and the model syllabus are available online. College’s self-evaluation: Level Two.

Institutional Support – Structures

The assistant to the vice president for instruction is the primary resource person for assessment. Responsibility for maintaining successful assessment programs is in the job descriptions for division deans and department chairs. The 2002 Plan for Continuing Progress has a timeline for advancing the assessment program. The College has a strengthened Instructional Assessment Committee through which faculty coordinate assessment. The Office of Institutional Research and other College units are available to assist the Committee, but the precise roles and contributions of these units must be more clearly defined. Syllabi for all courses are written from a model syllabus and describe student learning objectives and how learning will be assessed. College’s self-evaluation: Level Two

Efficacy of Assessment

Program-level data about student and program performance are not yet readily available and, thus, assessment data are not widely used to make changes across the institution. Most AA and AS graduates receive instruction in the lifelong skills. Faculty members have developed capstone courses in several programs. College’s self-evaluation: Level One.



Plan for Continuing Progress on Assessment

In the fall of 2002, the College reviewed the implementation of its assessment plan. Based on this review, CCA began to develop a Plan for Continuing Progress on the Assessment of Academic Achievement. A summary of the plan's four goals and related action steps follows. (*Resource Room document 6.10*)

By the spring of 2003, the College will have integrated students and non-academic departments, including student services, into assessment planning and evaluation. The assessment program will be more visible in the College, and student services representatives and students will serve on committees. Collaboration with the Office of Student Life will have increased.

By the fall of 2003, all CCA instructional programs will have a written statement of purpose, educational goals with measurable objectives and an identified assessment program. All programs will have identified their data needs and resources, aligned measures of student learning with the goals and objectives, included objectives and assessment plans in all syllabi, and incorporated assessment tools into capstone courses.

By the spring of 2004, the College will have increased substantially the abilities of regular and adjunct faculty members to gather, analyze and use both quantitative and qualitative assessment. Faculty will have created rubrics for each of the lifelong skills, and the College will have developed faculty education workshops and materials.

By spring 2004, the College will have effective feedback loops, an annual assessment reporting cycle and the infrastructure necessary to collect, store, analyze and distribute information. The College will use occupational program advisory committees to help analyze data and to develop strategies to improve student learning.

In the fall of 2002, the College reviewed the implementation of its assessment plan. Based on this review, CCA began to develop a Plan for Continuing Progress on the Assessment of Academic Achievement.

By spring 2004, the College will have effective feedback loops, an annual assessment reporting cycle and the infrastructure necessary to collect, store, analyze and distribute information.

CRITERION THREE: *The Community College of Aurora is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.*

Chapter 7

STUDENT SERVICES

Strengths

The Community College of Aurora has the following strengths in the areas discussed in this chapter:

- Students are very satisfied with the quality of the Student Services Division's services and customer service.
- Faculty and staff are satisfied with the services provided in the Student Services Division.
- Improved availability of retention, completion and transfer data.

Challenges

The self-study found challenges for the future. The College is challenged to:

- Meet expanded hours of operations and operate efficiently and effectively with smaller budgets and reduced staff.
- Continue to improve the performance of the financial aid department.

Issue for the Future

The self-study identified an issue for the future. This issue is the following:

- Providing the level of student services needed to match enrollment growth at the Lowry campus.

Introduction

The Community College of Aurora provides a wide range of services to students. Provision of these services is one of the College's five stated purposes and is implicit in the College mission statement. Moreover, by providing these services, the College ultimately expects to help students achieve their own educational and professional goals.

The College values (respect, quality, access, diversity, inclusion, and collaboration) guide the types of services the College offers and the manner in which it delivers them. For example, the record number of students on financial aid in the spring of 2002 and the priority the CCA Foundation now places on developing new scholarships testify to how highly CCA values access. The College's staff training and other recent efforts to improve customer service testify to the value of respect. Cross training of student services staff and the "one-stop" approach for services at the Lowry campus demonstrates the importance of collaboration.

Four CCA strategic goals focus on student services, including a goal to increase retention and completion rates and a goal to serve more students—particularly underserved students—in the College's service area. To ensure that the College meets these goals, the student services and enrollment management division ties its divisional and departmental planning directly to the College's strategic plan. The division's data booklet has a copy of the strategic plan draft and unit goals for each of the six units. The division inserts strategic planning goals directly into the unit goals and staff performance evaluations. (*Resource Room document 7.1*)

CCA provides most services to students through the division and its seven departments: advising, admissions and registration, financial aid, learning resource center, student life, recruiting, and Lowry campus services. Until 2001, when the College increased its focus on enrollment management, the division had been titled student, faculty, and staff services.

Four student services directors report to the vice president of student services and enrollment management and provide day-to-day administration and leadership in these areas. Primary offices are on the CentreTech campus and basic "one-stop" services are at the Lowry campus. As of August 2002, the division employed 34 staff members to service an annual nonduplicated headcount of more than 8,200 credit students. Reduction in the number of student services employees over the past several years (from 42 in 2000 to 34 in 2002) is a major challenge for the College.

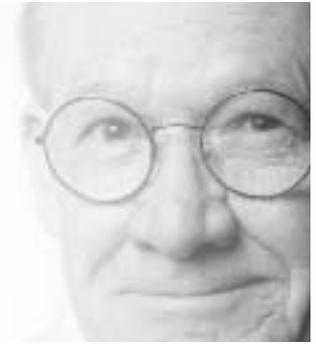
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The division has made several significant adjustments since 2001 to increase enrollment and operate more efficiently and effectively. These adjustments include the following:

- Developed the “one-stop” model to deliver services at the Lowry campus, where cross-trained staff members provide registration, admissions, advising, assessment and financial aid services. At the CentreTech campus, the division uses a traditional departmental model but cross trains staff members with other departments. For example, registration trains its staff members to read financial aid screens, and advising trains staff to provide assessment services.
- Focused on enrollment management, sending staff members to visit other campuses and to attend conferences and workshops on recruiting, retention and customer service.
- Improved student access to information with new degree, certificate and transfer guides; an improved, user-friendly Web site; updated degree audit software and a “just-in-time” financial aid application process.
- Created a positive climate for students and employees through changes in financial aid, access to financial aid screens for admissions and registration staff, a computer replacement strategy, an emergency loan fund for students and a strategy to improve the predictability of budgets.
- Increased the use of technology and data to improve decision-making in recruiting, retention, marketing, budgeting and staffing. The division has created a variety of databases and reports and used the resulting information for many purposes, including a ZIP code analysis to assist in marketing, a re-recruiting strategy, enrollment predictions and determination of goal accomplishment for underrepresented students. (*Resource Room document 7.2*)
- Improved decision-making and communication through an open, non-hierarchical decision-making style, the sharing of budgeting information and decision-making and inclusion of instruction in decision-making and information sharing.

With many changes under way or complete, the division also has a number of opportunities. These include the electronic transfer of transcripts, predictive modeling to improve retention, improvements in Learning Resource Center labs and tutoring, recruiting partnerships with Workforce Development, relationships with Aurora Public Schools, keeping pace with enrollment growth at the Lowry campus, and institutionwide training in retention and telephone techniques.



To understand how effectively the College is providing student services, the division collects assessment data from five institutional effectiveness measures:

- The annual Survey of Currently Enrolled Students; (*Resource Room document 7.3*)
- The annual Graduate Survey; (*Resource Room document 7.4*)
- Student services report cards (customer service surveys, collected daily and tabulated by frequency count); (*Resource Room document 7.5*)
- The CLARUS Report (a firm hired to do enrollment research at all Colorado community colleges in 1998); and (*Resource Room document 7.6*)
- Faculty/staff constituency evaluations (other departments in the College evaluate student services). (*Resource Room document 7.7*)

Some results from these surveys are provided below. The student services data booklet has additional assessment information. (*Resource Room document 7.1*)

Overall, these assessments reveal high mean ratings for CCA's student services:

- Respondents on the last three Surveys of Currently Enrolled Students rated "overall quality of services" at 3.2, 3.2 and 3.29 (1=low, 4=high).
- On the three Graduate Surveys given from 1999 to 2001, recent CCA graduates responded to the question, "Are you satisfied with student services?" with mean ratings of 2.77, 3.46 and 3.25 (1=not satisfied, 4=very satisfied).
- Annual constituency surveys completed by employees since 1998 indicate increased satisfaction with student services.
- Student services report card data (FY01) indicate strong grades in "courtesy" and "quality of operations."



Advising

The College encourages new and continuing students to talk with an academic advisor in the Advising Center for help in choosing courses. The Advising Center also provides specialized assistance to international students and veterans.

The Advising Center at the CentreTech campus has five full-time advisors and three part-time faculty advisors. At the Lowry campus, the “one-stop” Student Services Center has two advisors cross-trained in financial aid, admissions, registration and assessment skills, as well as one part-time faculty advisor. The Advising Center also uses staff from the Learning Resource Center during peak registration periods.

Since the summer of 2001, the Advising Center has implemented new products and processes to improve service to students. These improvements include:

- Formal, user-friendly advising and transfer guides to assist both students and advisors; (*Resource Room document 7.8*)
- “On-Course” online degree audit software that identifies what a student has taken and what he or she needs to take to complete a degree; (*Resource Room document 7.9*)
- Regular meetings with faculty members to update information about academic programs; and
- Adjunct faculty members hired to work as part-time advisors throughout the year to provide flexibility in serving students during busy periods and to link advising with instruction.

Advising Center staff members visit instructional departments monthly to build relationships and learn about program changes. Staff members are active in Systemwide initiatives in basic skills assessment for developmental courses.

The College has measured the effectiveness of advising and its services as follows:

- Respondents in the last three Survey of Currently Enrolled Students rated “advising” with means of 3.14, 3.07 and 3.09 (1=low, 4=high).
- Employees who completed the annual constituency surveys from 1998 to 2001 indicated that advising “meets or exceeds expectations” in all performance indicators measured.
- Student services report card data (FY01) indicated 81 percent of students gave advising a grade of “A” or “B” in courtesy, and 11 percent gave it a grade of “F.” Eighty-three percent graded it “A” or “B” in quality.

Advising Center staff members visit instructional departments monthly to build relationships and learn about program changes.

Admissions and Registration

The Admissions/Registration Office provides a variety of support services to students, including processing admissions applications and registrations, evaluating transcripts, providing transcript services, maintaining the degree audit program (On-Course), and conferring degrees. All services are available to students at CentreTech and Lowry campuses with primary services located at CentreTech. In addition, the office enforces compliance with state residency regulations, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, and with State Board policies and procedures.

The admissions/registration staff includes a registrar and four full-time and three part-time staff. The departments use the Student Information System software, a customized package used by most Colorado community colleges.

The College continues to welcome walk-in registration, offering extended office hours during peak periods. However, in recent years, the admissions/registration office has expanded its use of technology in order to provide more convenient service. For example, students can now apply for admission, register for courses, adjust schedules, obtain commonly used forms and access their student records online. Likewise, they can register, adjust their schedules and access their grades via the telephone.

Since the summer of 2001, CCA has implemented new processes, including several statewide initiatives, to improve service to students and faculty. These processes include:

- Cross-training of front-office staff in information related to financial aid. For example, front-office staff can check the status of a student's application, which reduces the student's wait in line.
- Implementing a Web-based program through which faculty can submit grades, check course enrollments and monitor wait lists. (*Resource Room document 7.10*)
- Participating in a program (Colorado Mentor) that allows students to send a common application to a number of Colorado colleges. (*Resource Room document 7.11*)

Students can now apply for admission, register for courses, adjust schedules, obtain commonly used forms and access their student records online. Likewise, they can register, adjust their schedules and access their grades via the telephone.

The College has measured the effectiveness of admissions/registration and its services as follows:

- Respondents in the last three Surveys of Currently Enrolled Students rated “walk-in registration” at means of 3.43, 3.29 and 3.5 (1=low, 4=high).
- Respondents to the Graduate Survey responded to the question, “Are you satisfied with the registration process?” with mean ratings of 2.62, 3.61 and 3.42 (1=not satisfied, 4=very satisfied).
- Annual employee constituency surveys indicate the department consistently “meets or exceeds expectations” in all performance indicators measured.
- Student services report card data (FY01) indicated 77 percent of students gave admissions/registration a grade of “A” in courtesy, and 63 percent gave it a grade of “A” in quality.

