FRONT RANGE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

2008 SELF-STUDY

At Front Range Community College,
we enrich lives
through learning.

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A Report written for the Comprehensive Evaluation for the
Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association

Front Range Community College Executive Leadership

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The preparation of a Self-Study Report is an exercise meant to improve an institution. We have analyzed our strengths, assessed our weaknesses, and proposed recommendations to help us better serve our communities.

I invite you to read through this Self-Study Report of Front Range Community College. It is submitted respectfully to the Higher Learning Commission, to the residents of the communities we serve, and to Front Range Community College students, faculty and staff. Our progress from this point forward will be based on the continued dedication, commitment, cooperation, and partnership of all our constituencies.

I thank the scores of FRCC faculty and staff who helped prepare this report and the residents of the communities we serve whose comments were gratefully received. I also thank the Higher Learning Commission and the members of the visiting Evaluation Team for their valuable participation.

Karen Reinertson
President

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Introduction

Development of the College

In 1967, the Colorado State Legislature established a State System of Community Colleges. Front Range Community College (FRCC) began as the North Campus of the Community College of Denver (CCD) in 1968 in temporary quarters at East 62nd Avenue and Downing Street in Denver with an enrollment of 1,861 students. By 1974, 4,184 students were attending the college, and plans were made for construction of a permanent site on Forest Farm, in the City of Westminster. From that initial beginning over 39 years ago, the college has evolved to a three-campus/one-center system with a service area spanning six counties. The college now serves over 23,000 students annually. The following paragraphs describe in more detail this fantastic evolution of Colorado's largest Community College.

In 1977, still operating as a branch of CCD, the college moved to a hilltop location in the northern part of the City of Westminster. In that first fall semester, 1977, the college attracted an enrollment of 4,838 students (2,982 FTE). That site, at 3645 West 112th Avenue, is still the home of the Westminster Campus. With the passage of House Bill 1187, FRCC separated from CCD, and became an autonomous college on July 1, 1985.

Shortly thereafter, the college began to expand north, merging with the Larimer County Voc-Tech Center in Fort Collins in 1988 and opening a campus in Boulder in 1990 and in Longmont in 1995. All three campuses have grown substantially and have added new facilities to accommodate the growth. The Boulder and Longmont Campuses merged into a new, 120,000 square foot leased space in Longmont in 2003.

As an open-access institution, Front Range Community College serves anyone sixteen years of age or older who can benefit from college preparatory or college-level instruction. FRCC provides education and training in general education and career/technical programs. Certificate programs are offered in many career and technical areas. Associate of Science, Associate of Arts, Associate of General Studies, Associate of Applied Science and courses guaranteed to transfer to in-state, public institutions are also offered. A cadre of non-credit courses for personal and professional development are also offered. Business and industry employees benefit from Front Range's customized workplace training and credit-generating courses. Finally, FRCC serves the entire community by developing and enriching the economy and culture. The Front Range Community College service area includes all or part of seven counties: Adams, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Jefferson, Larimer, and Weld.

Campuses

Westminster Campus

The original Westminster building, constructed in 1977, had several unique features. At the time of its opening, it was the largest solar heated building in the country. The building was designed as a long rectangle to maximize solar energy collection points. The solar heating system was finally removed in the 1990s when it became too expensive to operate.

A second key design feature was accessibility. Well before the Americans with Disability Act was passed, the campus was designed to be handicapped accessible. The campus also had a relatively large program focused on helping deaf students access college.

The original building had bay doors all along its front side, and was well designed to train students in technical and industrial programs like auto body repair, electronics, and machining. Over the course of two decades, however, the student population began to change and during the next 20 years, the campus began a series of remodeling projects to answer demands for training in transfer education, healthcare, and computer technology.

In 1989, the Interpreter Preparation Program won a state Program of Excellence Award and used funding from that award to create the ground-breaking integrated audio visual/computer lab with a central control panel that became the model for other interpreting programs around the country. In 1994, also using funds from a state Program of Excellence Grant, the campus created a nursing education center, with tiered classrooms, laboratories, and student study areas. Next, in 1997, an area originally used for auto body repair became a computer commons, with seven computer classrooms and large open computer lab for student use.

In 1998, the campus opened two major additions: an 80,000 square foot library built and operated jointly with the City of Westminster, and a 30,000 square foot student center and cafeteria. The area formerly used by the library became state of the art science labs.

In 2003, the former electronics lab became a new faculty support center and general purpose classrooms. In the same year, using funds from a student fee, the campus reconstructed its parking areas, adding over 200 spaces and creating improved traffic patterns. In 2007, the machining area was converted to expanded space for the growing automotive repair program.

Despite these extensive renovations, the campus still offers a wide mix of career and technical programs, albeit programs that typically take less space than the original offerings. Among the prominent career and technical offerings are Nursing, Horticulture, Interpreter Preparation, Emergency Medicine, Automotive Repair, Architectural Engineering Technology, and Computer Information Systems.

Larimer Campus

The Larimer Campus opened as the Larimer County Vocational Technical Center in 1972. Comprised of four buildings, totaling 104,000 square feet on 47 acres, the Vocational Technical Center was owned and operated by the three Larimer County School Districts—Poudre R1 (Fort Collins), Thompson R2J (Loveland/Berthoud), and Park (Estes Park). In 1988 the Vocational Technical Center became a part of Front Range Community College through an agreement whereby the Larimer County Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), comprised of these 3 school districts, leased the campus to the State of Colorado for $1.00 per year for 25 years. In 1995 a new agreement made the State of Colorado 50% owner of the entire campus, with an increasing ownership share for every new dollar of state capital investment.

In 1998 three new buildings were constructed: Challenger Point, a 22,000 square foot building that houses 5 science laboratories, 10 classrooms, a 75-seat lecture hall, and office space; the Longs Peak Student Center, a 20,000 square foot student-funded building with dining facilities, conference rooms, a bookstore, fitness center, study lounge/art gallery, and offices for student activities/clubs, and Harmony Library, a 31,000 square foot, joint-use library constructed and operated with the City of Fort Collins. Harmony Library expanded the vision of what a library can be both for the college and community residents.

In 2001-2002, renovations of the Blanca Peak and Mount Antero Buildings were completed. These renovations created space for courses and programs that had been offered at the Remington Campus, a facility the college leased from Colorado State University. These renovations created 27 additional classrooms, two 60-seat lecture rooms, flexible and shared technical commons spaces, laboratories, art studios, a photography darkroom, music classrooms, and offices.

In 2006, parking lots were modified and expanded with use of student fees. Eight hundred additional paved spaces were added to campus parking, and 96 additional paved spaces were added to library parking, bringing the total parking spaces to 1,698.

The Remington Campus was leased from August 1995 until March 2002 from Colorado State University (CSU). This location gave students a unique opportunity to co-enroll at Front Range Community College and CSU because of its close proximity to CSU. At peak use, this facility offered approximately 30% of FRCC\Larimer Campus classes. In addition, during AYs 2000-2002 the Larimer Campus leased classroom space at Webber Junior High School, Cache La Poudre Junior High School, Preston Junior High School, and Colorado Christian University in Fort Collins. Additionally, facilities in Estes Park provided non-credit and credit classes to the Estes Park Community. The Larimer Campus has ended these leases.

In fall 2002 Larimer Campus leased classrooms offered by Poudre Valley Air, a local business, for the Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Program and other classes. This lease ended in December 2006.
In fall 2005 the Thompson R2J School District invited the Larimer Campus to be a co-participant in a new community-learning center in Loveland, a city 10 miles from the campus. Space was reserved for the HVAC program in a building formerly owned by Agilent Technologies. Currently, the campus leases 5,960 square feet that house the Med Prep, HVAC, Holistic Health, and Certified Nursing Assistant programs.

In addition, the campus leases space for astronomy classes via an agreement with a residential home developer who built an astronomy lab/observatory. Classes are also currently held at Faith Evangelical Free Church, Regis University in Fort Collins, and at Fossil Ridge High School.

Boulder County Campus

For over 15 years, FRCC offered courses at various sites within the City of Boulder. The Boulder Campus initially held courses during the evening in private and public school buildings. In 1990 FRCC leased a more permanent site at the Wilderness Place location that came to be known as the Boulder Valmont Campus. Both day and evening courses were offered at this site, and enrollment quickly expanded to capacity.

Using needs analysis studies, feasibility studies, enrollment reports, and a student survey, the College staff made plans for improved and expanded facilities. Given a severely constricted yet highly competitive real estate market, the effort to find a new facility in Boulder was unsuccessful. Alternatively, FRCC secured a facility in the Gunbarrel area northeast of Boulder, located at 5490 Spine Road. This facility opened fall semester 1996. New courses in science and fine arts were offered, and enrollment increased significantly.

FRCC also offered classes at Longmont High School during this time period (1982 to 1995). Business, industry, and governmental and community organizations responded positively to FRCC's course offerings in the community. They began to voice their support for the establishment of a campus in the City of Longmont. Their rationale for an FRCC presence in the City is best summarized by the Longmont Chamber of Commerce and the Longmont Area Economic Council in the 1994 Final Report of the Labor and Training Needs Assessment:

"We can think of no community endeavor in recent memory that has held greater economic opportunity for our residents and our employers than [the] creation of [a] Front Range Community College Campus in Longmont." In 2003, Pratt Properties of Longmont, an independent real estate company, offered Front Range Community College two existing, one-story, high-tech buildings for lease. With numerous technology employers near this site, the college had a unique opportunity to facilitate joint programming and educational partnerships with public and private sector entities at this proposed relocation site. The lease for the current facilities ends in 2010.

The Longmont Industrial Park Board, with a matching pledge from the Longmont Chamber of Commerce, donated $55,000 to the FRCC Foundation to be used as a challenge match fund for the development of a permanent location in Longmont.

Brighton Center

The Brighton Center is a satellite of the Westminster Campus and is located within the Westminster Campus Service Area. The center offers developmental studies, general education, and business classes for students who want to complete an Associate of Arts Degree or fulfill prerequisites for another program.

The Brighton Center opened in 1998 in the old Adams County Courthouse on Bridge Street in Brighton, Colorado, and continues to operate at that site. The center is approximately 4,000 square feet including four classrooms and a computer laboratory, and has access to additional classrooms and office space in adjacent parts of the building. The current location will probably not be available after fall 2008. In anticipation of enrollment increases caused by a housing boom in the area around the center, FRCC is actively looking for a larger rental facility than the current center. The Brighton Center will continue its focus on general education coursework, but may house specific technical programs depending on demand from local industry in the future.

History of College Accreditation

1975
Community College of Denver – North Campus (CCD-North) was granted initial accreditation by the North Central Association (NCA) Commission on Institutions of Higher Education

1983
Still a part of the Community College of Denver system, the North Campus changed its name to Front Range Community College

1985
Front Range Community College became an autonomous community college

1988
Comprehensive visit for continued accreditation

April 1991
Focus visit to Larimer Campus following merger between FRCC and the Larimer County Vocational-Technical Center to add the campus to the Statement of Affiliation Status

February 1997
Panel review of North Boulder, Longmont and Boulder Arapahoe campuses following merger with Boulder TEC, and growth of all Boulder County sites

April 1997
Focus visit to the Higher Education Advanced Technology Center (HEAT) to evaluate the shared facility and add it to the approved degree sites for the Statement of Affiliation Status

Summer 1997
NCA staff review to evaluate delivery of FRCC degrees by distance learning methodologies

Summer 1999

Focus visit for change to deliver online degrees as a member of the
Colorado Community College Online (CCCOnline) Consortium

April 1998

Comprehensive visit for continued accreditation

April 2000

Monitoring report on Education Programs (General Education)
and Faculty and Staff (full- and part-time ratio)

December, 2000

Progress report by the Colorado Community College System on the
development of a strategic plan and a financial plan for Colorado
Community College Online

May 2001

Focused visit on Governance (decision-making process), Finance
(human resources finances), and Evaluation and Planning (assessment
and strategic planning)

December 2002

Progress report on the matter of insuring an adequate number
of full-time faculty

Spring, 2008

Next comprehensive visit for continued accreditation

Self-Study Purpose and Process

Front Range Community College's (FRCC's) Mission Statement and Strategic Priorities indicate college responsibility for seeking methods of evaluating and continuing to improve performance. The creation of the 1998-2008 Self-Study has been one of those methods. FRCC's Mission Statement states, "At Front Range Community College, We Enrich Lives through Learning."

Strategic Priorities for the college are:

1. FRCC creates a welcoming *community of learners* that embraces excellence by setting and achieving high standards.

2. FRCC promotes student *access and success* in learning, in work, and in community by valuing and respecting the diversity of all and the individuality of each.

3. FRCC provides a *great place to work* by valuing and respecting employees for their unique contributions and potential.

4. FRCC leads *community vitality and sustainability* by strengthening partnerships and responsiveness.

5. FRCC obtains *resources* to successfully achieve its mission. The Mission Statement and Strategic Priorities line up with the Higher Learning Commission's new mission statement: "Serving the Common Good by Assuring and Advancing the Quality of Higher Learning."

Given the positive nature of this Self-Study, the college began preparing for its Continued Accreditation visit in April 2005. Faculty and administrators attended the Higher Learning Commission Conference in Chicago. In June 2005, then College President Janet Gullickson appointed Dr. Joanne Maypole, Westminster Campus Social Science Faculty Chair, to coordinate writing of the Self-Study. Dr. Geri Anderson, Vice President of Student Learning, was in charge of the Continued Accreditation process. From July-November 2005, Dr. Maypole worked with faculty, staff, and administrators to examine viable models for the Self-Study. In July 2005, Dr. Gullickson resigned and Karen Reinertson was appointed to the presidency by the Colorado Community College System President, Dr. Nancy McCallin.

In August 2005, at an all college in-service, the Continued Accreditation process was introduced to all faculty and student services staff. Faculty made the decision to follow the traditional PEAQ Program to evaluate and advance the quality of services that, combined, address the mission statement. Campus Vice Presidents selected individuals to represent their respective campuses on a Self-Study Steering Committee.

Monthly meetings of the Steering Committee began in September 2005. In November 2005 Steering Committee members Dr. Barbara Bollmann, Dr. James Butzek, Dr. Glenn Good, and Dr. Joanne Maypole attended the partnership workshop sponsored by the HLC. In January 2006, Front Range Community College submitted a formal request that the Higher Learning Commission evaluation team visit occur in late February to early March 2008. In addition, the Steering Committee developed and administered detailed questionnaires and made document requests, college-wide, to begin to provide the foundation for an evidence-based, objective Self-Study. To that end, nine focus groups were held internally and three external groups were conducted.

In February 2006, Dr. Joanne Maypole resigned from the college. Therese Loeffler-Clemens was subsequently appointed Coordinator of the Self-Study, including the Steering Committee and the ad hoc, five-member Executive Committee. The Steering Committee met monthly; individual members took responsibility for the Self-Study Core Components; and volunteers throughout the college formed sub-committees to gather information and write sections of the Self-Study.

The eighteen-member Steering Committee, including representatives from staff, faculty, and administrators and sub-committee members and their respective assignments were:

Administrative Liaison:
　　Dr. James Butzek, Vice President, Larimer Campus

Coordinator of the Self-Study:
　　Therese Loeffler-Clemens

Writer:
　　John Chin (Retiree and former Chief Academic Officer)

History of College Accreditation:
　　Dr. Phyllis Abt, Steering Committee

Purpose and Process of the Self-Study:
　　Therese Loeffler-Clemens, Steering Committee

Development of the College:
　　Dr. James Butzek, Steering Committee

Response to Higher Learning Commission Concerns from the 1998 visitation:
　　Dr. John Sullivan, Steering Committee and Eleanor Storey

Introduction/Background:
　　President Karen Reinertson and
　　Dr. James Butzek, Steering Committee, John Feeley

Criterion 1:

Co-Chairs:

Marko Mohlenhoff, Steering Committee and
Evelyn Alton, Steering Committee

Writing Team Members:

Heather Mohler, Kirsten Burris, Mary Fischer, Carla Starck,
Ivan Loy, Matt Stilwell, Kathy Trummer

Criterion 2:

Co-Chairs:

Gerald Rogers, J.D., Steering Committee and
Duane Risse, Steering Committee

Writing Team Members:

Bitsy Cohn, Meg Gallagher, Susan Brown,
Liliana Castro, Dr. Elizabeth Bauer, Keith Boggs

Criterion 3:

Co-Chairs:

Sandie Love, Steering Committee and
Dr. Shashi Unnithan, Steering Committee

Writing Team Members:

Louise Brown, sub-chair, criterion 3a;
Chris Romero, Kerri Mitchell,
Steve Delong, Donna Hall,
Dr. Monica Geist, sub-chair, criterion 3b;
Dr. David Platt, Dana Waller, Lori Dodge,
Kelli Godwin, Anthony Heiderman
Andy Dorsey, sub-chair, criterion 3c;
Laura Sherrick, Jan Joost,
Claire Gilliland, Nancy Casten
Dr.Glenn Good, sub-chair, criterion 3d;
Connie Vogel, Eladia Rivera,
Laurie Miller, Charles Watt

Criterion 4:

Co-Chairs:

Mike Daugherty, Steering Committee and
Joanna Vance, Steering Committee

Writing Team Members:

Drew Hardy, Steering Committee, Mark Johnson, Dr. Mary Croissant,
Alan Dinwiddie, Dan Gryboski, Leslie Schmidt

Criterion 5:

Rob Ingle, Steering Committee and
Lana Fredrickson, Steering Committee

Writing Team Members:

Camille Rendal, Marla Manchego, Julie Beggs, Nordy Jensen,
Lydia Brokaw-Nelson, Cathy Pellish, Dr. Dorothy Hull

Executive Committee:

Therese Loeffler-Clemens, Dr. Geri Anderson, Pat Meade,
Dr. Phyllis Abt, Dr. Barbara Bollmann, all Steering Committee members

Electronic Reference Room:

Dr. Barbara Bollmann, Steering Committee and John Thornberry

Special Editor:

Jennifer Meissner

Publishing:

Marian Maharas

Additional Steering Committee member:

Gay Hampton

In April 2006 Therese Loeffler-Clemens, Dr. John Sullivan, Dr. Geri Anderson, Gerald Rogers, J.D., Dr. Phyllis Abt, and Dr. James Butzek attended the HLC annual meeting in Chicago. Information from the meeting was presented to the Steering Committee and the volunteer writing groups created initial drafts of core components starting in spring 2006. The Executive Committee of the Steering Committee advised and facilitated the Steering Committee and writing teams. Faculty and Staff throughout the college contributed information, ideas, data, examples, and reports for inclusion in the Self-Study. Final first drafts of the core components were submitted to the Self-Study Coordinator for revision at the end of 2006. Part time instructors were paid for work on these drafts.

The college hired Restorative Solutions, LLC to conduct focus groups of faculty and staff. The focus groups explored 10 core issues and were conducted in July 2006. Applicable content from the results of these focus groups has been used in creating the Self-Study.

Core issues of the focus groups were:

- FT/PT Faculty Ratios
- Student Services Audit
- Student Retention
- Strategic Planning
- Recruiting and Outreach
- Distance Learning and Online Student Services
- K-12 and University Partnerships
- Facilities Planning
- Campus Appearance
- Branding

After Dr. Geri Anderson resigned from the college in December 2006, Dr. James Butzek, Vice President, Larimer Campus, was selected to be administrative liaison for the continued accreditation project, including the Self-Study.

During spring 2007 the Steering Committee met weekly to review each of the criterion core components and to suggest revisions. A retired Associate Vice President and Chief Academic Officer, John Chin, was hired to re-draft the documents based on suggestions from the Steering Committee and information gathered from various offices and individuals throughout the college.

Starting summer 2007 Dr. Butzek, Dr. Abt, and Therese Loeffler-Clemens, with assistance from the instructional deans, student services deans, the online dean, and the Office of Institutional Research re-drafted the core components. Karen Reinertson, President of Front Range Community College, and members of President's Cabinet (Mike Kupcho, Vice President for Administrative Services/Chief Financial Officer; Dr. James Butzek, Vice President, Larimer Campus; Andy Dorsey, Vice President, Westminster Campus; and Dr. Tina Ludutsky-Taylor, Vice President, Boulder County Campus) reviewed the documents for completeness, and accuracy. Jennifer Meissner, Advisor on the Larimer Campus, assisted in editing the documents. This process continued through December 2007, when the final document was submitted to the printer, via Marian Maharas, Director of Marketing.

Successes and Challenges:
Addressing Advice and Suggestions for Institutional Improvement by 1998 Review Team

Along with requiring a focus visit on governance, finance, and evaluation and planning (Institutional Report for a Commission-Mandated Focused Evaluation, April 27, 2001), and a monitoring report on General Education and full- and part-time faculty ratios, the 1998 review team enumerated other specific concerns (Report of Visit 47-54). The college took these concerns seriously, incorporated improvements in its planning activities, and continues to address them. The following paragraphs highlight key developments in response to the recommendations.

Challenges

Although FRCC has a very dedicated and well credentialed full-time faculty, and strong diversified adjunct (part-time) faculty, the number of full-time faculty is not at a sufficient level to further develop and maintain a curriculum that in 97-98 had 97 degrees and certificates and 874 active credit courses delivered from multiple campus sites. The College needs to study and significantly increase both the number of (currently at 146) and the percentage of credits taught by (currently at about 30 percent) full-time teaching faculty. Also, the team noted that the institution cannot attest to the academic credentials of 59 of its adjunct faculty (p. 4, 10).

In early 2001 the college sought to increase the number of its post secondary faculty through implementation of a five-year plan (5-Year Hiring Plan for Full-time Faculty), increasing the number by 64.4, from 117.2 to 181.6 today.

The following notes the number and percentage of full time FTE faculty versus part time FTE faculty from 1998-2007:

Full-time/Part-time Faculty 1998-2007				
Academic Year	FT Faculty FTE	FT Faculty %	PT Faculty FTE	PT Faculty %
1998	117.2	27.8%	304.3	72.2%
1999	146.4	32.2%	308.9	67.8%
2000	150.6	30.2%	347.4	69.8%
2001	147.9	29.7%	349.4	70.3%
2002	151.0	27.9%	389.9	72.1%
2003	158.7	28.5%	397.2	71.5%
2004	161.5	27.3%	429.8	72.7%
2005	169.3	26.7%	464.3	73.3%
2006	175.6	26.8%	479.9	73.2%
2007	181.6	28.8%	449.8	71.2%

Although the number of full time faculty has increased substantially since the 1998 visit, enrollment has kept pace with hiring *(—R-1)*. As a result, the ratio of full-time to part-time faculty has remained generally consistent. The college is committed to improving the percentage of full-time faculty, but budgetary constraints have limited such hiring.

The college has taken several steps to ensure that the full-time faculty can develop and maintain excellent curriculum and teaching. All full-time faculty have leadership roles, per the full-time faculty job description *(—R-2)*. The department chairs in particular serve in instructional leadership roles, including hiring, training and evaluating part time faculty, as noted in the job description for department chairs *(—R-3)*. The college also works to maintain instructional excellence by providing ongoing training and support for part-time instructors.

Front Range Community College continues to pride itself on the dedication and strength of its full-time faculty and part-time instructors and can attest to their academic credentials. During November and December 2006 all faculty and instructor files were audited for appropriate credentials. Currently, files of all new faculty and instructor hires are reviewed by department chairs and deans of instruction.

Even though the self-study indicated the College's definition and philosophy of general education are contained in SBCCOE Policy BP-9-40, the team is concerned that many college staff are unaware of that policy and that there seems to be no clear understanding of how it relates to the applied science and vocational curricula (p. 4, 23).

After receiving the 1998 report, the college emphasized the definition and philosophy of general education during its twice-yearly in-service activities, developed standards for general education in all Career and Technical (AAS) degrees and certificates of substantial length (30 hours or more), and required that the general education component of proposed new courses be reviewed by the College Curriculum Committee.

In the late 1990s program faculty across the college audited all CTE degrees to make certain they complied with the new general education standards. The new requirements included a minimum of 15 credits which consisted of three credits of communications, 3 credits of math and 3 additional courses (9 credits) from at least 2 of the following areas: science, social and behavioral science, and arts and humanities. Changes to the programs were made as necessary.

To improve understanding of how the policy relates to the applied science and vocational curricula, the college centered its semi-annual in-service activities from 1999 to 2001 on General Education. The entire scope of General Education included in each instructional program was reviewed through analysis of infused general education competencies and specific general education course requirements.

The college also began in 2001 to compare CTE student performance on the CAAP examination to that of students pursuing AA or AS degrees and made necessary curriculum changes indicated by the comparison. For example, because laboratory science competencies were not developed in computer information systems (CIS) courses, CIS courses no longer fulfill the science requirement toward the AAS degree. The comparison continues today, and the data suggest that all FRCC students taking the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency examination (CTE and transfer students) continue to outperform students at other colleges in national averages, per CAAP AY06 Results *(— A-3)*. One specific finding of note is that CTE students score higher than transfer students on the critical thinking measure.

The mission, purpose, vision and values do not provide a clear and coherent statement of the specific ends the institution intends to achieve (p. 5).

The college uses collaborative processes to ensure the mission documents represent the views of all constituents and to clearly articulate principles that drive the institution. The mission documents have been reviewed twice since 1998. Processes for these reviews included:

- College-wide engagement. In-services, town halls, and other college forums were used to gather feedback on mission documents.
- Focus groups. The college hired professional facilitators to design and conduct focus groups with college employees, students, and community stakeholders to assess the clarity of mission documents and to determine perceived progress on achieving strategic priorities.
- Surveys. FRCC regularly uses surveys to collect data on mission documents and goal achievement. The Office of Institutional Research annually conducts surveys of employees, alumni, employers, currently enrolled students, and vocational graduates, among others.

These extensive collaborative and information gathering processes indicate the college's constituencies affirm the mission documents and institutional objectives. The college administration and staff do believe that ***the mission, purpose, vision and values statements do provide a clear and coherent statement of the specific ends the institution intends to achieve.***

Decision-making processes involving its constituencies that are appropriate to the College mission and purposes are not clearly articulated (p. 5, 43).

Following the report of the 1998 review team, the college made a number of efforts to include its constituencies more specifically in decision-making. From 1998 to 2004, for example, the Strategic Coordinating Council, and the Site Council included representatives from the faculty and from the classified staff. From 2002 to 2004, an increasing number of recommendations were developed by committees and task forces (i.e. faculty senate, diversity, basic skills, assessment, academic policies and procedures). In 2004, a college-wide planning process that expressly sought the contribution of all its constituencies began. This inclusive approach to planning continued through changes in college leadership. Currently, a number of methods are used to include constituencies in decision-making. Student government, Student Life, students working on committees and task forces, classroom evaluations, faculty senate, focus groups, department chairs, the area advisory board, Career and Technical Education advisory committees, meetings with external constituencies, surveys, and evaluation forms are some of the groups and methods involved in decision-making.

The inadequacy of a coherent strategic plan outlining the College's preferred future, and including fiscal projections to support that future, severely limits the College's future decision-making capability (p. 7).

The current Five-Year Strategic Plan incorporates a variety of student, community, faculty, staff, administrative, and facility goals into a coherent strategy for development and decision-making in major areas including student learning and economic development and sustainability. The Plan identifies a variety of "strategic priorities" and plans for their realization based on environmental scans and community needs.

Since the last visit, the college has developed three strategic plans, the most recent of which was drafted in 2005 after extensive input by staff, faculty, and community members. The 2005 college wide plan formed the basis for detailed campus plans that set goals for campus actions. The college plan and resulting campus plans have guided policy development and resource use at the college, as reflected in support for key strategic initiatives, including expanded high school partnerships and increases in faculty salaries.

Related to the strategic plan have been two detailed academic master plans, created in 2001 and 2007. This academic planning process has outlined specific visions for academic programming at each campus based on extensive environmental scans. Those visions have included plans for opening, revitalizing, and closing career and technical education programs and implementing specific instructional strategies to address key needs in developmental and transfer education.

Also related are facilities master plans for the Westminster and Larimer campuses. The plans, completed in 2006 and 2007 respectively, outline a detailed vision of remodeling and expansion projects at each campus, and are closely linked to the visions in the academic master plan. They include detailed cost projections for capital projects needed to provide the physical environment that matches the strategic and academic plans.

The college's strategic and academic plans have not had detailed fiscal projections, in large part because the budget climate in Colorado has been so unpredictable that most fiscal projections would be quickly outdated. Instead, the college has focused on developing annual budgets that reflect a commitment to the principles of the plans.

Continued multiple site expansion with available capital funds endangers quality at all sites due to limited operational funds required to provide infrastructure support. e.g. faculty hires, staff support and training (p. 14, 44).

Three changes in practices addressed this concern. First, improvements to the budget process since 1998 specifically support increased quality by allowing more funding to be directed to instructional areas. By 1999, the college instituted a campus-based budget allocation process, allowing each campus to receive a pro rata share of state funding as well as all the tuition it generated. In the model, the college's budget task force annually modified the budget process to ensure each campus received an appropriate share of available funds. All changes to the allocation were documented each year in the Budget Guiding Principles document *(—R-4)*. This year the college adopted a new cost-based budget, where campus budgets are based on the previous year's expenses and campuses submit new initiatives to the President's Cabinet for additional funding. This new model provides the mechanism to allow cabinet to allocate funds to the greatest needs college wide, while still allowing the campuses to maintain sufficient operating funds.

Second, the college merged the Boulder and Longmont sites into the Boulder County Campus, located in south Longmont, in 2003. Because state funding for capital projects is scarce, the Boulder County and Brighton sites are leased; however, by making leasehold improvements, all from college reserve funds, the College secured a long-term lease agreement at a very favorable rate *(—R-5)*. The merger also facilitated administration that is more efficient. Third, many administrative functions common to all campuses (accounting, purchasing, and information technology, for example) are now handled on a college-wide basis, often with operational staff located at each site. This had freed resources to provide necessary infrastructure support.

Given the pace of enrollment increases at the Boulder sites, more substantial resource commitments need to be made in the form of more full-time faculty, increased student services, improved library access, and expanded instructional technology support to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning at these locales matches the standards provided at other FRCC sites (p. 15-16).

The college's new cost based budget mentioned above, and explained more fully in Criterion 2, adequately addresses the allocation of financial resources to the campuses. Since merging the Boulder and Longmont sites into one location, many new full-time faculty have been hired. The college has doubled

the number of full-time faculty at the Boulder County Campus since 1998, from 18 to 36. The campus provides a full array of student services, offers comprehensive library services, and employs an information technology staff according to college-wide staff-to-computer ratios. In 2007, the college instituted, as part of its budget process, a 5-year computer refresh plan to update technological capability at all campuses.

Even though it has been nearly nine years since the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education announced its requirements for the Assessment of Student Academic Achievement, the College has only recently begun to develop and implement a program to meet these requirements. Much work remains to be done in this area (p. 37-38).

While the college had only begun to develop and implement an ASAA program in 1998, continuous assessment of student learning specifically to inform instructional improvement has always been central to the college's culture. After the report of the 1998 review team, the college developed an assessment process based on data gathering, which was used by faculty for several years. Many methods of assessment of student learning have been employed. The college has been a member of the Higher Learning Commission Assessment Academy since spring 2007. The college is currently creating a system of faculty-driven assessment of student learning so faculty may use the results of assessment to improve student learning. Successful past assessment methods as well as useful new methods will be applied.

At the Larimer Campus, several boxes of student permanent records sit unsecured and unprotected against fire or other disaster while staff are scanning them to CD-ROM for safekeeping (p. 42-43).

Scanning of student permanent records was completed per the State Archives records management rules within the Division of Information Technologies of the Colorado Department of Personnel and Administration (CRS Title 24 Article 80 and Schedule 8). The college now stores copies of those records, noted by the 1998 review team, on 55 CD-ROMs in a fire- and disaster-safe file cabinet at its Larimer Campus and in permanent storage at the Colorado State Archives. The college maintains paper copies of student records in accordance with the Division of Information Technologies of the Colorado Department of Personnel and Administration (CRS Title 24 Article 80 and Schedule 8) and submits and retains them electronically through Banner (the enterprise resource planning system of The Community Colleges of Colorado) and the "legacy" Student Information System (SIS) ("FRCC IS-7.1").

An audit of recent graduates at the Larimer Campus revealed that some students were permitted to graduate without having met the degree requirements outlined in the College catalog (p. 45).

Beginning in 1998, the college established a process to ensure that its graduates meet the degree requirements outlined in its catalog. Members of the Admissions and Records staff review every application for the AA, AS, AAS and AGS degrees and for early graduation checks (according to program requirements *(—R-7)*). The applications of students seeking AAS degrees or certificates are reviewed initially by members of the CTE faculty and then by a Graduation Evaluator from Admissions and Records according to the program standards.

Additionally, the Colorado Community College System plans to purchase and program an automated "degree audit" system that will provide on-line degree assessments for students, faculty, and staff.

Introduction to the Self-Study

Community colleges are asked to provide an amazing number of services to communities. Excellence in provision of services is a hallmark of Front Range Community College. This Self-Study describes the myriad accomplishments of the college and the processes and strategies that assure quality and continual improvement in services. Its mission, vision, and strategic initiatives guide the college in the excellence for which it is known.