Financial Aid

The Financial Aid Office, with five full-time employees, is responsible for assisting students with applying for and receiving federal, state and institutional financial aid, including grants, scholarships, work-study support and student loans.

The Financial Aid Office collaborates with other College departments to ensure that services are available for students. For example, the office works with:

- the Business Office to create a system in which the transfer of financial aid funds to eligible students’ accounts results in accurate balances on those accounts.
- the CCA Foundation to establish, process and publicize scholarship opportunities, as well as to develop and adopt a single application for all scholarships.
- the Admissions and Registration Office to determine the accuracy of student data.
- the Learning Resource Center to ensure that an ability-to-benefit test (Accuplacer) is available to students and that the LRC reports these scores promptly and accurately.
- the Advising Center to ensure that advisors monitor students on financial aid to be sure they continue to meet eligibility requirements when planning their course schedules.

The Financial Aid Office works with the CCA Foundation to establish, process and publicize scholarship opportunities, as well as to develop and adopt a single application for all scholarships.

The Financial Aid Office has used technology to improve the administering and awarding of financial aid funds. The awarding of grant funds is automated and loan applications can be transmitted electronically and funds may be transferred electronically. Student financial aid records are imaged, allowing financial aid staff to access student files from their own computers. Apply-in-time awarding is now in effect so that students with a tax form in hand can get their financial aid award in less than one hour.

Many improvements in the Financial Aid Office have been implemented since a less-than-ideal audit in March 2001 and the receipt of numerous student complaints. Several indicators revealed there were problems:

- Student services report card data [FY 01] indicated that while 58 percent of students gave the Financial Aid Office a grade of “A” in courtesy, 25 percent gave it a grade of “F.” Similarly, 47 percent gave the department a grade of “A” in quality, and 26 percent gave it an “F.”

During 2001 and into 2002, the College acted to resolve the problems and address the student complaints, including hiring several financial aid consultants. Currently, the office has a relatively new staff, and the number of students on financial aid has returned to an all-time high. (*Resource Room document 7.12*)

Learning Resource Center

The Learning Resource Center (LRC) plays a critical role in supporting student success at CCA. Located on the second floor of the Student Centre on the CentreTech campus, the LRC houses a computer lab with 32 PCs and adaptations for students with disabilities. Many LRC services are also available at the Lowry campus. The LRC services include the following: (*Resource Room document 7.13*)

- study skills development through workshops and individualized assistance;
- support services and resources for special-needs students;
- media resources, including classroom equipment and instructional materials;
- assessment and placement in reading, math and English;
- testing for a variety of purposes;
- tutoring in math, writing, accounting, computers and chemistry; and
- open computer labs, writing lab and self-paced math software.

The Learning Resource Center (LRC) plays a critical role in supporting student success at CCA.

In general, the Learning Resource Center has operated well in the past few years. At the same time, CCA's Learning Resource Center does not have the same depth and breadth of support services as do larger community colleges or those in states with greater support for higher education.

The following LRC services are addressed below: accessibility services, career services, testing and tutoring services.

Accessibility Services

Accessibility services helps CCA students and employees with disabilities gain equal access to College programs and services. The accessibility coordinator collaborates with the advising staff and faculty members to arrange for accommodations and address special concerns. Each semester, the department assists approximately 190 students with identifiable disabilities.

CCA strives to address the rights of students with disabilities and to make them aware of their responsibilities. Students learn about accessibility services from course syllabi, the College Web site, the CCA catalog and schedules of classes, and in a letter the College sends to all students. To receive accommodations, students must document their disability each semester. To ensure that the College meets the needs of all students with disabilities, the accessibility services director spends one afternoon a week at the Lowry campus.

Accessibility services provides tutors, readers/writers, interpreters for the deaf, textbook recording, equipment, note taking and study-skills training. Accessibility services also refers students to additional services in the community and acts as an advocate to improve the environment as it affects persons with disabilities.

Respondents to the spring 2001 Survey of Currently Enrolled Students ranked accessibility services 3.44 on a scale from 1 (low) to 4 (high). The survey did not ask about accessibility services before 2001.

Testing

The Testing Center serves students, faculty, staff, and community residents. The center provides the following services:

- academic testing in a secure, proctored environment for students requiring makeup exams, distance education course exams, or credit for prior work or life experience via credit-by-examination programs;
- assessment testing of students' academic skills, in partnership with advising, which interprets the results (available at both the CentreTech and the Lowry campuses);



- outside testing services for individuals, students, workers or professionals from other organizations, academic institutions or business/professional associations; and
- pre-GED testing and support of local GED testing services.

The center works with accessibility services in accordance with ADA provisions to provide students with necessary accommodations, materials and support. The center is also continuing to look at new ways of serving the CCA population and the community at large.

Over the last three survey periods, respondents to the Survey of Currently Enrolled Students rated the testing center at 3.21, 3.17 and 3.28 (1=low, 4=high). The 1998 CLARUS report ranked CCA's testing and assessment services higher than those at other metro area community colleges in every category measured.

Tutoring Services

Tutoring services provides extra help and assistance to students in math, writing, chemistry, computers and accounting. One part-time coordinator supervises 16 tutors (eight faculty members, one student and seven volunteers). Tutoring services may be provided in group or individual sessions. Tutors play an important role in helping students achieve their educational goals and completing their course of study.

Over the last three survey periods, respondents to the Survey of Currently Enrolled Students rated tutoring at 2.98, 3.0 and 3.13 (1=low, 4=high). Tutoring services also receives student comments from the drop-in tutoring labs. Most of the feedback provided is positive, although there have been some complaints about scheduling and the type(s) of tutoring available. Additional statistics about tutoring services are available in the student services data book.

Career Services

The Career Center is located in the Advising Center and is staffed by one full-time employee. Career services software is also available at the Lowry Campus. The center helps students in their job search and hosts a schoolwide job fair with approximately 40 employers every fall. The center helps students assess their career interests, learn more about careers and prepare for a job.

The center offers seminars in resume writing, interviewing techniques, job-search strategies and career choices. Career staff members also provide career information to College groups and classes. Career services receives numerous referrals from advising.

In the spring of 2001, respondents to the Survey of Currently Enrolled Students rated the career services at 3.1 (1=low, 4=high). The survey did not ask about career services before 2001. Log-in sheets located in the LRC track Career Center usage.



Student Life

Student Life plays a critical role in supporting student success at CCA. By taking part in special activities, students are able to build relationships and develop friendships that help them to grow personally and academically. This integration is an important component of retention. One director, assisted by several student workers, coordinates the following options for students: (*Resource Room document 7.14*)

- organizations, including Phi Theta Kappa, athletic clubs, business clubs, Black Student Alliance, Criminal Justice Club, religious clubs, International Student Alliance, Lazos Culturales, Women of Wisdom and the Lesbian/Gay Alliance;
- activities such as dances, cookouts, cultural events, games, athletic competitions, speaking events, student leadership programs, films and “pizza with the President;”
- Student Government Association, which represents the student body and regulates all clubs and organizations;
- the CCA Fitness Center, which opened to students and the public in January 2002 on the Lowry Campus;
- the CCA residence hall, which opened in the summer of 2001 and doubled the number of residents in one year; and
- student ID discounts negotiated with local businesses.

The College has measured the effectiveness of student life and its services as follows:

- On the spring 2001 Survey of Currently Enrolled Students, respondents rated student life 3.04 on a scale of 1 (low) to 4 (high). This was the first year the survey asked about student life.
- The 1998 CLARUS report compared CCA's student life program to other metro area colleges and other colleges across the country. CCA scored consistently higher in most categories.
- Another measure of effectiveness is provided on sign in-sheets and evaluations after major student events. Those who planned the event meet to evaluate its effectiveness and this information is usually entered into club meeting minutes.

Student Life plays a critical role in supporting student success at CCA. This integration is an important component of retention.

Recruiting

Recruiting services provides new and prospective students with information about the College in the form of brochures, schedules and catalogs. Recruitment personnel also provide tours and are available to answer student questions.

Recruiting services reports directly to the vice president of student services and enrollment management. One full-time employee and two to four student ambassadors provide pre-enrollment services, including attending high school fairs, recruiting at high schools and businesses, managing the inquiry database and recruiter log, coordinating tours, and updating recruiting materials. Lowry staff provide recruiting assistance where overlap or schedule problems occur. (*Resource Room documents 7.15*)

To strengthen recruiting, the vice president for student services and enrollment management worked with staff to introduce new information technology in 2001-02:

- The inquiry database now tracks all inquiries by type and yield (who has applied, who has enrolled), indicating inquiry sources and totals. The College now has the capacity to do much more specific reporting and to give many more people access to this information. (*Resource Room document 7.16*)
- The recruiter log tracks all recruiting activity, including who represented the College at an event, whom that person spoke to, and so forth. The log allows for year-to-year comparisons of recruiting activity starting with the 2001-02 year. The student services data booklet contains recruiting information.
- The creation of the inquiry database and the recruiter log were part of a larger effort to use information to generate additional enrollment. Over the last year, the division has continued to build the College's capacity to understand more about inquiries to the College, particularly which of those inquiries went on to apply and which of those applications went on to enroll. This information has been compared to national data and used for specific purposes, including:
 - deciding what ZIP codes to include in specific mailings, and
 - continuing to place more emphasis on the World Wide Web as inquiries via the Web increase.

Recruitment resources sometimes limit the potential for using the information to its best advantage. For example, the inquiry database provides a list of persons who have applied but who have not enrolled. With additional resources, these persons could be "re-recruited" and encouraged to enroll.

The inquiry database now tracks all inquiries by type and yield (who has applied, who has enrolled), indicating inquiry sources and totals. The College now has the capacity to do much more specific reporting and to give many more people access to this information.

To reach Hispanic and other underrepresented groups, the College does the following:

- hires a bilingual student worker every year to act as an interpreter or assist in answering questions from Spanish-speaking students;
- uses Hispanic staff to recruit at events that focus on Hispanic students; and
- develops strong relationships with foundations (the Latin American Educational Foundation and the Daniels Fund) and community agencies that serve a variety of underrepresented students.

The residence hall that the College opened in 2001 at Lowry has proved to be an unexpected asset to recruiting. Open to any student registered at an area college who passes a background check, the residence hall is now promoted by other area schools as a housing option for incoming students.

The College has not assessed recruiting using the traditional college surveys. However, since the College restructured recruiting and strengthened its technology tools, CCA's FTE increased 5.5 percent in FY 02 and is on track to increase again in FY 03.

Online Student Services

In the fall of 2002, more than 200 students were taking courses at CCA exclusively online. For these and other students, the process for applying, registering, advising, buying books and getting financial aid for an online course is much the same as for any other CCA course:

- Online students register and apply three ways: the Internet, the telephone system or in person.
- Online students get advising by visiting the Advising Center or using online advising sheets for degrees and certificates and online transfer guides; some students e-mail the department chairs for information.
- Online class information is available at <http://www.ccaurora.edu/infosheets/index.html>. The information includes a course description and a class syllabus link with detailed sub-links to information on faculty, announcements, class notes, homework, tests, grades and how to contact the instructor.
- Online students can apply for financial aid online at the CCA Web site or in person at the Financial Aid Office.



- Online students use the Learning Resource Center for testing, tutoring and using learning software.
- Online students can purchase books through the Internet or in the campus bookstore.

The College has an e-mail account and voicemail that are checked and responded to daily for questions about distance learning classes.

CCA has a Web test to help students prepare for online classes. It includes short demonstrations and a practice exercise to help them determine if they have the basic skills required to take a course online.

To aid students in their use of College services via the Internet, CCA has paid special attention to designing and maintaining a user-friendly Web site. Evidence of the College's success in this area came in the fall of 2002, when Stone/Ward Fuse Box, a national public relations and marketing firm, rated CCA's Web site third among the more than 1200 college Web sites it had reviewed.



CRITERION FOUR: *The Community College of Aurora can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.*

Chapter 8

PLANNING AND EFFECTIVENESS

Strengths

The Community College of Aurora has the following strengths in the areas discussed in this chapter:

- The tested capability to respond to budget challenges through greater budget openness, conservative budgeting, and cautious enrollment and revenue projections.
- A focus on responding to new challenges with funding generated through the CCA Foundation and from government and foundation grants.
- More opportunities to fulfill the College mission at an expanded Lowry campus and the recently completed facilities at the CentreTech campus.
- Experienced and committed faculty and staff, including many adjunct faculty members drawn from community businesses and organizations.
- A growing service area, with major development areas (Buckley Air Force Base, Denver International Airport, the E-470 Corridor), large-scale redevelopment projects (Lowry, Fitzsimons and Stapleton) and increasing minority populations.
- Broader participation in College decision-making through a Cabinet Advisory Council, an expanded President's Cabinet and an expanded Instructional Leadership Team.
- Revised planning and decision-making processes that are more inclusive and open than in the past.
- A commitment to, and strategy for, increasing the use of assessment for planning and decision-making across the institution.
- Community support for the College, its students and its programs.

Challenges

The self-study and the work of the self-study committees assigned to this criterion also found challenges for the future. The College is challenged to:

- Respond positively and creatively to declining state revenues and state financial support;
- More effectively meet the educational needs of underrepresented groups and of immigrants not eligible for resident tuition;
- Increase minority representation on program advisory committees, the College Advisory Council and the Foundation Board so that their membership is generally proportionate to the minority populations of the College's service area;
- Develop aggressive recruitment and retention strategies for minority faculty, staff and students;
- Develop and implement a system to evaluate the degree to which the College meets its strategic goals and use the evaluation results to modify subsequent strategic plans; and
- Increase the use of assessment data in the planning process.

Issues for the Future

The self-study and the work of the self-study committees assigned to this criterion identified issues for the future. These issues include:

- Finding creative ways to use the space at CentreTech vacated by programs moved to Lowry;
- Seizing additional opportunities at the Lowry campus, building upon the initial successes;
- Continuing to solicit input from constituencies throughout the planning process and share planning documents (including unit plans) with all CCA faculty, staff and students.
- Distributing an annual planning cycle master calendar with plans, products, timelines and responsibilities.

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the Community College of Aurora's ability to continue to accomplish its purposes and to strengthen its educational effectiveness. The chapter first summarizes the College's financial, physical and human resources to reach these goals. Next comes a discussion of the ability of the College governance structure and decision-making processes to respond to changing circumstances and new challenges. The chapter then analyzes CCA's processes for planning and for measuring institutional effectiveness. Finally, the chapter outlines how the College will integrate the self-study findings into the planning process in coming years and how the College will allocate resources to implement self-study recommendations.

Resources to Accomplish Goals and Improve Education

Financial Resources

CCA has the financial resources with which to meet goals and strengthen its teaching and learning. To maintain these resources, CCA has developed an open and conservative approach to budgeting and spending. A cautious approach to forecasting enrollment, combined with intensive enrollment management, supplements the budgeting and spending processes. Most important, the lessons learned in developing and implementing these approaches mean that the College has the tested capability to respond to future financial challenges. (*Resource Room document 8.1*)

The College changed its approach to budgeting in 2000-01. At the beginning of that fiscal year, the College had in place an aggressive revenue goal, expenses that were not in line with revenues, and debts in some auxiliary accounts. In spring of 2001, faced with enrollment short of projections and excess expenses, the President's Cabinet reduced the budget and eliminated programs and positions, saving \$1.2 million. In addition to staff reductions, the budget cuts included strategic changes such as moving the Workplace Solutions Center from the regular budget to being self-funded. The cabinet made these reductions openly and inclusively to the extent possible while protecting employees' privacy. During this period, for example, the president regularly informed the Cabinet Advisory Council and the College at large about the budget situation.

Given the 2000-01 experience, the cabinet constructed a much more conservative 2001-02 budget based on less ambitious enrollment projections. Consequently, the College ended 2001-02 with a year-end surplus, despite the state's rescinding funds.

CCA has the financial resources with which to meet goals and strengthen its teaching and learning. To maintain these resources, CCA has developed an open and conservative approach to budgeting and spending.

The 2002-03 budget year began with a nearly 5 percent state general fund budget reversion, effective July 1, 2002, followed within a month by an additional 5 percent reversion. Rather than simply taking across-the-board budget cuts, the cabinet worked openly with directors and cost-center managers to ensure that the College invested in the future even as it dealt with the immediate situation. Among these investments were improved facilities for biology, film and video technology, and equipment and transportation technology.

The College will continue to focus on new opportunities while meeting any future fiscal challenges. Among the sources of funding to meet these challenges will be the CCA Foundation and grants from government agencies and local foundations. Presently, for example, the College is addressing the needs of the community's immigrant population with monies from the city of Aurora and the Xcel Energy Foundation. (*Resource Room document 8.2*)

Physical Resources

CCA has an exciting array of physical resources with which to meet goals and strengthen its teaching and learning. Not the least of these resources is additional space. During the past several years, the College has added to its CentreTech campus, expanded and improved its facilities at the Lowry campus, and reduced the use of rented satellite sites. In 1991, CCA occupied just over 89,000 square feet at the CentreTech campus. By 2002, the College occupied over 400,000 square feet, including 278,000 square feet at the Lowry campus. Equally important, the College has made major investments in technology and completed other physical improvements. The completion of a Lowry facilities plan in the fall of 2002 and the expected completion of an overall facilities master plan within the next few years will help the College make the most efficient use of its physical resources. (*Resource Room documents 8.3 and 8.4*)

The College opened the Student Centre at CentreTech in 2000. The 26,500-square-foot facility houses student activities and provides much-improved space for the College's educational support programs, including the Instructional Resource Center and the Learning Resource Center. In 2001, the 8,000-square-foot addition to the Fine Arts Building gave CCA's theater and other fine arts programs a performance venue, as well as additional classrooms and offices. The College has improved CentreTech in other ways, such as new carpeting for the Classroom Building, to ensure that these facilities remain appealing and comfortable for students. With laboratory sciences, computer information systems and other classes moving to Lowry, CentreTech has space for new and creative uses, including space on the third floor of the Classroom Building.

The College expanded its facilities significantly at Lowry in 2001, taking on both a tremendous opportunity and the challenge of doing so with limited resources. Because the System paid some costs at Lowry, CCA acquired the additional space at reduced cost. Moving many programs to a three-building complex across from the residence hall created a more

The College will continue to focus on new opportunities while meeting any future fiscal challenges.

CCA has an exciting array of physical resources with which to meet goals and strengthen its teaching and learning.

campus-like atmosphere and greatly increased the instructional space. Among the facilities in the new 150,000-square-foot complex is a CCA Foundation-funded Cisco networking lab and extensive new facilities for the growing film and video technology program. The College's science programs benefited from moving to remodeled labs in the new complex.

The residence hall at Lowry represents an example of the calculated risk-taking and investment in new opportunities that will serve CCA well in the years ahead. In a short period in 2001, the College converted the former officer quarters into the only community college residence hall in the Aurora/Denver metropolitan area. The number of students living in the hall doubled from 2001 to 2002. Similarly, changes related to the Lowry expansion have helped the College to become fiscally and administratively more efficient. For example, some classes taught at relatively expensive rented space in area high schools have moved to Lowry. CCA kept classes at just one school, Grandview High School, which serves a growing area far to the south of the campus in the Cherry Creek School District. New space at Lowry also allowed the College to leave leased facilities off campus and move the equipment and transportation technology program to Lowry.

Since the last self-study, CCA has greatly advanced its use of technology, preparing the College well for the future. For example, the College has 25 computer labs (including Cisco-certified labs) with approximately 700 PCs.

Human Resources

CCA has the human resources with which to meet goals and strengthen its teaching and learning. The College has numerous faculty and staff members whose long service with the College testifies not only to their commitment, but also to the experience they bring to their work with students. Like many institutions, the College in the next decade will have many of its most experienced employees retire. Fortunately, over the past few years, new faculty and staff members with a variety of experiences and backgrounds have joined the College.

The College benefits from the talents of many adjunct faculty members who work in area companies such as Raytheon and TRW. Strong and creative partnerships with business, industry and community groups help the College find these highly qualified personnel. In several programs, such as equipment and transportation technology, emergency medical provider and insurance, local company partners supply faculty to teach specialized courses.

The College has also benefited from the availability of many talented people attracted to Colorado's Front Range. High-quality graduate education, an outdoor-oriented lifestyle and, until recently, numerous employment opportunities for families and spouses, have contributed to CCA's success in developing its human resources. Likewise, many military personnel have retired in the Aurora area, providing the College another source of qualified faculty and staff.

The residence hall at Lowry represents an example of the calculated risk-taking and investment in new opportunities that will serve CCA well in the years ahead.

The College has numerous faculty and staff members whose long service with the College testifies not only to their commitment, but also to the experience they bring to their work with students.

At the same time, attracting and retaining talented candidates from underrepresented groups continue to challenge CCA. Because of its limited resources, the College often has difficulty competing with wealthier institutions and the private sector. To help meet the challenge, the College has charged committees reviewing job applicants to consider diversity as they seek the best candidate. The director of human resources attends all job interviews, emphasizing the College's commitment to diversity. (*Resource Room document 8.5*)

The College has made progress in increasing the numbers of regular faculty, though recent budgetary concerns have impeded that progress. Nevertheless, CCA is committed to increasing the ratio of regular to adjunct faculty, while also valuing the advantages of a large cadre of adjuncts who provide specialized expertise, broad experience and budget flexibility.

The College has also made a long-term commitment to increasing salary scales while carefully ensuring the institution's long-term budget stability. Current state budgetary constraints have delayed plans for salary analysis and implementation, but the College's commitment to increasing salaries remains.

Responding to Changing Circumstances and Challenges

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) and the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) monitor the College's activities, finances, programs and facilities. These boards set policy, allocate funding, approve programs and generally provide citizen oversight to Colorado public higher education. In addition, the SBCCOE appoints CCA's College Advisory Council to advise the president on the changing educational needs of the College's service area. (*More information is in the GIRs*)

Within this service area, CCA faces a particularly complex set of changing circumstances, continuing challenges and great opportunities. Many of these relate to Aurora's evolution and growth and include the following:

- the increasing ethnic diversity of north Aurora with a large, often-undocumented Mexican immigrant population;
- the conversion of nearby Fitzsimons Army Medical Center into the country's newest and most comprehensive educational medical center;
- the creation of the nation's largest urban redevelopment project on the site of the former Stapleton Airport, just north of the Lowry campus, as well as the continued redevelopment of Lowry;
- a service area encompassing two large school districts, one (Aurora) serving students from 82 language backgrounds and with schools under state mandate to improve and the other (Cherry Creek) more affluent but increasingly diverse; and

CCA is committed to increasing the ratio of regular to adjunct faculty, while also valuing the advantages of a large cadre of adjuncts who provide specialized expertise, broad experience and budget flexibility.

- the rapid development around Denver International Airport northeast of the College, along the new E-470 toll way corridor to the east and southeast of the city and adjacent to Buckley Air Force Base near the College's CentreTech campus.

Over the last several years, the College has developed the flexible and inclusive institutional governance necessary to respond to these and other changes, challenges and opportunities. CCA's recently revised mission statement, goals and values guide this approach to governance, while specific structural changes assist in its implementation. For example, to make the College's decision-making more inclusive, the president created the Cabinet Advisory Council in 2001 with representation from a broad range of units and from both the Lowry and the CentreTech campuses. The advisory council's range of expertise and variety of perspectives strengthen CCA's ability to find solutions to new challenges, adapt to changing circumstances and seize new opportunities. *(Resource Room document 8.6)*

In a more recent change, the College's executive decision-making group, the President's Cabinet, expanded to include the three academic deans, strengthening the cabinet's capacity to address and improve educational effectiveness. The president also regularly convenes ad hoc all-college meetings, solicits e-mail suggestions from the CCA community, and meets frequently with individuals to discuss issues, formulate strategies and consider decisions. *(Resource Room document 8.7)*

Within the College's three units, leadership teams or committees regularly meet to make many decisions that affect their units. One of these teams, the Instructional Leadership Team, broadened its representation in the fall of 2002 by adding all 14 program chairpersons to its membership. In addition, within this unit, the vice president for instruction holds monthly meetings with faculty members and uses e-mail to solicit ideas and encourage faculty participation in decision-making. Faculty Council is another important vehicle for broad-based faculty input into College decision-making. Open to all faculty members, the council has representatives on the Cabinet Advisory Council and on the Instructional Leadership Team. *(Resource Room document 8.8)*

Also important to the College's ability to make decisions and allocate resources in coming years is the wealth of ideas and suggestions from the community. The College Advisory Council meets monthly to advise the president about perspectives from citizens, business, education, state legislators and local government. Program advisory committees provide program-specific information. To ensure that the council and committee suggestions represent the diversity of the community, the College is challenged to expand their Hispanic and other minority membership. *(Resource Room documents 8.9)*

Over the last several years, the College has developed the flexible and inclusive institutional governance necessary to respond to these and other changes, challenges and opportunities.