Front Range Community College welcomes this opportunity to share the results of our three year Self-Study with our college community, community supporters, donors, other constituencies, and the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association.

This report provides a comprehensive and public view of Front Range Community College that reflects its mission and values and how they are documented and reviewed through ongoing evaluation. For the college community, the Self-Study provides both framework and foundation for the continuous examination and improvement of programs and services to meet diverse learning needs and expectations of its constituencies. It becomes a living document to be incorporated into an existing process of planning for the future and allocating resources in accordance with that planning.

Awareness of where the college has been is integral to appreciating the excellence it perpetuates. Front Range Community College was created in 1968 as the North Campus of the Community College of Denver, situated at East 62nd Avenue and Downing Street in Denver. In 1977, this North Campus moved to 112th Avenue in Westminster, where FRCC continues to capitalize on a strategic location at the crossroads of Adams, Boulder, Jefferson, and, today, Broomfield counties. In the early 1980s, classes also were offered at Longmont High School and a junior high school in Boulder. In 1984, the North Campus became Front Range Community College. A year later, Front Range Community College became autonomous.

In 1988, a Memorandum of Understanding was created to turn the Larimer County Voc-Tech Center into Front Range Community College, and even today the Larimer Campus is home to 400 high school students in career/technical programs.

The 1990s saw further growth with the leasing of a Boulder Valmont Campus (1990) and a Longmont Campus (1995). By 1996, Boulder Valmont proved too small, and a North Boulder Campus replaced it. The Longmont Campus

also was bursting at its seams and doubled in size in 1998. Also in 1998, the Westminster Campus added a Campus Center and joint-use College Hill Library, and the Larimer Campus added a new classroom building (Challenger Point), Longs Peak Student Center, and the joint-use Harmony Library as well as a newly renovated Mount Antero building. Improvements to technology, telecommunications, and science and computer laboratories also took place throughout the 1990s. The 1990s ended with the opening of the Brighton Center.

Before recession and state budget challenges took hold in the 21st century, FRCC was able to renovate Larimer's Blanca Peak and Mount Antero (second phase), and open additional satellites in Longmont and Boulder, finally consolidating the then four sites in Boulder County into one leased Boulder County Campus that doubled the space of the four locations combined. For more than 35 years, Front Range Community College has engaged the college community and the communities we serve to develop, improve, expand, and implement our mission documents. The mission documents, discussed in detail in our Self-Study, are our mission statement, our purpose, our vision, our central values, and our strategic initiatives. The college community has been engaged through all-college inservices, campus-based "town hall" meetings, focus groups, surveys, and requests for comment. The communities we serve have been engaged through focus groups, community surveys, advisory boards, and our outreach through memberships in various organizations, service learning, and volunteer associations.

Our mission documents do not exist in a vacuum. They live in changing environments. While the diversity of students at Front Range Community College reflects the general demographic profile of the state of Colorado and the college service area, the demographics are changing. The percentage of minorities in Colorado is increasing, as it is at Front Range Community College. Official college publications present "welcoming" statements for all. In addition, campuses have student services specifically designed for target populations, e.g., an advisor for single parents.

Other demographic changes include a younger population of students, more students needing developmental preparation, and more females, many of whom are balancing family, work, and academic commitments. Each of these changes provides both challenge and opportunity.

Sometimes other environments change. Front Range Community College witnessed three changes in presidents in a short time. The State of Colorado felt recession post 9/11. Through these years, the mission documents were a critical compass to help faculty and staff navigate through change. The focus remained steadily on student success.

Planning documents assist the college in charting its course. These planning documents include the Strategic Plan, the Academic Master Plan, the Facilities Master Plan, the Technology Plan, and the annual Budget. The first four prepare for the future; the budget directs the present. Processes and procedures in the development and use of these documents are detailed in the Self-Study.

Front Range Community College has been diligent in tracking the progress of student learning. The college's acceptance of an invitation to enter the Academy of Assessment of Student Learning of the Higher Learning Commission is a logical next step in this process. Being prepared for this step means other steps were taken previously; among them, faculty work on Assessment of Student Learning and Institutional Research tracks student progress in general education competencies.

As part of this assessment process, students receiving associate degrees are required to complete the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) examination or other general education assessment during the final semester of their enrollment. CAAP trends analyses conducted by Institutional Research demonstrates that in the last five years FRCC has never fallen significantly below the national normative data on any of the five general education domains. In fact, each year FRCC students have scored higher than the national normative sample on multiple domains.

A further step in assessment is that individual campuses take leadership roles in piloting various projects to assess student learning: effects of a formal developmental student mentoring program on retention and GPA; effects of an extended new student orientation on retention and GPA; effects of mandatory advising on retention and GPA; effects of learning communities on retention and GPA; and comparison of grades in online classes versus traditional classroom delivery. It's clear: outcomes matter.

Collaboration and support is key to the excellence that pervades Front Range Community College. Faculty, instructors, staff, and students alike are supported in various ways. Success is the foremost objective. For faculty and instructors, there are orientation and mentor programs, opportunity for professional development, and technology support. For staff, there are professional development opportunities, thankfully on the rise after some troubling budget years. For students, there are learning communities, campus-based and online support centers, and other special programs. In addition, college departments support an average of about 400 students with disabilities each academic year. Further, the college has more than 150 open computers in common areas, more than 100 open computers in libraries, and 60 open computers in student services areas. Library services connect students to a

vast body of knowledge, stored on paper (traditional books, magazines, and journals) and electronically (databases, e-books, and other virtual sources). The college acts in collaboration with the constituencies it serves to create quality services for them. For example, the service area does not have a universal distribution of industry segments. Thus, individual campuses respond to their areas' labor and industry demands with autonomous decisions on customized training, workforce needs, and career/technical program offerings. This is one example of a decentralized approach to management, all within a shared leadership and communication model. Ultimately, decisions rest with the president, but micromanagement slows down organizations, so the president delegates as needed. A President's Cabinet advises, reviews, and implements decisions. Campus vice presidents have college-wide responsibilities and authority as well as campus responsibilities and authority. Deans serve on campus leadership teams, and deans and directors communicate across campuses on a regular basis. Some areas are best served as college-wide units, such as information technology, business services, and financial aid. College-wide task forces and committees also prove useful, particularly on academic and curriculum matters. Three recent examples detailed in the Self-Study are: Online Learning, Career/Technical Education, and Faculty Professionalism.

Front Range Community College does not know what the future holds. We know today we are working in a global, diverse, and technological world. With this information, as this Self-Study will show, our mission documents guide us. The resources we use are used effectively. We are clear about the purpose of our work, and that purpose is student learning and effective teaching. We know we all are on a journey of discovery. And we are committed to serving future needs, whatever shape they take.

This Self-Study is a careful, expansive, and inclusive examination of the journey Front Range Community College has been on since 1968, with focused attention paid to the past 10 years. It has not been a tranquil 10 years. There have been many demographic shifts. Campus consolidations. Changes of leadership. Recession. Budget challenges. Yet, there have been many periods of significant accomplishment. New programs. Enrollment growth. Advances in student learning assessment. Technology improvements. Community partnerships. Student success. Taken together, what the evidence will show is that Front Range Community College positioned itself to enrich lives of constituencies it serves through exemplary learning experiences.

Criterion One:
Mission & Integrity

Criterion One:
Mission & Integrity

The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Introduction

Front Range Community College has invested substantial resources and effort to creating and maintaining the processes, structures and systems to establishing and sustaining a strong sense of integrity. The foundation of the college's integrity is laid in the college's mission documents.

Beginning in 1992, the college has continued to refine its mission, statement of purpose, vision, and values. These mission documents inform all levels of strategic and programmatic planning and implementation at the college. As noted in the following core component sections, specific evidence will describe how the mission documents are clearly articulated throughout the institution and the community and how decision making is based on conformance with the college's mission. Additionally, it will be shown how strong internal and external communications is critical to the college's integrity with staff, students and other constituents and stakeholders.

Another important aspect of the college's integrity is based on the college's role as part of a 13-college system. As a member of the Colorado Community College System (CCCS), the college's integrity is also founded on the institution's adherence to CCCS policies and procedures. These policies and procedures provide a framework for the college's policies and procedures on all aspects of its operations from accounting to scholarship.

Two key principles also support the college's attainment of a high standard of integrity. The first is the principle of "One College, Many Communities" which allows each campus to exercise innovation, responsiveness and flexibility. This is the recognition that Front Range Community College has a vast service area and that each campus, while part of a single institution, reflects its community in terms of educational needs and goals. The college also operates with the principle of "Shared Leadership" which means that all college staff, i.e. faculty, administrators, and classified employees, are part of a collaborative process for decision making.

Core Component 1A:

The organization's mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization's commitments.

Front Range Community College's Mission Documents

The current FRCC mission documents are:

Our Mission:

At Front Range Community College, we enrich lives through learning.

Our Purpose:

As an institution of higher education, Front Range Community College admits individuals 16 years- of- age or older who can benefit from college preparatory and two-year college-level credit instruction in general education and occupational areas which may lead to a Certificate or an Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, or Associate of General Studies Degree, or lead to transfer to a four-year institution.

We serve individuals of all ages who can benefit from non-credit instruction for personal and professional development, recreation and fitness, and individual and family enrichment.

We serve employees of local businesses and industries who can benefit from workplace skill development from customized and/or credit-generating courses.

We serve all individuals in our communities by developing and enriching the local economy and culture.

Our Vision:

We are learner-centered and responsive to diverse student goals, including service to community.

We facilitate learning where, when, and how it best suits the needs of the diverse learning publics we serve.

Our curriculum prepares vocational, academic, and business-oriented students to succeed in a highly competitive, global economy by focusing on quality, innovation, technology, self initiative, and problem solving.

Collaboration, teamwork, cheerfulness, diversity and a priority on student success and satisfaction characterize our work and our management.

We recognize that our faculty, together with our staff, are our greatest asset and that our commitment to their continuous professional development is essential.

We are driven to excel and embrace the importance of listening to our constituencies.

Business and civic leaders experience our resolve to impact in significant ways the economic well-being of the region we serve.

We are recognized as a model for a "virtual campus" spanning not only Adams, Boulder, Broomfield, Larimer, and North Jefferson Counties, but wherever technology allows us to educate effectively.

Our Core Values:

The Central Value of Students:
We believe that students are the essence of the institution.

The Central Value of Learning:
We are committed to learning; both in the classroom and in our common organizational life together, so that we improve, develop, and grow.

The Central Value of Quality:
We value quality and excellence in all that we do.

The Central Value of Community:
We are committed to engaging and supporting each other, our students, and our community in both internal and external ways.

Strategic Priorities:
FRCC creates a welcoming ***community of learners*** that embraces excellence by setting and achieving high standards.

FRCC promotes student ***access and success*** in learning, in work, and in community by valuing and respecting the diversity of all and the individuality of each.

FRCC provides a ***great place to work*** by valuing and respecting employees for their unique contributions and potential.

FRCC leads ***community vitality and sustainability*** by strengthening partnerships and responsiveness.

FRCC obtains ***resources*** to successfully achieve its mission.

Development and Updating Mission Documents

Each community college within the state system is expected to develop strategic plans and mission documents that address local needs but that are aligned with the overarching strategic goals defined by the State Board of Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE). College plans are submitted to the Colorado Community College System (CCCS), the administrative arm of the state board.

These expectations are defined in SBCCOE policy and may be found under "Organization Guidelines\Institutional Issues\Strategic Goals" *(—1A-1)*.

Since 1992 the college has used collaborative processes to ensure that the mission documents represent the views of internal and external constituents and clearly articulate principles that drive the institution.

These processes include:

- *College-wide engagement.* In-services, town halls, and other college forums have been used to gather feedback on mission documents. In 2006, the college retained Restorative Solutions to conduct 10 internal focus groups on key topics *(—1A-2)*.

- *Focus groups.* The college hired professional facilitators to design and execute focus groups with college employees, students, and community stakeholders to assess the clarity of mission documents and to determine perceived progress on achieving strategic priorities.

- *Surveys.* FRCC regularly uses surveys to collect data on mission documents and goal achievement. The Office of Institutional Research annually conducts surveys of employees, alumni, employers, currently enrolled students, and vocational graduates, among others.

Under the current administration, President Reinertson uses a defined process for an annual review of the college budget, based on previous year's expenses, and the addition of new college/campus initiatives that culminates in a yearly operational plan and budget.

What the Mission Documents Articulate

The mission documents articulate our commitment to our constituents, to high academic standards, and to learning.

Our commitment to our constituents:

The Mission Statement refers generally to "lives" and "learning," which are broad references to all who learn at Front Range Community College. The Purpose Statement states we serve "individuals 16 years of age or older," "individuals of all ages," and "individuals in our communities." The Vision Statement refers to "vocational, academic, and business-oriented students." The Strategic Priorities refer to "diverse learning publics" and "partnerships in the community, and employees," reflections of both internal and external constituencies. In short, we know to whom we are committed.

Our commitment to high academic standards:

The Mission Statement's "we enrich lives…" implicitly refers to an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and innovation in learning to ensure that students are able to attain educational goals and achieve success. The Vision Statement's "our curriculum prepares … students to succeed" directly addresses high academic standards. Additionally, "our commitment to (faculty's) continuous professional development" speaks to the importance of ongoing faculty development as a critical underpinning of high academic standards. And, "We are driven to excel…" states an institutional commitment to academic and customer service excellence. The Core Values contain two statements that are, in substance, about high academic standards: "The Central Value of Learning" and "The Central Value of Quality."

Our commitment to learning:

When, after many internal conversations, our Mission Statement changed to "we enrich lives through learning" from "we enrich lives through education," we changed from focusing on the process and started focusing on educational outcomes and achievement of student education goals. The Purpose Statement emphasizes "ability to benefit," which is another way of saying "achievement of learning objectives." The Vision Statement has several salient elements, including "learner-centered," "diverse student goals," "facilitate learning," and "curriculum prepares…students to succeed…" These also reflect our emphasis on student achievement. Finally, "The Central Value of Learning" explicitly declares our strongly held commitment to student learning.

Public Accessibility of Mission Documents

The College Catalog is the key public document that articulates the mission documents. The catalog is the basis for a student's engagement with the college, i.e. the catalog for the year the student initially enrolls has guidelines for completion of any certificate or degree.

Other published documents also contain all or parts of the mission documents. These documents are made available to the public, including prospective and enrolled students, as well as to FRCC employees. As of Oct. 15, 2006, mission documents were found in the following publications:

Mission Statement	• FRCC Catalog • Website • FYI Booklet • College Wide Fact Sheet • Frontline Online • Student Handbook • Part Time Faculty Handbook
Purpose Statement	• FRCC Catalog • Website • Part Time Faculty Handbook
Vision Statement	• FRCC Catalog • Website
Core Values	• FRCC Catalog • Website • FYI Booklet • Part Time Faculty Handbook
Strategic Priorities	• FRCC Website • Frontline Online • Part Time Faculty Handbook

Core Component 1B:

In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

Front Range Community College's geographically large, ethnically and economically diverse service area stretches from North Denver to the Wyoming border. It includes all or portions of Adams, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Larimer, Jefferson, and Weld counties. With three campuses and one center serving more than 23,000 students, FRCC is the largest community college in Colorado.

The 2006-07 Catalog acknowledges diversity on page 5: "Students are welcome at Front Range Community College, whatever their race, color, age, religion, disability, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, educational background, or educational goal may be." *(—1B-1)*.

Many ethnic and cultural groups – African American, Hispanic, Asian, and others – are part of the service area. A mix of urban, suburban, and rural communities means economic activity within the service area also is highly varied. Employment sectors include aerospace, agriculture, biotechnology, education, information technology, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, tourism, and much more. Large corporate headquarters as well as small businesses populate the service area.

Demographic statistics noting gender and ethnicity of students from 1998-2007 are available from the Office of Institutional Research *(—1B-2)*.

Demographic analysis includes the following:

- Our student body is more heavily represented by females than either Colorado as a whole or just our service area, per the 2000 through 2005 census analysis.

- Our trends in minority representation are also similar from 2000 to 2005. The student population under-represents the Hispanic general population. Other minority groups are represented more closely. Our Hispanic students are increasing in number, although our rate of increase is slower than the general population.

- Rates of Hispanic and minority representation have increased at FRCC since AY 1998:

Year	AY98	AY99	AY00	AY01	AY02	AY03	AY04	AY05	AY06	AY07
Minority	15.50	16.20	15.90	16.40	16.80	16.80	17.40	17.30	18.00	18.00
Hispanic	8.5	9.2	8.8	9.5	9.5	9.9	10.1	10.3	11.1	11.3

NOTE: "Minority" includes Hispanic *(—1B-3)*.

The state's overall minority population in 2007 was 17%. For many years, female students have been the majority in community colleges nationally, and Front Range is no exception, per demographic data from 1998-2006 *(—1B-4)*.

The median age of students has fallen over the past several years. In the past, the median age was higher as the "baby boomer" generation continued to enroll in courses and programs, creating a bi-modal age distribution. As boomers reach their peak earning years and enter retirement, they are taking fewer classes, which lowers the median age. Accelerating the drop in median age is a sharp increase in the number of traditional-age students who see FRCC as a school of choice after high school graduation.

Honoring Diversity

President Karen Reinertson wrote a letter published in the 2006-2007 College Catalog to affirm a commitment to diversity. This letter states:

Access to higher education is important. … Our students reflect a wide variety of age, gender, ethnic, economic, and educational diversity. We have students working on their GEDs, students who already have Ph.D.s, and students at every stage of their education in between *(—1B-5)*.

Other examples of the college's commitment to diversity include:
- Training for faculty and instructors emphasizes instructional strategies to accommodate different learning styles, thus recognizing and honoring diversity in learning.
- Course delivery honors diversity in learning. Students can access classroom, computer-based, hybrid, and online courses. Additionally, the college offers non-credit classes that include a range of professional development and personal interest topics. These offerings are updated regularly to reflect community needs and interests.
- The Center for Adult Learning received the 2007 Arlene Nededog Award from the Northern Colorado Multicultural Commission, awarded annually to businesses or individuals that have demonstrated sustained and extraordinary commitment to serving the needs of the diverse populations of Northern Colorado.

A Commitment to Diversity

As early as 1992, the Mission Statement expressed the college's foundational commitment to diversity: "…we promote, celebrate, respect, and embrace the strengths that diverse cultures, experiences, and ideas bring to our college" *(—1B-6)*. Today's mission documents continue the commitment.

The Purpose Statement states that the college "serves anyone 16 years of age or older …" and "individuals of all ages …" – a clear commitment to diversity.

The Vision Statement affirms that we are "responsive to diverse student goals," that "we facilitate learning where, when and how it best suits the needs of the diverse learning public we serve," and that "diversity" is one of the characteristics of "our work and our management."

The Core Values declare "we value students … as people and as learners and for the diverse perspectives they contribute" and "we value … the commitment, knowledge, diversity, and uniqueness of our employees."

The Strategic Priorities make three commitments to diversity:
- "FRCC creates *a welcoming community* of learners that embraces excellence by setting and achieving high standards."
- "FRCC promotes student access and success in learning, in work, and in community *by valuing and respecting the diversity of all and the individuality of each.*"
- "FRCC provides a great place to work *by valuing and respecting* employees for their unique contributions and potential."

A Commitment to a Multicultural Society

A key outcome of developing the College's mission documents is the recognition and understanding of the College's roles and responsibilities as a community partner. The College is involved in the communities it serves. The College works closely with individuals, civic and business leaders, chambers of commerce, economic development agencies, school districts, workforce centers, and civic organizations *(—1B-7)*.

The Purpose Statement builds from recognition of diversity among individuals – "we serve individuals of all ages" – to an awareness of diversity within communities – "we serve employees of local businesses and industries" – and, by extension, a multicultural society – "we serve all individuals in our communities by enriching the local economy and culture."

The Vision Statement outlines how we will serve a multicultural society. First, by embracing "the importance of listening to our constituencies." Second, by "our resolve to impact … the economic well being of the region." And, third, by expanding our presence to "wherever technology allows us to educate effectively."

The Core Value of Community states why we will serve a multicultural society: "We value a sense of community and collaboration."

And the Strategic Plan reinforces the commitment and outlines its execution: "FRCC leads community vitality and sustainability by strengthening partnerships and responsiveness" *(—1B-8)*.

Honoring the Dignity and Worth of Individuals

Student success is grounded in honoring the dignity and worth of the individual student.

The essence of student success starts with advising to ensure that a student is properly placed in developmental or entry-level college or career and technical education courses that successfully meet his/her educational goals. Additionally, the College has devoted resources to continual communications with students on their academic progress, including early intervention should the students need assistance. The College fosters an environment (e.g. friendly and helpful faculty and staff) that makes students feel welcome and empowered so they can succeed.

The mission documents commit us to honor the dignity and worth of individuals.

The Vision Statement tells us "we are learner centered and responsive to diverse student goals," that "a priority on student success and satisfaction characterize our work and our management," that "we recognize that our faculty, together with our staff, is our greatest asset," and that we "embrace the importance of listening."

The Core Values are crystal clear about dignity: "We value students" and "We value employees."

The Strategic Plan tells us to create "a welcoming community of learners," to promote "student access and success … by valuing and respecting the diversity of all and the individuality of each" and to provide "a great place to work by valuing and respecting employees for their unique contributions and potential."

Constant Attention, Continuous Commitment

Over the years, the Mission Statement has been revisited and revised to ensure that it reflects the high ideals of the college (see Criterion 1, Core Component A). The Core Values have also been reviewed, discussed, and reaffirmed as being in concert with the mission. The Core Values have been largely unchanged, but continually supported, since 1995 and are a mainstay in the 2007-08 Catalog *(—1B-9)*.

The mission documents address the concept of diversity from a number of perspectives. These documents form the basis for individual campuses, departments, and staff to embrace diversity with specific strategies, goals, and milestones.

If you seek an overarching statement that drives our diversity initiatives, look to the Catalog, where a "Commitment to Diversity" statement has appeared since 1999-2000. From the 2006-07 Catalog, it reads:

> Our Commitment to Diversity—
>
> Diversity among faculty, administration, and staff is one measure of quality within academic institutions; we seek to create greater diversity so that we reflect the variety [in] our community and our world.
>
> FRCC strives to develop and foster human diversity in all of our activities, including:
>
> - Student recruitment and support
> - Staff recruitment and development
> - Community relations
> - Curriculum
> - Institutional policy

Core Component 1C:
Understanding of, and support for the mission pervade the organization.

Since the early 1990s, Front Range Community College has been driven by, and committed to, its Mission, Purpose, Vision, Core Values, and Strategic Priorities. These mission documents have undergone continuous review and affirmation through the strategic planning process, as the two are strongly linked. Every FRCC president since the early 1990s has used a collaborative planning process to coalesce the college's organization, programming, resource allocations, and new initiatives in accordance with the mission documents.

The Front Range Community College Strategic Plan (1999-2001) describes the underlying assumptions and principles that guide the strategic planning process:

"Through a proactive strategic planning process, Front Range Community College identifies and analyzes factors – external as well as internal – which may represent opportunities or challenges to its ability to fulfill its mission. The college then formulates and implements strategic changes to optimize its position within the educational marketplace.

"The Strategic Plan:

- is an ongoing, dynamic process, not a document or a fixed blueprint
- links strategic and program planning with budgeting and resource development
- addresses strategic and operational planning at both campus and college levels
- is interactive, linking the campuses with each other and with the college as a whole
- is developed and carried out both from the bottom up and the top down

"President's Cabinet, in its capacity as the college's central planning team, coordinates the strategic planning process. All campus governance, planning, management, and budgeting systems reflect the overarching college mission, values, purpose, and strategic initiatives" *(—1C-1).*

Each FRCC president publicly declared a personal commitment to the College mission, collaborative planning, and decision making. For example, in the spring 2002 edition of FrontLine OnLine, President Tom Gonzales writes about the college's mission documents and their importance in the planning process:

> Late last semester we enhanced our ability to be responsive by revising our Strategic Plan. By now you should have received your copy of our 'Outcomes Report,' which describes some of our many accomplishments in the four Strategic Initiatives areas defined in our Strategic Plan for 1999-2001. Late last year, the administrators, classified employees, and students met with President's Cabinet and members of our local communities to develop a new Strategic Plan for 2002-2005….
>
> We will share the new plan with you in the near future, but I wanted to lay out the general framework for you in this issue of FrontLine. Perhaps most importantly, as a group we strongly renewed our commitment to our mission statement: 'At Front Range Community College, we enrich lives through learning.' This brief statement captures our philosophy of responsiveness and flexibility in offering services and programs that meet the needs of our students and communities *(—1C-2)*.

In the 1999-2001 and 2002-04 strategic plans, a conceptual schematic entitled "Strategic Plan Linkages" is included that clearly shows the relationships between the college's Strategic Plan and other planning processes, e.g. campus plans, master plans (Instructional, Facilities, and Technology), budget allocation, and institutional effectiveness. The following schematic was printed in the 1999-2001 Strategic Plan *(—1C-3):*

Environmental Scanning
Focus Groups
College Groups

FRCC
Strategic
Plans

Campus
Strategic
Plans

Institutional
Effectiveness

FRCC Master
Planning:
• Instruction
• Student Life
• Facilities
• Technology

Campus
Master
Plans

Assessment
and
Evalution

FRCC
Budget
Process

Implementation
of Plan(s)

Campus
Budgets
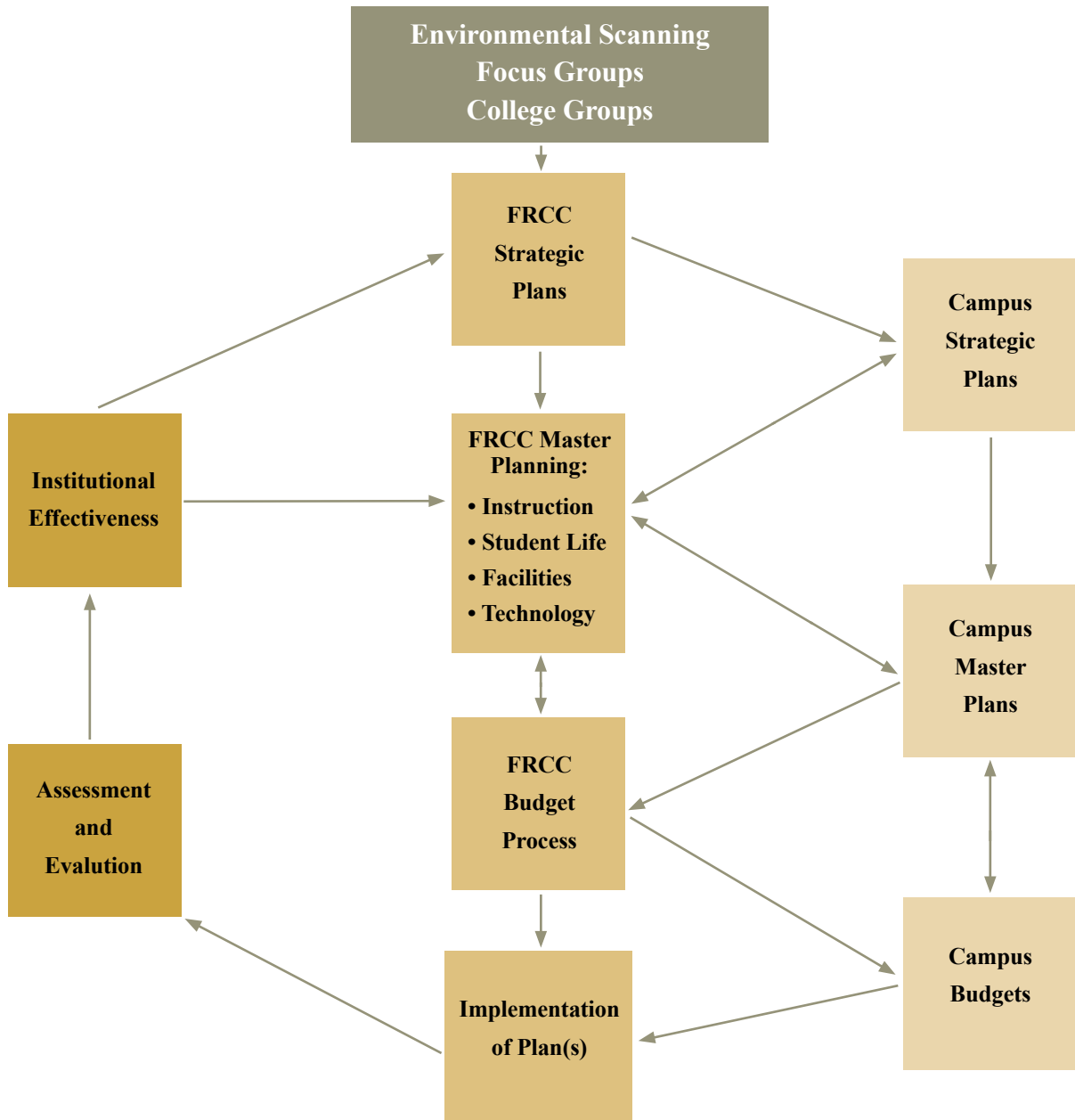
Beginning in fall 2006, President Karen Reinertson directed the college to initiate a series of surveys and focus groups to collect information on perceptions of students, faculty, staff, and other key constituencies about the college mission. The findings from these surveys and focus groups with respect to mission and planning are summarized below:

While the surveys were conducted by the College's Office of Institutional Research, focus groups were conducted by a consulting company, Restorative Solutions Inc. in July 2006. Restorative Solutions conducted 10 focus groups. In the area of Strategic Planning, Restorative Solutions reported:

> There was overall consensus that strategic planning is critical to the mission, vision, and morale of the institution and that all staff and faculty should be a part of this process. Staff and faculty feel best when their input is included and a plan is carried out, which hasn't always been the case. The recent strategic planning process had mixed opinions, largely resulting from the turnover in college administration which disrupted the focus and end results of the process. Each campus had differing results, dependent upon the ability of its leadership to see the process through. Staff and faculty feel significant stress from the lack of support for higher education from the State Legislature and feel that a strong strategic plan could see them through hard times.

President Reinertson and Cabinet conducted in-depth discussions about the findings. As noted in the report, negative comments were often because of anxieties created by administrative turnover. President Reinertson, with concurrence from Cabinet, will ameliorate such concerns by increasing the lines of communications for staff, faculty, and other stakeholders through the vice presidents. The campus vice presidents are the first line of communication between the college and the internal and external groups, given that each campus is geared to address the educational needs of their areas.

In addition, continued accreditation surveys were administered to students, faculty, part-time instructors, chairs, and administrators and staff in spring 2006 *(—1C-5)*. Survey results provided more detailed and nuanced insight into the perceptions of these groups about mission, planning, and resource allocation. The 2006 surveys provide evidence that the college's strategic decisions are mission-driven.

In the Administrators and Staff Survey, 92.7% responded that the college was effectively implementing its Mission and Purpose. Most (94%) also believed that decisions were made with the best interests of students in mind. Of those surveyed, 95.1% felt that the Core Values were aligned with the mission. See the following charts:

Q32: FRCC is effectively implementing its stated mission and purpose.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	2.3	2.4	2.4
	Disgree	4	4.5	4.9	7.3
	Agree	66	75.0	80.5	97.8
	Strongly Agree	10	11.4	12.2	100.0
	Total	82	93.2	100.0	
Missing	System	6	6.8		
Total		88	100.0		

Q33: Decisions within FRCC are made with the best interest of students in mind.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	5	5.7	6.2	6.2
	Disgree	8	9.1	9.9	16.0
	Agree	51	58.0	63.0	79.0
	Strongly Agree	17	19.3	21.0	100.0
	Total	81	92.0	100.0	
Missing	System	7	8.0		
Total		88	100.0		

Q7: The core values meet the goal(s) of the FRCC mission statement.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	78	88.6	95.1	95.1
	No	4	4.5	4.9	100
	Total	82	93.2	100.0	
Missing	System	6	6.8		
Total		88	100.0		

Surveyed students were not as aware of the Mission or Core Values. Only 27.6% said they knew the college mission and values, although the response rate for the student survey is low. This is not unexpected, as students tend to focus on attaining their educational goals and not on the official mission of the educational institution. Nevertheless, the college mission documents are readily available to students and the general public in several widely distributed publications including the catalog and the college Web site (—1C-6).

Q11: Do you know what the mission and values of FRCC are?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Yes	29	25.7	27.6	27.6
	3 No	76	67.3	72.4	100.00
	Total	105	92.9	100.0	
Missing	System	8	7.1		
Total		113	100.0		

The college has devoted considerable human and financial resources to ensuring all sectors of the college help to develop and understand the mission. Every few years, the college gathers both internal and external constituents to revisit, modify as needed, and affirm the Mission, Purpose, Vision, Values, and Strategic Priorities. College units such as President's Cabinet, the Deans' Council, Faculty Senate, and Student Government assist with the development of the multi-year strategic plan. Many groups, such as campus vice presidents' Executive Teams, then develop operational plans and budgets to support the overarching strategic initiatives. The college's budget process is founded on the Mission, Core Values, and Strategic Priorities.

On a regular basis, publications such as the College Catalog, FrontLine OnLine, and other documents address the Mission and related planning and resource-allocation efforts.