The College Advisory Council meets monthly to advise the president about perspectives from citizens, business, education, state legislators and local government.

Finally, the College is not meeting challenges and seizing opportunities in isolation. Founded by Aurora residents who labored so the community could have a college of its own, CCA actively collaborates with a great many organizations to devise new programs and improve existing ones. For example, the Medical Center of Aurora, the Aurora Fire Department and Rural/Metro Ambulance collaborate with the College in the emergency medical provider program.

These partnerships generate positive relationships with the community that can help the College continue to meet its purposes. The depth of this goodwill can be seen in the high regard with which the community holds CCA and its programs. For example, 97 percent of respondents to the College's most recent (April 2000) Community Leadership Survey agreed, "CCA provides the programs and services the community desires and contributes to its economic well-being."

As it examined the College's ability to respond to changing circumstances, the self-study committee on decision-making concluded that the College has a solid decision-making process. It cited the 2000 Community Leadership Survey results to show that the College does a good job of involving both internal and external constituencies in decision-making. However, the committee also found areas where the College could continue to improve decision-making. (*Resource Room documents 8.10*)

These areas include:

- creating a better understanding throughout the College about who is responsible for what decisions;
- making decisions in a timely manner and at the lowest-possible level;
- communicating decisions to everyone required to implement them; and
- informing people about the status of delayed or pending decisions.

College Plans and Ongoing Planning Processes

Over the past two years, CCA's planning processes have changed considerably. College planning now involves a wider representation of constituencies, focuses more on connecting planning at various levels of the institution, and is developing better ways to measure how well CCA is meeting its goals and fulfilling its plans.

The College bases its planning upon priorities established by its governance board, the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education. In addition, planning takes into account the priorities and standards of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and the state of Colorado's Quality Indicator System. (*Resource Room document 8.11*)

Over the past two years, CCA's planning processes have changed considerably. College planning now involves a wider representation of constituencies, focuses more on connecting planning at various levels of the institution, and is developing better ways to measure how well CCA is meeting its goals and fulfilling its plans.

CCA involves internal and external constituents in the development of the College's strategic plan (its strategic goals). Throughout the development of the plan, divisions, employee groups, students, citizen advisory groups and other constituents provide ideas and comments. The president begins the development process with visits to College employees to hear their thoughts about accomplishments, needed changes and opportunities and challenges. The president also meets with student groups, the board of the CCA Foundation, and the College Advisory Council to evaluate the College's strengths and weaknesses, assess community needs, review resources and brainstorm potential partnerships and relationships. *(Resource Room document 8.12)*

As the planning process proceeds, the president and cabinet assess progress on reaching existing strategic goals and decide what goals to carry over and what goals to change. To help them measure this progress, CCA's Office of Institutional Research conducts a variety of surveys. *(Resource Room documents 8.13 and 8.14)*

These surveys include:

- Vocational Graduates Survey
- Survey of Currently Enrolled Students
- Faculty Survey
- Staff Survey
- Student Evaluation of Instruction

Other information used for planning also includes the Quality Indicator System reports and the credit enrollment profiles, developed by the Office of Institutional Research. *(Resource Room documents 8.15 and 8.16)*

As the instructional programs further implement their assessment plans, the College will use data from these efforts in the planning process. The gathering and use of assessment data remains a challenge, however.

Using the constituent input and the survey data, the president, the Cabinet, and the Cabinet Advisory Council develop a draft strategic plan and circulate it widely for review. Academic departments, for example, send the draft plan to adjunct faculty members for their comment. Final responsibility for modifying the plan rests with the Cabinet following discussion with the Cabinet Advisory Council. Once the plan is complete, the College distributes it to CCA employees and groups, as well as to selected external constituencies.

The College planning process remains flexible, giving the College the capability to respond to changing circumstances. For example, in the summer of 2002, many faculty members attended two "summer summits" to discuss concerns first voiced more informally within instruction. At the summits, faculty generated and honed ideas about how to empower faculty and involve them more in decision-making, improve various

The College planning process remains flexible, giving the College the capability to respond to changing circumstances.

instruction-related conditions and communication and increase student success. A College retreat, also in the summer of 2002, brought together College leaders from all three units to discuss ideas and possibilities, many related to the evaluation and performance of College personnel. (*Resource Room document 8.17*)

In an effort to improve the planning process, the College has focused on planning and plans that connect across the institution. Once the institutional strategic plan is complete, each major unit (administrative services, student services and enrollment management and instruction) develops its own annual plan, focusing on the College goals most appropriate for the unit. The unit plans also include any unit-specific goals not covered in the strategic plan. The units use information from college surveys to measure previous years' goal achievement and to develop new or modified plans. For example, the instructional unit uses information from the faculty survey and the survey of currently enrolled students and the student service unit makes extensive use of data from the survey of currently enrolled students. (*Resource Room documents 8.18*)

To complete the Collegewide planning process, individual employees develop annual work plans that address elements of their respective unit plans as well as job-specific goals. These individual work plans ultimately reflect the College strategic plan. This well-interconnected process is relatively new in its implementation, and work remains. (*Resource Room documents 8.19*)

The College planning process also involves the development of specific plans required by SBCCOE. Copies of these plans are available in the Office of the President and on the CCA Web site. (*Resource Room document 8.20*)

The self-study committee assigned to examining CCA's strategic planning concluded that the planning process has improved greatly over the last two years. The committee observed a shift away from senior-management planning to a more inclusive process and concluded that this has been a dramatic, positive change. The committee recommended that the shift continue with more emphasis on communicating planning outcomes to all who participate in the process and publicizing the degree to which the College and its units have achieved planning document goals. The committee noted that confusing and overlapping titles, variations in terminology, and a wide range of formats sometimes interfere with communication about planning. The committee recommended that the College develop common titles, standardized terminology and common formats and structures for planning documents and reports.

Finally, the committee noted that the cycle for developing and assessing the strategic plan, while improving, has not yet been clearly delineated with an annual timeline, specific products and clear-cut responsibilities. The College needs to develop, publish and disseminate such a document.

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Measuring Institutional Effectiveness

Until 2000, CCA used a one-page scorecard to measure institutional effectiveness. The cabinet used the scorecard information to evaluate performance and set goals, as well as to report performance to groups such as the College Advisory Council. However, the College dropped the use of the scorecard because what it measured was not connected to a strategic plan. To replace the scorecard, the College is developing an annual report that analyzes how well the institution is meeting each strategic goal and related objectives. (*Resource Room documents 8.21*)

As a first step in developing this report, the director of communication prepared a document in the fall of 2002 giving examples of the progress the College has made in meeting its strategic goals. The president also described this progress at the 2002 convocation. CCA's major challenges for the future are to expand this initial version of the annual report, adding detailed measurement and rigorous analysis of goal achievement, and then to use the report each year in the modification of the strategic plan.

Two goals in the 2002-05 strategic plan testify to the importance the College places on how it collects and uses data to measure institutional effectiveness and assist in decision-making:

- to more thoroughly integrate the use of information and technology into the decision-making processes, and
- to develop a systematic, integrated planning process that is data-based and outcomes-oriented.

Beginning in the fall of 2002, a team that included the three vice presidents and the directors of communications and grants began to design a matrix of decision-making and institutional effectiveness. The design included consideration of the following:

- The essential decisions related to institutional effectiveness and institutional planning for which College faculty and staff need accurate, up-to-date information.
- Data the College is now collecting related to these essential decisions, additional data the College needs to collect, and data the College no longer needs to collect.
- How the College can best analyze data to provide accessible, user-friendly information needed for planning, budgeting and other decision-making.
- The persons responsible for collecting, analyzing, distributing and maintaining data, including new or revised responsibilities.



- How the College can better use technology to collect and analyze data and distribute the resulting information quickly and accurately to all faculty and staff who need it.
- Training and other human factors the College will need in order to implement the strategic goals and related initiatives.

Quality Indicator System

During the 1999-00 school year, the Colorado Legislature enacted legislation called the Quality Indicator System (QIS), which the Colorado Commission on Higher Education manages. This annual report card-type evaluation requires that each public higher education institution in Colorado assess its effectiveness using both standard statewide criteria and criteria of its own choosing. QIS gives the public a snapshot of the performance of the state's public colleges and universities. The indicators used in QIS are now part of CCA's planning and evaluation cycle. QIS currently mandates reports on the following performance indicators:

- three-year graduation rate;
- freshmen retention and persistence rates for all students and for minority students;
- undergraduate class/section size;
- faculty instructional workload; and
- percent of technical graduates employed or continuing their education.

The QIS also allows each college to submit two reports of its choosing. CCA reports the following:

- the number of minority students enrolled as compared with the service area's minority population; and
- the number of students and companies served by the College's Workplace Solutions Center and the number of students served in customized training programs.

CCA has done very well in the QIS evaluation. The results of the QIS report published in the fall of 2001 put CCA first among Colorado's community colleges and second among all the state's public colleges and universities. (*Resource Room documents 8.22*)



Assessment of Student Academic Achievement

Chapter 6 describes the College's progress and plans.

Integration of the Self-Study Findings Into CCA's Planning Process

The College's planning process regularly integrates information and recommendations from throughout the College and from external sources, including the annual State Board and Colorado Commission on Higher Education priorities. In a similar way, the College will integrate the self-study findings into the 2003 planning process. The wide participation in the self-study process by CCA faculty and staff and their knowledge of the study and its findings will greatly aid this integration.

College Resources Allocated to Implement Self-Study

The College will allocate resources to implement the self-study through the prioritization and budgeting process described earlier. The College mission, goals and values play an important part in this process. Virtually all those who participate in the budgeting process have participated in the self-study, with the cabinet playing a central role in both efforts.



CRITERION FIVE: *The Community College of Aurora demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.*

Chapter 9

INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY AND FEDERAL COMPLIANCE

Strengths

The Community College of Aurora has the following strengths in the areas discussed in this chapter:

- A new set of values developed as part of a recent revision of the College's mission and goals.
- An increasingly diverse student body and a service area with a rapidly growing Hispanic population.
- Communication of information through a variety of media to students, faculty, administrators and community constituencies.
- Positive relationships with educational, community and government groups.
- Advisory committees that contribute expertise to College vocational programs.
- High levels of efficiency and integrity in financial and contract matters.

Challenges

The self-study and the work of the self-study committees assigned this criterion also found challenges for the future. CCA is challenged to:

- Better inform faculty, staff, and students about College policies, including sexual harassment and contract policies;
- Increase the number of African American, Hispanic, Asian and Native American staff and faculty members; and
- Establish a more comprehensive strategy for developing relations with a changing community and increasing collaboration among CCA's existing community programs.

Issues for the Future

The self-study and the work of the self-study committees assigned this criterion identified issues for the future. These issues include:

- Completing the transition to the new CCA values, integrating them into evaluation systems and communicating them to the entire College community through many means, including the *CCA Faculty Handbook*; and
- Revising the *Faculty Handbook* to include more information about faculty members' rights, responsibilities and grievance procedures and make copies of the handbook available on the CentreTech and Lowry campuses.

Introduction

This chapter will focus on how the College demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships. The discussion of institutional practices begins with the standards the College expects of students, staff and faculty. It then evaluates the College's grievance and sexual harassment procedures, diversity policies and communication. The discussion of institutional relationships includes the College's connections with other institutions and the community, as well as articulation agreements and contracts. The chapter concludes with a section on the College's federal compliance.

College Standards

Ethical behavior is essential to CCA's operation. The College adopted an ethics policy, "Ethics for CCA Employees and Others," in 1986 and revised it in 1989 (Policy/Procedure 510). However, few members of the CCA community know about this policy because it is rarely published or referenced. Thus, the ethical bases for CCA's decisions and practices are primarily the College's formal set of values and the personal standards of its faculty, staff and students. (*Resource Room document 9.1*)

CCA adopted a set of values with ethical implications before its self-study in 1993. These values were identified as respectful, empowering, collaborative, exemplary and responsive. As mentioned in Chapter 1, CCA recently revised and broadened these values as part of a reassessment of its mission, goals and strategic plan. In 2000-01, College faculty, staff and administrators agreed on a mission statement and a set of values. The final report of that process, issued in July 2001, identified the College's new values as respect, quality, access, diversity, inclusion and collaboration.

The themes that run through the College's 2002-05 strategic plan reflect these values: responsiveness to community needs, ensuring student success, reaching the underserved, increasing diversity and partnering with other institutions and community groups.

An indication of the importance the College gives to its values is their use in employee performance reviews. A challenge for the College in 2003 and beyond is to integrate the new values into the evaluation system. (*Resource Room document 9.2*)

The themes that run through the College's 2002-05 strategic plan reflect CCA's values: responsiveness to community needs, ensuring student success, reaching the underserved, increasing diversity and partnering with other institutions and community groups.

Communication

The College uses various means to communicate expected standards for ethical behavior to students, faculty and staff.

The College communicates standards for ethical behavior, including academic honesty, especially well to students. The *CCA Student Handbook* contains extensive and specific information about the student code of conduct, disciplinary procedures, student grievance procedures, the instructional policy on academic dishonesty, and the student academic appeal procedures. The *CCA Student Handbook* also has information on student rights, freedoms and responsibilities. (*Resource Room document 9.3*)

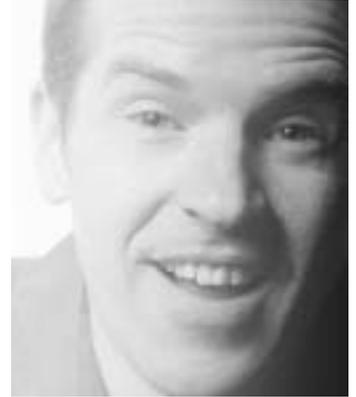
The *CCA Faculty Handbook* has brief sections on student responsibilities and appeal procedures to help instructors inform their students. Faculty members also help communicate College standards, particularly those related to academic issues such as plagiarism, through course syllabi and through classroom discussion. (*Resource Room document 9.4*)

The College communicates expectations for ethical behavior less well to faculty and staff than it does to students. The College's ethics policy applies to College employees and to any agent or representative (paid or unpaid) as they perform duties on behalf of the College. However, the College has not circulated the policy widely in recent years. The *State Employees' Handbook*, available only on the Web, contains information on ethical behavior, including the code of ethics for state employees and the policy on conflict of interest. The *Faculty Handbook* lacks similar policy statements. In general, the College does not include policies about ethics in employee orientation or training. When the College policy manual is available on the Web, the ethics policy will be more accessible to faculty and staff. (*Book marked on the computers in the Resource Room and Resource Room document 9.4*)

On a practical level, the process of student appeals communicates ethical standards to faculty. Students may appeal grades and other academic decisions through a process that exposes faculty decisions to examination and ethical judgment by the College community. (*Resource Room document 9.5*)

Internal Communication

The College attempts to describe its programs, policies and operations honestly and clearly to both internal and external constituencies. It has increased efforts to do so during the past two years. Moreover, CCA strives to clear up misunderstandings or misinterpretations of College programs and policies. To do so, the Communications Division may make annual, or even semester, changes to College publications. All departments view and proof these publications, along with any changes.



Quality is a College value, one quite evident in College publications. The Communications Division's numerous national awards for excellence give evidence of the rigor and integrity with which the College carries out the communication process. The division has won 10 Paragon awards from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR), an affiliate council of the American Association of Community Colleges. NCMPR's District 4 has also awarded CCA 15 Medallion awards for publication design, logo design, radio and print advertising, and marketing/community relations plans.

To reach internal constituencies, the College uses print and electronic publications, e-mail, all-college meetings, campus television monitors and direct contact among faculty, staff and students. However, those who wish to communicate a message to the CCA community face several challenges. First, the majority of both faculty members and students are part-time, which means they keep diverse schedules. Many faculty members and students are not available to come to scheduled campus meetings or events. Second, staff, students and faculty are spread across several locations, including two primary campuses, satellite campuses and online. (*Resource Room document 9.6*)

The *CCA Catalog*, *CCA Schedule of Classes* and various departmental brochures describe the degrees, certificates and courses that CCA offers. The *Catalog* and *Schedule of Classes* also describe College policies and procedures. The *Student Handbook* contains general information on the College, including student responsibilities and rights. The *Faculty Handbook* focuses on specific information useful to instructors, particularly to those who are new or who teach part time. (*Resource Room document 9.7*)

External Communication

The College describes its programs, policies and operations externally through print publications, television commercials, the Web, cable television Channel 54, flyers and departmental brochures. The *College Catalog* and the *Schedule of Classes* describe College policies. These publications also instruct students on practical operations of the College such as registration, advising and financial aid, in addition to describing the types of degrees, certificates and courses CCA offers. (*Resource Room documents 9.8 and 9.9*)

Access is a CCA value, and the College attempts to attract students through its marketing. These efforts often target groups such as non-traditional or older students, working individuals, single parents, and ethnic groups including African Americans and Hispanics. Because a large part of marketing is visual, the Communications Division makes special efforts to ensure that all groups are well represented in visual graphics to clearly reflect the College's diversity. (*Resource Room document 9.10*)

The College describes its programs, policies and operations externally through print publications, television commercials, the Web, cable television Channel 54, flyers and departmental brochures.

Grievance Procedures and Dispute Resolution

The emphasis CCA gives to the values of respect and relationships is evident in College grievance policies and procedures. Written grievance policies and procedures cover all CCA employees and students. College grievance policies come from state-level agencies. For example, the grievance policy in the *State Employees Handbook (2001)* covers CCA's classified employees. The grievance policy that covers all other employees, including regular faculty, administrators and contracted staff, is based on State Board Policy 350, and is printed in the College policy manual and on the College Web site. The *Faculty Handbook* does not contain information about grievances. (*Resource Room documents 9.4 and 9.11*)

CCA, like other community colleges in Colorado, develops its own procedures to implement state grievance policies. At CCA, the grievance procedure is the same for all employees. If the director of human resources determines that a complaint is a grievance, he first tries to resolve it informally through discussion. If the informal process does not satisfy the complainant, he/she may file a formal written complaint. Once the director receives a formal written complaint, he selects a committee with representation from four groups: classified employees, full-time faculty members, administrators and adjunct faculty members. At any point in this process, the complainant may hire an attorney and pursue legal recourse outside the grievance process.

The need to convene a formal grievance committee has been rare at CCA (the human resource director recalls only three in the last 16 years). Many problems have been resolved informally. In other cases, the complainants immediately sought outside resolution. These cases have usually involved claims of discrimination brought to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to determine if there was probable cause or not. CCA has never had a probable-cause finding.

The student grievance procedure is clearly stated in the *Student Handbook* and referenced in the *Catalog*. The handbook is available in campus offices and on racks throughout the campus.

The self-study committee that examined grievance procedures reported three factors that it believes impair the effectiveness and fairness of the College's grievance policies and procedures:

- The College does not adequately communicate grievance policies and procedures to faculty and contract employees. They are accessible only in the policy manual in the Human Resources Office.

Written grievance policies and procedures cover all CCA employees and students. College grievance policies come from state-level agencies.

- The grievance process has no mechanism to ensure that an employee or student first discusses a possible grievance with his or her immediate supervisor or instructor. Students, for example, sometimes go directly to a dean without talking first to the appropriate faculty member.
- The short time limit (10 days) for submitting grievances may make it difficult for some to file a grievance.

Sexual Harassment

The values of respect, relationships and inclusion guide CCA policies and procedures, including the College's policy and procedures related to sexual harassment. The College's sexual harassment policy and related procedures are described in the CCA policy manual (No. 515). The College publishes the policy in the *College Catalog* and in the student code of conduct in the *Student Handbook*. There is also a statement about sexual harassment in Appendix A of the *State Employees' Handbook*. The policy is not included in the *Faculty Handbook*. Orientation for new employees covers the sexual harassment policy. However, in recent years, the College has not held the annual seminars and workshops for students, faculty and staff mandated in the policy. (*Resource Room documents 9.12*)

Diversity

CCA's diversity testifies to the influence of the College values of access and inclusion. The College's student body is growing more diverse and now includes a higher percentage of minorities than does CCA's service area. However, Hispanic enrollment has not grown in proportion to Hispanic growth in the community. (*Resource Room document 9.13*)

The discrepancy may reflect, in part, rapid growth of the city's Hispanic population over the last few years, a population that includes many recent arrivals from Mexico, including many undocumented persons. Among the undocumented are youth who have graduated from high school in Aurora but who are not eligible for in-state tuition and are, therefore, unlikely to attend college. Providing these youth access to higher education remains a challenge.

Likewise, the number of adults interested in English as a Second Language courses appears to be quite large, based on the extensive waiting lists for courses offered by the Aurora Public Schools and the response to a community-based pilot project CCA began with the city of Aurora in 2002. However, many potential ESL students cannot document U.S. or Colorado residency and are not eligible for in-state tuition. For these people, CCA's for-credit ESL courses are very expensive. Improving CCA's service to this population is the target of Goal 5, and the College requests the advice of the visiting team on this topic.

CCA's diversity testifies to the influence of the College values of access and inclusion. The College's student body is growing more diverse and now includes a higher percentage of minorities than does CCA's service area.

Maintaining a diverse group of College employees is a continuing challenge for CCA. For example, while CCA's student body has grown ethnically more diverse in recent years, the College's full-time faculty has grown less diverse. In 1995, 79.2 percent (19 of 24) of full-time faculty members were White. Six years later, 88.9 percent (24 of 27) were White. The change represents both a growth in the number of full-time White faculty members and the loss of full-time Asian and Native American faculty members. The number of full-time African American faculty members (two) remained the same.

The changes in the diversity pattern for adjunct instructors from 1995 to 2001 were more complex than were the changes for full-time faculty members. In 1995, 86.3 percent of the adjunct faculty was White. In 2001, that percentage was 83.4 percent. During the same period, the percentage of African American adjunct faculty decreased, from 8.4 percent to 6.6 percent. On a positive note, the percentage of Hispanic adjunct faculty increased from 3.5 percent to 5.8 percent and the percentage of Asian adjunct faculty increased from 1.3 to 3.3 percent. In 2002, the College had no adjunct Native American faculty members.

Compared to their representation in Aurora as a whole, Hispanics are underrepresented among full-time and adjunct faculty, administrators, technical/professional staff and classified staff. African Americans are underrepresented among full-time and adjunct faculty. The situation is more complex for Asians, with underrepresentation among faculty, good representation among administrators, and underrepresentation among technical/professional staff. Although the percentage of Native Americans in the student body exceeds the percentage of the Aurora population, there are no Native Americans (1999-00) among faculty, administrators or staff. (*Resource Room document 9.14*)

Ethnicity is not the only measure of diversity at CCA. Contributing to the diversity of the student population as a whole—and to many individual classes—is the wide range of age groups. For example, in the fall of 2002, of students registered at CCA:

- 20 percent were 19 years old or younger;
- 19 percent were 40 years old or older;
- 41 percent were in their 20s; and
- 20 percent were in their 30s.

Unlike the rather substantial changes in the student population's ethnic diversity over the last few years, the year-to-year changes in age groups have been minimal. (*Resource Room document 9.15*)

Ethnicity is not the only measure of diversity at CCA. Contributing to the diversity of the student population as a whole—and to many individual classes—is the wide range of age groups.

Building on its values of inclusion and respect, the College continues efforts to increase its diversity. The College has focused on recruiting more Hispanic students through a diversity committee chaired by the vice president for instruction. In addition, the president, the director of the CCA Foundation and the director of grants visit with various Hispanic groups in the community.

The College seeks to further enhance diversity by:

- offering courses in areas such as English as a Second Language, ethnic studies, and culture and conflict resolution;
- supporting student clubs such as the Black Student Alliance, International Students Club, Lazos Culturales, Lesbian Bisexual and Gay Club, and Women of Wisdom Club;
- increasing the number of course offerings and tutorial services for English as a Second Language;
- encouraging faculty and staff to attend free courses in workplace Spanish;
- responding, when possible, to Spanish-language inquiries with a Spanish-speaking employee; and
- selecting diverse committees that will recruit, select, interview and recommend employee candidates. (*Resource Room document 9.16*)

Non-Discrimination and Affirmative Action

The College states its strong support for diversity among students, staff and faculty in the discussion of student diversity programs in the *Catalog*. The *Student Handbook* more fully articulates that support:

“The Community College of Aurora recognizes that human diversity is a measure of quality within academic institutions, and is fostering a multicultural environment that promotes pluralism and values human differences. Students of different ages, races, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations and educational goals are welcome at the Community College of Aurora. Diversity in the College population provides an opportunity for students to meet with and learn from those who are similar to them as well as those who are different. This diversity adds a rich and valuable dimension to the educational experience of all students. We invite the participation of all Community College of Aurora students in an ongoing celebration of diversity.”