In the early 2000s, Front Range Community College was severely tested in its resolve to adhere to its planning and budget priorities.

From the end of FY2002 through the end of FY2004 the State of Colorado experienced a decline in revenues of over 17%. During this time federal entitlement programs such as Medicaid increased and a specific constitutional provision required increased appropriations to K-12 education. The result was that Higher Education received a disproportionate share of the reductions forced by the revenue decline.

The table that follows breaks out FRCC figures from State of Colorado revenues and expense budgets from 2001-2005:

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Resident FTE	6,985	7,286	7,718	8,764	9,401	9,629
Non-Resident FTE	482	394	405	460	547	591
Original State Appropriations	15,397,583	17,025,399	18,655,262	20,333,198	14,613,093	15,104,932
Actual State Appropriations	15,397,583	17,025,399	18,068,386	16,226,367	14,613,093	15,104,932
Tuition Revenue	15,365,754	15,539,691	17,218,607	20,320,519	24,326,843	25,781,288
General Fund Expense Budget	32,011,787	34,832,142	38,449,228	41,365,067	39,603,827	43,214,733
Resident Rate/Credit Hour	56.30	57.75	60.05	62.90	66.05	66.80
Non-Resident Rate/Credit Hour	266.80	277.45	291.30	313.75	345.15	345.15

The largest reduction in original state appropriations came in 2003 to 2004 – a reduction of 28%.

Focusing on alignment with mission, President Tom Gonzales regularly conducted town hall meetings with the college to discuss the budget crises. He wrote in the March 2003 FrontLine:

> "Recent hits on funding for higher education have impacted every college and university in the state … So far FRCC has absorbed an 11.5 percent reduction in funding – about $2.3 million – without diminishing the integrity of our programs and our overall mission… Our ability to sustain this impact reflects well on FRCC's fiscal practices and its faculty and staff, [who are] willing to trim expenses while continuing to meet the highest standards in educational excellence" *(—1C-7)*.

In 2004, President Janet Gullickson began to modify the budget process to foster teaching and learning. On Dec. 6, 2005, President's Cabinet reported to the college community on the "hot topics" developed at an all-faculty meeting in August:

> "Internally, the College has made progress … through reallocation of its budget. For example, over the past 12 months the College has made administrative cost reductions twice to help shift a higher percentage of its spending from non-instructional to instructional areas. During fiscal years 2003, 2004 and 2005, the percentage of the total college budget spent on instruction was 51 percent, 52.6 percent, and 54.8 percent, respectively" *(—1C-8)*.

FRCC also implemented a new budget development process in 2005. In a document entitled "Front Range Community College Budget Development Process Guiding Principles" *(—1C-9),* the budget process clearly supports the mission and mission documents. The college has documented its guiding principles for its budget development process. The first two principles stated in this document declare: "1. The budget will support the College's Strategic Plan and 2. The budget will support the common and unique needs of each of the college's campuses and the communities they serve."

This speaks to the mission-informed nature of the budgeting process and clearly highlights the importance that is placed upon the Strategic Priority of leading community vitality and sustainability.

The 2006 continued accreditation surveys underscore the college's emphasis on teaching and learning, which are directly related to our mission. For example, results of the accreditation survey of staff and administrators were broken down by employment category. Sixty-three percent of respondents were staff. The survey indicates 77% of staff believe an emphasis on teaching and learning is demonstrated by budgeting priorities and the alignment of planning and budget processes.

Q15: Budgeting priorities indicate that improvement in teaching and learning is a core value of FRCC.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	5	5.7	6.0	6.0
	Disgree	14	15.9	16.9	22.9
	Agree	53	60.2	63.9	86.7
	Strongly Agree	11	12.5	13.3	100.0
	Total	83	94.3	100.0	
Missing	System	5	5.7		
Total		88	100.0		

One area open for improvement, as noted by the faculty, is the role mission documents play in budgeting. Slightly less than half of faculty agreed that budgeting priorities reflected the core values of teaching and learning *(—1C-10).* Since this was also the area administration and staff scored lowest, at 77% *(—1C-11),* budget processes deserve some scrutiny. Nevertheless, more than 90% of faculty believed the overall process was on track, with FRCC effectively implementing its stated mission and purpose:

Q54: FRCC is effectively implementing its stated mission and purpose.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Strongly Disagree	1	7	8	8
	2 Disgree	11	7.5	8.8	9.6
	3 Agree	84	57.5	67.2	76.8
	4 Strongly Agree	29	19.9	23.2	100.0
	Total	125	85.6	100.0	
Missing	System	21	14.4		
Total		146	100.0		

As part of the strategic planning process, campuses are required to develop individual strategic plans to meet community and student needs in the context of the overall college mission.

Larimer Strategic Directions, for example, provide evidence of support of the College's Mission and Strategic Priorities, as each initiative in the document is categorized under one of the five Strategic Priorities *(—1C-12).*

Larimer Campus Student Services Strategic Plan for the 2005-2008 is clearly and directly based upon the College's Strategic Priorities. At the direction of the Dean of Student Services, each of the strategic initiatives of every Student Services department is directly connected to all of the Strategic Priorities, and strategic initiatives are grouped accordingly *(—1C-13).*

A sampling of other internal constituencies shows they, too, support and promote the Mission and Strategic Priorities. A document outlining the strategic plans of the Institute for Community and Professional Development for both Westminster and Larimer campuses incorporates elements that address increasing access for students from diverse populations, maintaining employee satisfaction and morale, and developing and maintaining strong business and community partnerships. Each of these elements is directly related to one of the College's Strategic Priorities *(—1C-14).*

 The Small Business Development Center, another internal constituent, follows a mission that supports the Strategic Priority of community vitality and sustainability. Its mission statement, placed prominently on a link off the FRCC Web site, is "to provide high-quality and cost-effective small business assistance, information, and support which fosters the successful growth and development of small businesses and results in a positive long-term economic impact on our communities" *(—1C-15).*

The 2006 continued accreditation surveys provide evidence that the goals of the college and campus subunits are congruent with the college mission documents.

For example, in the administrators and staff survey, 90.6% of respondents answered that the college's mission and core values were a part of departmental processes.

Q7: I use the mission statement and core values in my department.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	77	87.5	90.6	90.6
	No	8	9.1	9.4	100.0
	Total	85	96.6	100.0	
Missing	System	3	3.4		
Total		88	100.0		

In the part-time instructor survey, three responses to questions clearly demonstrate that part-time instructors believe the college and its departments have mission congruency. Ninety-three percent agreed that "teaching and learning" are a core value. Eighty-four percent believed that FRCC is achieving its mission and purpose. And 87% perceived that their units have the best interests of students in mind. See the following charts:

Q28: Teaching and learning is an obvious core value at FRCC.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4 Strongly Agree	45	50.0	51.1	51.1
	3 Agree	37	41.1	42.0	93.2
	2 Disagree	6	6.7	6.8	100.0
	Total	88	97.8	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.2		
Total		90	100.0		

Q52: FRCC is effectively implementing its stated mission and purpose.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4 Strongly Agree	19	21.1	25.3	25.3
	3 Agree	44	48.9	58.7	84.0
	2 Disagree	11	12.2	14.7	98.7
	1 Strongly Disagree	1	1.1	1.3	100.0
	Total	75	83.3	100.0	
Missing	System	15	16.7		
Total		90	100.0		

Q53: Decisions in my area are made with the best interests of students in mind.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4 Strongly Agree	31	34.4	40.3	40.3
	3 Agree	36	40.0	46.8	87.0
	2 Disagree	8	8.9	10.4	97.4
	1 Strongly Disagree	2	2.2	2.6	100.0
	Total	77	85.6	100.0	
Missing	System	13	14.4		
Total		90	100.0		

Faculty are also familiar with the mission and make use of it in their classroom teaching. Eighty-five percent reported using the Mission Statement and Core Values as guides in their classes. A typical response was, "I strive to enrich students' lives beyond simply giving them the course content. My goal is to somehow improve their life experience." Another faculty member looked beyond the mere transmission of information to its usefulness in students' lives: "I stress relevance and applicability of my course to personal growth and real-life situations" *(—1C-16)*.

There is general agreement, particularly among faculty and staff, that the Mission is known and supported throughout the institution. Survey evidence from 2006 illustrates how the Mission has permeated the college. The Mission is part of the everyday practice of faculty and staff, and the educational experience of the student body *(—1C-17)*.

As might be expected for a general statement like the Mission, the groups most consciously familiar with it are administration and staff. More than 90% of administrators and staff reported using the Mission Statement and attendant Core Values in their departments *(—1C-18)*. An overwhelming 95% believed the Core Values were good expositions of the Mission *(—1C-19),* and nearly 93% thought the Mission was being effectively implemented *(—1C-20).*

Faculty (84.9%) use FRCC mission and values as guideposts:

Q3: I use FRCC's mission statement and core values as guides to my classroom teaching.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Yes	118	80.8	84.9	84.9
	3 No	21	14.4	15.1	100.0
	Total	139	95.2	100.0	
Missing	System	7	4.8		
Total		146	100.0		

Similarly, part-time instructors also use mission and values as guides:

Q2: I use FRCC's mission statement and core values as guides to my classroom teaching.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Yes	63	70.0	76.8	76.8
	0 No	19	21.1	23.2	100.0
	Total	82	91.1	100.0	
Missing	System	8	8.9		
Total		90	100.0		

Core Component 1D:

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

Colorado Community College Governance and Structure

The State Legislature established the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) in 1967. In September 1986, the Colorado General Assembly enacted HB 1237, reorganizing the Board. The new SBCCOE created the Colorado Community College and Occupational Educational System (CCCOES) to administer its responsibilities. In June 2002, CCCOES was renamed the Colorado Community College System (CCCS).

The SBCCOE is a nine-member board that governs CCCS. Members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the State Senate for staggered four-year terms. One community college faculty member and one student representative serve one-year, non-voting terms.

The SBCCOE provides the governance structure of Front Range Community College via policies developed and sanctioned by the system *(—1D-1)*.

In addition, the SBCCOE employs a president of the community college system (CCCS) who is the direct supervisor of the community college presidents. Conditions of employment *(—1D-2)* and selection of college presidents *(—1D-3)* are defined by system policies.

The SBCCOE appoints members to an Area Advisory Council for each community college. Area Advisory Councils provide liaisons between colleges and communities, and serve in an advisory capacity for maintaining contact with area employers and local school districts; facilitate long-range planning; review budget priorities; and meet public-service needs. A critical function of the council is to provide a forum to assess the ability of the college to meet its mission and preserve college integrity with its communities *(—1D-4)*.

The system president, in conjunction with system office staff, developed a structure for community colleges to determine and communicate policy within CCCS. The President's Council consists of the System President and presidents from each of the community colleges. This council discusses policy issues and makes recommendations to the SBCCOE for statewide policy. Leaders from each of the system colleges make up a second key committee, the Educational Services Council. This council provides a forum for sharing best practices, communicating information and decisions from the SBCCOE and system staff, and developing policy and procedure recommendations to the President's Council.

Because all colleges must maintain a common curriculum, CCCS has established procedures and committees to coordinate curriculum development. In each step, groups check to make sure the curriculum maintains consistency with common curriculum standards, does not duplicate existing curriculum, and has appropriate rigor and quality. New curricula must first be approved at a college and then presented to statewide discipline teams, composed of faculty in individual academic disciplines. After approval by a discipline team, curriculum is evaluated by the State Faculty Curriculum Committee, composed of faculty from each system college and the CCCS Provost. The Educational Services Curriculum Committee reviews all proposed college curricula statewide in order to make recommendations to the Educational Services Council. Once the curriculum is approved, it becomes part of the CCCS Common Course Numbering System (CCNS) *(—1D-5)*.

Curriculum in the CCNS can then be nominated, at the request of faculty, to become part of the state guaranteed transfer curriculum, known as gtPATHWAYS (statewide guaranteed-transfer courses) *(—1D-6)* as defined in statute (Colorado Revised Statute 23-1-108 (7) (a), C.R.S. 23-1-108.5, and C.R.S. 23-1-125 *(—1D-7)*. A committee of two-year and four-year institutions' faculty reviews the nominations, which are then submitted to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) for approval. Courses designated under gtPATHWAYS are guaranteed to count as general education core requirements for any associate of arts, associate of science or associate of applied science degree. FRCC offers more than a hundred courses in 28 subject areas approved under gtPATHWAYS *(—1D-8)*.

In addition, system office staff provide oversight to a variety of college functions. System staff oversee and approve all college applications for new Career and Technical Education programs, oversee and approve all expenditures under the Perkins grant, and monitor credentialing of all career and technical faculty. System Information Technology staff determine standards and protocols for almost all information technology in use at the colleges and provide the technical expertise to maintain many of the networks the colleges use. System staff also maintain the common student information/ registration system and financial systems that the colleges share.

Front Range Community College Structure and Governance

CCCS charges the president of Front Range Community College with exercising effective leadership by determining operational structures *(—1D-9)*. The president has a team of administrators – called President's Cabinet (each is a direct report to the president) who are individually and collectively accountable to guide a shared vision and lead institutional operations for advancement of the College *(—1D-10)*.

The distribution of governance responsibilities is delineated through FRCC Organizational Guidelines *(—1D-11)* which delegate authority via members of the President's Cabinet *(—1D-12)* and through officially sanctioned committees and constituent councils that operate under established procedures in support of the College's mission and goals *(—1D-13)*.

Since 1999, the college has used a collaborative model. In this model, final decisions are vested with the president. However, the president delegates operational responsibility and authority. Additionally, faculty, staff, students, and other constituents inform decision making through standing and ad hoc committees, task forces, forums, and other venues. The college also delineates the scope of responsibility and accountability for college-wide and campus governance. In essence, this college/campus dynamic is characterized by the phrase "one college of many communities." President's Cabinet sets policy based upon recommendations from various entities in the college. The Academic Guideline and Procedure Committee (AGP) recommends organizational guidelines that come from a variety of sources including the Deans' Council, faculty senates, and the Curriculum Committee. Each campus is charged with developing procedures that adhere to the policy but conform to the individual nature of the campus and the community. This shared leadership structure requires faculty, administrators, and staff to participate in decision making.

The college has established clear, defined college-wide and campus-based operations. In 1999, the president, recognizing individual characteristics of each campus, appointed vice presidents for the three campuses. Campus vice presidents are the chief executive officers responsible for all operational aspects of their campuses. Two key officers, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and the Chief Academic Officer (CAO), provide oversight of fiscal matters and academic and student development respectively. In addition, a registrar ensures consistency in admissions and records processes and decisions.

This structure works effectively, allowing campuses to develop individual flavor while maintaining college-wide consistency. In 2007 the Vice President for Learning accepted a position at CCCS. Subsequently, her duties were divided among the campus vice presidents and the vice president for administrative services/chief financial officer. Each vice president was given a clear set of college-wide responsibilities.

On the campus level, vice presidents delegate authority to key leaders, including deans of instruction and student services. Campus deans provide leadership to department chairs and directors. Additionally, through participation on committees, they advance the mission of the college *(—1D-14)*. Vice presidents, deans, and chairs regularly collaborate to assure that the College is fulfilling its mission. The college's 2006 Reaccreditation Survey for Administration and Staff shows 80.2% feel involved in planning and decision making to assure the mission of the college is met. *(—1D-15)*.

The college's decentralized organizational structure works effectively. As much as possible, decision making occurs on the campus level. This is particularly true in instructional programming, where each campus determines its program mix based on community needs. (Campuses must be mindful, however, of maintaining consistency with other programs in the college, and President's Cabinet approves all programs). For example, each campus has learning communities, but with different models and different courses. Campuses also have experimented independently with instructional initiatives such as writing across the curriculum. Finally, campus-specific programs include Interpreter Preparation at Westminster, Geographic Information Systems at Boulder County, and Veterinary Technology at Larimer.

In addition, while adhering to college-wide standards, each campus manages its own student services activities to best meet student needs. One example of campus-based student development initiatives is student orientation. The Westminster Campus offers College 101, a faculty-led program. The Boulder County Campus provides slightly different services to new students through New Student Orientation. The Larimer Campus has established a First-Year Experience Program.

FRCC effectively balances campus-based decision making with the need for college-wide efficiency. In several instances, either the need for common practices (e.g., accounting/purchasing or financial aid) or significant cost savings (information technology) have led to creation of college-wide departments. In some cases, departments always have been college-wide, and in others, departments that were campus-based became college-wide, as the college is constantly aiming for efficiency. In AY 2005, for example, financial aid services were reorganized into a college-wide organization with the creation of a centralized processing center. The restructuring of financial aid services continued in 2007 with a six-month review, by an external consultant, to determine a structure for optimum efficiency in serving students. Other college-wide operations include fiscal services, business services (copiers, food service, bookstores), and institutional research.

In addition to the college-wide functions, campuses share information and coordinate activities. Campus deans meet and collaborate at regularly scheduled meetings. A college-wide Chair Council also convenes each semester to discuss instructional issues.

Faculty and academic leaders share responsibility for academic and student affairs through a formalized administrative and committee structure *(—1D-16)*. The college has official task forces which research, analyze, and recommend policy and procedures. These committees have representation from all campuses and work collaboratively. Two examples of this college-wide approach are the Academic Guideline and Procedure Committee and the Curriculum Committee *(—1D-17)*. Both are composed of faculty and deans from all campuses. The Academic Guideline and Procedure Committee meets regularly to discuss academic policy issues, to revise and create organizational guidelines and procedures in academic matters, and to obtain feedback from its campus constituents. This committee prepares recommendations for the Dean's Council. The Curriculum Committee *(—1D-18)* provides assistance to faculty in developing new curriculum, reviews and approves new courses, and provides input on all new programs.

Other organizations, such as Faculty Senate and student government, work collaboratively to assist campuses in making decisions. The Student Government Association (SGA) plays an important role in shaping and defining students' experiences. Many college committees have student representation within their official membership. Students are represented in high-level organizations such as the SBCCOE Board and in student-led initiatives such as student newspapers (the Front Page, Boulder County Sun, and Rangeview). The Student Government Association also has provided input in a number of student life issues.

In addition to standing committees and task forces, the college has effectively employed ad hoc task forces. One example of a task force that demonstrated collaborative leadership is the college-wide Online Learning Task Force. The Online Learning Task Force was empanelled in late fall 2003 to develop a college-wide online learning program *(—1D-19)*. The task force included faculty and deans from all campuses. Based on task force recommendations, online learning was restructured from independent campus-based departments to a single, college-wide online learning organization (Online Learning).

Based on recommendations of the task force, FRCC began offering a single combined schedule of online courses to students in summer 2004, and Online Learning reorganized to deliver services college-wide using three campus-based instructional designers and two support staff, all reporting to a college-wide dean of online learning. To facilitate effective communications, an Online Faculty Advisory Committee meets monthly with the dean of online learning to provide input regarding course quality standards, training guidelines, and other instructional issues. This committee is made up of three faculty from each campus (one general education/transfer, one Career and Technical Education, and one representative from Faculty Senate), plus the instructional coordinator at the Brighton Center.

Online Learning continues to be a model for collaborative decision making. In February 2006, oversight of online courses was streamlined by implementing a new instructional leadership model. For each instructional discipline, a faculty member is designated as an Online Lead and is responsible for college-wide online learning for that discipline for two years. The Online Leads work closely with campus-based chairs and the dean of online learning to develop and support standards for online courses on a college-wide basis.

Two other ad hoc task forces led to major improvements in college operations. These were the Career and Technical Education Task Force, which recommended the position of the current college-wide dean of Career and Technical Education, and the Faculty Professionalism Task Force, which led to new faculty job descriptions and a plan for raising faculty salaries to national averages.

FRCC evaluates the effectiveness of the college in meeting its educational purposes in changing environments and provides data that support changes in programs, curricula, and teaching. For example, the College has reduced the burden of staff participation in multiple committees. In AY2004-2005 FRCC disbanded long-standing committees and instituted task forces that attend to specific problems or functions.

Career and Technical Education programs are facilitated via a college-wide process for the revision of existing curricula and development of new curricula to assure compliance of curricular decisions with system and college standards, procedures, and guidelines. New program development has become a college-wide, 12-step procedure *(—1D-21)*. Since the new process has been implemented, individual campuses no longer unilaterally create new career/technical programs without consideration of the implications for other campuses.

Statewide Curriculum Coherence and the Integrity of Academic Processes

CCCS has adopted a set of system-wide guidelines that define the course requirements for students to graduate with an Associate of Science (A.S.) or Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree in two calendar years *(—1D-22)*. To ensure the transferability of credits, the Legislature implemented the Student Bill of Rights, a policy to assure students a quality general education experience, degree completion within 60 credits (associate) and 120 credits (bachelor), formalized plans for two-year or four-year degree completion, identification of course transferability, satisfaction of core course and graduation requirements, and a transferability policy for courses *(—1D-23)*.

Evaluating Student Learning

FRCC's continued commitment to assessment of student learning is another means by which its Mission is fulfilled. Assessment of student learning plays an important role in evaluating the effectiveness of the college in meeting its educational purposes and mission and in providing data for changes in programs, curricula, and teaching. Since its last accreditation, FRCC created an extensive Assessment of Student Academic Achievement (ASAA) plan and used this plan for several years *(—1D-24)*. The original ASAA plan allowed flexibility and individualized assessment strategies *(—1D-25)*. Examples of strategies employed were embedded questions in exams, use of standardized and national tests, clinical evaluations, and a modified scientific method based on the Harvard Model.

During AY 2006-2007, President Reinertson and President's Cabinet approved involvement in the Higher Learning Commission's Assessment Academy. While progress in the assessment of student learning was evident, instructional deans recommended that participation in the Assessment Academy could accelerate student learning and its assessment. In February 2007 FRCC was selected to participate in the Academy. A nine-member Student Learning Task Force of faculty, academic leaders, and part-time instructors *(—1D-26)* embarked on a four-year process to accelerate and advance student learning and to increase college-wide commitment to student learning. The task force surveyed faculty about student learning and created a preliminary plan to assist faculty in their assessment efforts *(—1D-27)*.

Academic Integrity

Ensuring the integrity of academic processes is the responsibility of everyone. A multi-faceted approach that informs and educates students about expectations for academic integrity is used. According to the 2006 Reaccreditation Survey of Students, 93.8% of students feel the Student Code of Conduct is commonly known. FRCC Student Services has responsibility for enforcing the Student Code of Conduct regarding plagiarism and academic dishonesty *(—1D-28)*.

Expectations for academic integrity are published in the Catalog, Student Handbook, Schedule of Classes, and course syllabi *(—1D-29)*. Reaccreditation surveys show 86.6% of faculty integrate instruction on plagiarism into their classrooms and 87.9% of faculty feel the FRCC policy on plagiarism is clear, thorough, and accessible *(FRCC Re-Accreditation Survey, Full Time Faculty, Questions 41 and 42—1D-30)*. Many part-time instructors integrate information on academic dishonesty into their classes (88%) and feel the academic integrity policy is clear (91.4%) *(—1D-31)*. FRCC students say they know and understand the college's policy on plagiarism – 87.5% indicated information on plagiarism was integrated into class instruction, and 92.7% indicate the policy is clear and accessible *(—1D-32)*.

Despite positive results from survey data, the college continues to work to improve academic integrity. In January 2007, college-wide discussions regarding plagiarism and academic dishonesty took place. Feedback from these discussions was presented to the Academic Guideline and Procedure Committee and discussed with representatives of student services. The committee determined more effective definitions of what constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty were needed.

In addition, effective collaboration between student services and faculty reporting helped the college apply more uniformly disciplinary measures for breeches of academic integrity. Meetings between deans of student services and faculty clarified processes for disciplinary action.

General syllabus requirements mandate every syllabus contain a statement about academic dishonesty under the heading "class policies and procedures" *(—1D-33)*.

Communication

The College uses several mechanisms to keep communities informed. College staff sit on a variety of boards and organizations, including chambers of commerce, economic development corporations, Rotary, and more.

The College furthers communication through regular sharing of meeting minutes and decision making processes. For example, minutes of the Area Advisory Council, President's Cabinet, Deans' Council, and select committees are regularly posted on public folders *(—1D-34)*. FRCC Organizational Guidelines are located on the college's Web site *(—1D–35)*.

General information pertinent to college and employee activities, accomplishments, and upcoming events are the focus of FrontLine OnLine, a bi-weekly electronic publication disseminated to all employees.

Communication is also facilitated through interaction of internal and external constituencies. One example is the AY2006-2007 system-wide implementation of the Banner System for student information. FRCC staff served on several key committees in this area and collaborated to identify problems, create solutions, and assist in the conversion of the software system.
Strategic Planning and Communication

Processes such as Institutional Planning and Effectiveness (FRCC Organizational Guidelines IS-1.0 *(—1D-36)* provide opportunities for broad participation and communication across campuses, departments, and employee classifications. Focus groups of external constituencies also provide valuable information in setting strategic priorities to fulfill the college mission *(—1D-37).*

In 2004, FRCC initiated a college-wide strategic planning process *(—1D-38)* involving representatives of all constituent groups to identify goals and values. A series of meetings to review and distill the voluminous data collected resulted in recognition of five common themes. As a result, five strategic priorities surfaced:

- FRCC creates a welcoming community of learners that embraces excellence by setting and achieving high standards.
- FRCC promotes student access and success in learning, in work, and in community by valuing and respecting the diversity of all and the individuality of each.
- FRCC provides a great place to work by valuing and respecting employees for their unique contributions and potential.
- FRCC leads community vitality and sustainability by strengthening partnerships and responsiveness.
- FRCC obtains resources to successfully achieve its mission

These strategic priorities are embodied in a variety of ways, as noted in the 2006 employee and student surveys: 84.9% of faculty indicated they use the Mission Statement and Core Values as guides in classroom teaching *(—1D-39)*. Seventy-seven percent of part-time instructors also indicated by the college's Mission Statement and Core Values guide them in the classroom *(—1D-40)*. Surveys of administrators and staff reveal 95.1% felt the Core Values meet the goals of the Mission Statement, and 90.6% use the Mission Statement and Core Values in their areas *(—1D-41)*. The student survey revealed 27.6% knew the mission and values of the college and 89.1% felt faculty, administration, and staff demonstrate the value of lifelong learning as role models *(—1D-42)*.

Front Range Community College regularly evaluates its structures and processes through creation of formal documents like the Facilities Master Plan (IS-15.1, IS-15.2), Instructional Master Plan (IN-6.1), and Program Review and Analysis (IN-6.2) as required by FRCC Organizational Guidelines *(—1D-43)*. The Facilities Master Plan and the Instructional Master Plan are updated at least every five years. These documents, submitted to the CCCS and CCHE, provide frameworks for program management that include new program development, program revisions, and program closure. In addition, these documents are a requirement for requesting capital funding for construction. Each campus has its own Facilities and Academic master plans, most recently revised in 2007 *(—1D-44)*. An Institutional Master Plan, used until 2004 as an annual plan and report of instructional initiatives, was replaced by campus Strategic Directions in 2005-06.

Program Review and Analysis is a process for ongoing program enhancement in Career and Technical Education *(—1D-45)*. It requires a five-year review targeted toward ongoing program improvement. Program review includes input from industry advisory committees, environmental scanning, and analysis of student learning outcomes. This information then drives the preparation of a list of program strengths and weaknesses and culminates in a five-year plan for improvement. This five-year plan guides the allocation of general fund, Perkins, and other grant dollars. Examples of changes resulting from program review include expansion of the Computer Aided Drafting certificate program to an AAS degree program; ALS simulator mannequins in Nursing; and, in Welding Technology, the addition of an Ironworking certificate and renovation of the welding laboratory to include new welding machines and an expanded ventilation system.

Core Component 1E:
The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary integrity means a "firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values." Front Range Community College has a number of documents that provide the framework for integrity. These documents include the mission documents; the budget process; State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education policies; and various legal and articulation documents including the Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, the College has systems (e.g. Student Disciplinary and Student Grievance procedures) that provide mechanisms to ensure fairness and integrity.

The Role of Mission Documents

To assess the manner in which Front Range Community College upholds and protects its integrity, we start with the mission documents – Mission, Vision, Purpose, Core Values, and Strategic Priorities – and determine whether the College operates consistently, objectively, and fairly. (Criterion Two, Preparing for the Future, is a detailed discussion of the college's effectiveness in fulfilling its mission.)

When an institution professes a commitment to "enriching lives through learning" (the Mission), promoting student success is critical to its integrity. Student success has been a part of FRCC's culture since the early 1990s when Dr. John Rouche (professor and director, Sid W. Richardson Regents Chair, Community College Leadership Program, University of Texas at Austin) came to FRCC to discuss the important role each employee, from maintenance worker to professor, has in creating an environment to help students reach their educational goals. Since that time, a question always asked is "will this enhance student success?"

Implementing educational initiatives and strategies such as learning communities exemplifies this commitment. The Westminster, Boulder County, and Larimer campuses continue to build on the success of a Lumina Foundation's Achieving the Dream research grant by adding and refining learning communities and working to maximize the success of developmental students.

Thus, during spring 2007 term, the Westminster Campus offered paired learning communities in English 090 (developmental course) and Humanities 121 (transfer course) as well as Reading 090 (developmental) and Psychology 101 (transfer). Other offerings included pairing Sociology 101 and English 121 (both transfer courses), English 090 and a history course, and English 060 with Reading 090 (developmental courses). Eleven new learning communities were offered.

On the Boulder County Campus, learning communities offered in spring 2007 included Ethnic Literature with Ethnic Studies, and U.S. History with English 090.

Similarly, the Larimer Campus scheduled an accelerated Reading 060 and English 090 class; an English 090 for Automotive Technology students, which embedded a general curriculum course into a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program; an accelerated Reading 060 and English 090 (both developmental courses), and English 090 with a literature class. These offerings demonstrate commitment to creating courses for various student needs and, with developmental course pairings, to underserved student populations.

Our classes are significantly smaller than those of public four-year institutions, which is one means to advance student learning. Smaller classes facilitate student/instructor interactions. For example, a sampling of classes for AY2004-2005 revealed student-to-faculty class ratios ranging from 6.07 students in education classes, to 23.34 students in psychology classes *(—1E-1)*.

In addition, maintenance of Career and Technical Education program quality occurs through accreditation by special oversight agencies for Automotive Technology, Dental Assisting, Dietetic Technology, HVAC, Machining, Nursing, and Veterinary Technology *(—1E-2)*. The Paralegal Program is in the process of earning accreditation with the American Bar Association. These periodic, rigorous accreditation reviews show the integrity of the college through a commitment to quality education.

Consistent with individual department missions within Student Services, students at FRCC have access to academic advising and personal counseling; programs for international students and others whose first language is not English, including English as a Second Language (ESL) classes; career services and job placement opportunities; and services for students with disabilities. These services include use of assistive technology, tutoring,

note-taking and in-class assistance. GED classes, a variety of seminars and workshops, and Writing, Math, and Science help centers foster student success. Clearly, to fulfill the college mission, these services are crucial to diverse student populations and demonstrate, yet again, that integrity within the institution extends from student and academic services into the classroom.

A significant component of integrity and enriching student lives through learning is respecting diversity and offering educational access and success to all students. This aspect of integrity is exemplified by the Larimer Campus edition of the Part-Time Instructor Handbook, which includes a statement about student diversity:

> Students of different ages, races, ethnic background[s], educational background[s], and educational goals are welcome at FRCC. This diversity provides an opportunity for students to meet and learn from those who are similar to them as well as those who are different. This diversity adds a valuable dimension to the educational and social experience of all students *(—1E-3).*

A "Commitment to Diversity" statement in the Student Handbook requires the College to deal fairly with internal and external constituencies *(—1E-4).* (Core Component 1B provides additional detail.)

The College Budget Process;
SBCCOE Policies; Legal and Articulation Documents

According to the Front Range Community College Budget Development Process Guiding Principles:

- The budget will support the College's Strategic Plan.
- The budget will support the common and unique needs of each of the campuses and the communities they serve.
- The budget process is open, defined, documented, impartial, and establishes a framework for consistent practice *(—1E-5).*

These Guiding Principles attest to the college's honesty in fiscal reporting and to its honoring of state and federal laws and regulations. The college also conducts business in a manner consistent with Colorado Fiscal Rules. In addition, fiscal services follow the relevant rules of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

The college also consults with local and state governmental agencies. One example concerns hazardous waste disposal from all campuses. The disposal requires working with the Department of Public Health and Environment and appropriate regulatory agencies *(—1E-6)*. Similarly, the college abides by hiring practices stipulated by the state and conforms to Colorado House Bills 1023 and 1343, which monitor resident status of an applicant for a position with a state agency. Human Resources also follows requirements of the State of Colorado *(—1E-7)*.

As part of CCCS, Front Range Community College is under the jurisdiction of the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE). The SBCCOE promulgates policies for the colleges. FRCC creates, through a collaborative process, a set of "guidelines and procedures" that define the approaches and practices used by the college to implement the SBCCOE policies.

Additionally, an Area Advisory Council fulfills many of the requirements of dealing fairly and honestly with external constituents. According to the FRCC Web site:

> "The Front Range Community College Area Advisory Council serves as a liaison between the college and the community and provides advice about long-range planning, maintaining contact with area employers and local school boards, setting budget priorities, establishing policies, and reviewing curriculum, student services, and public service needs. Board members are appointed by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education." *(—1E-8)*.