A statement of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination is printed in the *College Catalog* and in the *Schedule of Classes*, but the statement is not printed in the *Faculty Handbook*. The most complete statement about nondiscrimination is in the *Student Handbook*. This statement includes specific information about where individuals can obtain additional information at the College, from the community college system, and from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights. The EOC statement is on job announcements and applications, and the College advertises widely to ensure diverse and qualified candidate pools. However, the College does not have a formal affirmative action policy or program. (*Resource Room documents 9.3 and 9.17*)

There is evidence that the College's strong support for diversity has affected students in positive ways. In their responses on the 2001 Graduate Survey, 79.1 percent of respondents said that to a great or very great extent their experience at CCA had helped to improve their respect for ethnic and cultural diversity. (*Resource Room document 9.18*)

The self-study committee that gathered and analyzed information about nondiscrimination took issue with the application of the State Board policy under which the College can dismiss probationary faculty and nonclassified staff without cause. The committee found the wording of the policy (BP 3-20) to be clear but its implementation to be vague and imprecise at times. The committee pointed out that common practices (unwritten procedures that are part of the CCA institutional culture) between and within departments are not always clearly stated or defined, creating disparities in practices. (*Resource Room documents 9.19*)

Integrity in Institutional Relationships

The Community College of Aurora has numerous relationships with other institutions of higher education, public school systems, businesses, governmental agencies, community groups and student organizations. Some of these relationships involve legal and financial matters. The College strives to maintain the highest levels of cooperation and integrity in all these relationships.

Higher Education Relationships

(See Chapter 1, the section on Governance, for a brief description of public higher education governance in Colorado.)

To ensure good communication and integrity of relationships with other institutions of higher education, particularly other two-year colleges, CCA regularly participates in the following:

- The Colorado Community College System staff convenes an annual meeting of community college faculty to discuss system initiatives and provide an opportunity for faculty to meet by discipline to develop common curriculum. (*Resource Room document 9.20*)

There is evidence that the College's strong support for diversity has affected students in positive ways. In their responses on the 2001 Graduate Survey, 79.1 percent of respondents said that to a great or very great extent their experience at CCA had helped to improve their respect for ethnic and cultural diversity.

- Each community college discipline group has a listserve, which members use to discuss issues of common interest, for submission to system committees.
- The Colorado Commission on Higher Education staff convenes biannual meetings of faculty from two- and four-year schools to discuss system initiatives and to give faculty the opportunity to work on issues shared by the community colleges and four-year schools. (*Resource Room document 9.21*)
- The community college presidents, chief financial officers and controllers meet monthly in separate groups. The vice presidents of instruction and the vice presidents of student services also meet one day each month, jointly in the morning and separately in the afternoon. (*Resource Room document 9.22*)



Articulation and Transfer Agreements

CCA has articulation agreements with, among others, the University of Colorado at Denver (paralegal and film/video), Metropolitan State College (criminal justice), and all area vocational schools. The College has transfer agreements with private four-year schools, including Franklin University, Regis University and Columbia College. The vice president of instruction maintains these agreements. (*Resource Room document 9.23*)

Articulation and transfer agreements work well for students if they regularly talk to an advisor to understand what courses will transfer to other institutions. The *College Catalog* publishes this information, but some students, typically those who do not complete a degree before they transfer, may never see an advisor to assure they are taking the correct courses.

The Colorado Community College System has developed a core curriculum that meets the general education requirements for arts and sciences at the state's public four-year colleges and universities. The core curriculum fulfills the general education requirements for CCA's Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees. The *College Catalog* advises students who plan to transfer to a four-year college or university to familiarize themselves with the requirements of that institution and to obtain assistance from a CCA academic advisor in planning a transferable program of study.

Community Relationships

To implement its value of service, the College relates formally to the community through a number of units, each with a different mission to the community and with a different relation to the College. All, however, contribute to CCA's role as a community college. At the same time, CCA has yet to develop a focused community strategy that increases collaboration among diverse College units to address community needs and the College's goals. Likewise, there is no clearly defined organizational structure to coordinate and implement such a strategy.

Service Learning

Much of the work of CCA's Service Learning Program is grant funded and is with public schools in low-income neighborhoods in north Aurora. For example, the program convenes a coalition of middle schools, city departments and Aurora Public School administrators to develop and support after-school programs. The Service Learning Program also provides service learning training to other community colleges, coordinates the "America Reads" program, and supports CCA students who do service in their community. (*Resource Room document 9.24*)

The Lowry Family Center

The Lowry Family Center, housed on the College's Lowry campus, provides a variety of family-related and other social services to neighborhoods in northwest Aurora and east Denver. It is heavily involved with local community organizations, schools, government agencies, service providers, coalitions and networks. The LFC is a member of the Family Resource Center Association, which represents all 20 family centers in Colorado. The LFC, like other centers, receives pass-through funding through the association from government agencies, foundations and corporations. The center also receives funding from foundations, corporations, private entities and local governments that passes through the College or the CCA Foundation. (*Resource Room document 9.25*)

The Center for Workforce Development

The Center for Workforce Development provides job training, education, case management, job-placement assistance and support services to single parents, the economically disadvantaged, displaced homemakers and persons re-entering the workplace. The center provides a nine-week certificate program in essential skills for the workplace in computers and customer service. Students who complete the program are awarded 19 college credits. The program is completely contract funded and generates FTE for all its training programs. The Center works with several businesses and over 100 customers, as well as community agencies and other CCA units. Demonstrating its commitment to the community, the center has developed a scholarship program to assist low-income families with tuition and fees for the essential skills certificate program. (*Resource Room document 9.26*)

The Lowry Family Center, housed on the College's Lowry campus, provides a variety of family-related and other social services to neighborhoods in northwest Aurora and east Denver. It is heavily involved with local community organizations, schools, government agencies, service providers, coalitions and networks.

Business Relationships

The College relates formally to Aurora-area businesses through several units. These include:

Workplace Solutions Center

The Workplace Solutions Center (formerly Workplace Training and Development) provides credit and noncredit training for business and industry, nonprofit agencies, state and local governments, and professional civic organizations. Courses are delivered on campus or at the contracting agency's site and use a variety of modes and technologies to individualize instruction.

In addition to training, the Workplace Solutions Center offers services such as assessment and evaluation, organizational development, knowledge management solutions, database development and consolidation and internal training department coordination.

Some center funding comes from state grant programs that provide training incentives for new industries or expanding companies. In other cases, businesses pay for their own training. The grant programs also give companies the opportunity to establish long-term relationships with the local community colleges. From July 2000 through June 2001, the Workplace Solutions Center served approximately 27 businesses and 3,722 customers. (*Resource Room document 9.27*)

Small Business Development Center

The Small Business Development Center provides advice for start-up and existing businesses and offers free technical assistance and small business educational workshops. Located in the original downtown Aurora, the Aurora SBDC receives federal funds from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), with matching funds from CCA. From July 2000 to June 2001, the SBDC worked with approximately 575 businesses and 1,178 customers. The SBDC also offers a small business management program, which awards 18 college credits upon completion. About 30 businesses enroll each year. (*Resource Room document 9.28*)

Survey of Community and Business Relationships

To determine the perceptions about partnerships with CCA, the self-study committee responsible for analyzing institutional relationships surveyed agencies working with the College. The committee sent 20 surveys to persons who work directly with the Center for Workforce Development, Service Learning, Workplace Solutions Center, the Small Business Development Center, and the Lowry Family Center. The results of the survey demonstrate that CCA is working very well with other agencies and the community. (*Resource Room document 9.29*)

The Workplace Solutions Center (formerly Workplace Training and Development) provides credit and noncredit training for business and industry, nonprofit agencies, state and local governments, and professional civic organizations.

Memoranda of Understanding

Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) formalize partnerships between CCA and other agencies. They formally establish which agency will provide what services. CCA has MOUs with the following organizations:

- Aurora Fire Department
- Aurora Police Department
- Denver Fire Department
- Denver Police Department
- Medical Center of Aurora
- Rural Metro Ambulance Service
- Aurora Public Library

The vice president of administrative services maintains a file of all MOUs. (*Resource Room document 9.30*)

P-12 Education Relationships

CCA is broadly involved in P-12 education and has close working relationships with the schools and school districts the College serves. In particular, CCA has strong relationships with the Aurora Public Schools and the Cherry Creek Public Schools, the two districts that cover most of CCA's service area. The College's service area also includes portions of the Denver Public School district.

The College offers dual-credit classes for high school students under the Post-secondary Options Act. Juniors and seniors preapproved by their school counselors enroll in the CCA courses. After they complete a course with a grade of "C" or above, the school district reimburses their tuition and fees. Both the high school and the College award them course credit. CCA also offers a "Fast Track" program for high school students who have completed all requirements for graduation but who have not yet participated in their graduation ceremony. These students can take college courses for credit. (*Resource Room document 9.31*)

Among the College's other connections with schools are the following:

- CCA offers evening courses at Grandview High School.
- College advisors visit the feeder high schools in the service area to provide information to students.
- The College has an articulation agreement with T.H. Pickens to accept its certificates, with their students adding their general education courses at CCA. (*Resource Room document 9.32*)

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- CCA's vice president for instruction meets annually with principals from the Aurora Public Schools and from Cherry Creek Public Schools to share success rates of their graduates, provide information about state and system policies and discuss partnerships.
- The College offers courses to help teachers with recertification.
- In May 2001, the College received a grant of \$375,000 from the National Science Foundation to teach high school biology teachers biotechnology techniques and to loan them equipment so that they could incorporate these techniques into their biology classes. This program focused first on the Aurora high schools, then on schools in other districts in the Aurora-Denver metropolitan area. (Resource Room document 9.33)

Program Advisory Committees

Program advisory committees help keep CCA vocational classes and programs current so that students study up-to-date materials and practices and are more employable upon graduation. In addition to examining program curriculum, the committees also review facilities, budget, student competencies and student placement. Every program advisory committee is different. Some committees are more active than others; those that are active can be very effective. One challenge nearly all the advisory committees face is to increase their diversity to include Hispanic members.

Student Groups

The director of student life oversees all recognized student groups and acts as their fiscal manager. The director may deny a group's request if it exposes the College to legal liability. The director also can remove a club officer who fails to maintain a minimum grade point average or complete a minimum number of credits during a semester.

For a student group to receive College recognition, group members must present a petition with signatures of 50 or more students to the director of student life. They must also submit a constitution to student government, have a faculty or staff advisor and be open to all members of the student body. Once the College recognizes the group, the group is on probation for six months. Recognized student groups have the right to use the College name, logo and space. (Resource Room document 9.34)

State Board policy (SBCCOE Policy BP 4-50) mandates student government as the students' voice to the College president and as a means for the College to hear students' suggestions, requests and complaints. (Resource Room document 9.35) Student government consists of four executive officers elected by the student body, a representative from each student club and members elected at large. At open bimonthly meetings, these representatives set goals and present budgets to the College. Funds

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for the student groups come from student fees. They are based on the groups' budget proposals and the availability of funds. The student government, the director of student life and the President's Cabinet approve budget proposals.

CCA's student government elects two representatives to participate in the monthly meetings of the Student Life Development Council, a consortium of all 15 two-year colleges in Colorado.

Contractual Relationships

Colorado laws and regulations require CCA to track and maintain the details of all contractual arrangements, leases and memoranda of understanding. The financial office reviews contracts before signing and, after signing, sets up the cost center for each contract. If a contract involves the state controller, the vice president of administrative services or the controller signs the contract, and the president signs for the College. The vice president of administrative services monitors the financial issues related to contracts, and the instructional units monitor the performance issues. The vice president of administrative services monitors lease payments.

CCA practices full financial disclosure and follows conservative accounting principles. An outside accounting firm audits the entire community college system each year and audits CCA once or twice every three years. CCA complies with federal and state of Colorado open records laws. The College's budget is public information, but personnel records are not public.

The vice president of administrative services and his staff record, monitor and account for all financial transactions. Audits of CCA's federal, state and private funds ensure efficient fiscal operations. CCA maintains specific program/department cost centers. The College does not permit general fund monies to roll into the next fiscal year. The CCA standard is prompt and correct payment for expenditures.

CCA does not own or operate sub-corporations. However, it does contract with outside businesses for several on-campus services. The company that runs the College bookstore, for example, pays a commission based on a percentage of sales.

CCA charges self-funded units an administrative fee of 6 percent of expenditures. These monies go into the College's general fund. For example, 6 percent of student fees used to support student government go to the general fund.

CCA practices full financial disclosure and follows conservative accounting principles. An outside accounting firm audits the entire community college system each year and audits CCA once or twice every three years.

Federal Compliance

Credits, Program Length and Tuition (I.C.9)

The Community College of Aurora uses semester credit hours as the basic measure of students' learning experiences. The minimum contact times follow the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's full-time equivalency (FTE) guidelines. This approach to measuring students' learning experiences is common to all state-funded Colorado institutions of higher education.

The *CCA Catalog* publishes the course descriptions, which provide students with an accurate description of the course, including the credit hours identified by lecture and lab hours. Student transcripts reflect the official course prefix and number, course title, course credits and the grade earned by the student. The standards for the academic record (transcript) follow the recommendations of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

The total number of credit hours defines program length. All associate degree programs are a minimum of 60 credit hours, and the minimum for certificates varies based upon business and industry requirements. The current *CCA Catalog* states the requirements for the associate degree and certificate programs.

The State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) establishes resident and nonresident tuition rates and policies for the community colleges. Tuition rates are published in the *Schedule of Classes* and on the CCA Web site.

Compliance With the Higher Education Reauthorization Act (I.A.5)

The Financial Aid Office actively seeks to control student loan default rates. The office does not process student loans as part of automated packaging of financial aid. All student loan borrowers attend a student loan entrance counseling session before their student loan is certified. A designated financial aid counselor then reviews student loans individually. Students with academic problems or with high loan debt may be asked to meet individually with the financial aid counselor. Some student loan applications are denied, or the requested dollar amount is reduced, because of a lack of academic progress or high loan debt. Students may appeal these decisions by meeting with the director of financial aid. The College delays all student loan disbursements until 30 days after the first day of classes, as required by regulation. These measures have helped keep the college's default rate low (8.2 percent in 2001, 8 percent in 2000, 5.5 percent in 1999 and 9.9 percent in 1998).



Advertising and Recruitment Materials (IV.B.2)

The Community College of Aurora provides accurate information regarding its programs, services and policies in the *CCA Catalog*, *CCA Student Handbook*, *CCA Schedule of Classes*, the College Web site, program brochures and other advertising and recruitment materials. The College provides information about its affiliation with the Higher Learning Commission, along with the commission's address and telephone number, in the *CCA Catalog*, the *CCA Schedule* and the College Web site. (*Resource Room document 9.36*)

Professional Accreditation (III.A.1)

The Community College of Aurora does not hold any specialized accreditation with a single agency that covers one-third or more of either the College's offerings or its students.

Requirements of Institutions Holding Dual Institutional Accreditation (III.A.3)

The Community College of Aurora is not affiliated with another federally recognized institutional accrediting body and is affiliated only with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

Public Notification of Comprehensive Evaluation Visit

The following information was posted:

Community College of Aurora is seeking comments from the public about the College in preparation for its periodic evaluation by its regional accrediting agency. The College will undergo a comprehensive evaluation visit April 14-16, 2003, by a team representing the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Community College of Aurora has been accredited by the Commission since 1988. The team will review the institution's ongoing ability to meet the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation and General Institutional Requirements.

The public is invited to submit comments regarding the college:
Public Comment on Community College of Aurora
The Higher Learning Commission
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60602

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. Comments must be in writing and signed; comments cannot be treated as confidential. All comments must be received by April 2, 2002. For more information on the Community College of Aurora and the North Central accreditation visit, see the CCA website at www.CCAurora.edu



Records of Student Complaints

The College has established a procedure for addressing formal, signed complaints that students make in writing to an institutional officer who has the responsibility to handle the complaint. The institutional officers include the College president, the vice president for student services and enrollment management, and the vice president for instruction. The student complaint is reviewed and investigated, and the institutional officer who received the complaint responds to the student. The vice president for student services and enrollment management maintains the record of student complaints.



Chapter 10



SUMMARY AND APPLICATION STATUS

Summary

The Community College of Aurora has engaged in a two-year, comprehensive self-study that has led to growth and change. The self-study process has included a review of the general institutional requirements and of the five criteria for accreditation as identified by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

General Institutional Requirements

Chapter 2 Addresses the general institutional requirements. This self-study document provides evidence that the Community College of Aurora meets these requirements.

Criteria for Accreditation

This self-study document addresses each of the criteria and provides evidence that the Community College of Aurora meets the five criteria for accreditation. The evidence is presented in the chapters as identified below.

Criterion One: The Community College of Aurora has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.

Chapter 3 Mission and Purposes

Criterion Two: The Community College of Aurora has effectively organized the human, financial and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.

Chapter 4 Governance and Resources

Criterion Three: The Community College of Aurora is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.

Chapter 5 Educational Programs

Chapter 6 Assessment

Chapter 7 Student Services

Criterion Four: The Community College of Aurora can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

Chapter 8 Planning and Effectiveness

Criterion Five: The Community College of Aurora demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

Chapter 9 Institutional Integrity and Federal Compliance

Institutional Change

Chapter 11 Information and Documentation to Support a Request for Institutional Change

Request for Continued Accreditation

The Community College of Aurora is seeking continued accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.



Chapter 11

INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT A REQUEST FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

1. What is the change being proposed?

State the specific change that is proposed.

The change at CCA's Lowry campus includes increased numbers of instructional programs and course offerings, more complete student and community college instructional support services and a residence hall. CCA now administers all community college instructional programs at Lowry (formerly the HEAT Center) with the exception of the health sciences, which are the responsibility of the Community College of Denver (CCD). The headquarters of the Colorado Community College System are also located at Lowry.

The change comes within the following context: In 1997, upon unanimous recommendation of the NCA consultant evaluator team, the Higher Learning Commission changed CCA's Statement of Affiliation Status for new-degree sites to, "No prior Commission approval required for offering degree programs in Aurora and eastern Denver." Likewise, upon the team's recommendation, the commission added, "Aurora/Denver (Heat Center)" as a full-service degree site to the College's statement of scope and activities. (*Resource Room document 11.1*)

State the expected outcomes of this proposed change (e.g., enrollment growth, enhanced services, financial growth).

The change at Lowry provides the College with additional classroom space and improved facilities, including new science and computer labs. Several programs, including film and video technology, now have expanded quarters. Upon recommendation of CCA's staff, many of the College's programs and services were relocated to a complex of three classroom buildings (Buildings 901, 903, 905) and the residence hall, giving Lowry a more "campus-like" feel. The College continues to occupy Building 859, two blocks north of the complex. (*See Chapter 4 for a full discussion of the Lowry campus facilities.*)

The added classrooms, upgraded facilities and the new residence hall will

The change at CCA's Lowry campus includes increased numbers of instructional programs and course offerings, more complete student and community college instructional support services and a residence hall.

promote increased enrollment (as of January 2003, Lowry enrollment had already exceeded projections). This increase in FTE, coupled with the additional funding the College receives specifically for the Lowry operations, should mean financial growth for the College.

The changes also mean enhanced services. A student services one-stop center now operates in Building 903 and its staff report directly to CCA's vice president for student services and enrollment management.

Project the impact of this proposed change on the institution's current mission, the numbers and types of students to be served, and the breadth of the institution's educational offerings.

The change fits closely with CCA's current mission. For example, an important mission element is service to a diverse community. The College's increased presence at Lowry offers more opportunities to serve the low-income immigrant neighborhoods that lie to the north and east of the campus.

The mission also emphasizes the preparation of the workforce, both current and future. The increased program offerings at Lowry include numerous occupational programs, particularly in technology. These programs join existing Lowry-based occupational programs such as early childhood education, criminal justice and public service. The recent changes also reduce the distance between the College's science facilities—now almost all at Lowry—and the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center and the Colorado Bioscience Park at the former Fitzsimons Army Medical Center. The Lowry campus is also close to the College's Small Business Development Center on Colfax Avenue in north Aurora. The College's Workplace Solutions Center occupies new offices in Building 903.

Identify the Commission's policy relevant to this change.

The "Change in educational sites policy" (I.C.2.c.) pertains, in part, to this change.

2. What factors led the institution to undertake the proposed change?

Describe the relationship between the proposed change and ongoing institutional planning.

The change fits closely with a number of CCA's strategic goals, including those relating to student satisfaction and success, improved access and service throughout the service area, increased enrollment of underserved groups, and strengthening partnerships with P-12 education, business, higher education and community organizations. The changes at Lowry were an important consideration in the institutional planning process in which these strategic goals were developed.

The College's increased presence at Lowry offers more opportunities to serve the low-income immigrant neighborhoods that lie to the north and east of the campus.

As CCA implemented the change in 2001, the College developed a set of strategic initiatives for 2001-02 specifically for the Lowry campus. Moreover, the instructional unit developed an academic plan for Lowry. To follow up on these efforts and to integrate Lowry planning with the College's overall planning, the president convened a discussion and planning session at Lowry in January 2002. In the fall of 2002, Paulien & Associates, a Denver consulting firm, prepared a facilities master plan for Lowry. (*Resource Room document 11.2*)

Describe the needs analysis related to this proposed change.

CCA has had operations at the Lowry site throughout the College's history, even when the Lowry site was still an active Air Force Base (see the 1997 evaluation team report, Page 19). Most recently, many of these operations were carried out through the structure of the HEAT Center, as described in the 1997 consultant evaluator team report. Thus, the change in 2001 was not a new endeavor for the College. Rather, the change came as the Colorado Community College System identified and acted upon the low student enrollment at the HEAT Center. System officials saw the need to reduce the number of higher education institutions offering classes at Lowry. (The 1997 team report also noted the lack of students, Page 8). As part of its vision for the post-HEAT Lowry, the System offered CCA an expanded role at Lowry and the College agreed, recognizing the site's potential for helping to fulfill the College mission and goals. (*Resource Room document 11.3*)

Describe the involvement of various constituencies in developing this proposed change.

The Colorado Community College System suggested the change. Therefore, the College's constituencies were more involved in implementation of the change than in its development. However, the College president, the cabinet, and the College Advisory Council played a role in the development. Once the College received the go-ahead for Lowry expansion, faculty, staff and the College Advisory Council helped make decisions about particular program locations and the use of space. For example, each CCA instructional division reviewed its offerings at Lowry and recommended new and expanded programs. Many faculty and staff members also worked very hard during the summer and into the fall of 2001 to implement the expansion.



3. What necessary approvals have been obtained to implement the proposed change?

Identify the internal approvals required and provide documentation confirming these actions.

The College Cabinet approved the proposed change in the spring of 2001. (*Resource Room document 11.4*)

Identify the external approvals required and provide documentation confirming these actions.

Because the Colorado Community College System already administered the HEAT Center at Lowry, the change required no approval outside the System. The System approved the change in the summer of 2001. (*Resource Room documents 11.5*)

4. What impact might the proposed change have on challenges identified by the Commission as part of or subsequent to the last comprehensive visit?

Identify any challenges directly related to the proposed change.

The 1993 consultant evaluator team report indicated a concern (Page 57) that “Utilization of space in the new [CentreTech] campus facilities has been maximized.”

The 1997 consultant evaluator team referred to residence halls at the HEAT Center and suggested one method (athletic teams) to fill those halls.

Describe how the institution has addressed the challenge(s).

The College’s expanded presence at Lowry and the related move of information technology programs and science laboratories to Lowry means that there is now space for expansion at CentreTech.

In the fall of 2001, CCA opened a residence hall at Lowry in an existing building. Through extensive marketing efforts, the College more than doubled the number of residents from the 2001-02 to the 2002-03 school year.



5. What are the institution's plans to implement and sustain the proposed change?

Describe the involvement of appropriately credentialed faculty and experienced staff necessary to accomplish this proposed change (e.g., curriculum development and oversight, evaluation of instruction and assessment of learning outcomes).