By abiding by laws and regulations, and by dealing with internal and external constituencies honestly and fairly, FRCC upholds and protects its integrity. Examples of ways the college upholds these laws and regulations are:

- College contracts and agreements adhere to federal and state laws; where appropriate, they are reviewed before execution by the CCCS legal counsel.
- All purchases of products and services follow state guidelines for procurement.
- College records follow the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. The college has regular staff trainings to ensure compliance. The registrar is the chief FERPA officer.

- Human Resources policies and procedures follow federal and state mandates, including:
  - Anti-Harassment Handbook offered on the college Web site
  - Workers Compensation
  - Background checks for employees
- "Generally accepted practices" – an accounting industry term meaning "standards" –govern purchasing, business, and other fiscal services.

An important component of any organization's integrity is the articulation and implementation of clear and fair policies and a timely response to complaints and grievances. One aspect of the college's integrity is faculty understanding that innovative instructional methods are governed by a clear policy of intellectual property rights *(—1E- 9)*. Referring to the quantitative outcomes from the 2006 Accreditation Self-Study Survey, when asked if the FRCC policy on intellectual property rights is fair, faculty and part-time instructors agreed. Only 15.3% of faculty and 35.6% of part-time instructors disagreed that the policy is fair *(—1E-10)*.

In addition, when part-time instructors were asked if "FRCC has clear guidelines of integrity upon which effective decisions are made," 58.7% agreed and 22.7% strongly agreed *(—1E-11)*. When this same question was asked of faculty, 47.5% agreed, while 31.7% disagreed *(—1E-12)*. Finally, 66.7% of administrators and staff agreed there were clear guidelines of integrity *(—1E-13)*. In summary, there is agreement among various internal constituents that the organization has written guidelines for integrity, but the understanding of how they play a role in clear and effective decision-making may need to be investigated further.

Another question about integrity raised by the 2006 survey asks whether "concerns of employees and students are heard and considered" by lead instructors, departmental chairs, and college administrators. According to the part-time instructor survey, more than 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed while 3.7% strongly disagreed *(—1E-14)*. The survey results from faculty respondents showed about 83% agreed or strongly agreed, and 20.5% disagreed *(—1E-15)*. Among administrators and staff, 80% agreed or strongly agreed *(—1E-16)*.

An example of integrity in responding to student complaints and grievances is the Student Grievance Procedure. The three primary documents related to students' rights and responsibilities – the Student Code of Conduct, Student Disciplinary Procedure, and Student Grievance Procedures – are readily available on the college Web site. According to the Student Grievance Procedure, students may grieve a policy that they feel is applied to them unfairly. Any grievance is investigated and heard by a dean of instruction and/or a dean of student services.

According to the Student Grievance Procedure, if a student has a grievance with the college, the student must bring the "grievance to [a] formal state within 20 calendar days of the date the grievant knew or reasonably should have known about the action" *(FRCC Student Grievance Procedure—1E-17)*. The College provides information regarding student grievance procedures on the Web site, in the Catalog, in the Student Handbook, and at campus information centers.

If the student is found in violation of the Student Code of Conduct, according to the Student Disciplinary Procedures, the student has a right to appeal the decision. According to the FRCC Disciplinary Procedures:

The student shall receive written Notice of the Decision and be advised of his/her right to appeal the Decision by filing a written appeal with the Chief Student Services Officer within seven (7) days of service of the Decision. In case of suspension or expulsion, the sanction shall be imposed no earlier than six (6) days after service of the Notice unless it is a summary suspension or the student agrees to the sanction. (FRCC Student Disciplinary Procedures *(—1E-18)*

Should the student choose to appeal the original decision, seven days advance notice that the appeal will go to an Impartial Decision Maker is given to the student. The student is then informed of the appeal decision "within 5 calendar days of the close of the hearing" (FRCC Student Disciplinary Procedures):

"The student may then petition the President to review the Impartial Decision Maker's decision by filing a written petition within five (5) days after notification of the decision. If a review is requested, the other party will be given three (3) days to respond to the petition and his/her response materials will be given to the President to review before a decision on the petition is made" *(Student Disciplinary Procedures —IE-19)*.

A final decision by the president will be handed down within 14 days of receipt of the Petition for Review *(FRCC Student Disciplinary Procedures —IE-20)*.

The Student Grievance Procedure is different from disciplinary action because the student initiates the process. If a student has a grievance as defined within the Procedure, that "grievance must be brought to the formal state within 20 calendar days of the date the grievant knew or reasonably should have known about the action" *(Student Grievance—1E-21)*.

It is one thing to fully articulate the Student Code of Conduct and grievance process and make them accessible and understandable, but student awareness is important as well. According to the 2006 Currently Enrolled Student Survey, 87.6% of students felt the Student Code of Conduct was accessible, and 93.8% felt it was easy to understand *(—1E-22)*. However, those figures change when students are asked if they are aware of formal and informal grievance procedures. Only 46.1% and 33.6%, respectively, were aware of the procedures *(—1E-23)*. This indicates the college upholds its integrity by informing students of the Code of Conduct, but might improve its ability to inform students of the processes of formal and informal grievance.

Strengths, Concerns, Recommendations

Strengths:

1. The mission is clearly stated, easily accessible and widely promoted.

2. The organizational structure for the institution provides a balance between college- wide consistency and campus autonomy, thereby supporting our mission.

3. The college mission was reaffirmed by constituents across the college in 2004. This reaffirmation included development of 5 strategic initiatives that explain in detail our values and how we go about achieving our mission. The strategic priorities address our commitments to teaching and learning, our students, our employees, and our community, as well as the need to obtain resources to support those commitments.

4. The faculty, staff, and administration at Front Range Community College are passionate about serving our students and our communities. It is not just part of a mission statement, but part of our culture. Faculty demonstrate this through their love for helping students learn. Staff and support personnel are on board as demonstrated by the outstanding support they provide. Administrators demonstrate this by giving guidance, giving vision, and offering leadership. The ongoing hard work and dedication of individuals across the organization serves to re-inspire each of us in our own unique roles and as a community.

Concerns:

1. While the formal process indicates a strong relationship between mission, planning, and budgeting, many faculty and staff perceive that budgeting is incremental in nature rather than driven by the mission.

2. In spite of our best efforts, the faces of our students and faculty/staff do not reflect the faces of our communities. Our campus' student demographics have recently been approaching the ethnic/racial makeup of our communities.

Recommendations:

1. The college should conduct annual training sessions for faculty and staff on the policies and procedures for intellectual property rights to assure that the policies are properly followed.

2. Further investigation into the perceptions that "integrity is not applied in decision making" and that concerns by students and employees are "heard and not considered" should be undertaken in order to understand these concerns more fully and, if necessary, develop strategies for ameliorating them.

3. The college needs to develop a college-wide focus on diversity that translates intent into action.

4. The college should continue its participation in the P-16 discussions to designate competency outcomes for each level of instruction to foster student success throughout the educational continuum.

Criterion Two:
Preparing for the Future

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Preparing for the Future

Front Range Community College's processes for planning and evaluation as well as its allocation of resources allow it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality and delivery of education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The period of economic downturn following September 11, 2001 provided challenges to the college in this area. The college responded to severe state budget reductions, exacerbated by state legislative fiscal mandates, by focusing its financial resources on student learning and student services.

Despite reduced State funding, the college was able to foster quality education and prepare for future educational needs of its communities and students. The college's budget planning process played a key role in its ability to continue to promote educational excellence. As described in this chapter, the college's budget planning system has remained flexible over time and allowed for proper allocation of resources based on enrollments and overall education related needs of the campuses.

The college's principle of "One College, Many Communities" provides a critical framework, which allows us to meet future challenges and opportunities. President's Cabinet and Deans' Council are two examples of college-wide collaboration that have helped our college maintain its leadership role in its communities and in the state. Both help the college balance campus and college-wide needs as they deliberate on key strategic and operational issues facing the college in the future.

Environmental scanning and assessment processes are major strengths of the college and key tools in responding to the future. The Office of Institutional Research is a state leader in institutional research and is often consulted by other community colleges. The Office of Institutional Research provides timely environmental scanning information for future planning. Administration and faculty use environmental scanning and collaboration within the college and within communities to pilot courses, drive regular program reviews, and create initiatives to respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Core Component 2A:

The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

Since the 1990s, and through three successive presidents, Front Range Community College has prepared for its future by the implementation of integrated and effective planning, budgeting, and assessment processes. Even in the face of state budget cuts, as a result of collaborative planning and priority setting, the college has been able to allocate sufficient human, financial, and physical resources to continue to address societal and economic trends *(—2A-1)*.

Planning at Front Range Community College

The college's integrated planning and evaluation system is based upon the college strategic plan. The overarching strategic plan is supported by key planning processes and documents. The college's planning documents are:

- College Strategic Plan *(—2A-2)*. The strategic plan is a multi-year document that declares the college's mission, purpose, and core values. It also highlights the strategic priorities that drive the college's annual planning processes. The college regularly assesses its progress on strategic priorities and modifies those priorities as environmental and financial issues dictate.

- Academic Master Plan *(—2A-3)*. The Academic Master Plan is the culmination of trend analysis, student learning gains, community input, and program review to forecast the mix of the college's educational offerings over a three to five-year period. The plan is based on the local needs of each campus with consideration of economies of scale at the college-wide level. The Academic Master Plan is evaluated and updated to ensure that the college is addressing current and emerging community needs.

- Facilities Master Plan *(—2A-4)*. In accordance with the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) policy, each college prepares a five-year multi-phase Facilities Master Plan that addresses facilities requirements for current and new programs. This process allows for an aggregate understanding of overall community college system and financial needs related to the state level and comprehensive coordination of facilities with programmatic and operational needs requirements at the college level. As state capital construction funding becomes available, the college prepares a program plan for the phase that is queued for funding. The program plan is a detailed analysis of facilities needs, e.g. instructional space, faculty and staff offices, laboratories, library, common area, public space, and other facilities requirements, for that particular plan phase.

- Technology Plan. As technology adds productivity, efficiency, and access to every aspect of college operations, e.g. administrative computing, student records, financial management, and instruction, the need to have a definitive plan to refresh existing technology and prepare for emerging technology is critical. The college's Technology Plan is a collaboratively developed multi-year plan that ensures, assuming available funding, maintaining our technology current. In addition, a five –year technology refresh program adopted by the college replaces a minimum of 20% of its computer workstations each year. The primary workstation replacement criteria are processor speed, memory capacity, video capability, and age. Other technology elements, such as servers, SMART Board™ interactive white boards, network routers, and switches are replaced as needed to support the institutional mission.

- College Budget Guiding Principles. The Budget Task Force, comprised of all cabinet members along with representation from faculty and staff, reviews this document and related processes each year. Changes are made as necessary to ensure proper allocation of financial resources in alignment with the overall strategic plan. Over the past several years this Task Force has resolved difficult issues resulting from unique cost differences between the campuses and most recently adopted a more traditional cost based budget model.

Collectively, these planning processes and documents provide the internal "checks and balances" that ensure scarce college resources are distributed in a manner to assist the college to achieve its mission, strategic priorities, and educational purpose.

All FRCC planning processes and documents are based on collaborative decision-making and data provided by the three-person Office of Institutional Research (OIR). For instance, the college regularly reviews census and other demographic data gathered by OIR staff. Additionally, OIR uses focus groups and statistically valid surveys to collect trends, perceptions, and suggestions. The college's OIR is recognized as a leader in data management. The OIR has pioneered and implemented numerous innovations such as "freezing" data – (previously the college used "live" data for historical analysis) and data warehousing – (which facilitates data utilization). A set of standard statistics provides the framework for ongoing analysis of trends. The careful definition of the data assures that data trends are reliable and consistently reported.

Front Range Community College adopted environmental scanning in 1993. Subsequently, the Office of Institutional Research assumed the responsibility for environmental scanning. There is a special section on environmental scanning on the Office of Institutional Research website. The introduction reads:

> Environmental Scanning is a widely accepted technique for monitoring the pulse of change in the external environment, whether it is in political, economic, technological, or social arenas. It can provide information to help guide institutional decision making by alerting managers to trends and issues that may affect the organization's future *(—2A-5)*.

The OIR regularly produces *Research Briefs*, which help guide institutional decision-making by pointing to trends and issues that may affect the organization's future *(—2A-6)*.

The college's Academic Master Plan is an excellent example of the analytical and collaborative approach the college uses. The first Academic Master Plan was produced in AY 2001, using a process led by the campus vice presidents. James R. Mingle, President of Mingle & Associates, formerly executive director emeritus of the State Higher Education Executive Officers, conducted the study. The introduction to the plan provides insight into its development:

> The academic plan that follows is the product of thorough research, careful consultation, and necessary priority setting. It is grounded to both the external environment affecting Front Range Community College (FRCC) and the internal values and strengths of the faculty and staff of the organization. We began with an environmental scan and a sense of the important next steps that the College needed to take to serve the citizens of Colorado along the Front Range. We tested those ideas with all of our stakeholders – industry leaders, members of the community, faculty leaders, and students. The plans outlined here are the result of this deliberative process *(—2A-7)*.

A second Academic Master Plan, completed in spring 2007, followed a similar process. In each plan, elements were finalized following a rigorous decision making process. For each plan, Institutional Research staff conducted a comprehensive analysis of academic programs using five criteria. Campus leadership teams then carefully evaluated both new program proposals and existing programs using the criteria. In each instance, college-wide discussion about coordinating activities on each campus followed.

The five criteria are as follows:

1. *Competitive Niche:* What is the potential of FRCC to establish a viable presence in its service area (the Front Range from North Denver to the Wyoming border)? What other institutions offer similar programs? Is there continuing demand for the program? What would be distinctive about a new FRCC program in this area?

2. *Quality Potential:* This criterion has two components:
   (a) the foundation upon which the new program would build, and
   (b) the potential to achieve excellence through state and community support. The availability of faculty resources on campus or in the community is considered key to a "high" rating.

3. *Employer Demand:* The size and nature of employer needs, as expressed by employers along the Front Range, is the most important factor to consider. While employment demands might be judged as "acute," they should not be judged as "high" unless the number of potential hires is substantial.

4. *Probability of Cost Recovery:* Programs have different cost requirements and periods of cost recovery (namely, the point at which initial investments in faculty, curriculum, materials, equipment and labs reach a "break-even" point). High cost/low enrollment programs will be rated low on this criterion; low cost/high enrollment programs are rated high.

5. *Economic, Social, Personal Impact:* Programs at FRCC have a wide variety of social, economic, community, and personal effects. Some can be seen clearly in short-term economic gains for individuals; other programs have a longer term and less quantifiable impact (but no less value). Programs rated high are expected to improve both the economic well-being of individuals and the community and/or have demonstrable community benefits *(—2A-8)*.

New programs, based on these criteria, have included: Interior Design; Psychiatric Technician; Carpentry and Home Framing; K-12 Paraeducator for Special Populations; Masonry; Medical Assistant; Medical Office Technology; Geographic Information System (GIS); Advanced Placement RN degree (at the Boulder County Campus), and Paramedic.

Programs evaluated but not undertaken include: Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) and Social and Human Services Technician.

Programs evaluated and closed include: Business Technology and Office Administration; E-Commerce; Photonics and Vacuum Technology; CISCO Networking Academy; Computer Network Support; Engineering Graphics Technology; Respiratory Therapy; Manufacturing Process Technology; Dietetic Technology; Machining (at Westminster); Dental Assisting (at Westminster); Environmental Science (the Hazardous Materials Program at Westminster); Educational Interpreting; and Psychiatric Technician.

Core Component 2B:

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

Front Range Community College's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future through a carefully prescribed process of budget allocation, human resource management, support program development, implementation, evaluation, and maintenance.

All resources, allocations, and utilization begin with the state and college budget processes. Since the economic downturn following the events of September 11, 2001, the college has emerged from a period of state budget reductions. However, it should be noted that Colorado still ranks 48th in the nation per student funding. At a recent summit called by the Colorado Higher Education Commissioner, summit participants learned it would take an estimated additional $832 million annually to meet the average support of national peers *(—2B-1)*.

During the downturn, decreased economic activity had a significant impact on the state's higher education system as available state general revenue funding dwindled. In addition, three Colorado legislative mandates –TABOR (Taxpayers Bill of Rights), Amendment 23, and Gallagher – were in place, potentially preventing a quick return to previous higher education funding levels. The impact on Front Range Community College was an overall loss in actual state appropriations over a period of five years as shown below.

Actual State Appropriations to FRCC, FY2001-FY2005				
FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
$17,025,399	$18,068,386	$16,226,367	$14,613,093	$15,104,932

To offset this loss, two measures were implemented. First, tuition rates were increased significantly at all state institutions *(—2B-2)*. Secondly, strategic budget reductions were made across the college. One key principle was maintained as the budget reductions were made. This principle was to minimize the financial impact on services and programming to students. In practice, this meant "back office" functions were mainly affected. Budget savings included:

- Deferred salary increases
- Staff cuts in Institutional Research, Accounting, Purchasing, Media Services, Computer Services, Student Services, and other back office departments
- Some small increases in class size
- A moratorium on professional development activities
- Reduced operational and travel budgets

Prior to 2005, state general funds were allocated to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE). That agency determined the funds to be allotted to each system, e.g. the community college system, Metropolitan State College of Denver, the Colorado State University System, and the University of Colorado system. Under this approach, universities and four-year colleges typically received larger per student allocations than community colleges.

The community college system then made an allocation to each community college based on a complicated funding formula using enrollment and size factors. On a per FTE basis, smaller, rural schools received a larger allocation. Front Range Community College, the largest community college in the State of Colorado, typically received a smaller per FTE allocation *(—2B-3)*.

The Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF) higher education funding model was adopted by the State in 2005 and is similar to a voucher system. Under the model, a resident student meeting all requirements enrolls at a specific public institution and receives a set stipend per credit. For example, in fall 2007, the published in-state tuition rate at Front Range is $166.15 per credit. In-state students are allowed to offset $89 per credit of that tuition via the COF stipend. The resulting charge to the student is $77.15 per credit. The shift to COF did not change the net charges students pay, nor did it significantly affect funding to the college. It did make State funding (to the college) more variable, and increased administrative work considerably for both the college and the student. The COF stipend funding is allocated by the community college system using essentially the same formula as in the past.

In the past two budget years, higher education as a whole has received increases in funding as a result of Referendum C passed by voters. This curtailed the negative effects of the TABOR legislation mentioned earlier, some of the negative effects were changed permanently, while others were changed for only a 5-year period.

Over the past ten years, FRCC has utilized three different basic budget allocation models and has also made minor modifications each year in an effort to ensure resources are properly allocated. Throughout these changes, three overarching guiding principles have remained constant. They are:

1. The budget will support the college's strategic plan.

2. The budget will support the common and unique needs of each of the college's campuses and the communities they serve.

3. The budget process is open, defined, documented, impartial, and establishes a framework for consistent practice *(—2B-4)*.

The first model during this time period allocated funds primarily based on historical budgets without the inclusion of a good, college-wide initiative process. This approach had significant disadvantages for emerging campuses like Larimer and, later, Boulder. The historical budget approach favored the Westminster campus with its mature and funded infrastructure.

In the mid-1990s, the college began using a revised budget allocation process similar to the CCCS system allocation model and included key factors such as student enrollment and headcount. This formula-driven approach provided more autonomy to the three campus operations, allowing each campus to make budget decisions on programming, infrastructure investments, and other factors. In summary, the process allocated State funds to cover college-wide functions, distributed the remainder of these funds to the campuses based on enrollment, and allowed the campuses to keep all cash generated from tuition and fees.

In addition, at the end of the fiscal year, each campus kept 75% of its remaining unspent budget funds. (The remaining 25% went into the college reserves for college-wide initiatives.) This "carry-over" minimized the typical "use it or lose it" spending behavior at the end of the fiscal year.

Over time under this model, certain inequities in the operations of each campus and/or area were noted and solutions were developed and implemented. The following are some examples:

1. ***Boulder County Campus Lease***

   The Boulder County Campus is the only campus that leases its primary facility. As a result of this, the Boulder County Campus' Operation and Maintenance of Plant (O&M) expenditure is higher than the average O&M expenditure for the college. The college has determined that the Boulder County Campus budget should be adjusted to negate this difference.

2. ***College Hill Library***

   Due to library staffing required under the Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Westminster, the Westminster Campus budget was adjusted to account for college staffing differences between the Larimer Campus and Westminster Campus libraries.

3. ***Professional Development***

   To ensure consistent funding of this activity at all campuses, a pool for professional development funding was established as part of the budget process and was allocated to campus budgets based on employee headcount.

In FY08, the college shifted to a cost based budget in an effort to further resolve inequities between the campuses by creating a larger initiative pool available to all campuses. The base used for this process was the final FY07 expenses, adjusted for one-time expenses. Campuses were allowed to submit initiative requests as part of an overall college initiative process. A couple of examples of college-wide initiatives that have been designated for funding as a result of this model are the computer refresh plan and leasing of new space at an off-campus location. Under the previous model, large initiatives such as these would not have been possible for individual campuses.

College Resources

Financial resources, technical resources, physical plants, and human resources play important roles in supporting education at FRCC and are examined in this core component.

College-wide staffing, as well as policies and programs, show support for the institution. The Human Resources Department at the college works with all employees, using extrapolated data, on numbers of considerations such as hiring practices, credentialing, professional development, job satisfaction, mentoring, and peer support. For faculty, common workload issues such as credit loads, full time faculty to part time instructor ratios, and faculty to student ratios are monitored by Human Resources.

Technology at the college supports programs including equipment and facilities needs of Career and Technical Education programs and labs, technology needs for classrooms and offices, support of online learning, and the tech support of administrative computer systems.

Finally, the physical plant is assessed in terms of how programs are supported. Reports and surveys pertinent to the use of existing space, the relative quality of facilities, and the need for expanded space, especially lab areas, is currently being addressed in both the Strategic Plan *(—2B-5)* and requests made at the state level.

In order to define "resources", a delineation of the six major programs and instructional areas offered at FRCC is necessary. They include Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, transfer or general education programs, developmental education programs, continuing education, and customized business and training, and high school programs. The college maintains an Academic Master Plan that is largely campus based. Each campus vice president leads a process to forecast instructional needs, particularly new programming, for five year periods. This plan is a useful resource allocation planning tool as it comprehensively organizes personnel, equipment, facilities, and other needs in a prioritized ranking.

This review is organized to look first at what is currently being done in educational programs and courses, the systems in place for future planning, and plans that are currently in place.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Department of the college, which is staffed by a college-wide director and classified, hourly, and student staff reporting to the director is located in offices at the various campuses. The department is responsible for maintaining the system of hiring for all new employees. Established guidelines for classified staff are governed by the State of Colorado. According to the 2006-07 FRCC Fact Book, the college employed 19 executive administrative staff, 145 other administrative staff, 184 classified staff, 197 full time faculty, and 766 part time instructors *(—2B-6)*. Administrators, full time faculty and part time instructors are subject to regulations and practices outlined in the Administrator/Technical Professional and Faculty Handbook, which are updated annually *(—2B-7)*. These include State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) and FRCC general guidelines for minimum qualifications, required certifications and/or education levels, workload standards, basic grievance and advocacy policies, and compensation matrices. Individual departments that are hiring may add qualifications in developing job descriptions for new positions *(—2B-8)*.

Human resource planning at the college is comprehensive. Close attention to available budget and strategic initiatives is standard. Hiring requests connect to the college strategic plan, the individual campus strategic plans, the academic master plan, the individual campus student services strategic plans, and the technology plan. For example, faculty hiring at each campus is directly tied to priorities that have been identified to support the future educational direction for the campus. President's Cabinet approves all new permanent hiring decisions after determination that sustainable funding for positions exists.

Additionally, despite the recent budget issues, the college works hard to maintain a relatively stable full time faculty to part time instructor ratio. College-wide this ratio has been at approximately 71% part time to 29% full time for many years *(—2B-9)*.

While the college would gladly hire more full time faculty if funding permitted, it has adapted well to the current ratio in order to maintain quality instruction. All FRCC campuses are near major universities and have relatively large populations of highly educated residents from which to draw part time instructors. All full time faculty are expected to provide program leadership in addition to classroom instruction, including mentoring and supervising part time instructors. Full time faculty observe part time instructors' classes and review student evaluations each semester. In addition, the college has professional development opportunities and specific training and orientations for all part time instructors.

All non-faculty personnel participate in a system of evaluation that includes goal setting, future planning, professional development requirements and planning, and both mid-year and annual reviews with supervisors. This process helps ensure peak performance and development of college personnel.

Front Range Community College uses a full time faculty evaluation system, following SBCCOE guidelines *(—2B-10),* drafted by faculty and approved by the college president. Department chairs, lead discipline faculty, and/or deans conduct annual review of full time faculty performance. These reviews cover teaching effectiveness (including classroom observations and student evaluations), professional development, college and departmental service, and community service. This comprehensive evaluation results in regular faculty being placed into one of four levels--"outstanding," "exceeds expectations," "meets expectations," or "fails to meet expectations." These levels determine raises for the upcoming year. Data gathered from the 2006 accreditation survey show 73% of full time faculty are observed in the classroom at least once each academic year. Of these, 88% reported receiving verbal and written feedback on their performance *(—2B-11)*. This faculty evaluation system monitors faculty performance to produce quality instruction that supports education at the college. Human Resources stores records of administrative, staff, and faculty evaluations.

The college supports professional development activities, one of the major categories of faculty evaluation, in a number of ways. The cabinet annually allocates pools of funds for faculty and staff professional development. During the past three years, the college has continued to increase the pool of money available for professional development. Additionally, staff development funds are distributed at the campus level to ensure that funds are utilized for priority needs.

In addition to funding conferences and other outside resources, FRCC supports employees through regular training offered through The Institute for Community and Professional Development (ICPD), including computer applications, especially those related to instructional design and management, such as Blackboard™.

Faculty and staff have access to Instructional Design Centers (IDCs) on each campus. Feedback from the 2006 Full Time Faculty Survey shows 49.6% of faculty feel the IDC on their campus "provides training and support that meets my instructional needs" *(—2B-12)*. Almost 85% agreed or strongly agreed that training in the use of technology is adequate for their needs *(—2B-13)*.

During 2006-2007 the college administration recognized that, while it continues to support professional development, it needs to do more to develop leadership skill in the college. Under the direction of the Boulder County Campus Vice President, an ad hoc task force for leadership was formed to design a formal leadership development program for employees at the college. This task force developed two leadership programs for potential leaders in different stages of their career development; the program was implemented in fall 2007.

Another critical area of human resource planning and management is retention of faculty and staff.

In October 2004 a Faculty Professionalism Task Force, comprised of 12 faculty and administrators, was formed to examine and make recommendations to address a number of issues, including faculty compensation. One recommendation of the task force was compensation of full time faculty at the national, two-year college average by 2010. In 2004 the average faculty salary at FRCC was $41,256—an amount that research indicated was $10,000 below the national average of $51,088 *(—2B-14)*. In February 2005 a plan to close this gap by increasing salaries approximately 4% above the cost of living increase in each of the subsequent 5 years was adopted. In FY 2005-06, FRCC full-time faculty salaries were increased by 5%, which was approximately 2-3% above the cost of living. In FY 2006-07, full time faculty salaries increased 5.64%, approximately 3.5% above the cost of living increase. For FY 2007-08, full time faculty salaries have increased, on average, 7.89%, which is 4% above the increase for cost of living. The college estimates full time faculty salaries, on average, are within 8-9% of the national average as of fall 2007 *(—2B-15)*.

President's Cabinet felt increased faculty salaries were critical to improving morale, increasing hiring pools, and improving faculty retention – in sum, in creating happier, more effective faculty.

Professional development is another retention strategy. During the past three years, the college continued to increase the pool of money available for professional development *(—2B-16)*. Additionally, staff development funds are distributed at the local level to ensure that funds are utilized for priority needs.

The college also has programs and ceremonies, such as Master Teacher, that honor outstanding instructional efforts. Each year, campuses select one full time and one part time master teacher. Campuses have year-end ceremonies that honor selected administrators and staff.

Technology

Technology at FRCC is supported through the Information Technology (IT) Department. The primary purpose of the department is to "provide purchase recommendations, installation, and troubleshooting support for computer hardware and software at all campuses" *(—2B-17)*. The IT department is responsible for its own master plan for maintenance and upgrades of all equipment on campus *(—2B-18)*. IT directors and staff are constantly working to make sure technology is more than adequate to meet the needs of students, staff, and administrators. In the 2006 Full Time Faculty Survey, 81.8% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed "adequate technological resources are available to help faculty teach" *(—2B-19)*.

In 1999, the college received an award of 7 million dollars from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education for technology upgrade and improvement. This award allowed the college to upgrade its technology in all parts of the college, particularly instruction, over five years. One of the key initiatives that came out of the grant was the initial implementation of SMARTBoard™ and LCD projectors in many classrooms. Today SMART Boards are in wide use by faculty and instructors.

While subsequent grant money has not been available, the college kept pace with technology and generally has up-to-date equipment throughout the college. As part of the college-wide budget process, college leadership has committed to an IT refresh plan which involves replacing desktop and laptop computers in the college at the rate of once every five years, or more frequently when technology requires a more rapid change such as during the implementation of the Banner Student Information System in 2006-07 *(—2B-20)*.

IT is currently in the process of responding to the new Microsoft™ upgrade and the installation of Windows Vista™ for student and staff use. College staff can also access IT support at any time through either a call to their campus Help Desk, which is staffed during normal business hours, or by placing a work order through the Track It™ system. IT meets these requests in a timely manner and has a reputation for being very responsive to faculty requests.

Faculty are able to expand the scope of their teaching beyond the classroom through use of Blackboard™ (formerly WebCT™), an online learning management system that supports online delivery of course content, group discussions, tutorials, assignments, quizzes, and tests. The college has used versions of WebCT™ for over 10 years.

By state mandate (HB 1086), the community college system recently moved all online courses and course components to a single enterprise version of the learning management system. WebCT Vista™ (now the Blackboard Learning System™ Vista Enterprise License) was selected and FRCC chose to migrate all online courses to the new system for fall 2007 to minimize confusion for students.

Student response to this resource from the 2006 accreditation survey is positive; 74.7% agreed or strongly agreed that WebCT supplements were helpful to their learning *(—2B-21)*. Students have access to online and face-to-face orientation sessions to help them use this tool. Individualized support is also available by e-mail, phone, and in-person through an online student success coordinator and the rest of the online learning staff. An instructional designer housed at each main campus provides personalized assistance with both course design and use of the tools available in Blackboard, in addition to a variety of formal workshops and online learning experiences *(—2B-22)*.

In terms of technical resources, the college has up-to-date labs for art, science, Nursing, Emergency Medical Technician, Veterinary Technology, and Dental Assisting, among others. These departments and programs supply, staff, and maintain these labs. The expansion of programs and class offerings is limited by lack of space for more labs, especially at the Larimer Campus.

Facilities

One of the foundational planning and allocation tools for the college is the Facilities Master Plans *(—2B-23)*. These plans are a crucial tool in assisting the college to project future enrollments, educational programs, and support requirements in terms of space needs. Each document is updated approximately every five years. Produced with the assistance of professional space planners, the plan typically breaks down comprehensive space needs into a number of related projects. The order of these projects is determined by its strategic importance.

Core Component 2C:

The organization's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

Institutional effectiveness became a part of the college lexicon in the late 1990s. In 1998, the president established The Office of Institutional Advancement, Planning, and Effectiveness with the associate vice president serving as a direct report and member of President's Cabinet, the college's highest policy and decision-making body. This office ran all the planning, assessment, and evaluation functions except budget and information technology, both housed in the division of finance and administration. Under supervision of the associate vice president, the scope included strategic planning, assessment of student academic achievement, institutional research, program review and development, and other functions. This office ensured the president, President's Cabinet, the college at large, and the community that the processes, information, and reports to fully assess and evaluate the institutional effectiveness of the college and develop strategies for continuing improvement were in place.

In that same year, the president established two college-wide councils to provide conduits for communications on strategic directions, institutional effectiveness, and continuing improvement. One of these, the Strategic Coordinating Council (SCC), was described in the Committee Profile:

> ...meets four times each year for strategic planning, communication, and coordination; the guidance and accountability of college-wide committees and campus teams to support college goals and priorities; and shared leadership in the development of those college goals and priorities. Meetings will be scheduled in coordination with budget and other planning documents. SCC will also conduct business (such as policy review, comment and approval)… *(—2C-1)*.

Membership included a representative from each college-wide committee and task force along with a representative from Student Government, Faculty Senate, and part time instructors from each campus. President's Cabinet were also members. The college president was the designated accountable cabinet member and was the committee facilitator.

The second council, the Constituent Advisory Council, according to the Committee Profile:

> …meets monthly with the president for sharing of information, ideas and concerns and for direct advisory discussions regarding college and constituent issues. Council membership includes representatives from each campus for each employee group, e.g. faculty, administrators, classified employees and part time instructors. Students were also represented *(—2C-2).*

During this period, the college articulated and operated under a principle called shared leadership. Unlike shared governance, in which decision making is vested in recognized organizational bodies, e.g. faculty senate, under shared leadership the college president retained final decision making authority with constituents and stakeholders delineating lines of communication to the president. Shared leadership provided an effective framework for planning and effectiveness by allowing the college to operate responsively and efficiently in a centralized manner with strong decentralized campus operations that recognized and addressed local needs.