The College has a full complement of faculty, staff and administrators at Lowry. The dean of computers, mathematics and business is assigned half-time to Lowry. His division has three information technology technicians, two administrative assistants, a webmaster and 9.5 regular faculty positions at the Lowry campus. The dean of public service, science and workforce development is also the associate vice president for Lowry. His division has four directors, 10 professional staff members and eight regular faculty members at Lowry. Humanities, fine arts and social sciences has faculty and staff at Lowry in its film and video technology program. Student services has staff assigned to the one-stop center and to the residence hall.

Faculty members have been actively involved in accomplishing the Lowry expansion. Science faculty, for example, coordinated the relocation of science laboratories to Building 903. Faculty members in many departments have worked to design new or revised programs and course offerings to take advantage of the expanded facilities. Faculty members are also heavily involved in assessment. A Lowry-based faculty member, for example, chairs the College's assessment committee.

Describe the administrative structure (e.g., accountability processes, leadership roles) necessary to support this proposed change.

The associate vice president for the Lowry campus heads CCA's administrative structure at Lowry. He also serves as the dean of public service, science and workforce development. The associate vice president reports to the president (in the absence of a vice president for instruction). Three building liaisons, who report to the associate vice president, are responsible for facilities issues and for instructional support.

Describe how the institution will make learning resources and support services available to students (e.g., student support services, library resources, academic advising, and financial aid counseling).

The College is developing learning resources for the expanded presence at Lowry and provides student services through the one-stop center. *(Further discussion of these resources and services is in Chapter 4.)*

The College has opened a fitness center at Lowry and has plans to open an education resource center for the early childhood education program in Building 859.

Faculty members have been actively involved in accomplishing the Lowry expansion.

Provide financial data/information that documents the institution's capacity to implement and sustain the proposed change (e.g., projected budgets, recent audit reports, revenue streams, cost of facilities and projected facility and equipment costs).

The College occupies the Lowry campus without major financial obligation. The Colorado Community College System (CCCS) pays for major facility costs at Lowry, including maintenance, custodial services, grounds upkeep, utilities and some minor remodeling.

CCCS provided CCA with a one-time allocation of \$250,000 in FY 2002 for costs associated with the transition from the HEAT Center to the expanded CCA operations at Lowry. The College used these monies for equipping classrooms and retooling door locks and for similar expenses.

CCCS provides CCA with a \$400,000 allocation each year for student services at Lowry. The System also provides CCA with \$100,000 annually to operate the residence hall at Lowry.

Specify the timeline used to implement the proposed change.

The change occurred in July 2001. Since that time, the College has overseen the upgrade of facilities at Lowry and the movement of programs from CentreTech to Lowry. The College continues to identify programs at both Lowry and CentreTech for possible changes and to review structures as enrollment changes.

6. What are the institution's strategies to evaluate the proposed change?

Describe the measures the institution will use to document the achievement of its expected outcomes.

The College uses the same effectiveness measures it uses for evaluating the overall institution, including enrollment data and the results from various surveys of students, faculty and staff.

Describe how the assessment of student learning is integrated into the institution's assessment program.

The College's plan for assessing student learning applies to the Lowry campus and the programs at Lowry, just as it does to all the College's programs.



Acknowledgements

The Community College of Aurora's self-study has involved the entire College community in an extensive analysis of who we are and what we do. Even before the report was complete, the process produced positive results. More than a dozen committees with members from across the institution gathered and discussed information. They produced specific recommendations and learned more about the College and about what their colleagues contribute and accomplish. As the self-study report took shape, the College community gained a clearer understanding of CCA's strengths, challenges and issues for the future.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the self-study has been the involvement and contributions of so many individuals from through the College. Among these individuals are the following:

- CCA's faculty and staff served on the self-study committees, contributed data and sections for individual chapters, answered many questions, and read various versions of the report.
- The College Advisory Council has provided guidance and support throughout the process.
- The President's Cabinet and Cabinet Advisory Council provided initial leadership for the self-study. The chairpersons of the committees then convened as the steering committee.
- Karl Van Etten and Chris Ward coordinated the self-study process and the writing of the report. Mike Berry provided much of the statistical data. Chris Henning and Liz Van Landingham designed and produced the report.

Glossary

AEC: Aurora Education Center – predecessor of the Community College of Aurora

APL: Aurora Public Library

APS: Aurora Public Schools

CCA: Community College of Aurora

CCD: Community College of Denver

CCHE: Colorado Commission on Higher Education

CCCS: Colorado Community College System

CRS: Colorado Revised Statutes

EEOC: Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

FRS: Financial Reporting System

HEAT: Higher Education and Advanced Technology Center (no longer in operation)

IAAC: Instructional Annual Adjustment Committee

ILT: Instructional Leadership Team

IRC: Instructional Resource Center

LFC: Lowry Family Center

LOEP: Levels of English Proficiency (test)

LRC: Learning Resource Center

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding

NCMPR: National Council for Marketing and Public Relations

OIR: Office of Institutional Research

QIS: Quality Indicator System (State of Colorado)

PAC: Program Advisory Committee

PERA: Public Employee Retirement Association

RRCC: Red Rocks Community College

SBCCOE: State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education

SBDC: Small Business Development Center

SGA: Student Government Association

The “System”: Colorado Community College System

UCD: University of Colorado at Denver

UCHSC: University of Colorado Health Sciences Center

Self Study Committees

Committee for the Introduction and the General Institutional Requirements

Lewis Schlossinger – Computers, math and business (**Chair**)
Wayne Gilbert – Humanities, fine arts and social sciences
Yen Phillips – Lowry one-stop student services
Cheryll Wingard – Computers, math and business

Committee on Mission, Purposes, and Decision-Making

Amy Grazier – Student life (**Chair**)
Terry Campbell-Caron – Financial aid
Constance Seiden – Computers, math and business
Claudia True – Center for Workforce Development

Committee on Freedom of Inquiry and Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Bill Thompson – Computers, math and business (**Chair**)
JoAnne Barnes – Humanities, fine arts and social sciences
Chuck Harrington – Computers, math and business
Mark Kemble – Humanities, fine arts and social sciences
Susan Kirk – Humanities, fine arts and social sciences
Shirley Piper – Information technology

Committee on Governance and Administration

Ron Ross – Human Resources (**Chair**)
George Lesko – Computers, math and business
Judy Patrick – Lowry one-stop students services (past Chair)
Kendra Wimbush – Center for Workforce Development

Committee on Human Resources

Sue Waldheim – Humanities, fine arts, and social sciences (**Chair**)
Mike Berry – Institutional research
Linda Bradford – Humanities, fine arts and social sciences
Michael Harris – Admissions and records
Dianda Havel – Human resources
Christy Ikeler – Center for Workforce Development

Committee on Physical Resources

Lanne Lancaster – Learning Resource Center (**Chair**)
Gil Davies – Computers, math and business
Reniece Jones – Learning Resource Center
Kader Nouibat – Computers, math and business
Bobby Williams – Information technology

Committee on Financial Resources

Larry Steele – Facilities (**Chair**)
Trevor Borgonah – Fiscal affairs
Bob Fulcomer – Computers, math and business
Jerry Martins – Computers, math and business
Denise Oakeley – Admissions and records

Instruction Committee

Norine Domenico – Instruction (**Chair**)
Karla Adamson – Computers, math and business
Bob Fulcomer – Computers, math and business
Sharon Halford – Instructional support
Geoff Hunt – Fine Arts, humanities and social sciences
Les Moroye – Public service, science and workforce development

Student Services and Enrollment Management Committee

Greg Goode – Student services and enrollment management (**Chair**)
Rebecca Bernstein – Advising Center
Sheryl Broadnax – Learning Resource Center
Libby Broughton – Advising Center
Kristen Cusack – Computers, math and business
Veronica Dubey – student
George Goree – Fiscal affairs

Committee on Strategic Planning Process

Les Moroye – Public service, science and workforce development (**Chair**)
Chris Henning – Communication division
Anna Jansen – Recruiting
Marian Lauterbach – Humanities, fine arts and social sciences

Committee on Integrity in Institutional Practices

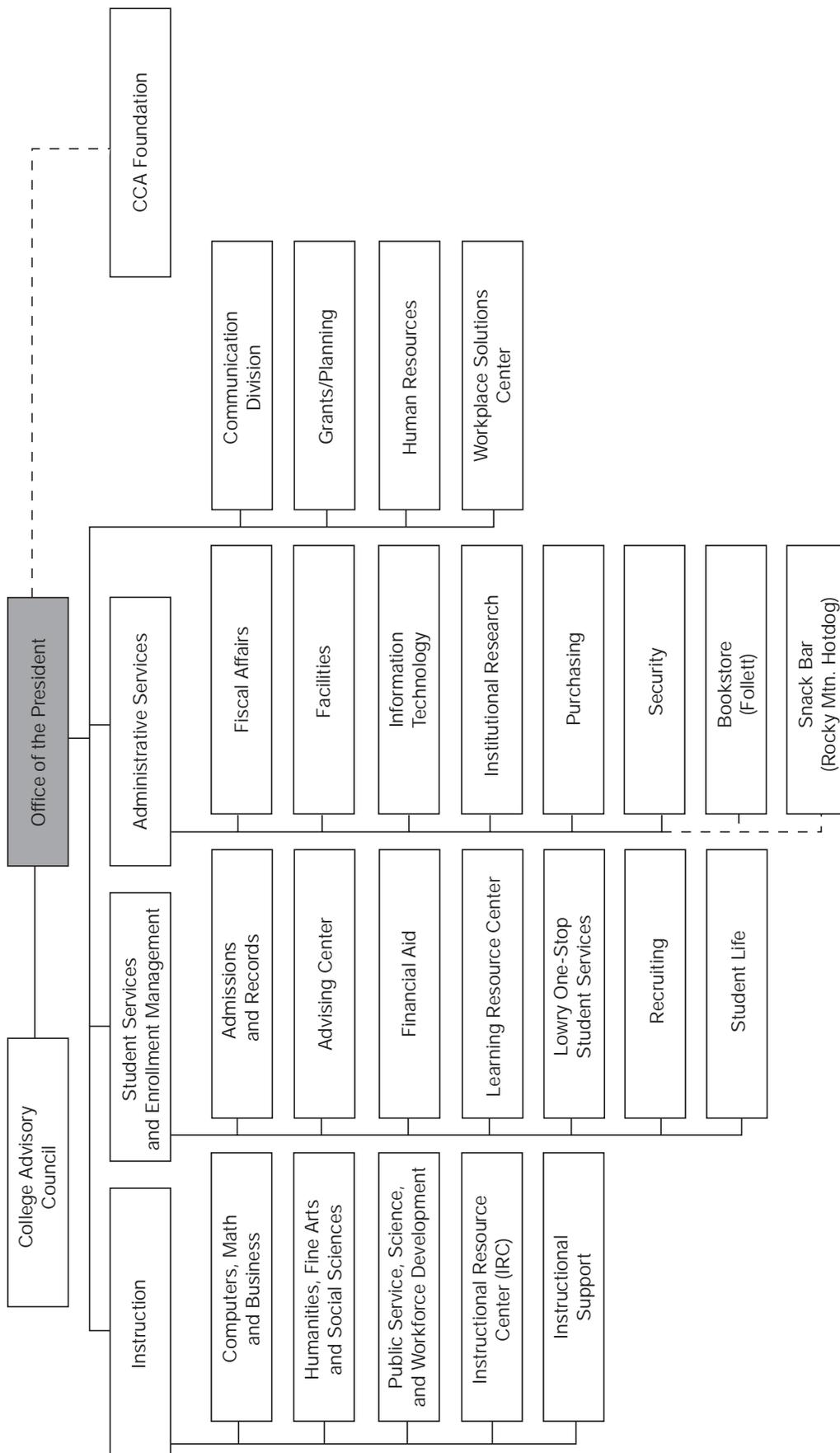
Michelle Amon – Humanities, fine arts, and social sciences (**Chair**)
Shawna Mahan – Computers, math and business
Eduardo Peralta – Information technology
Alexis Ross – Center for Workforce Development
Liz Van Landingham – Communication division

Committee on Integrity in Institutional Relationships

Terry Walker – Public service, science, and workforce development (**Chair**)
Pat Bouley – Fiscal affairs (past Chair)
Charlene Bugh – Computers, math and business
Daniela Higgins – Center for Workforce Development
Geoff Hunt – Humanities, fine arts, and social sciences

Hospitality Committee

Traci Fielden
Tami Morrissey
Cindy Smith
Judy Spitz



CCA Organizational Chart