In a 1999 document which described the Shared Leadership model, the following statement is made (under "College-Wide Committees and Council"):

> The following groups [referring to standing college-wide committees and councils] share college-wide leadership of FRCC in specific functional areas. They also share leadership through their representation to the Strategic Coordinating Council. In addition, under the Shared Leadership model, The President is charged with leadership of FRCC and is accountable for all college operations to the State Board for Community College and Occupational Education, the college membership, and the communities served by the college *(—2C-3).*

In 2005, under President Janet Gullickson, the college conducted an evaluation of existing committee and council structures in the interest of increasing institutional effectiveness. President Gullickson had, during her initial interviews with staff and faculty, consistently heard feedback about overwhelming workloads due in part to mandated participation of faculty, primarily, on college committees. A limited number of full time faculty –in some departments the instructor to faculty ratio approaches 80-20 –and their already substantial workload of teaching classes, providing programmatic leadership, and recruiting and supervising part-time instructors was a major reason for heavy faculty workloads. As a result of this evaluation, the college committee structure was modified. The Strategic Coordinating Council and

Constituent Advisory Council were eliminated. President Gullickson believed that, given the maturity of the individual campuses, President's Cabinet comprehensively represented the college as a whole with a balance of college-wide and campus-based administrators. She also assembled ad hoc task forces to discuss specific initiatives such as the college strategic plan. President Reinertson continued this philosophical approach when she assumed the presidency in August 2005.

Over the years, the college invested in, and maintained, institutional capacities, processes, and reporting that provided a comprehensive framework for assessment and evaluation of college operations, ranging from administration to instruction to facilities.

Examples of two different but critical elements of institutional effectiveness are the Office of Institutional Research and the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program Review Process.

The FRCC Office of Institutional Research (OIR) systematically maintains an array of student data based on student admission information and subsequent student enrollment and academic performance. Institutional Research also manages periodic surveys conducted by the college, e.g. currently enrolled students, vocational, and employer surveys. Additionally, the office regularly conducts environmental scanning studies for specific internal requests, typically concerning labor market trends. OIR is responsive to numerous requests for reports addressing issues of current interest to college administration and faculty each year. For example, since the start of 2005, about 20 targeted environmental scan reports were generated in response to requests for information about the viability of new CTE program concepts. All OIR reports are available on the college website *(—2C-4)*.

Campus based instructional deans arrange ongoing Career and Technical Education (CTE) program reviews. College-wide coordination of the review process occurs in regular monthly meetings of the Instructional Deans Council. Decisions regarding development of new programs and significant modifications or phase out of existing programs occur at these meetings. During AY 2006-2007, the college piloted use of an annual college-wide report on the status of selected programs. The Office of Institutional Research, the college-wide Career and Technical Education dean, campus-based instructional deans, and CTE program faculty derived input for these reports from individual CTE program review reports prepared in a coordinated effort. The process for creating this report originated from recommendations made by a college-wide CTE Task Force, convened in AY 2005-2006 and charged with assessing overall CTE administration and delivery systems at FRCC *(—2C-5)*.

In practice, Front Range Community College's approach to institutional effectiveness is multi-tiered as demonstrated in the following chart:

Level	Areas of Focus	Organizational Unit
College Tier	**Strategic Plan.** Is the college meeting its strategic goals and initiatives? Is it honoring its mission and values? **Academic Master Plan.** Is the college addressing changing and new educational demands? How effective is the college in improving existing programs? **CCHE Common Data Set.** On specific measures, e.g. diversity, persistence, graduation rates, faculty to adjunct ratio, class size, what is the institution's performance? **Program Development and Review.** Is a sound "business" plan prepared and followed for each program? Is the program responsive to labor market demands? **Focus Groups.** What is the perception of the college by students, community leaders, and others? **Quality Indicators.** What is the college's effectiveness compared to mandated, state-wide performance standards? **Budget.** How did the college perform fiscally? What investments will the college need to make for continued improvement and effectiveness? **Student Learning.** How do our students' (CAAP scores compare with graduates of comparable institutions?	President's Cabinet
Campus Tier	**Campus Strategic Plan.** How effective is the campus in meeting its plan? Was the plan tied to the overall college plan? **Campus Program Plans.** Are existing programs being revitalized? Do new programs reflect local needs? Is Student Services supporting student success and persistence? **Facilities Master Plans.** Are facilities meeting programmatic and student development needs? What are future needs?	Deans and Department Chairs

Level	Areas of Focus	Organizational Unit
Campus Tier	**Campus Strategic Plan.** How effective is the campus in meeting its plan? Was the plan tied to the overall college plan? **Campus Program Plans.** Are existing programs being revitalized? Do new programs reflect local needs? Is Student Services supporting student success and persistence? **Facilities Master Plans.** Are facilities meeting programmatic and student development needs? What are future needs?	Deans and Department Chairs
Department Tier	**Assessment of Student Learning.** At the class level, are students acquiring needed skills and knowledge? What changes need to be implemented? **Faculty Evaluation.** How are faculty performing in and out of the classroom? Are faculty doing class and program assessment? Are assessment results used to modify class content and structure and instructional processes? Are faculty receiving positive feedback and developing constructive professional development plans? **Surveys** (Currently Enrolled, Vocational Follow-up, Employers). How are survey results used to improve student success and retention?	Campus VPs and Executive Team

The college's comprehensive approach to institutional effectiveness is one important reason for the flexibility that FRCC demonstrated over the past ten years as the college continued to implement new programs, retire obsolete programs, expand campus operations, and increase student enrollment. Examples of this include:

- Agile Administrative Structures. As needs and conditions changed, the college administration has readily reconfigured the administrative structure to allow for maximum local responsiveness and effectiveness. Evidence of this administrative maturity is the growth, and full funding, of both Boulder and Larimer campuses as full service sites from their original beginnings as satellite operations. As needs dictated, the college moved from centralized (early 1990s) to a matrix organization (mid-90s) to a decentralized system (2000s). President Reinertson continues this approach as demonstrated by her September 2005 memo on "Cabinet Reorganization." In this memo, she details the creation of a new vice president for student learning along with the elimination of several other positions and reassignments of key personnel, resulting in savings of $163,000 *(—2C-6)*. In 2007, FRCC's Vice President of Student Learning resigned to become the Associate Vice President and Provost for the Colorado Community College System. To achieve additional cost savings at the college and to better integrate the student learning function across campuses, FRCC began piloting a model in which the Vice President of Student Learning's responsibilities were distributed across the members of the President's Cabinet *(—2C-7)*.

- Dynamic Budget Process. The college continually reviews and revises it budget process in an effort to foster institutional effectiveness through the strategic allocation of financial resources. The current cost based budget process provides funding of base needs to each campus while allowing for a college-wide initiative process to address local and college priorities *(—2C-8)*.

- Assessment of Student Learning Pilot Projects. The college attempted a number of pilot projects to enhance student learning. These included: effects of a formal developmental student mentoring program on retention and GPA; effects of an extended new student orientation on retention and GPA; effects of mandatory advising on retention and GPA; effects of learning communities on retention and GPA; and comparison of grades in online classes with on campus classes.

- Participation in HLC's Academy for Assessment of Student Learning. As documented in the SAAAC (Student Academic Achievement Assessment Committee) minutes of April 7 and 24, 2004, the committee was frustrated with the growing apathy for assessment across the institution. One response to this frustration occurred when President Reinertson committed institutional funds for faculty participation in the 2007 Academy for Assessment of Student Learning. This academy offered HLC member institutions a four-year seminar focused on student learning, targeted at accelerating and advancing efforts to assess and improve student learning, and designed to build institution wide commitment to assessment of student learning *(—2C-9)*.

The immediate focus of the nine member group formed to participate in the Academy is to obtain faculty buy-in for assessing student learning and using results to make changes that will improve learning. Projected secondary foci for AY2007-2008 are in-house training in assessment and creation of workshops for faculty in methods of assessment and how to work with data.

Core Component 2D:

All levels of planning align with the organization's mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

Front Range Community College, the largest community college in Colorado, has complex planning systems designed for responsiveness to community needs, while adhering to the strategic direction and initiatives of the college and the overarching Colorado Community College System.

Since the mid-1990s, FRCC articulated and utilized an integrated planning system. This system is grounded in the mission documents *(—2D-1).*

The summary of the 2002-2004 Strategic Plan further elaborates:

Through a proactive strategic planning process, Front Range Community College identifies and analyzes factors—external as well as internal—which may represent opportunities or challenges to its ability to fulfill its mission. The college then formulates and implements strategic changes to optimize its position within the educational marketplace. President's Cabinet, in its capacity as the college's central planning team, coordinates the strategic planning process. All campus governance, planning, management, and budgeting systems reflect the overarching college mission, values, purpose, and strategic initiatives.

Also according to the summary:

- The Strategic Plan is an ongoing, dynamic process, not a document or a fixed blueprint

- The Strategic Plan provides a framework for each campus to develop goals, objectives, and milestones that address local needs

- The Strategic Plan links strategic and program planning with budgeting and resource development

- The Strategic Plan addresses strategic and operational planning at both campus and college levels

- The Strategic Plan is interactive, linking the campuses with each other and with the college as a whole

- The Strategic Plan is developed and carried out both from the bottom up and the top down

The following diagram completes the published plan with a "flow-chart" representation of the major institutional planning elements and their inter-relations as part of a comprehensive planning system:
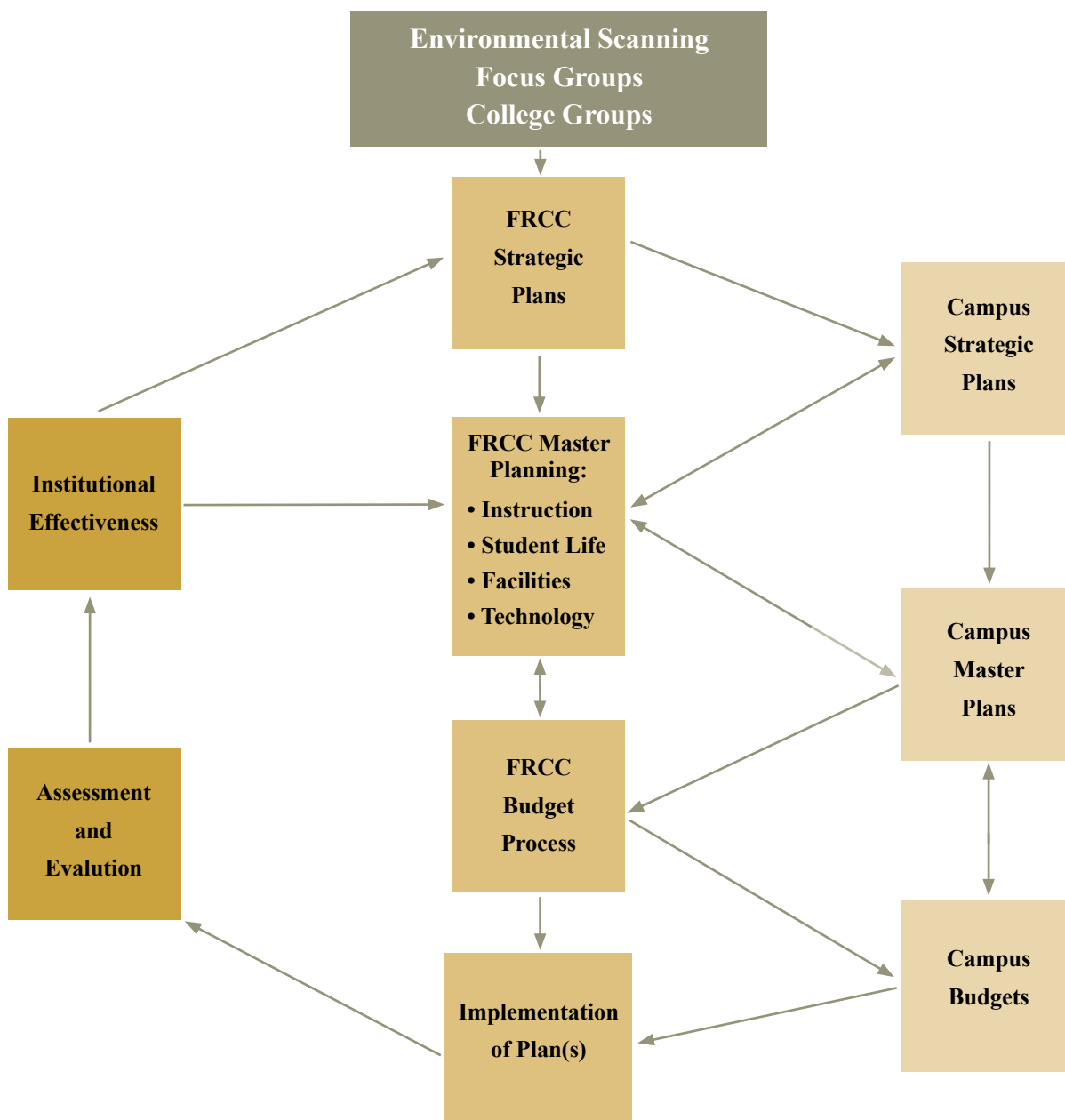
In this representation, key guiding principles are evident. These include:

- Planning processes involve internal and external constituents. The top blue box suggests "Environmental Scanning, Focus Groups, and College Groups" are critical elements in defining the college's Strategic Plan. Further, campus-based planning and resource allocation paths indicate participation of both internal and external constituents.

- Coordinated planning processes center on the mission documents that define vision, values, goals, and strategic priorities for the organization. Clearly, per the diagram, the college's Strategic Plan is central to all planning processes.

- Planning processes link with budgeting processes. At college and campus levels, the diagram demonstrates the inter-relationships of planning and budgeting.

- Implementation of the organization's planning is evident in its operations. Master Plans are operational planning documents for the college and individual campuses that drive the work of faculty and staff. Moreover, the diagram displays clear accountability and milestone monitoring as indicated by "Assessment and Evaluation" and "Institutional Effectiveness" functions.

- Long-range strategic planning processes allow for necessary reprioritization of goals because of changing environments. Implicit in environmental scanning is the expectation that, as conditions change, plans change to accommodate new trends, economic factors, and other factors. Additionally, environmental scanning provides evidence of the college's awareness of relationships between educational quality, student learning, and the diverse, complex, global, and technological world in which the organization and its students exist.

As the strategic plans were revised in 2005, the principles outlined in the earlier plan continued to guide the college's planning process. The 2005 plan was based on feedback from approximately 500 employees and more than 250 external constituents who participated in college-wide in-service and community focus groups. Internal committees synthesized the volumes of data. Cabinet and deans then analyzed the data and feedback and identified five strategic priorities to shape the college's response to the economic and human development needs of our communities from 2005-2010. Each campus then developed its own plan and priorities based on the overarching principles of the college plan.

The summary of the college's new strategic plan, published in August 2005, also provides strong evidence of the relationship of planning and operations to the college are mission *(—2D-2)*. This document contains greater operational detail than previously published college plans. The new plan includes new "themes" –Access & Success, Teaching & Learning, Great Place to Work –which emerged during the collaborative plan formulation stage and provided overarching framework for the five strategic priorities of the plan. The plan details individual campus components of the strategic plan, which is an important integration of college-wide and campus planning systems.

The college's Academic Master Plan is another good example of coordinated planning, budget allocation, and constituent involvement *(—2D-3)*. In this plan, the president noted:

> …our new Academic Master Plan…will bring together the elements of environmental scanning, community focus groups, campus programmatic 'signatures,' instructional master plans, assessment, technology planning, student services needs, and facilities planning in a comprehensive long-term strategy. The plan will drive college and campus-based decisions on staffing, budgets, operations, and other aspects of the college in a comprehensive and coordinated manner *(—2D-4)*.

As noted in the 2002 diagram, each campus develops its individual strategic plan and matrices for accountability. All college and campus plans are available for inspection *(—2D-5)*.

Strengths, Concerns, Recommendations

Strengths:

1. First-level planning processes are closely aligned with Front Range Community College's campus-based structure, helping us to respond with greater speed and effectiveness to the unique challenges and opportunities of each campus' surrounding community. College-wide needs are addressed, and individual campus needs balanced, through college-wide structures including President's Cabinet, Deans Council, and Chair Council.

2. The organizational structure for the institution provides a balance between college-wide consistency and campus autonomy and supports the premise of a "college of communities."

3. FRCC has a dedicated Office of Institutional Research staffed by professional researchers who assist with data gathering, evaluation, and assessment that provides information to support decision making processes. Specific strategies for providing data include the definition of a set of standard statistics that are collected each year, annual preparation of the FRCC Fact Book, GIS and environmental scanning capabilities, compilation of student unit record data to facilitate longitudinal studies, and procedures for responding to customized data requests.

4. The college was able to provide essential resources to support educational programs and services, even in times of significant fiscal constraints, by using strategies such as looking for opportunities for fiscal efficiencies, minimizing travel, and delaying one-time expenditures.

5. Comprehensive procedures for academic planning, program development and program evaluation have supported the development of new programs and revitalization of existing ones, as well as closure of programs that no longer meet community needs.

6. The college has made significant efforts to raise compensation for full time faculty and bring it closer to the national average.

7. Front Range Community College has well-established processes for evaluation and planning that involve internal and external constituencies, as demonstrated by strategic planning, academic master planning, technology planning, and budgeting.

Concerns:

1. Frequent turnover in college and campus leadership has resulted in faculty and staff concern about continuity and loss of institutional memory.

2. Because of the multi-campus nature of the institution, difficulty of communication sometimes results in challenges to maintaining consistency of application, policy, and practice.

3. Implementation of Banner™ and Blackboard Vista™ has caused unexpected problems in our capability to serve students and meet instructional needs.

4. Facility availability and quality of space is inadequate for instructional and student services needs.

Recommendations:

1. Front Range Community College should continue to review recent college-wide assignments made to campus vice presidents and monitor effectiveness of the functions and feasibility of workloads.

2. Planning processes have at times suggested initiatives that could not be implemented due to limited resources. Recently the college has begun to allocate resources to support strategic priorities and initiatives. Continuation of this process is important.

3. Because the geographical distances between campuses present barriers to effective communication, the college must continue to investigate strategies for making information available to all campuses and provide various methods for enhancing communication.

4. The college should continue to develop and submit facilities master plans for approval to appropriate state agencies. The college should also seek other mechanisms for meeting its growth needs, understanding that state funding may not be available in the future.

Criterion Three:
Student Learning and Effective Teaching

Criterion Three:
Student Learning and Effective Teaching

F ront Range Community College is committed to student learning, as reflected in the Mission Statement of the college: "At Front Range Community College, We Enrich Lives through Learning." As described in this chapter, the college has committed substantial resources to creating effective learning environments and in evaluating the effectiveness of its efforts. The college has been a leader statewide in assessing general education skills of students, and has used sophisticated analysis of general education test results to understand how students are performing. After a strong start in the early part of the century, formal, college-wide assessment of individual programs and courses has been sporadic. The new four-year commitment to the Higher Learning Commission Academy for Assessment of Student learning is further evidence of the college's determination to improve student outcomes.

The college's participation in the Colorado Community College Numbering System (CCCNS) is an important element in striving to enhance student learning. All developmental, transfer, and Career and Technical Education courses have common Standard Competencies and Topical Outlines. All Colorado community colleges, including FRCC, must use these as common learning goals. These Standard Competencies and Topical Outlines are the basis for the course syllabi developed by FRCC faculty and for the guaranteed transfer program between the 13 community colleges and the public universities and four year colleges in the state.

The college has been able to promote effective teaching and learning environments in a number of ways. One of the most important is a renewed professional development program for faculty. In addition to earmarked funds for faculty development, each campus has made special efforts to continually train and support faculty and instructors. All campuses have learning resources such as math labs, writing centers, open computer labs, online student assistance, and virtual library resources to help students succeed. Student Life on all campuses also plays an important role in creating effective learning environments and is a major contributor to student persistence.

Core Component 3A:

The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

Student learning outcomes are specified for each course, credit or non-credit, and are the same regardless of location or course delivery method. Succinct outcome expectations allow effective assessment of student learning. For credit courses, student learning outcomes are specified statewide, as part of the CCCS Common Course Numbering System. Under Common Course Numbering, all credit courses in all community colleges have standard competencies and topical outlines that are agreed upon by faculty statewide *(—3A-1)*. Each faculty teaching a section of a credit course must incorporate at least 80% of the standard competencies. The competencies and outlines are readily available to faculty at the Colorado Community College System Web Site. Per FRCC's guideline on course syllabi, faculty must list the standard competencies on each course syllabi.

History of Assessment at Front Range Community College

The first formal assessment effort at FRCC began in 1995. A team assembled by the Vice President of Instruction identified 6 broad instructional and student services areas (called goal areas) and recruited faculty and staff to serve as assessment coordinators for each area. After a few years of relying on these volunteer faculty and staff to lead the effort, the college recognized that it had not devoted enough resources to the project, so in 1998 the college recruited a respected faculty member to serve full time as the faculty chair of assessment. The faculty chair of assessment was released from all teaching duties to perform this role.

The faculty chair of assessment, the goal area coordinators, and several other staff, including the director of institutional research, collectively formed the Student Academic Achievement Assessment Committee (SAAAC). Using a structured reporting process developed by SAAAC, the faculty chair of assessment worked as a consultant to faculty and staff to develop assessment plans for each academic department or program and for general education. The assessment process for general education proved quite successful, and continues to provide current, useful information to the college. The formal

college-wide assessment process for courses and programs proved more difficult to sustain. It was widely implemented initially and planted several seeds of strong ongoing assessment efforts, but the formal process began to lose steam by 2003 and in 2004 college-wide program assessment ended. While there was no longer a comprehensive college-wide assessment effort, some faculty, notably in career and technical programs, continued to assess program outcomes and all faculty continued assessing student learning in their courses. When the formal program ended, the college began a series of discussions that led us to pursue a very different model and enter the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Assessment Academy.

Assessment of General Education

In the late 1990s, the college established fourteen general education goals for all graduates. The goals were widely disseminated to faculty in a series of college-wide meetings. The General Education Subcommittee of SAAAC then reviewed a number of potential methods for measuring how well graduates met those goals. After considerable analysis, the college adopted ACT's Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) in 1997 as the primary institutional assessment instrument for general education. Completion of the CAAP exam became a graduation requirement in 1999, and has remained so since.

The CAAP measures the vast majority of the college's general education goals; in some instances, staff have added specific questions to measure goals not well captured in the CAAP, such as information technology literacy. The college has also piloted an assessment of skills in using library resources.

The CAAP exam data has validated the success of general education efforts at FRCC. Since AY 2002, FRCC students have generally been at or above national averages on all scales, and are most often significantly higher *(—3A-2)*.

In 2004, FRCC worked with ACT to develop a new research methodology to measure the gains in general education scores that students demonstrated while at FRCC. The analysis compared ACT scores with CAAP scores for students who completed both. On the four dimensions that could be compared, FRCC students' gains were generally somewhat better than a national normative sample. Data for AY2001-2004 are published on the Office of Institutional (OIR) web site *(—3A-3)*.

Assessment of the fourteen general education goals proved to be cumbersome to assess and in 2004-05 the number of goals was collapsed to seven.

In 2007, FRCC completed an analysis of our CAAP outcomes compared to four-year school outcomes. On the math, reading, and critical thinking scales FRCC students who were awarded a transfer degree did not statistically significantly differ from a national normative sample of public four-year sophomores who complete the CAAP as a "Rising Junior" examination.

Besides the CAAP, FRCC uses several other instruments to measure general education; these include surveys of graduates, currently enrolled students, employers, and alumni. Data from these annual surveys informs decisions about student support services, program design, and specific general education goals.

Assessment of Course and Program Outcomes

The college has several strong, ongoing program based assessment efforts, many of which are described below. As noted above, a formal, college-wide assessment program for individual courses and programs proved difficult to sustain at FRCC.

Probably because of the considerable energy devoted by the first two faculty chairs of assessment, the college-wide assessment process worked reasonably well for about three years, from 1999 to 2002. Faculty met in cross campus teams to establish assessment goals and measurement instruments, and department assessment coordinators reported results to the faculty chair of assessment.

That program gradually lost faculty participation, until the formal college-wide process ended in early 2004 and SAAAC was disbanded. The course and program assessment process lost steam for several reasons, but probably the biggest reason was that faculty found the process to be cumbersome, sometimes bureaucratic, and often more rote than authentically connected to the issues they struggled with in their teaching. The college administration failed to connect the formal reporting process with authentic change in the classroom. In addition, in tight budget times, the college was not able to allocate enough money to the assessment process; while there were some funds available for department assessment projects, there was not enough to fund all departments, and budget cuts in 2002-2004 eventually eliminated most of those funds.

Despite the end of the formal college-wide process, the seeds sown by the original assessment committee have sprouted into several highly effective grassroots assessment efforts in individual departments. In an accreditation survey administered to faculty in August 2006, 99.3% of full time faculty report using assessment of student learning at the classroom level, 84.4% of faculty assess student learning at the discipline level, and 80.4% of faculty participated in at least one activity that contributes to shaping the learning environment at FRCC *(—3A-4–FT Survey, qs. 5A, 5B, & 12)*.

Reasonably well delineated program assessment methodologies have been implemented in many Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. In all the CTE programs, advisory committees guide and inform learning goals for CTE classes. In addition to advisory committees, some CTE programs use professional association accreditation and guidelines to establish learning goals:

- The Veterinary Technology Program (VET) at the Larimer Campus uses a checklist of essential skills required by its accrediting agency, The American Veterinary Medical Association, to guide learning expectations for students. VET faculty created a checklist of required skills, and each course incorporates one/some of these skills into the curriculum. Faculty developed criteria to evaluate these skills for individual students. These skills are required to pass each course. The system centralized documentation of each student's skills accomplishment, thereby allowing faculty to discover which skills are most often learned, and where improvement may be necessary.

- The Larimer Campus Nursing Program uses the "Comprehensive Concepts of Psychiatric Nursing Clinical Evaluation" to create student learning goals. One student learning goal in psychiatric clinicals is to "utilize therapeutic communication skills in patient interactions." Students complete an interpersonal process recording (IPR). The IPR is a written record of student verbal interactions with a patient on a focused topic related to the patient's treatment goals. Students, with the assistance of faculty, analyze their responses to the patient with the goal of initiating and improving the ability to provide therapeutic interactions in clinical situations. Failure to receive a satisfactory evaluation results in a remediation plan for the student and this plan continues to be a critical element of evaluation in a subsequent clinical experience. All students received a satisfactory on their IPRs during AY 2006-2007.

- Machining Technology students are eligible to take the NIMS (National Institute of Metal Working Skills) competency test at any time during the semester. The NIMS test is modular; therefore students may test their specific metal working competencies in either Level I or Level II. The written test is administered online. The Performance Test is administered in the machine shop. Students' passing rate is 90%. Students who take the credentialing exams feel well prepared to work in the field.

- Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) pre/post tests, used in most automotive classes, resulted in Automotive Service Technology faculty increasing emphasis on basic math and physics. For example, comparison of pre/post test results in ASE 161 (Engine, Disassembly, Diagnosis, and Assembly) increased faculty emphasis on ratios, decimal measurement (both customary and metric), and formulas for area and volume. Student scores and understanding of these concepts showed improvement after this change in curriculum.

- Certified Nurse Assistant outcome measurements, gathered through the State Board of Nursing's examination, are delivered through Promissor™. The Promissor Program™ receives a breakdown of scores on written and skills assessments, with areas of strengths and deficiencies explained. The written examination tests both core knowledge and critical thinking, while the skills assessment measures retention and use of information. Based on that feedback, changes are made in instructional delivery methods.

- Emergency Medical Services EMT Basic (EMS 125) uses the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician (NREMT) exam to determine student achievement. The NREMT exam must be taken by all graduating students if they wish to gain certification in order to work in EMS. As of fall 2007, the FRCC/LC EMS Program is maintaining a 95% pass rate, as compared to the overall national pass rate of 72%.

A number of faculty have developed specific assessments to measure and improve student outcomes. These assessments vary widely from discipline to discipline, and are often used by just one campus or one instructor. Still, they represent a positive development in a culture of assessment that was clearly not in place several years ago.

Some examples of specific assessments are:

- Common grading rubrics are used in several discipline areas. For example, student learning is assessed in general college biology courses through formal lab reports that are graded using a common rubric *(—3A-5)*.

- In English 121 (Composition I) courses, student learning is assessed using a common, faculty-developed rubric.

- Another common assessment tool used at FRCC is the pre/post test. This assessment tool is used in some sections of chemistry (CHE 111), in geography (GEO 105), Spanish (SPA 111), psychology (PSY 101), and art (ART 141 & 142) classes. Results from pre/post assessment indicate the nature and extent of student learning so faculty can make adjustments in teaching to improve learning.

- On the Boulder County Campus geography student assessment involves using a pre/post test based on a National Geographic\Roper Study which compares results for students in several countries, including the United States. Student scores on the post- test are markedly higher than on the pre-test.

- Writing across the curriculum assignments help instructors assess student learning on all campuses. Research papers assess student knowledge of content areas and written communication in natural resources (NRE) classes, and in English 121 and 122 (Composition II) classes on all campuses. Math students keep journals and provide written explanations of problem solution strategies.

- Portfolios are used to illustrate the progress of student learning in English (ENG 122 classes and art (ART 125 and 134) classes.

- Case studies gauge student learning in biology and in business classes on the Boulder County Campus. Case studies improve instruction by giving students opportunities to demonstrate what they learned. Specifically, students must research the topic of the case study; determine what is important from the vast amount of information available; and then report their findings.

- Speech/communications embeds questions aimed at assessing specific learning into final exams. Faculty design assessment questions, analyze results, and then discuss how they might use the results for improving learning.

- Faculty in the nursing program report using a Capstone, 40-hour, internship experience followed by a 3-hour presentation as a final program assessment.

- The Medical Office Technology (MOT) Program uses competency evaluations and internships to assess student learning.

- Cross-campus examination of student learning occurs in programs offered at more than one campus. For example, the Multimedia Graphic Design (MGD) Program on the Westminster and Boulder County Campuses uses pre and post quizzes for class assessment, results are tabulated, and faculty discuss the results and implications for improved learning.

- Most students are assessed for placement in math and English classes upon enrolling in credit classes at the college as a result of a State of Colorado mandate that students either complete an assessment test of basic skills or secure an exemption before registering for courses. In order to do this Accuplacer™, a computer adaptive assessment of student knowledge and skills, is used for math and English course placement as well as placement in developmental English, reading, and math courses.

Current and Future Assessment Plans

FRCC has reconfirmed its ongoing commitment to the improvement of student learning through assessment. This is most notably demonstrated by the college's successful application to participate in the Higher Learning Commission's Academy for Assessment of Student Learning and by the fact that a budget for assessment activities has been established *(—3A-6)*.

The college was admitted to the Academy for Assessment of Student Learning in December 2006. The Academy is a "four-year sequence of events and interactions that are focused on student learning" *(—3A-7)*. The objective of the academy is to help institutions assess and improve student learning and build institutional commitment. The chair of the college-wide Student Learning Committee writes in an e-mail *(—3A-8)*:

> … a new committee [has been] constituted to determine exactly what college wide assessment is and what form of college-wide assessment will be required to meet the unique needs of FRCC.

The Student Learning Committee (SLC) is currently composed of two instructional deans, eight faculty, and three student services administrators with representation from each of the campuses. A Campus Vice President champions the committee and serves as its liaison to the President's Cabinet. Committee members attended the Assessment Academy Roundtable in February 2007; they are now actively engaged in carrying out their Student Learning Project.

FRCC has ambitious goals for the improvement of student learning through assessment under the leadership of the SLC. A climate survey to measure faculty attitudes about student learning assessment and to solicit faculty opinion about how they know students are learning was completed in 2007 *(—3A-9)*. This is a critical first step in redirecting the college's assessment efforts. One of the primary objectives for the future is to obtain faculty buy-in for assessment, which has not always been optimal. Strategies include providing training for faculty on appropriate assessment measures, assisting them in making changes based on assessment and systematically communicating the results to internal and external constituencies. In addition, a college-wide intranet website entitled "FRCC Student Learning" and an Electronic Resource Library including 40 journal articles about assessment have been created to provide reference information to support faculty professional development in assessment of student Learning *(—3A-10)*.

Core Component 3B:
The organization values and supports effective teaching.

Front Range Community College is committed to quality education. Learning is the focus of the college's mission statement. Moreover, the college's vision statement articulates key college principles for teaching and learning. Relevant excerpts from the vision statement include:

- We are learner-centered and responsive to diverse student goals, including service to community.

- We facilitate learning where, when, and how it best suits the needs of the diverse learning publics we serve.

- Our curriculum prepares vocational, academic, and business-oriented students to succeed in a highly competitive, global economy by focusing on quality, innovation, technology, self initiative, and problem solving.

- Collaboration, teamwork, cheerfulness, diversity, and a priority on student success and satisfaction characterize our work and our management.

- We recognize that our faculty, together with our staff, are our greatest asset and that our commitment to their continuous professional development is essential.

- We are driven to excel and embrace the importance of listening to our constituencies.

Additionally, the college's core values and strategic priorities include components that specifically address teaching and learning:

FRCC Core Values:
- The Central Value of Students: We believe that students are the essence of the institution.

- The Central Value of Learning: We are committed to learning; both in the classroom and in our common organizational life together, so that we improve, develop, and grow.

- The Central Value of Quality: We value quality and excellence in all that we do.

FRCC Strategic Priorities:
- FRCC creates a welcoming community of learners that embraces excellence by setting and achieving high standards.

- FRCC promotes student access and success in learning, in work, and in community by valuing and respecting the diversity of all and the individuality of each.

Faculty Qualifications

FRCC hires qualified faculty. The Human Resources Department screens applications for full time faculty positions for required qualifications. Faculty teaching college-level transfer courses must have a masters degree and 18 graduate credit hours in their teaching disciplines. Career and technical education faculty must hold a masters degree to teach transfer classes or a bachelors degree to teach non-transfer classes, as well as a minimum of 4,000 hours of work experience in the career and technical field. Occasionally, CTE faculty are hired without the required degree, but with the expectation that the degree will be completed within a specified time period. Faculty members who teach developmental courses are required to hold at least a baccalaureate degree.

Since fall 2006, department chairs have been required to verify qualifications of each part time instructor using a common form *(—3B-1)* and confirm that appropriate transcripts or written exceptions (if official transcripts are unavailable) are in the part time instructor's personnel file. In fall 2006 approximately 4% of part time instructors had an associate's degree, 24% had a bachelor's degree, 51% had masters degrees, 9% had PhDs or JDs, and 6% had vocational degrees or certificates *(—3B-2)*. Approximately 82% of full time faculty had at least a bachelor's degree. At least 67% had master's degrees and 9% held PhDs *(—3B-3)*.

Faculty Involvement in Curricular Content

All FRCC credit courses are part of the Colorado Community College Common Numbering System. The system assures consistent numbering of courses across colleges and includes faculty developed course content templates for all courses. Faculty are required to teach 80% of the content in the templates. Many Front Range Community College faculty were involved in developing courses with common curriculum content for inclusion in the Colorado Common Course Numbering System *(—3B-4)*.

FRCC has a curriculum committee made up of deans and faculty. All new courses must be submitted in writing and approved by this committee. Once approved, the courses are submitted for inclusion in the CCCNS.

Additionally, faculty regularly attend annual statewide meetings with other community college faculty *(—3B-5)* to discuss curriculum. Faculty representatives from each discipline are also actively involved with the statewide curriculum committee as well as the GT Pathways Committee, which is a statewide committee charged with maintaining and updating guaranteed transfer courses. Faculty choose textbooks that correspond to curriculum content for each course *(—3B-6)*. Finally, faculty frequently work collaboratively to write or revise curriculum.

Faculty Professional Development

The President's Cabinet continues to recognize and support ongoing professional development for faculty through annual budgetary allocation. Professional development is an important area of focus for FRCC. When new full time faculty are employed, they attend several days of orientation including campus and discipline meetings *(—3B-7)*. Part time instructors attend new faculty orientations on their respective campuses. For example, every fall and spring semester, evening inservices designed for part time instructors, but also attended by full time faculty, are held on the Larimer Campus. These inservice training sessions offer, among other topics, technology training workshops in a variety of computer applications *(—3B-8)*. Part time instructors are paid to attend these sessions.

Boulder County Campus initiated a New Faculty Learning Academy to orient new full time faculty to the campus and to their responsibilities. The Academy covers such topics as an introduction to the campus leadership team, Faculty Support services, classroom technologies and how to use them, developing a proper syllabus, and a panel of full time faculty who discuss "what it's really like to work here." In addition, BCC holds monthly "Teaching and Learning Connections" sessions aimed at improving teaching and student learning.

The Brighton Center offers orientations, including a review of major requirements of FERPA, to new part time instructors.

In the 2006 Accreditation Surveys, 77% of full time faculty and 86% of part time instructors agreed or strongly agreed that adequate technological resources are available to help faculty teach *(—3B-9 FT & PT Fac Surveys, qs. 24 &23)*. Approximately 81% of full time faculty and 79% of part time instructors agreed or strongly agreed there is adequate training for faculty in the use of available technology *(—3B-10, FT and PT Faculty Surveys, qs. 25 & 24)*. All campuses also have fully-equipped teaching laboratories, called Instructional Design Centers, for faculty to try out new technology and obtain instruction in use of technologies. Sixty-two percent of full time faculty and 68% of part time instructors agree or strongly agree they have adequate opportunities to enhance their teaching skills *(—3B-11, FT and PT Faculty Surveys, qs. 27 & 26)*. Most (69%) of full time faculty believe they have funding for professional development at least once every three years *(—3B-12, q. 31)*. The college also offers a tuition reimbursement plan for faculty to take courses related to their teaching areas *(—3B-13)*.

The college is committed to helping faculty keep current in their disciplines. The college provides each full time faculty approximately $2,000 for professional development every three years; each campus manages professional development funds for its faculty. Faculty are encouraged to attend professional conferences and to bring best practices back to the college. Faculty frequently present material from conferences to other faculty in brown bag sessions and other formats.

The following provide additional examples of faculty professional development:

- Instructional deans provide teaching newsletters, such as Innovation Abstracts and Carnegie Perspectives to faculty *(—3B-14)*.

- At the Larimer Campus, a pool of funds is available for part time instructors for professional development.

- The college hosts conferences which are open to faculty and instructors. For example, the Larimer Campus offered a mini-conference called Teaching Mathematics: Transitions and Pathways in April 2006. It included math educators from local junior high schools, high schools, FRCC, and Colorado State University. The focus was on improving transitions between different levels of mathematics education and ensuring future student success.

- The college also hosts an annual internal summer conference, the FRCC Teaching and Learning Technology Conference, for all faculty and instructors. This week-long conference originated in 2003 and has since become a popular venue for faculty to exchange ideas and techniques for teaching with technology—including web-enhanced, hybrid, and fully online courses. Ninety-three faculty and instructors attended in 2007.

The 2006 Accreditation Survey reveals approximately 74% of full time faculty and 52% of part time instructors subscribe to professional journals relevant to their disciplines *(—3B-15–FT & PT Faculty Surveys, qs. 33.1 &31.1)*. Approximately 81% of full time faculty and 60% of part time instructors attend workshops or conferences related to their disciplines annually *(—3B-16–FT & PT Faculty Surveys, qs. 33.2 & 31.2)*. Approximately 91% of full time faculty and 92% of part time instructors confer with other colleagues in their fields at least once a year *(—3B-17–FT & PT Faculty Surveys, qs. 33.3 & 31.3)*. Approximately 79% of full time faculty and 84% of part time instructors read a book related to their teaching fields every year *(—3B-18–FT & PT Faculty Surveys, qs. 33.4 & 31.4)*. Approximately 19% of full time faculty and 26% of part time instructors published materials in their fields in the last three years *(—3-B-19–FT & PT Faculty Surveys, qs. 33.5 & 31.5)*. Approximately 47% of full time faculty and 34% of part time instructors lecture or present at professional meetings in their fields *(—3B-20–FT and PT Faculty Surveys, qs. 33.6 & 31.6)*.

Evaluating Teaching

Classroom observations and conferences about observations improve teaching by allowing faculty and instructors to garner feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of their classes. Efficacious ways to make changes that will benefit student learning may result from observations and conferences. Input from other professionals proffers teachers different perspectives and can help them work through perceived problems they have with their classes and overall courses.

According to the 2006 Accreditation Survey, the majority (71%) of full time faculty and 41% of part time instructors report their classes are observed by a department chair, dean, lead instructor, or colleague at least once a year. Approximately 25% of full time faculty and 33% of part time instructors report having their teaching observed less than once an academic year, and 23% of part time instructors reported never being observed *(—3B-21–FT & PT Faculty Surveys, qs. 7 & 6)*. Results of the 2006 Accreditation Survey

for department chairs indicate 30% of departments conduct classroom observations of part time instructors every semester; 55% conduct observations annually; 5% conduct observations once every two years *(—3B-22 Department Chair Survey, q. 3)*. Of those conducting observations, 90% of departments provide verbal and written feedback *(—3B-23–FT & PT Faculty Surveys, qs. 4 & 8)* to faculty and instructors. In many cases, academic deans conduct classroom observations of full time faculty at least once a year. Classroom observations are documented and include, at a minimum, the learning objectives for the particular session, the teaching and learning methods observed, the highlights of the class session, and recommendations for improvement. These observations are incorporated into annual faculty evaluations that determine full time faculty raises.

In the case of full time, provisional faculty, if improvement is needed and does not occur, the faculty member's contract may not be renewed. For part time instructors, if improvement is needed and does not occur, the instructor will not be offered classes the following semester.

Each full time faculty is evaluated by students in at least two classes per semester, and part time instructors are evaluated in at least one class per semester. For a brief period of time, the Boulder County Campus piloted an evaluation system with students filling out teacher evaluations using a common software application. That pilot met with mixed success. Currently, all campuses use narrative and other types of evaluations. Faculty receive copies of these evaluations to help them make curricular and pedagogical decisions. Courses taught completely online continue to use an anonymous web-based evaluation form *(—3B-24)*. Student evaluations help faculty and instructors obtain perspectives on their teaching that can result in changes that make classes "work better" for students.

Recognition of Teaching Excellence

The college annually honors one full time faculty and one part time instructor from each campus as Master Teacher. These faculty are recognized at graduation and in other ceremonies *(—3B-25)* and have their names and biographies printed in college publications. To recognize faculty and instructors who excel in online teaching, FRCC added an award for Master Online Teacher in AY 2005-2006. Recognition of outstanding teaching shows college support for effective teaching.

Support for Improved Pedagogies

In addition to recognizing teaching excellence, the college supports enhancing the quality of teaching. Mentoring gives faculty and instructors the opportunity to exchange perspectives and to work collaboratively to add to the quality of their teaching. The 2006 Accreditation Survey of department chairs found that 35% of departments have a formal mentoring process for part time faculty, while 65% do not *(—3B-26–Department Chair Survey, q. 5).* Each campus coordinates a mentoring program to improve the teaching effectiveness of faculty. All new full time faculty are assigned a full time mentor during their first year. This mentor relationship may continue beyond the first year. Part time instructors are also mentored by full time lead faculty. On the Westminster and Larimer Campuses, the mentoring program is called Teachers-Helping-Teachers. At the Boulder County Campus, the mentoring program is called the New Faculty Learning Academy. One-on-one mentor pairs are assigned. Part time instructors are compensated for participation. The Westminster mentoring group is very active; the group meets 9 times a semester to discuss issues, including how to engage students; how to handle difficult students; suggestions for accommodating students with learning disabilities; and teacher burnout. The Westminster campus also has a program called Teachers-Visiting-Teachers. In this program, faculty observe classes, and then meet to review their observations. During fall 2006, BCC introduced the idea of peer evaluations of teaching and learning. This project is under discussion by the faculty. Mentors and mentees alike report greater confidence in their teaching, and incorporating greater variety in teaching methods.

Online teaching is strongly valued and supported within the college. Faculty new to teaching online are required to complete an eight hour workshop orienting them to online teaching strategies as well as to specific tools available to them in Blackboard Vista™. Ongoing support is also available through instructional designers based at each campus, through workshops, a faculty resources site with self-paced tutorials in Blackboard™, and an interactive discussion board. Beginning in 2006, department chairs designated faculty members to serve as online leads for each discipline. Online leads provide leadership and support for full time faculty and part time instructors teaching online courses that can help improve student learning and teaching.

At the Brighton Center, all instructors are part time. Administrators mentor and provide faculty support at the center. Brighton instructors are members of their respective departments on the Westminster Campus. They are invited to attend Westminster inservice meetings.

Organizational Openness to Practices that Enhance Learning

Innovative projects at Front Range Community College are continually being discussed and piloted. The Boulder County Campus offers a Teaching Learning Connection (TLC) group. In addition, faculty are involved in a project to encourage teaching critical thinking *(—3B-27)*. The campus also has a Service Learning Program that encourages faculty to offer community service as a learning option in their classes. Boulder has recently opened a career counseling center and a library with a full time librarian.

Practices that enhance learning include:

- Art students have an annual mural competition; as a result, the campus boasts three student-designed and completed murals.

- All business, management and marketing classes have an internship component; students are interning at several businesses in the community.

- Journalism students often intern at the local newspapers; as a result, three former students are currently employed in journalism locally.

- Philosophy students engaged in service learning have stocked food pantries, assisted families in finding temporary housing, and have served as children's advocates through the juvenile court system.

The college is currently participating in ITunes U, which allows instructors or other people associated with the college, to post audio or video podcasts as well as PDFs, which students can download to their personal computers or portable devices. ITunes U is currently being piloted on the Westminster Campus, and four instructors from the Multimedia Graphic Design, Math, Humanities, and Science areas are participating. Thirteen more faculty have agreed to be trained over the next semester. Student Services is also participating in the pilot, starting with podcasted announcements of upcoming events generated by Student Life.

The Larimer Campus also involves students in service learning. Students in a sociology class serve as tutors for a local after school program to help low income elementary children. During election years, some sociology students volunteer for an election campaign and keep a journal of their experiences. Students enrolled in Introduction to Education (EDU 221) are required to do 20 hours of observation within a classroom setting. They often end up helping with classroom projects and tutoring.

Beginning in 2005, developmental faculty in reading and English collaborated with faculty in sociology, humanities, and psychology to offer paired course learning communities. Since the Developmental Studies disciplines began collaborating with transfer faculty, all faculty and instructors involved learned a great deal about improving teaching strategies. Transfer faculty have an opportunity to work closely with developmental students, gaining new understanding of the strengths of these students and the challenges they face. Faculty learned that developmental students are capable of mastering high level academic content. Additionally, developmental faculty have put their own practices to test, determining whether the content of developmental classes prepares students for transfer courses. As a result, pedagogical practices have been modified and enhanced. Student feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and the college is in the process of collecting data concerning student success rates in learning communities.

FRCC also supports innovative cultural activities. At the Boulder County Campus, the Arts & Humanities and Languages & Communication departments regularly host HUM (Humanities) Day activities during which students may visit an art gallery, a cathedral or synagogue and lunch at an ethnic restaurant. THE (Theater) Day involves a trip to the theater or opera, preceded by a dinner conversation about the play or opera. During fall semester, 2007, the campus produced the play "The God of Hell" to recognize Constitution Day. Composition, political science, sociology, anthropology, humanities and theater faculty all used the play to enhance their curricula (—3B-28).

Core Component 3C:
The organization creates effective learning environment.

At all of FRCC's campuses, students find rich and varied opportunities to learn both inside and outside the classroom. From comfortable student gathering areas that promote conversation and engagement, to wireless hotspots and computer access points, to writing, science, and math labs, a wide variety of services and settings for learning are easily accessible.

College faculty and administrators understand that learning has a much broader context than simply in the classroom, and they have led several initiatives to promote learning across disciplines through technology, campus activities and orientation programs, and interdisciplinary projects.

Student Activities and Organizations

On each campus, there are abundant opportunities for students to engage in student clubs and student life activities. Each campus has an active student government association as well as a student life director and activities coordinator. Together, they organize series of activities designed to stimulate thought and encourage students to interact. At the Boulder County Campus alone, over 30 events, from Martin Luther King Day to a philosophy film series, to a Talent/No Talent Show promote diversity, learning, and student engagement. The other campuses have similar rosters of diverse events and activities. Even the Brighton Center, with only 200 students, has an active student government association.

Campuses average between 10 and 12 active student clubs at any one time *(—3C-1)*. The clubs vary widely and change as student interests' change. Among the larger clubs are the student chapter of the Colorado Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (Westminster), The Student Veterinary Technician Association (Larimer), The Environmental Club (Boulder), and The Students in Free Enterprise Clubs (Larimer and Westminster). Other clubs, ranging from the Gay-Straight Alliance to the Fundamentalist Christian Club show the diversity of student interests and opportunities for extracurricular learning.

Phi Theta Kappa, an international student honor society, promotes and recognizes academic excellence and provides student members opportunities for campus and community service. Examples of activities sponsored by student chapters include: carnivals for children in the community; seminars on recent and relevant topics in the news; and support of local charities like Race for the Cure. The three chapters had a total membership of 335 students in fall 2007 *(—3C-2)*.

After a two-year hiatus, while the college reassessed its policies and goals for combining learning and travel, the study abroad program returned in 2005 with strong faculty leadership and centralized administrative support *(—3C-3)*. The result has been a series of effective trips, including an annual 30-student trip to a language institute in Mexico. During AY 2007-2008, the college approved five trips abroad *(—3C-4)*. Firsthand student experience of different cultures, languages, and geographic environments is a much more direct learning experience than classroom courses on the same material.

Artistic and Cultural Activities

All campuses offer opportunities for students to display their artistic talents and to be exposed to art and culture as part of a liberal arts education. Formal and informal discussions about displays and performances are an important part of the overall learning process and environment.

At the Westminster campus, art and music faculty jointly created an art gallery and performance space in 2002. Since then, the gallery has held over 30 exhibitions of professional and student work, with series on women and Latino artists, as well as regular displays of faculty work *(—3C-5)*. Over a dozen student and professional musical performances are scheduled each year, ranging from jazz to classical.

At the Larimer Campus, The Longs Peak Study/Art Lounge was dedicated in the student center in 2005. The art gallery primarily exhibits work by students, although it also houses group exhibits by Visual and Media Arts program faculty and local and regional artists. An example of these exhibits is "The Extended Image," narrative photography by advanced photography students *(—3C-6)*.

The Boulder County Campus has also established an ongoing student gallery space (Gallery 2010) for rotating student exhibitions. In 2006, the gallery hosted 10 exhibits. Students gain experience with installing the work and providing art openings. In addition, regular exhibits of faculty work have been hung in the administration building, and student work is regularly displayed in both campus buildings.

Literary magazines at Larimer and Boulder, and scheduled to be re-introduced in 2008 at Westminster, offer powerful learning experiences for student writers, designers, and publishers. Each spring the Larimer Campus publishes Front Range Review, a perfect-bound, full-color literary magazine. The first issue appeared in 2001. The publication's mission is to publish short stories, poetry, and essays of high quality from new and emerging writers alongside the work of established authors. To that end, staff have received submissions from writers in almost all fifty states, as well as from writers in Canada, Mexico, Europe, and the Far and Middle East. The review has been the first home for some of these writers' work, while other authors published in the review have also had work in such publications as the Best American Short Stories and The New Yorker. Front Range students have been published alongside Guggenheim Award winners and poet laureates. All visual art is produced by Front Range students; likewise, the editorial staff is comprised of students. Producing these magazines gives students practical experience in the entire range of the publication process. Student editors, who enroll in creative writing classes, get additional reading, critiquing, and editing experience outside the traditional classroom. They learn about submission requirements, cover letters, and magazine design while participating on the front line of the literary scene *(—3C-7)*.

At the Boulder County Campus, the annual Plains Paradox celebrates the best art and writing produced annually by students at the campus. Publication of the journal is celebrated at a community venue, thereby strengthening the bonds between the campus and the community. Students and an advisor are currently working on the fourth issue.

Support for Diverse Learners

College staff understand the diverse needs of learners and provide support and assistance that enable the broad mix of students to succeed. For example, Front Range Community College has long recognized there is a diversity of learning styles among students. Faculty training often focuses on viable strategies to serve students with different learning styles.

Drop-in Math Labs offer help for math students, with the largest center, at the Larimer Campus, averaging over 300 student visits per week. An online math lab responds to over 30 requests for help per week. At the Larimer campus, a science help center receives on average 45 visits per week *(—3C-8)*.

Writing Centers assist students in all disciplines. The centers have evolved over time to meet a wide variety of student needs. Until 2004, the Westminster center focused primarily on students in developmental studies courses. A campus wide project to improve writing across the curriculum made clear the need for more broad- based writing support. The Communications and Developmental Studies Departments transformed the center into a full scale writing assistance center used by approximately 250 students per week *(—3C-9)*.

Special Services provides learning support to students with disabilities. On average, the college provides support to over 400 students with disabilities per academic year. Front Range provides current assistive technology for students with disabilities and those with learning differences who benefit from access to multiple modalities for learning. Multiple modalities include: tape and digital recorders, gel wrist supports, adjustable tables and chairs, high-tech voice-to-text conversion software, voice control of computers (Dragon Naturally Speaking™), optical character recognition text-to-speech software (WYNN™ and Open Book™) assistive technology. The Larimer Campus offers Braille conversion support to all campuses *(—3C-10)*.

In 2004 FRCC established the new position of Online Student Success Coordinator to help students succeed in online courses, from arranging orientations to the online software, to helping online students access tutoring and other services available to them through FRCC. In spring 2007, the Westminster Campus Online Student Success Coordinator organized 19 student orientation sessions, handled 1070 student calls, 850 emails, and 180 walk-ins. Departmental administrative assistants at each campus provided additional support. This support was particularly critical during fall 2006 when both Banner™ and Vista™ were implemented at the same time and the call volume doubled *(—3C-11)*.

To help individual students decide whether online courses are an appropriate delivery method for them, the college is piloting online assessment software called READI™ that measures attributes such as learning style, typing speed, computer skill, and reading ability. Faculty and advising staff will have access to this information to help in advising students.

Disability Awareness Month is a significant event at the Westminster campus. Featured speakers have included Geri Jewell, an actress with Cerebral Palsy, and Paul Martin, a Para Olympian. Workshops for faculty cover a variety of topics from how to assist adults with learning disabilities to descriptions of mental illnesses and how to recognize them.

A unique partnership between the college and the Colorado Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), entitled the Enhanced Education Project (EEP) Grant, provides support services to students who are retraining due to injury or illness, with the goal of placing them in employment. A total of 154 DVR students were served by the EEP grant through fall 2006. Over half of the students who entered the job search process obtained employment within 6 months from the date of completion of retraining. The grant provides for active case management, counseling, financial aid, interventions, advising, and creation of Individual Plans for Employment *(—3C-12)*.

New Learning Communities on the Larimer, Boulder County, and Westminster Campuses focus on improving the success of students in developmental courses. Research indicates learning communities are effective learning environments because they provide academic as well as life skill services, which support students' college attendance and success *(—3C-13)*. In spring 2006, the Larimer Campus hosted an experimental learning community using funds from a Lumina Foundation grant. The community included a cohort of 11 students who took five developmental studies courses together and received individual assistance from a case manager. Students in the Lumina Learning Community showed higher semester-to-semester retention rates, more successful course completion rates, and higher GPA's than the comparison group. The Lumina Grant provided funding for tutor training, training developmental instructors, and instructional equipment. The Boulder County and Westminster Campuses have created paired-course learning communities that combine developmental and college level classes. Faculty are considering similar pairings between online courses.

Open computer access at each campus allows students to complete homework assignments, access programs they may not have at home (e.g. Photoshop and specific Nursing tutoring programs) and communicate electronically with faculty. The college has 159 open access computers *(—3C-14)*. More than 440 students per day use the computers. In addition, the college offers 117 computers for student use in libraries and over 60 computers for open access in student life, advising, and other areas. In 2006 the college added 10 wireless hotspots, 2 at Boulder and 4 each at Larimer and Westminster.

In the past three years, each campus reinvigorated student orientations to help students succeed. Interdisciplinary teams created unique programs with similar themes — student campus tours, an introduction to important support services, seminars on how to succeed in college, and a resource fair where students meet faculty and learn more about programs and majors. Over 500 students attended in fall 2006. Online orientations are also offered at each campus and online to help new online students become familiar with Blackboard™, our online learning management system, expectations for online courses, and tips for succeeding online. Over 200 students attend online orientations each semester.

Effective Use of New Technologies

For well over a decade, Front Range Community College has been an innovator in using technology to enhance learning opportunities. The college was one of the first in the state to implement online courses in 1994. Since then, the college has been the clear leader among Colorado community colleges in online learning and the integration of web enhancements into classroom courses. In spring 2007, FRCC offered 251 online sections, 128 hybrid sections, and 696 web-enhanced course sections using Blackboard VistaTM. This broad use of varied teaching modalities expands service to students who have varied learning styles and scheduling needs.

From 2000 to 2006, annualized enrollments in FRCC online courses grew from 429 FTE to 1057 FTE. Overall, online enrollment is approximately 12% of total college enrollment, which indicates the popularity and effectiveness of online courses. The typical online student also takes classes on campus, but students can complete online A.A., A.S., A.G.S. degrees and A.A.S. degrees in accounting, business, computer information systems, and paralegal studies. Online certificates are offered in accounting, management basics, project management basics, small business management basics, web authoring, programming, CIS applications specialist, legal assistant and legal refresher.

To ensure online courses offer quality learning experiences as well as convenience, the college examined the role of faculty leadership in reviewing and improving online courses in 2005. A faculty-led committee developed an improved model of course oversight that allows rigorous review of all online courses by one lead faculty in each discipline. This approach provides rapid feedback to online faculty to ensure quality instruction *(—3C-15)*.

Two particularly innovative online programs at FRCC are the Online Math Lab and the Online Student Center. Started in 2001, the online math lab allows students to use an online course shell to discuss math problems, ask questions, and view math resources under the guidance of two full time math faculty *(—3C-16)*.

The Online Student Center gives students an opportunity to engage with other online students in discussion of both academic and extracurricular topics and functions as a Virtual Student Union. The center, which uses a standard course shell structured to emphasize discussion, allows the Online Learning Department to have a social presence in our online students' educational experiences. It is a resource for our students to connect with FRCC faculty, staff, and their fellow students.

Faculty also use specialized technology to enhance individual online courses. One online learning faculty has increased student learning in his online Spanish courses with Elluminate Live™. He uses Elluminate Live™ for weekly office hours in Spanish for Health Care Professionals, Spanish III, and Spanish IV. These office hours consist of pronunciation and spelling lessons. This real-time format allows interaction with students. For AY 2007-2008, the Colorado Community College System expanded the FRCC license so these highly interactive teaching methods are available to faculty and staff at all colleges within the system.

Technology-Enhanced Instruction

The convenience of online technology has drawn many faculty to use web technologies to enhance their traditional classroom courses. All FRCC courses use e-mail as a key form of communication between teacher and student. Many courses are hybrids with both classroom and online instruction. Support in using online technologies, including instructional designers located at each main campus, is available for all faculty and students through the online learning department *(—3C-17)*.

The college also promotes effective learning by staying current with technology. FRCC began using its first learning management system, an early version of WebCT™, in 1998 to provide students a true online classroom environment. As part of the Colorado Community College System, FRCC adopted an enterprise version of WebCT™ , now Blackboard Vista™, in 2006,

and has begun to implement some of the benefits of that technology, including course templates that allow part time instructors to make use of the best practices of other online instructors. Blackboard™ integrates with third party software, such as Elluminate Live™, Respondus™, and Turnitin.com™ anti-plagiarism software.

On all campuses, Smartboards™ and LCD projectors are used regularly in most classrooms. Math faculty, in particular, embraced Smartboard™ technology, using the Smart Gallery of Symbols™ to illustrate math concepts electronically. Math faculty capture their lecture notes from the Smartboard™ and then post them to online sites for student review. The Smart Gallery of Symbols™ produces easily read notes of professional quality.

Math faculty also use other technology to enhance instruction. Larimer faculty, for example, use Geometer's Sketchpad™ to present geometrical concepts, which is particularly useful for visual learners. Drawings can be put into motion to dynamically show geometrical concepts. Faculty also use modifications of this program, Algebra In Motion/Calculus In Motion™, to illustrate algebraic and calculus topics.

Another instructional innovation is opening Remote Access to Software Applications Through Citrix™. Front Range Community College currently offers a Citrix Application Portal for students that allows them access to software applications that they may not have available on their home computers. Currently the Student Citrix Portal offers Office 2003™ and Keyboarding Pro™.

FRCC Nursing Departments are leaders in adopting technology. Nursing departments recently took another innovative step by beginning deployment of advanced SimMan™ patient simulators, interactive manikins that give students immediate feedback about interventions. Using specialized control software, faculty can program the simulator, which allows students to respond to realistic patient care scenarios. Simulator technology allows students to better prepare for placement at clinical sites and for work in hospital environments.

Suitable Physical Environments

The college makes consistent efforts to provide environments conducive to learning. Each campus includes quiet study areas and informal gathering areas.

All campuses have library spaces that provide quiet study space and access to library materials. Westminster and Larimer Campuses have joint-use partnerships with local libraries that allow students access to a broad collection of materials (see 3-D, for more information on college libraries).

Classrooms are designed to support instructional strategies, which emphasize small class sizes and current technology. Average class size ranges from a low of 13 in Brighton to 23 in Westminster *(—3C-18)*.

Each campus has well-equipped art studios and science labs renovated or constructed within the last 8 years. They contain up-to-date equipment and appropriate facilities for a variety of technical programming.

As part of an effort to better prepare students in the health care professions, the Westminster Campus has developed three new simulation centers for emergency medicine, nursing, and pharmacy technology that allow hands-on practical experience. In fall 2006, the Emergency Medicine Department at Westminster constructed an apartment that serves as a practice lab for students learning how to assist patients who need to be transported out of a dwelling. The apartment contains sophisticated audio video capture and recording devices so instructors and students can review students' activities. Nearby, the Pharmacy Technology Department has developed a mock pharmacy where students practice interacting with clients and dispensing medicine.

Core Component 3D:

The organization's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

Front Range Community College recognizes the importance of learning resources in supporting the teaching and learning process and in achieving the college mission: At Front Range Community College, We Enrich Lives through Learning. College faculty, instructors, staff, and administrators regularly monitor access to learning resources, evaluate their use, assess their effectiveness, support staff utilization, and provide staffing and support for those learning resources. Budgeting priorities reflect improvements in teaching and learning as a core value of the college. The college's learning resources and partnerships support student learning and effective teaching. The college is particularly proud of its library facilities and operations.

FRCC identifies, acquires, upgrades, and maintains learning resources. Examples of resources include:

- campus libraries
- media centers
- electronic access to information
- computer commons, classrooms
- web course tools through the Blackboard™ (formerly WebCT™) learning management system
- instructional design centers
- tutoring support services
- language laboratories
- mathematics laboratories
- testing centers
- instructional technology (in classrooms)
- science laboratories
- writing centers
- art studios/performance space
- a child care center
- instructional technology laboratories
- computer-based laboratories
- automotive technology shops
- nursing and other Career and Technical Education program clinical sites at hospitals and other health care agencies.

A variety of methods are used to assess the effectiveness of learning resources on FRCC campuses. These include student evaluations of courses, which provide data on instructor effectiveness and the effectiveness of learning resources utilized in courses.

Learning resources also include resources used in clinical and off-campus placement sites. Assessment of the effectiveness of those learning resources is conducted in several ways. These include discussion with providers of off-campus learning sites such as businesses, private practitioners, and health care facilities. Many discussions occur within the context of Career and Technical Education program advisory board meetings, typically held twice a year. Many curricular, programmatic, and instructional methods improvements, e.g. current skill requirements, are initiated as a result of advisory board feedback *(—3D-1)*.

Per the 2006 Accreditation Survey, the majority of full time faculty feel remote access to online library resources is supporting their teaching *(—3D-2–FT Faculty Survey, Q. 19)*. The majority of faculty feel technological resources such as open computer labs are available when needed by FRCC students *(—3D-3—FT Faculty Survey, Q. 26)*.

Part time instructors feel remote access to library resources supports their teaching *(—3D-4–PT Faculty Survey, Q. 18)*. A large majority of part time instructors report adequate training and support in instructional design and use of technological resources *(—3D-5–PT Faculty Survey, Q. 5)*.

Significant financial investment and managerial effort support technology training in a variety of areas on FRCC campuses. These include faculty training in the use of online resources for teaching. A training calendar is distributed electronically to all faculty in FrontLine OnLine, and a paid, week-long technology training, FRCC Teaching and Learning Technology, is offered each summer. Other learning resources are also supported — 67.8% of full time faculty agree that college resources help them and their students practice responsible scholarship and research *(—3D-6 FT Faculty Survey, Q. 43)*. Opinion about staffing and support occur in the 2006 Part Time Faculty Accreditation Survey in response to the question "[what] does FRCC do well?" *(—3D-7—PT Faculty Survey, Q. 55):*

"Good training for faculty."
"Extra teaching seminars and colleague support."

"(FRCC) offers support materials, e.g. videos, data bases, journals, reference books, and up to date classroom technology."

"Administration supports teachers and works to give them credibility with the students."

"(FRCC) has excellent help available for students who need extra help with classes, writing, or gaining computer expertise."

"Good student resources available."

Full time faculty participate in a variety of innovations and partnerships that enhance learning and strengthen teaching effectiveness *(—3D-8– FT Faculty Survey,"Comments")*. Part time instructors also participate in community partnerships that encourage innovation and improve teaching and learning *(—3D-9–PT Faculty Survey,"Comments")*. Sample partnerships include agreements with hospitals, universities, workforce centers, school districts, and business and industry. For example, the Larimer Campus has extensive partnerships with health care agencies *(—3D–10)*. Input from educational partners and advisory committees influences curriculum development and change *(—3D-11–FT Faculty Survey, Qs 34.2, 34.3, 34.4, 34.5, 34.6, & 34.10)*. Students participate in study abroad trips, internships, and field trips. Over 65% of part time faculty provide off-campus learning experiences *(—3D-12— PT Faculty Survey, Q 22),* and 40% bring guest speakers into their classrooms *(—3D-13– Q 29.4 PT Faculty Survey)*. Art history faculty take students to the Denver Art Museum; Larimer astronomy faculty use the local planetarium for instruction.

Numerous partnerships and innovations are in place at Front Range Community College. Many partnerships are substantive agreements between the college and employers that help transition students into employment. This transitioning adds value to programs. Some are innovative approaches to solving a shortage in a particular workplace, such as agreements between area health care facilities and FRCC to fund faculty positions in nursing *(—3D-14)*.

The 2006 Accreditation Survey of Administrators and Staff conveys the opinion that the college supports student learning and teaching. Almost 73% of administrators and staff agreed that budgeting priorities indicate that improving teaching and learning are the core value at FRCC *(— 3D-15 – Administrator and Staff Survey Q 15).*

Based on information contained in the General Fund Budgets taken from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education Budget Data Books, the percentage of the College's General Fund devoted to Instruction during the years 2002-05 is detailed as follows:

Instructional Percentage of Budget

2002 – 48%	2003 – 51%	2004 – 53%	2005 – 55%	2006 – 55%	2007 – 54%
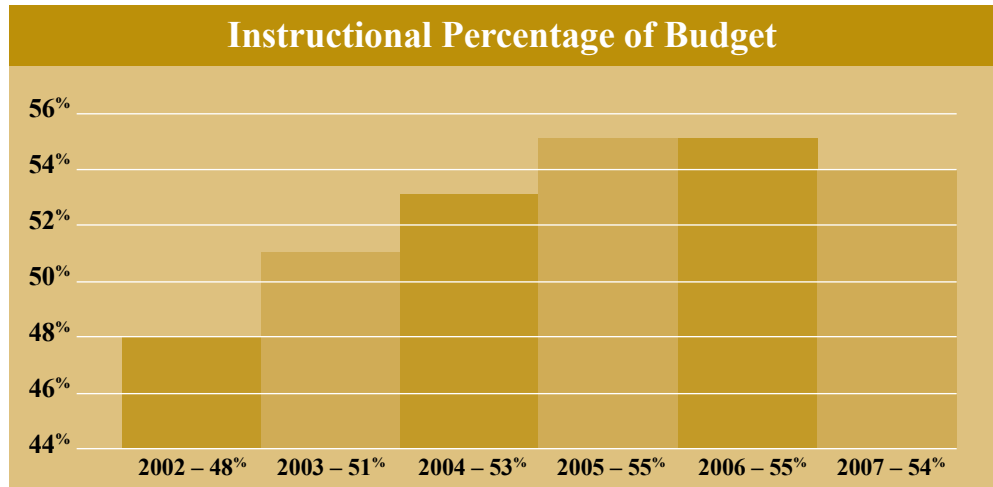
The increase between 2002 and 2005 was 7%, which shows more funds spent on instruction. The instruction expense category includes only direct instructional expenses: faculty salaries, benefits, and instructional operating expenses. The college president has publicly declared that the college will make every effort to continue this trend.

The 2006 Full Time Faculty Accreditation Survey provided mixed opinions concerning the college budgeting commitment to teaching and learning. Forty-seven percent strongly disagreed or disagreed that budgeting priorities reflect teaching and learning as a core value *(—3D-16—FT Faculty Survey, Q. 29).*

The college finances numbers of endeavors that support student learning. Among these are the following:

- Photography Lead Faculty designed and offered a seminar series for students to develop portfolios. Students were allowed to use the department's digital camera and lab to develop their photos.

- An Honors Institute increases offerings to academically advanced students.

- Math and English labs. The labs provide free math and writing tutoring. These labs are innovative because part time instructors and full time faculty provide tutoring in the labs, which helps students receive the best quality instruction, direction, and assistance.

- The Brighton Center offers tutoring in math and English twice a week. The Brighton Center also encourages students to use SkillsTutor™, a software supplement that supports Math and English basic skills via the Internet.

- The Boulder County Campus also has a Learning Center and an Online Writing Lab. At BCC, a collaborative effort between Developmental Education, Advising, and Student Life results in creation of learning communities.

- Starting fall 2007, the Larimer Writing Center played a significant role in the development of the new Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program. This program's goal is to increase the presence of writing and critical thinking in various disciplines.

- The Westminster Writing Project created a customized writing handbook used as a required text for Westminster English courses.

- The Westminster Campus offers students an online Math Lab. All students enrolled in math courses are automatically assigned to a Vista™ "class" called Online Math Lab.

- The Larimer Campus Math Help Center is committed to supporting students with special needs. Jointly run by the Mathematics Department and Special Services, this lab helps meet the needs of diverse populations of students on the campus. For example, the graphing calculator is used by students who are seeing impaired.

- The Larimer Campus also offers science tutoring in chemistry, biology, anatomy and physiology, physics, astronomy, and geology.

Library Services

FRCC campuses and teaching sites provide high quality library services to students, staff, and faculty. The Larimer Campus Harmony Library and Westminster Campus College Hill Library operate joint-use facilities that provide academic and public library services in conjunction with their local municipal public library systems, respectively, Fort Collins and Westminster. The joint use libraries are by professional academic and public librarians that adhere to current practices and standards in library automation, bibliographic instruction, and collection development.

The Westminster Campus College Hill Library provides electronic, telephone, and email reference services to the Brighton Center, college-wide distance learners, and to Colorado Community College System Online (courses offered by the state community college system office) distance learners. Services center on a suite of electronic research databases, links to library catalogs for print materials, and various forms of access to professional reference librarians. In 2006, the Westminster Library handled 20,349 email, telephone, and in-person reference questions, and 13,922 circulation services to students *(—3D-17)*. The library also services the entire Westminster community and users from outlying counties (108,000+). In 2006, total circulation to community users was 22,035 *(—3D-18)*.

The Larimer Campus Harmony Library offers students technically advanced solutions including wireless Internet access, session management systems, self check-out, a computer lab open seven days a week, with software programs FRCC is currently using for instruction.

The Boulder County Campus Library relies heavily on electronic resources such as online databases and e-books for research resources students and staff require. The library acquires articles not available in full text from one of these databases through networking with other libraries using OCLC's World Cat Resource™ to share databases. The BCC library employs one full time professional librarian and 2 full time equivalent student workers *(—3D-19)*.

Each campus library operates web pages directed at their constituent populations *(—3D-20)*. In addition to campus specific web pages, the Fort Collins Public Library and Westminster Public Libraries offer alternative public pages for their respective communities *(—3D-21)*.

Collections

The Larimer Campus Harmony Library, Westminster Campus College Hill, and Boulder Campus Library follow standard academic library practices in developing their collections. The collections include standard print titles, e-books, print and electronically delivered periodicals, and various media formats. The Larimer collection is interfiled with the Larimer Campus Harmony Library public library collection and cataloged using the Dewey Decimal System. The College Hill collection uses the Library of Congress and Dewey Decimal systems. When purchasing materials and resources for students, staff, and faculty, academic librarians ensure specific curriculum requirements are addressed, and supplementary materials are up-to-date in order to cover current events, special topics, and critical contemporary knowledge. The Westminster Campus College Hill Library Selection Committee makes every effort to include campus faculty, deans, department chairs, and professional library staff in material selection and assess their usefulness in student learning *(—3D-22)*. The Westminster Campus College Hill Library is governed by a clear collection development policy *(—3D-23)*.

The Westminster Public Library collections enhance collection offerings to FRCC students (approximately 200,000 additional volumes) and circulate over 1 million titles annually. These larger collections help students obtain current knowledge in increased numbers of subjects. Licensed electronic databases are purchased in conjunction with Westminster Public College Hill Library. The Fort Collins Harmony Library also has a circulation of over 1 million titles annually and an annual attendance of 450,000 patrons at the Harmony Library alone. Additionally, the Larimer Campus Harmony Library collection has 147,000 items including the city's collection *(—3D-24)*.

The Boulder County Campus Library has a collection of about 2,000 books as well as 10,000 online electronic books. The library relies heavily on electronic resources and interlibrary loan *(—3D-25.)*

In addition to books, the Westminster Campus College Hill Library has a collection of over 2,208 non-print materials, e.g. films, tapes, and CDs *(—3D-26)*. The Larimer Campus Harmony Library houses 645 non-print materials *(—3D-27)*.

Interlibrary Loan and Resource Sharing

The Larimer Campus Harmony Library, Westminster Campus College Hill Library, and Boulder County Campus libraries provide interlibrary loan services to students and faculty. The Larimer Campus Harmony Library has one central Interlibrary Loan Department while Westminster Campus College Hill has an academic interlibrary loan department using the OCLC Passport System™ and the public library has its own interlibrary loan department utilizing the SWIFT™ (State-Wide Interlibrary Loan Fast Track) System. The Boulder County Library uses the Westminster Campus College Hill Interlibrary Loan Department to fill student requests. The Larimer Harmony Library offers a patron originated request system and courier service with 23 other Rocky Mountain academic and public libraries, offering access to 20 million items delivered to the Larimer Harmony Library via the Prospector Consortium™ *(—3D-28)*. The Larimer Campus Harmony Library uses Prospector™ for loaning materials. In 2006, 46,318 items were loaned to FRCC students and the City of Fort Collins community.

Services to Online Learners

The Westminster Campus College Hill Library also provides electronic services to students across the college and to Colorado Community Colleges Online distance learners and faculty. The library provides students with a suite of standard academic electronic research databases, related tutorials, links to library catalogs for print materials and email, and instant message and telephone access to professional reference librarians *(—3D-29)*. In 2006, the Westminster College Hill Library provided 14,425 online database searches *(—3D-30)* and the Boulder County Campus Library provided 27,284 online database searches *(—3D-31)*. In 2006, 201,527 documents were provided electronically to the City of Fort Collins community *(—3D-32)*.

Reference Services

Reference services are available to FRCC students, faculty, and staff from the campus library of their choice. All campus libraries provide in- person, telephone, and email reference services and link to Ask Colorado™, a 24/7 electronic reference service. Reference services are the cornerstone of bibliographic instruction, student outreach, and are the "public face" of the library when users seek answers to simple or complex research questions. College librarians update their training in various online services and current practices in searching and organizing information.

Reserve Materials

The libraries encourage faculty to put curriculum materials on reserve in each campus library. These materials include 3-D objects, print articles, and supplementary book chapters. The Westminster Campus College Hill Library staff plan to provide electronic reserves via WebCT™ course management software in the future.

Bibliographic Instruction

Each campus library employs professional librarians to provide library instruction to students upon faculty request. Staff develop customized classroom instruction in conjunction with faculty who highlight library resources that address curriculum content. Each fall semester, faculty and staff are offered an introduction to bibliographic instruction. In 2006, the Westminster College Hill Library gave 105 presentations to groups and classes; *(—3D-33)* the Boulder County Campus gave 36 *(—3D-34);* and the Larimer Campus Harmony Library gave 104 *(—3D-35)*. Library tours and one-time presentations as well as hands-on instruction about using electronic databases and for Internet searching are all included, if requested, in library staff presentations to groups/classes.

Media Services

The Westminster Campus College Hill Library supports faculty in these areas: classroom media equipment setup assistance and support, equipment troubleshooting, repair, and purchasing advice/consultation. Other services include: audiotape and videotape duplication, CD/DVD duplication, satellite teleconferences, self-service digital editing (all services are governed by applicable copyright and licensing agreements), and limited video and audio production. Students have access to non-print instructional materials (typically, video-based instructional materials) as in-house only materials, e.g. American Sign Language and Interpreter Preparation Program materials.

At the Larimer Campus Harmony Library, the Media Department provides all library media services to faculty and staff.

The Boulder Campus Library provides audiovisual materials to faculty, staff, and students and campus Information Technology staff provide audio-visual support.

In the 2006 Accreditation Survey, students commented on library resources and services. Ratings of library staff, library resources, and library use were very positive. Over 95% of students surveyed regard library staff as knowledgeable, helpful, and available. Most (88%) of respondents felt library databases were available for their needs. Students reported 81% of their instructors recommend use of library databases and catalogs for research, and 69% of respondents follow this advice.

The number of students using library databases and catalogs may increase as library services are expanded. Student use may increase as students learn how to access and use these resources. For example, the Boulder County Campus Library student use of databases increased by 372% from April 2006 through March 2007 at least partly because of the expansion of classroom presentations focusing on databases and their use. The journal Colorado Libraries published an article, Increasing Student Database Usage Through Library Instruction (Summer 2007) about the success of this program as it expands *(—3D-36)*.

Strengths, Concerns, Recommendations

Strengths:

1. We provide outstanding learning environments as evidenced by comprehensive libraries, accessible learning laboratories, well-equipped computer commons, and a myriad of co-curricular activities that extend learning beyond the classroom and into the surrounding communities.

2. Excellent support services, such as those offered by Student Services, tutoring services in writing, math, and science disciplines, and case management for students in vocational rehabilitation programs and developmental learning communities, illustrate our dedication to student success.

3. One of our major values is continuous improvement of instruction that enhances student learning. This value is underscored by strong funding for faculty professional development; classroom and student evaluations; discussions of teaching that provide input for improved teaching methodologies; and support by Instructional Design Centers and coordinators.

4. Faculty is actively involved in monitoring student outcomes for their courses, analyzing student performance based on outcomes and using the results for making curricular changes.

5. The college recognized that it was not making adequate progress in he implementation of assessment of student learning and therefore made the commitment to improve by becoming a member of the Higher Learning Commission's Assessment Academy.

Concerns:

1. Developmental education has no comprehensive plan for assessment of student learning. A significant portion of our students require developmental coursework, therefore it is imperative that our developmental course sequence is effective in preparing students for success in college-level courses.

2. While many new full time faculty have been hired since the last comprehensive visit, student enrollment increases have kept pace with hiring, so the percentage of courses taught by part time instructors remains around 70%.

3. Prerequisite blocking is currently limited to composition, math and some science courses. Faculty in the other disciplines believe students are often inadequately prepared in basic skills.

4. Generally faculty members are committed to assessment processes, but it is not yet part of a college-wide culture.

Recommendations:

1. Continue to work toward improving the numbers of full time faculty and to provide better services and support for part time instructors.

2. The college should investigate the implications of expanded prerequisite blocking to ensure students enrolling in classes are adequately prepared for success.

3. Create a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of developmental courses and assure smooth articulation between different levels of developmental courses and between developmental and transfer courses.

4. The Student Learning Committee should provide leadership to turn existing assessment activities into a comprehensive set of processes that are routine rather than exceptional; that are created and driven by faculty, and that inform decisions central to teaching and learning.

Criterion Four:

Acquisition, Discovery and Application of Knowledge

Criterion Four:
Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

Criterion Four describes efforts of Front Range Community College to promote a life of learning for students and staff. Promoting a "life of learning" is inherent in the college's legislative mandate and underscores all of our approaches to policy, planning, operations, program development, resource allocation, and governance. Our broad and diverse curriculum, extensive credit and non-credit course offerings, and support for the development of the college's staff are all evidence of the college's commitment to lifelong learning.

Through our general education program, we strive not only to prepare students for transfer or a promising career, but also to foster good citizenship, a sense of social responsibility, and key skills in critical thinking, interpersonal communications, and problem-solving. Uniquely among Colorado's community colleges, Front Range Community College can compare entry-level ACT scores with the final semester scores on the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) to measure student improvement in some key general education skills as a result of education at the college.

As a critical component of the state's workforce training network, Front Range Community College has developed high-demand Career and Technical Education programs as part of its career and technical education curriculum. The college has over 170 associate of applied science degree programs and certificates.

At Front Range Community College, a life of learning also means access and availability. By legislative mandate, all Colorado community colleges allow students with the "ability to benefit" to enroll in community college courses. There are no entrance requirements to the college. Similarly, through the Institute for Community and Professional Development (ICPD), the college offers lifelong learning opportunities so students can return to college for refresher training, new skill attainment, or new career development.

Core Component 4A:

The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.

At Front Range Community College, a life of learning is fostered in a number of important ways. At the highest level, a life of learning is promoted by policy and strategic direction from the Colorado Community College System and the FRCC administration. Operationally, elements that advance a life of learning include: professional development for faculty and staff; an institutional culture that encourages intellectual pursuit, exploration of new interests and recognition of academic excellence; educational programming that facilitates student access and success; and support of learning opportunities outside the classroom.

Policy

As with any key organizational element, a life of learning requires the support of leadership. Both the Colorado Community College System president and the college president have publicly declared their commitment to student success and a life of learning.

In greetings on the Colorado Community College System Web site, Dr. Nancy McCallin, President of the Colorado Community College System states:

> "Our colleges are exciting, dynamic institutions that allow you to pursue your dreams and achieve your goals. We welcome everyone who desires an education or seeks to enhance their knowledge and skills. We are the primary doorway for freshmen and sophomores entering Colorado's higher education system. Our colleges are less concerned with where you've been than where you want to go and our fundamental goal is making certain that every student receives the individual attention he or she deserves" *(—4A-1)*.

In her comments in the college catalog, FRCC President, Karen Reinertson, asserts:

"The economic vitality of our communities is growing and you're at the right place to help you keep pace, whether it be entering the job market after learning new skills, updating current skills to land a better job or transferring to a four-year institution…. Thank you for choosing FRCC as your partner in learning. We hope you will continue to think of us first for your learning needs, now and in the future" *(—4A-2).*

Additionally, the Colorado Community College System is guided by statutory mandates. The role and mission statements, included in Colorado Revised Statutes § 23-60-201, provide fundamental guiding principles:

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. The mission of the community colleges shall be to serve Colorado residents who reside in their service areas by offering a broad range of general, personal, vocational, and technical education programs. Each college shall be a two-year college. No college shall impose admission requirements upon any student. The objects of the community and technical colleges shall be to provide educational programs to fill the occupational needs of youth and adults in technical and vocational fields, two-year transfer educational programs to qualify students for admission to the junior year at other colleges and universities, basic skills, workforce development, and a broad range of personal and vocational education for adults *(—4A-3).*

Recently, CCCS embarked upon a statewide initiative that includes lifelong learning for students as part of its strategic plan. This initiative is called "Envision 2020" *(—4A-4).* On the CCCS website, the Envision 2020 web page states:

Our kickoff Envisioning Workshop including almost 200 participants, occurred May 31, 2007, and laid the groundwork for our yearlong process to develop a vision for the future; creating a strategic plan that can be implemented, monitored over time, and adjusted as conditions change.... working-together, we can proactively prepare Colorado's community colleges to spread the spirit of optimism, hope, and economic prosperity by providing students with opportunities for a lifetime – a good lifetime, a great lifetime.

College Mission

The college's mission documents are an important foundation for a "life of learning." The documents state important values and principles and contain numerous references that address acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge.

In the Purpose Statement, the college declares:

> As an institution of higher education, Front Range Community College admits individuals 16 years of age or older who can benefit from college preparatory and two-year college-level credit instruction in general education and occupational areas which may lead to a Certificate or an Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, or Associate of General Studies Degree, or lead to transfer to a four-year institution. We serve individuals of all ages who can benefit from non credit instruction for personal and professional development, recreation and fitness, and individual and family enrichment *(—4A-5)*.

In addition, there are two key declarations about learning in the college Vision Statement. These are: "We are learner-centered and responsive to diverse student goals, including service to community…" and "We facilitate learning where, when, and how it best suits the needs of the diverse learning publics we serve"*(—4A-6)*.

The college's Core Values reinforce the resolve to provide a "life of learning." This is evidenced in the following values:

- The Central Value of Learning: We are ***committed to learning***; both in the classroom and in our common organizational life together, so that we improve, develop, and grow.

- The Central Value of Community: We are ***committed to engaging and supporting*** each other, our students, and our community, both internally and externally.

Finally, the Strategic Initiatives provide three guideposts for day- to- day operations of the college. These are:

- FRCC creates a welcoming ***community of learners*** that embraces excellence by setting and achieving high standards.

- FRCC promotes student ***access and success*** in learning, in work, and in community by valuing and respecting the diversity of all and the individuality of each.

- FRCC obtains ***resources*** to successfully achieve its mission. The mission of the FRCC Institute for Community and Professional Development (ICPD), an organization that provides lifelong learning opportunities for local community and business members, also emphasizes a life of learning. On its web page, ICPD states, "We are proud to offer you a wide range of professional development and personal enrichment classes to meet your lifelong educational needs" *(—4A-7).*

Academic Freedom

The college has a long-standing commitment to academic freedom. Each campus' Adjunct Faculty Handbook summarizes the college's beliefs about academic freedom:

Front Range Community College believes that education should help students function well in a dynamic society. To do so, students must gain knowledge and cultivate critical thinking skills. In order to accomplish the goal of providing the highest quality education possible, faculty and instructors believe no restriction should hamper the spirit of investigation, free inquiry, and open discussion in the classroom. Faculty and instructors exercise professional judgment in the selection and interpretation of ideas. They have the freedom to choose the methods of instruction, interpretation, guidance, tutoring, testing, and evaluation deemed most effective in achieving these goals *(—4A-8).*

Professional Development

FRCC has one of the most comprehensive professional development programs in the state community college system. Key aspects of professional development for faculty are explored in another section of this self-study (see Core Component 3B). Professional development for other staff is also critical, and the college has a long history of innovation in broad professional development programming. From 1998 until 2004, the Council for Professional Development (CPOD) coordinated professional development college-wide for all college faculty, instructors, administrators, and staff. Partly because of budget issues following 9/11 and partly because campus staff wanted a more direct voice in program design, CPOD was disbanded in 2004 and professional development funds were allocated to each campus for distribution. In most respects, this approach has worked well in that it has allowed each campus to design professional development activities that address local campus needs. However, as the President's Cabinet reviewed professional development progress in 2006, it became clear that the college needed a more coordinated effort to develop leadership skills among staff. In response, in early 2007 President's Cabinet approved a Career Enrichment Academy to provide college-wide leadership development by fostering personal and professional growth.

The Career Enrichment Academy program consists of three distinct components designed for various stages of career development. The first stage, Roadmap to Success, provides new and continuing employees tools and skills essential for job success and career enhancement. Under the guidance of Human Resources, faculty and staff receive training covering a variety of subjects from New Employee Orientation to FRCC processes and procedures, basic supervision, and more. The second stage, Roadmap to Achievement, focuses on leadership development in the context of local and national community college issues. Participants gain knowledge and skills in areas such as political awareness, budgeting, strategic planning, community stewardship, and emerging national issues. Finally, the third stage, Roadmap to the Future, offers intensive career planning, high-level mentoring, and a uniquely focused career development internship. Participants will have an opportunity for developmental job experiences to assist them in career advancement *(—4A-9)*.

The first parts of Roadmap to Success are scheduled to begin in November 2007, with the kick off of a new employee orientation program. To increase the consistency and timeliness of orientation information, participation in a half-day workshop offered college-wide is now required of all new full time employees within the first 90 days of employment. The first cohort of staff for Roadmap to Achievement has submitted applications as of early November 2007, and final participants are being selected. The first cohort in the Roadmap to the Future group began meeting in September 2007 and began internships in November 2007.

As noted in Criterion 3B, the college provides extensive support for faculty to improve teaching skills and content knowledge. Among many activities, all campuses host orientation programs and mentoring opportunities for new faculty. The college provides funding for each faculty member to travel to a conference at least every three years. Campuses also host a variety of individual programs, like Teachers Helping Teachers at Westminster and the Teaching and Learning Connection group at Boulder County, to help faculty share ideas and improve teaching skills.

The college realizes that understanding and applying technology to learning is a critical instructional skill, and makes every effort to provide opportunities for students, faculty, and instructors to have hands-on access and training for these technologies. Each year, Online Learning offers a week-long internal conference for faculty and instructors on Teaching and Learning with Technology. In addition to online learning coordinators, information technology departments are on site and available to support faculty. More detail in the use of technology and technology training is provided in Criterion 3B and 3C.

Classified employees participate in a number of professional development activities including seminars in leadership, assertiveness training, business writing, and conflict management. Some classified staff have recently taken Spanish classes focused on communicating with students and the public. In 2007 at the Westminster Campus, a number of classified staff completed a six-session course called "Work Smarter, Not Harder," that helped them organize their work space and manage work flow to become more effective and less stressed. Classified staff also take CPR/AED training regularly. Classified organizations meet regularly and have budgets for professional development *(—4A-10)*.

Professional development for administrators emphasizes the value the college puts on lifelong learning. Student Services Divisions provide significant professional development for their employees. During summer 2007, the college hosted an inservice for all student services staff on customer service standards. In October 2007 Student Services Deans hosted a follow-up college-wide inservice titled "Transforming Customer Service."
A number of faculty and staff organizations also help advance learning and create a climate of lifelong learning. These organizations are concerned with quality of life, working conditions, morale, and other critical employee matters. Recognized organizations include Faculty Senates, Adjunct Faculty Organizations and the Classified Employee Council.

Student Life

A life of learning is understood at Front Range Community College to be more encompassing than the classroom. The campus environments and the activities and programs the college develops outside of the classroom, housed in Student Activities or Student Life Departments, are also a part of the Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge.

On the college web page, in the section on Student Life, the introduction reads:

> Student Life seeks to engage students in reflective discussions and expose students to a variety of leadership skills that will benefit them now as well as in the future. Recognizing that education is a complex endeavor and that not all learning takes place in the classroom, the office of Student Life is committed to assisting students in becoming active members of our college and community through programs, activities, services, and opportunities *(—4A-11)*.

Student/Campus Centers are the hub of student life. A variety of cultural, leadership, and social opportunities are available to FRCC students. Student activities fees fund a number of these opportunities. Student activities that advance learning include:

- **Boulder County Campus.** The Boulder County Campus hosts a Children's Holiday Party for students' children. In addition, the Boulder County Campus sponsors a smoke-out day, presented in collaboration with the Colorado Collegiate Tobacco Prevention Initiative and Bacchus and Gamma, a national program for smoking cessation *(—4A-12)*.

- **Brighton Center.** The Brighton Center offers cultural, educational, and social activities through student life events and student club activities. The Center celebrates social and cultural awareness through presentations and experiential opportunities that highlight Latino cultural celebrations (Dias de Muertos, Cinco de Mayo), Native American Heritage (Traditional Bison stew, artifact and artwork displays, and storytelling), Black History Awareness (a poster display of the many contributions of African Americans to American culture), a historical poster display of women's suffrage and the progression of women's rights and a selection of seminars and movie offerings to promote the awareness of those with differing abilities *(—4A-13)*.

- **Larimer Campus.** Every year Student Activities presents an International Fair which showcases the college's cultural diversity through food, art, and dance– FRCC students represent over twenty countries of origin. Also, Welcome Week welcomes students to campus by offering free activities including films, music, and a quiz bowl. Student clubs and organizations are highlighted and drug and alcohol free programming and educational sessions are presented *(—4A-14)*.

- **Westminster Campus.** A Welcome Back Carnival for students each semester facilitates students knowing each other outside the classroom. Donuts with the Dean allows students to meet and get to know their campus administrators. Hispanic Heritage Month, Native American History Month, and Black History Month celebrations help students learn about other cultures. Student Life also works with faculty to co-sponsor a variety of speakers and presentations on topics ranging from current events to presentation skills. *(—4A-15)*.

- **Online Student Center.** Students also have an opportunity to interact with other students in the Online Student Center, a site in Blackboard where students can discuss current events and other topics of interest with other students from across the college. This virtual student union was recognized by Campus Technology in August 2006 for its innovative use of technology.

Student Life has a number of other extra-curricular activities that emphasize learning. These include:

- **Student Government.** Student governments exist on all FRCC campuses. The Campus Student Government Association is the students' official voice at FRCC and the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE). Student government associations/student advisory councils provide processes for student communication and participation with other college leaders in planning and governance.

- **Student Clubs.** Student organizations allow students to further explore their vocational and avocational interests. A variety of student organizations are available, including those listed below (B=Boulder County Campus, BC= Brighton Center, L=Larimer Campus, W=Westminster Campus):
  - Automotive Club (L)
  - Campus Crusade for Christ (L)
  - Christian Challenge (B, W)
  - Gay/Straight Alliance (L, W)
  - Horticulture Club (L)
  - La Tertula Española (B)
  - Pharmacy Tech Club (W)
  - Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society (B, L, W)
  - Science Club (L)
  - Society for American Foresters (L)
  - Student Colorado Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (SCRID) (W)
  - Students in Free Enterprise (L, W)
  - Student Nurses Association (L)
  - Students Veterinary Technology Association (L)

- **Special Events.** Each campus, with the assistance of student organizations and volunteers, plans and organizes special events that promote global, cultural, and social awareness and understanding. These special events include cultural activities like Cinco de Mayo and Chinese New Year festivities. Political candidate forums are conducted. Performing arts are often showcased with local singers and bands. Gallery spaces on each campus showcase student and professional art work.

- **Student Recognition.** Student recognition allows family, friends, and fellow students to celebrate students' academic accomplishments and helps motivate students to succeed. One of the most visible avenues for recognition is the college honor society, Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society. In addition, at the end of each academic year, Student Life Offices host ceremonies at which the following student awards are presented: Outstanding College Student, Vice President's Service Award, and Outstanding Student Employee, among others. Both the Colorado Community College System and college publications also honor student accomplishments. For example, the system newsletter regularly profiles outstanding students *(—4A-16)*.

- **International Travel.** The Study Abroad Program is an example of the excellent academic programs provided outside the traditional classroom. This program was created to allow students the ability to increase cultural awareness, improve language skills, gain new perspectives on global issues, and meet new, lifelong friends.

Core Component 4B:

The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

Front Range Community College certificate and degree program requirements demonstrate a consistent commitment to educating students broadly, not solely in one area or discipline. With the intent that they become valued employees and good citizens, students are continually encouraged to develop a broad range of knowledge and skills.

Varied avenues of study offer students opportunities to improve their knowledge, skills, and intellects. Among these opportunities are two-year Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of General Studies, and Associate of Applied Science degrees, general transfer courses, certificates, and workplace education and training.

General Education

The general education philosophy of FRCC is: "General Education is intended to impart common knowledge, intellectual concepts, and attitudes that every educated person should possess. FRCC provides students with the General Education proficiencies and value of knowledge that prepare them for employment, baccalaureate and professional programs, lifelong learning, and for leadership, service, and responsible citizenship" *(—4B-1)*.

The FRCC philosophy is consistent with State Board for Community College and Occupational Education policy: "…definition of 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 a 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" *(—4B-2)*.

Starting in 1999, a college–wide General Education Committee developed clear goals and sub-goals for general education, based on the existing Deans' General Education Philosophy Statement (as noted previously, jointly created by deans and faculty) *(—4B-3)*. Faculty helped shape the goals by responding to drafts presented at regular inservice meetings. Over several years, the committee established goals in seven areas of knowledge:

- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Mathematical Concepts and Application
- Scientific Inquiry and Methodology
- Computer and Technological Literacy
- Historical and Social Perspectives
- Society and the Individual

While that work continues to influence general education practice at FRCC, a broader statewide program called gtPATHWAYS, has significantly shaped course and degree offerings. As noted in the College Catalog under *Colorado Guaranteed Transfer Program for General Education:*

> The Colorado Department of Higher Education, in consultation with Colorado's public colleges and universities, has developed a standardized concept of general education and identified the specific courses to satisfy these general education requirements. These specific courses have been designed to ensure that students demonstrate competency in reading, critical thinking, written communication, mathematics, and technology. Within this framework, general education provides the student with the opportunity to apply these skills across diverse disciplines, including communication, mathematics, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences" *(—4B-4)*.

The statewide general education program is particularly important to community colleges in the state, because the courses in the general education core are guaranteed to transfer to four-year public colleges in the state. The gtPATHWAYS program is described in more detail in Criterion 5.

General Education requirements are clearly set out for all two-year degrees. Since 2003, the practice has also typically been to require general education courses in all newly created certificates of 30 credits or more in length *(—4B-5)*. The gtPATHWAYS program is the basis for the college's general education requirements in the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees;

the general education requirements for both of those degrees are set system wide, and all the general education courses in those degrees must be part of gtPATHWAYS. The system also sets minimum general education credit requirements for the Associate of Applied Science and Associate of General Studies Degrees, but the college has more leeway in identifying which courses qualify. Most of the general education courses for those degrees are also part of gtPATHWAYS, but because students taking those degrees are often not pursuing transfer, there are some additional general education courses available to meet those degree requirements *(—4B-6)*.

The general education requirement for the Associate of General Studies Degree is 30 credits, or 50% of the degree. The general education requirement for Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Degrees is 35-37 credits—more than 50% of these degrees. Completion of the Associate of Applied Science Degree requires a minimum of 15 general education credits. Please refer to the Front Range Community College 2007-2008 catalog for a summary of general education and course distribution requirements *(—4B-7)*.

Assessment of General Education

As noted in our response to Criterion 3A, the college has devoted considerable resources to assessing general education and is the leader among community colleges in the state in doing so.

In fall 1998 the General Education Committee at Front Range Community College adopted the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) as the primary method for assessing general education. Currently, students are required to complete the CAAP during their final semester of enrollment. The results of several years of testing show that FRCC's students are slightly above the national average in general education competencies.

Results of CAAP testing indicate FRCC is achieving the goal of producing students who meet general education competencies. CAAP trends analysis demonstrates that in the last five years FRCC has never fallen significantly below the national normative data on any of the five general education domains. Each year FRCC students have scored significantly higher than the national normative sample on multiple domains as shown in Table 1:

Table 1: CAAP Results

Domain	AY03	AY04	AY05	AY06	AY07
Writing	+	+	=	+	+
Math	+	+	+	+	+
Reading	+	+	+	+	+
Critical Thinking	+	+	+	+	+
Science Reasoning	+	+	+	+	+

= — at national levels
+ — above national levels

CAAP results are published on the Institutional Research Web Site: *(—4B-8).* Table 2 shows the same results with more detail, including the number of students who completed each domain, mean scores for Front Range students and the nation, the mean difference, and significance level. Additionally, the effect size is shown as an indication of practical significance*(—4B-9).*

Table 2: CAAP Results More Detail

Domain	# of Students	FRCC Mean	National Mean	Mean Difference	Significance	Effect Size	Interpretation
Writing	873	62.8	62.2	0.6	0.000	0.13	Small effect size
Math	873	56.9	56.1	0.8	0.000	0.21	Small effect size
Reading	873	62.2	60.6	1.6	0.000	0.29	Small effect size
Critical Thinking	873	62.8	60.9	1.9	0.000	0.36	Moderate effect size
Science Reasoning	872	60.4	59.1	1.3	0.000	0.33	Moderate effect size

The college also uses a value added analysis of student learning from the CAAP. Gains Analysis information is located on the IR webpage *(—4B-10).*

According to the site:

> A gains analysis can be completed for FRCC graduates who have taken both the ACT and the CAAP. The data provide indication of the general education gains made by FRCC students…. On average over the last four years [AY 2001-AY 2004], 96% of FRCC graduates (who could be matched to ACT scores) had expected, or higher than expected, gains in reading. This compared to 87% of the national sample. More specifically, an average of 18% of these students had higher than expected [reading] gains. This compares favorably to the national sample from which 9% had higher than expected gains.

Developmental Education

Front Range Community College is committed to providing learning opportunities that fit student needs. One way this is accomplished is through developmental courses. Overall objectives of these courses are twofold: to teach students how to succeed in college and to prepare them for general transfer courses. Developmental courses are offered in mathematics, writing, reading, and academic achievement strategies. Over time, the college has offered increasing numbers of sections of developmental courses as it became clear that increased student retention, degree completion, and overall academic success are tied to the acquisition of basic skills. A significant number of students need developmental courses when they enter the college (—4B-11). During 2006, of those students college-wide who took the Accuplacer placement exam, 85% placed into remedial math, 81% placed into remedial English and 54% placed into remedial reading.

Since 2005, through work supported by a grant from the Lumina Foundation, faculty have been reviewing developmental course work and examining options for improving student outcomes. Faculty have trained with experts from Landmark College in Vermont, and have substantially revised pedagogy in several developmental courses.

One of the key innovations supported by the Lumina grant has been a series of learning communities involving developmental courses. The most successful of these learning communities have linked a developmental reading or writing course with a transfer level course, usually in Social Sciences or Humanities. Recent examples include linking pre-college writing with sociology, history, and philosophy, and pre-college reading with psychology and Auto Mechanics. In most of the learning communities, an academic advisor has been assigned to mentor the students in the cohort.

The intent of these learning communities is to increase student learning in all courses. Learning Communities offer the opportunity for students to work together to master knowledge, skills, and concepts. Students enrolled in learning communities have strong knowledge bases as indicated by comparisons of grades between learning community students and non-learning community students *(—4B-12*). Student retention in learning communities is also higher, with drop and withdrawal rates both lower than in similar non-learning community courses.

Career and Technical Education

FRCC is committed to providing career and technical education as an integral part of its mission. The college offers almost 170 degree and certificate programs, mostly in career/technical areas. Career instruction at the college strives to:

- Promote overall success in the workplace.
- Contribute to the development of well-educated citizens and workers.
- Provide specific skills and general knowledge to stay abreast of emerging technologies in rapidly changing environments.
- Provide a strong foundation in work ethics.

Intellectual Inquiry

At Front Range Community College we value academic learning in our classes, but also strive to instill a sense of community responsibility, a respect for the worth of every individual, and to stress the importance of each student's responsibility towards society. As noted above, campus activities are one of the methods used to accomplish this. As discussed further in Criterion 5, opportunities for the community to participate in the college, through non-credit classes, facility use, and public meetings, also furthers these goals. Perhaps most important, though, are the ways in which respect for diverse ways of life are integrated into the curriculum of most of our courses. Acquiring knowledge, skills, and critical thinking ability permeate all programs that FRCC offers on and off its campuses for internal and external constituents.

Responses from the 2006 Full Time Faculty Accreditation Survey enlighten us about the myriad ways in which diversity and broad inquiry are honored at FRCC. These include the following and show the investment made by the staff and faculty in creating good citizens:

- **Internal Campus Diversity Work:** FRCC is dedicated to promoting respect for and awareness of varied cultures and ideas. This respect and awareness can be seen in the following: diversity statements in syllabi; multiple assessment methods to gauge and increase student learning; study abroad; lectures on Islam; the Human Rights Awareness Film Club; studies of many cultures (in sociology, anthropology, history, political science, humanities, psychology, and English); speakers from other cultures in class and campus-wide; the addition of the Ethnic Studies prefix to social and behavioral sciences; the International Fair; Deaf Awareness Month; Diversity Awareness Month; The Gay Straight Alliance Club; and many others.

- **Community Involvement:** Front Range Community College believes its students benefit from interacting with the wider community in a variety of ways. According to the 2006 Full Time Faculty Accreditation Survey, student involvement in the following FRCC activities increases student knowledge beyond the classroom through: service learning projects; CARE Housing tutoring; work with Habitat for Humanity; work with CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates); work with community science organizations; tutoring at local high schools; student involvement with organizations at state and local levels; Constitution Day (open to the community); Hospice recertification; the Stargazer Observatory (which FRCC operates and opens to the public three nights per month); externships at Denver Health; providing extra resources to those who speak English as a second language; The Summer Children's' Theater Project which boasts attendance of thousands; Career Day; 9 NEWS Health Fair; Job Fairs; Ameristar (NUR); Mission of Mercy (DEA) and many others *(—4B-13 q 37[comments]FT Faculty Survey).*

Additionally, intellectual inquiry is promoted for students and faculty in a number of other ways. For example, laboratory experiences and experiential learning, e.g. clinical instruction and service learning, are two ways students engage in intellectual inquiry. Faculty have opportunities, encouraged by the college, to plan and offer pilot programs, research new teaching methods, and participate in conferences.

Core Component 4C:

The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

Front Range Community College faculty, administrators, and staff engage in assessment of the usefulness of curricula for students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society. These practices are in accordance with mandates and policies of the Colorado Community College System.

The following are specific examples of how Front Range Community College proactively engages in assessing the usefulness of curricula and ensures that appropriate curriculum modifications are made. Examples of proactive engagement in assessing usefulness of curricula and ensuring appropriate changes in curricula include:

State Faculty Conferences

FRCC participates in a community college system-wide conference called the 2:2 Conference annually. Attendees at this conference update curriculum content guides and review new curriculum offerings *(—4C-1)*, and perhaps most importantly, get feedback from colleagues about how best to develop and shape programs and courses. Faculty and administrators also attend the Faculty to Faculty Conference, an annual meeting between faculty of two-year and four-year public colleges *(—4C-2),* where they often resolve issues to ease the transfer of courses between colleges.

Career and Technical Education Curricular Relevance and Advisory Committees

All Career and Technical Education programs are subject to policies and procedures created by the Colorado Community College System. In the *Colorado Career and Technical Education Fact Sheet of 2006*, the Overall Goal/Outcome of CTE is clearly stated: "…to provide quality educational programs emphasizing core academic content, workplace competencies, technical skills, and seamless transition to further education or employment and better prepare students to meet challenges of the workforce and emerging occupations" *(—4C-3).*

At FRCC, all CTE programs are reviewed by Advisory Committees. In the CCCS publication, *A Guide to the Operation of Career and Technical Education Advisory Committees,* the foreword describes the role and function of advisory committees *(—4C-4)*:

> Today's rapidly changing society requires that educational entities and the Communities they serve work closely together, especially in Career and Technical Education programs. Career and Technical Education is an organized system of programs which are directly related to preparation, upgrading and retraining for careers requiring other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree.
>
> Excellence in Career and Technical Education is the goal of teachers, administrators, and volunteer advisory committee members. Bringing employers and educators together on advisory committees provides a format for sharing information and ideas.
>
> Program advisory committees are organized to provide advice and assistance to the teachers and administrators of specific programs so that students are learning the most current skills because employers are an integral part of designing and updating curriculum *(—4C-5)*.

Advisory committees meet at least twice a year to assist program personnel in formulating and periodically revising goals and learning domains and ensuring program responsiveness to change.

The committees are typically made up of representatives of agencies, organizations, and businesses who hire graduates of the program and students who have completed the program. Other members of committees may include representatives from clinical and intern affiliations, and community members from government, financial, and education sectors.

The Dental Assisting Program provides an example of advisory committee analysis and resultant change. Meeting minutes from the November 2003 Dental Assisting Advisory Committee show that more time should be spent in training students to place posterior composites. A decision that this training should occur in Introduction to Expanded Functions (DEA 200) was made. It was also determined that students would learn how to use a high speed hand piece to finish composites *(—4*C-6).

More recently the advisory committee for the Architectural Technology program was instrumental in shaping the development of a new concentration in Steel Detailing. The committee in Multimedia Graphics played a key role in the development of a Print and Presentation Certificate, a key expansion of a program that had been primarily web focused.

CTE Program Accreditation

Another key factor in ensuring curricular relevance is accreditation of CTE programs by national or regional bodies. The self studies and program reviews conducted for these accreditations serve to hone the programs, and site visits by accreditors help instructors get perspectives on different approaches to instruction. Among the programs with national, state or regional accreditations, are automotive technology, machining, pharmacy technician, paramedic and veterinary technology. The nursing and nurse aide programs also go through a similar review and approval process by the State Board of Nursing. In addition, the paralegal program is currently planning for accreditation by the American Bar Association.

CTE Annual Program Reviews

Career and Technical Education Programs undergo program reviews every five years in a process administered by the Colorado State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education. These program reviews examine demand for program graduates, job placement rates, feedback from industry advisory committees and other factors, and are the basis for a determination about whether a program may continue operating.

In order to monitor CTE Program progress and quality on a more regular basis, and to facilitate the state renewal process, the college is piloting a plan to require annual CTE Program Review Reports. The pilot CTE Review Report was completed by Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Programs at all three campuses as well as the Early Childhood Education Program *(—4*C-7).

One goal of the proposed reports is to demonstrate how programs collect and analyze data and then make changes to curriculum content to improve student learning. Student outcomes in EMS are primarily assessed through pass rates on national standardized practical and written examinations. These examinations are developed and administered by the National Registry of EMTs in Columbus Ohio.

National standardized exams for healthcare-related fields are used as models at Front Range Community College. Exams are developed and evaluated to reflect changes in medical technology. Success on these exams depends on up-to-date curricula and technology currency. More details on some of the applications of these exams are in Criterion 3.

Institutional Research

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) is a college-wide staff function. The OIR Mission Statement reads, "The Office of Institutional Research at FRCC accurately and completely collects, manages, analyzes, and reports data for the purpose of supporting and anticipating the needs of the communities we serve, meeting external mandates, and supporting college-wide decision and policy making" *(—4*C-8).

OIR conducts annual surveys that provide important feedback and insights into general education and CTE programs. This information is subsequently used to modify curriculum and practice. These surveys include:

- Vocational Graduate Follow-Up Survey—these surveys, required by CCCOES, are conducted annually. Career and Technical Education graduates are called personally by CTE faculty asking their employment status and hourly wage, whether or not they are continuing their education, whether their program of study enhanced their ability to get or keep their jobs, and whether their FRCC instructional programs met their educational goals.

- Graduate Survey—the Office of Institutional Research conducts Graduate Surveys within one year of a student's graduation to collect information regarding student perceptions of the FRCC learning experience. The information is used for ongoing program improvement.

- Employer Survey—the Office of Institutional Research surveys employers of FRCC graduates. Surveys ask employers to evaluate skills of FRCC graduates.

- Alumni Survey—the Office of Institutional Research repeats these surveys one year later for graduates.

- Environmental Scanning—this is a widely accepted technique for monitoring changes in the external environment. It can provide information to help guide institutional decision making by alerting program managers to trends and issues that may affect the organization's future.

Global and Diverse Environments

FRCC offers courses that provide students with knowledge of diversity. For example, Ethnic Studies is currently offering ETH 200 (Introduction to Ethnic Studies), ETH 212 (African-American Studies), and ETH 224 (Introduction to Chicano Studies). These courses introduce students to general issues of race and ethnicity as well as in-depth history, migration, and legal issues. SOC 216 (Sociology of Gender) provides students the theoretical and factual background necessary to understand the phenomenon of gender stratification in American and other cultures. Readings assigned in ENG 121 and 122 (English Composition I and II) frequently portray cross cultural perspectives.

Coursework emphasizing current societal issues is offered. For example, political science offers POS 215 (Current Political Issues), which emphasizes in-depth analysis of critical issues in political science. Sociology 215 (Contemporary Social Problems) explores current social issues that result in societal problems. These courses provide students current information about civil liberties, discrimination, and social change.

The Westminster Campus is home to a branch of English as a Second Language schools, which typically provide English language training to about 80 foreign students on campus each month. ELS students are invited to participate in all student activities, and are often active competitors in athletic tournaments. Several faculty have developed ways for ELS students to interact with native FRCC students. For example, ELS students from Arab countries came to sessions of a conversational Arabic class to provide students in the class a chance to converse with native speakers. ELS students are also collaborating with world regional geography students on international day, where students present information on different countries around the world.

Graduates of FRCC are also prepared to work in careers in a global and diverse society. One example is the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Program. EMS faculty visited ambulance services in London, England and Isla Mujeres, Mexico in past years. "…formation of a rapid rapport [of FRCC students] with foreign EMS providers is the norm not the exception" *(—4C-9)*. "The Larimer EMS program has sent thousands of EMS education slides to the Mexican Red Cross agency located on Isla Mujures, Mexico. That agency provides EMS training to local inhabitants" *(—4C-10)*.

Students who have completed the Emergency Medical Technician Basic Program have served on medical missions to South American, Africa, and Nepal. Some have served as assistants in agencies such as Doctors Without Borders. EMS graduates often become wilderness guides and work in remote places or on the ground in disaster zones. FRCC EMT graduates have worked as EMS providers in such diverse areas as Asian tsunami relief, hurricane recovery efforts in New Orleans, the Aleutian Islands fishery fleet, and the U.S military.

Annual activities that honor diversity are offered at the college. These include special speakers for Black History month and Cinco de Mayo celebrations.

International Travel

Front Range Community College recognizes the importance of providing opportunities for its faculty, staff, and students to study, work, and travel outside of the United States. Travel abroad provides in-depth, firsthand insight into different perspectives and ways of life, thus preparing students to live in a global environment.

FRCC briefly stopped offering travel abroad programs in 2001 for budgetary reasons and because of the political climate around the world. In 2002 the college created a task force that created policies and procedures for developing and implementing college-sponsored, travel abroad, and international travel was recommenced in 2004. In addition to the task force, a faculty study abroad position was created. Since then FRCC has run 2-4 programs per year. Destinations have included Mexico, Italy, Ecuador, Greece, Costa Rica, the Galapagos Islands, Ireland, and Scotland. All international travel experiences are offered in conjunction with at least one credit course.

In fall 2007, international students from over 40 countries were enrolled in Larimer Campus classes. Interaction between international and native students furthered cross cultural connections and awareness of cultural similarities and differences.

Technology

Ability to use technology effectively, from gathering and analyzing information to communicating with others, is a critical skill for success in our increasingly global environment. In recognition of this fact, FRCC has designated Computer and Technological Literacy as one of its core general education requirements *(—4C-11)*. Technology is also one of the required competencies for courses guaranteed to transfer as part of an approved associate degree to four-year public colleges and universities within Colorado.

As of spring 2007, approximately 40% of all FRCC courses used an online course site in Blackboard™ where students can access a variety of course information and interact with instructors and fellow students over the Internet. Over 250 course sections were offered in a fully online format. To help students determine whether they have the technology skills needed to succeed in an online course, we have been piloting a web based self-assessment called READI™ that measures such indicators as basic computer skills, reading comprehension, and typing speed. The ability to communicate online is vital in a global environment.

To support students in the use of technology, 194 classrooms across the college are equipped with computers for instructor-led demonstrations. Seventy-one of these are classified as computer labs, with multiple computers so that students can engage in hands-on learning. Outside of class, a full-service drop-in computer lab at each campus is available for students to access the internet, use software, and print documents. Students also have access to a free e-mail account through the college. For students needing to build basic computer skills, the college offers a variety of credit and non-credit courses, as well as tutoring *(—4C-12)*.

Core Component 4D:

The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

The acquisition, responsible use, and protection of knowledge are crucial in higher education. Students are introduced to multiple methods of acquiring knowledge at FRCC, from their first contact with the college until after graduation. The college understands the vital role current, reliable knowledge plays in the 46 degrees and 121 certificates it offers. Courses that fulfill requirements for these degrees and certificates provide the foundation for student learning. Thus, the content of these courses must be current, accurate, easily accessible, and used responsibly. Beyond the classroom, a number of resources are available to assist college faculty, students, and staff in acquiring knowledge.

Responsible Use of Knowledge

FRCC has policies in place to encourage the responsible use of knowledge among faculty and students. The Student Code of Conduct outlines college policies on plagiarism and cheating *(—4D-1)*. These policies are printed in the front of student planners *(—4*D-2) that are distributed to students free-of-charge when they register. Course syllabi also reference student conduct, particularly plagiarism.

Faculty are encouraged to practice responsible use of knowledge. Copyright policies are clearly stated in CCCS Board Policy BP3-90 *(—4D-3)*. Course materials can be put on reserve at the library only if they uphold copyright law *(—4D-4)*. Computer policy also outlines guidelines for the download and use of material from the Internet *(—4D-5)*.

The 2006 full time Faculty Accreditation Survey contained a question on college resources and responsible scholarship. Faculty overwhelmingly agreed that college resources helped them further responsible use of knowledge:

Q43: College resources help me help students practice responsible scholarship and research.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Strongly Disagree	1	.7	.8	.8
	2 Disgree	30	20.5	23.1	23.8
	3 Agree	70	47.9	53.8	77.7
	4 Strongly Agree	29	19.9	22.3	100.0
	Total	130	89.0	100.0	
Missing	System	16	11.0		
Total		146	100.0		

The part time instructor survey shows similar results:

Q41: College resources help me help students practice responsible scholarship and research.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4 Strongly Agree	18	20.0	22.8	22.8
	3 Agree	52	57.8	65.8	88.6
	2 Disagree	9	10.0	11.4	100.0
	Total	79	87.8	100.0	
Missing	System	11	12.2		
Total		90	100.0		

Plagiarism

Students can read FRCC's policies on plagiarism in numerous college publications. The first item in the Student Code of Conduct's List of Violations addresses academic honesty and potential penalties for violations: " Students who engage in such behavior [plagiarism] violate reasonable standards of academic behavior and may, at the discretion of an instructor, be dismissed from a class session or receive a reduced or failing grade" *(—4D-6).*

A more extensive discussion of plagiarism and cheating is found in the 2007-2008 FRCC Catalog *(—4D-7).* The 2006 Accreditation Surveys indicate the majority of faculty, administrators/staff, and part time instructors feel the Student Code of Conduct is clear, accessible, and thorough.

The importance of responsible use of knowledge is also emphasized in every syllabus for every class. Syllabi are required to contain information on academic honesty and on penalties for breeches of conduct *(—4D-8).*

Specific classes such as Basic Composition (ENG 090) and College Composition (ENG 121) have a required library orientation that focuses on effective research methods as well as avoiding plagiarism and copyright infringement.

For instructors, a number of resources provide assistance in teaching the responsible use of knowledge to students. A clear protocol for reporting incidents of cheating is found on the college's main webpage *(—4D-9).* Faculty have also developed additional resources to help both faculty and students understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. In fall 2001, an English faculty member authored a document called Using Sources in College Writing (*—4D-10),* which has been widely employed to help students use sources correctly.

A few of the trainings and in-service presentations on plagiarism have included:

- Fall 2003: A breakout session on plagiarism at the part-time instructor in-service
- Fall 2004: Two breakout sessions on plagiarism at the all-college in-service
- Fall 2006: A training session on plagiarism for faculty

Eighty percent of full time faculty and part time instructors include a syllabus component that defines plagiarism and how to avoid it. The same percentage of full time faculty and part time instructors describe the college policy on plagiarism as being clear, thorough, and accessible. Note the full time faculty 2006 Accreditation Survey responses:

Q41: I have a component in my course that defines plagiarism and how to avoid it.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Strongly Disagree	4	2.7	3.0	3.0
	2 Disgree	14	9.6	10.4	13.3
	3 Agree	40	27.4	29.6	43.0
	4 Strongly Agree	77	52.7	57.0	100.0
	Total	135	92.5	100.0	
Missing	System	11	7.5		
Total		146	100.0		

Q42: The college's policy on plagiarism is clear, thorough, and accessible.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Strongly Disagree	3	2.1	2.3	2.3
	2 Disgree	13	8.9	9.8	12.1
	3 Agree	67	45.9	50.8	62.9
	4 Strongly Agree	49	33.6	37.1	100.0
	Total	132	90.4	100.0	
Missing	System	14	9.6		
Total		146	100.0		

Since 2005 the college has had a site license for Turnitin.com™, a resource that allows instructors and students to check their writing to be sure it is NOT plagiarized. Students can learn where they have plagiarized and make corrections before submissions. Since 2005, 115 faculty from various disciplines have used Turnitin.com™ to evaluate over 2,000 student papers *(—4D-11)*.

Intellectual Property Rights and Protection of Confidential Information

Two board policies relate to intellectual property. Board Policy BP 3-90, Copyrights and Patents, and BP 3-70, Code of Ethics, clearly outline the procedures faculty should take regarding copyright and patented materials. These policies also provide information on use, ethics, and conflict of interest *(—4D-12)*.

The college consistently sets high ethical standards for the protection of knowledge by its faculty, staff, and students. These standards are reflected in such diverse areas as the protection of student information *(—4D-13)* and General Computer and Information Systems Procedures *(—4D-14)*.

Guidelines regarding intellectual property rights are accessible to part time instructors in the Handbook for Adjunct Faculty *(—4D-15)*. This policy protects resources created by instructors. It also clarifies issues of ownership of print materials created by groups of employees and using college materials and equipment.

The 2006 Accreditation Administrators and Staff Survey shows a strong, positive response to the college's policies on intellectual property:

Q25: Are college policies on intellectual property rights clear?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	42	47.7	70.0	70.0
	No	18	20.5	30.0	100
	Total	60	68.2	100.0	
Missing	System	28	31.8		
Total		88	100.0		

Q26: Are the college policies on intellectual property rights fair?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	46	52.3	82.1	82.1
	No	10	11.4	17.9	100
	Total	56	63.6	100.0	
Missing	System	32	36.4		
Total		88	100.0		

Training in FERPA (The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974) rules is required for student employees and provided for all employees. Following are some basic FERPA rules to which the college adheres *(—4D-16):*

- § Student records are considered confidential and may not be released without the written consent of the student.
- § Faculty and staff members have a responsibility to protect educational records in their possession.
- § Students may complete a "release of records" form available through the Admissions and Records Office to grant a third party access to that student's information.

Information Technology

A new computer use policy, the Colorado Community College System General Computer and Information Systems Procedures, was adopted on June 15, 2005. It clearly specifies responsibilities and sets forth guidelines regarding use of information technology at the college. One guideline states, "…access is a privilege, and requires that individual users act responsibly. Users must respect the rights of other users, respect the integrity of the systems and related physical resources, and observe all relevant laws, regulations, and contractual obligations" *(—4D-17).*

All employees are required to sign a document stating they read and will comply with the Colorado Community College System General Computer and Information Systems Procedures guidelines.

Financial Support

College financial support "to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly" is imbedded in the budget planning and development system. As noted in more detail in Criterion 3D, the instructional budget is over 50% of the college budget, which demonstrates the college's commitment to teaching excellence and student learning.

Strengths, Concerns, Recommendations

Strengths:

1. The college recognizes the importance and need for continual professional development by offering and supporting a wide range of professional development activities for faculty, staff, and administrators.

2. The college has identified general education goals for all students, including designation of general education requirements for all Career and Technical Education degrees and new certificates of at least 30 hours, to support the development of a breadth of knowledge for all students.

3. The college has strong mechanisms for ensuring the currency of Career and Technical Education programs, including active advisory councils, generally solid links with national or regional associations, and a diverse set of surveys and other instruments that provide leaders with regular information on program performance.

4. Faculty and staff actively work to ensure responsible use of knowledge. The college has clear guidelines on plagiarism and on intellectual property.

5. The college is a leader in technology among community colleges in the State of Colorado as demonstrated by its extensive online learning infrastructure, technology-assisted course offerings, online degree offerings, classroom technology, comprehensive computer refresh program, and technology training for all employees.

Concerns:

1. Assessment of general education competencies in computer and technological literacy does not provide enough information for improvement of instruction. Historical and social perspectives and society and the individual are not assessed.

2. There are still some concerns among faculty about intellectual property rights, particularly about how the use of college information technology may limit faculty rights to material they produce.

Recommendations:

1. The college should investigate ways to provide more career services on all campuses.

2. The Student Learning Committee should analyze and make recommendations for expanded implementation of measures of general education outcomes.

3. The college should continue to help CTE programs seek national or regional accreditation whenever possible, and should continue to help faculty create strong advisory committees.

4. The college should seek further dialog between administration and faculty on intellectual property rights, and seek legal interpretation and clarification of some policies.

Criterion Five:
Engagement and Service
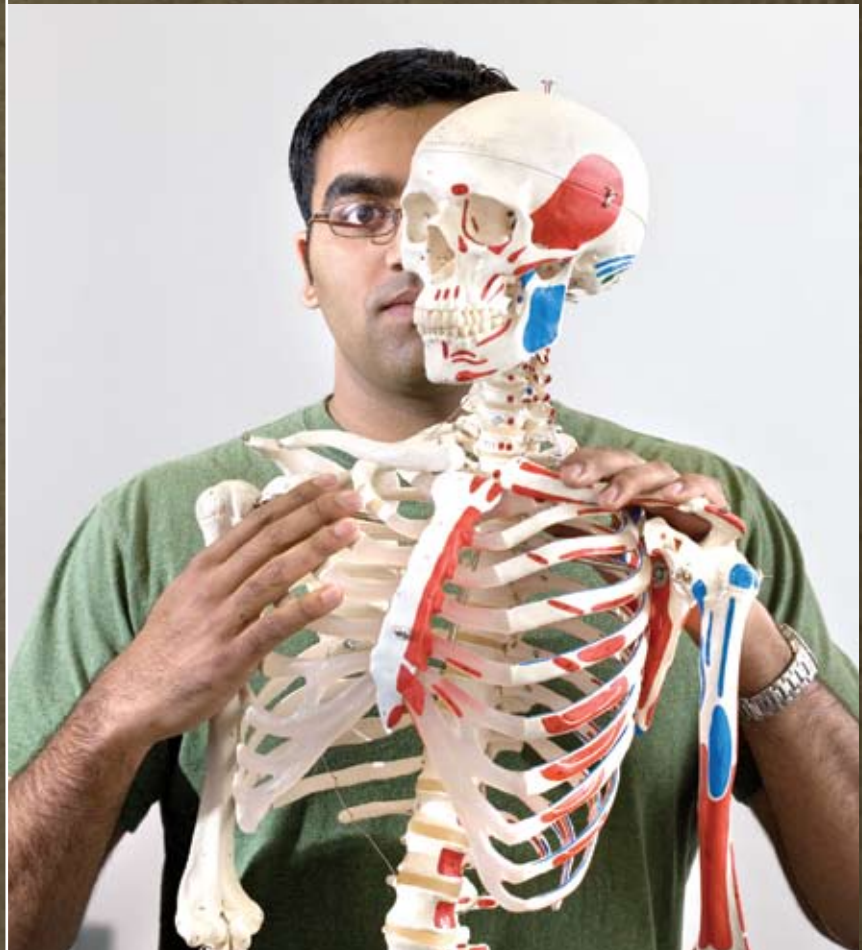
Criterion Five:
Engagement and Service

Front Range Community College is extremely proud of our engagement with constituencies and of the services we provide. The 1998 visitation team report noted the large number of partnerships the college had with businesses. Since 1998 the breadth of services to internal and external constituencies has expanded. Feedback about the value of services has also increased.

Careful planning guided by our Strategic Plan allows FRCC to provide numerous and varied services to our communities. Demographic information and environmental scans assess the feasibility of addressing needs throughout our service area. Examples of needs that have been addressed through careful planning include testing for re-certifications, Adult Literacy Education, English as a Second Language Programs, and GED preparation.

Core Component 5A:

The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

Front Range Community College is committed to learning about and serving the needs of diverse populations. The college seeks to create an environment and culture of greater diversity so the institution can provide for the needs and expectations of diverse populations. FRCC strives to analyze and serve the needs of diverse student populations through:

- Institutional policy
- Student recruitment and support
- Curriculum and instructional delivery methods
- Responsive Continuing Education Programming
- Careful Analysis of Community Needs

Commitment to Serving Constituencies

At Front Range Community College, we enrich lives through learning. We value students; we value teaching and learning; we value community; and we value employees. As a community college, community is inherent in FRCC's purpose. The mission and values declare this commitment. The college touches many groups. It touches students, local business and industry, adult workers, international students, workforce center participants, P-16 educational institutions and employees, and Second Language Learners, among others. Diverse programs are informed and shaped by the needs and expectations of the college's constituents and stakeholders.

The college's purpose statement clearly articulates the constituents and stakeholders. They are listed in key phrases in the purpose statement:

- "…anyone 16 years of age or older who can benefit…"
- "…employees of local businesses and industries…"
- "…all individuals in our communities by developing and enriching the local economy and culture…"

The college's constituencies and communities are clearly defined by system guidelines. According to the System President's Procedure Sp 9-20a, "Service Area Principles and Guidelines" three key principles that each college must follow are:

- "It is important for community colleges to develop the strongest possible positive relationships with all constituents within the geographic region they serve."

- "Quality and customer service should be in the forefront as institutions respond to needs and opportunities."

- "Colleges should collaborate when and where appropriate." *(—5A-1)*

Serving Diverse Constituencies

The college diversity statement notes, "Students are welcome at Front Range Community College, whatever their race, color, age, religion, disability, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, educational background, or educational goal may be." Statistics for the spring semester 2007 provide the general makeup of FRCC's student body *(—5A-2):*

Standard Statistics (2007 Spring) End of Term (7/2/07)

Campus	Full Time	Male	Female	Minority	Age: 26+
Boulder County	28.09%	40.47%	59.53%	17.93%	42.18%
Brighton	13.46%	28.21%	71.79%	37.18%	35.27%
CCC Online	17.91%	32.62%	67.27%	14.18%	51.49%
Larimer	44.63%	48.02%	51.98%	12.19%	31.67%
Online	19.45%	29.29%	70.71%	14.28%	54.88%
Westminster	33.04%	41.41%	58.57%	26.46%	37.32%
Total	33.86%	41.75%	58.23%	18.21%	38.66%

The student body profile is consistent with demographics of the Denver metropolitan area. The FRCC minority population reflects the minority population in the state, but minority enrollment does vary by campus, reflecting local demographics. Percentages of female enrollment have grown since the late 1990s.

The college actively seeks to promote diversity in its student body and provide opportunities for all students to develop an appreciation for diverse cultures. Activities designed to promote diversity include recruiting presentations and events, partnerships with organizations that serve diverse clients, student support services and academic case managements, Student Life programming and clubs, and organizations.

Recruiting activities are designed to connect with prospective students from a variety of backgrounds. Below are some events implemented during the 2006-2007 academic year that specifically help the college ensure it serves a diverse student body:

- Great Colorado Marketplace Education Fair (Hispanic/Latino families)
- Discovery Career & Lifestyles Expo (Other-abled adults)
- Presentations at the Center for Community Justice (At-risk youth)
- Center for Adult Learning in Loveland, G.E.D. program (Low-income, at-risk populations)
- Fossil Ridge High School Learning Disabled Class (Learning Disabled youth)
- Life Beyond High School, A Community Resource Fair (At-Risk youth and families)
- College Awareness and Planning presentations on behalf of the Colorado Educational Services and Development Association at Poudre, Northridge, Valley, Thompson Valley, Fort Collins, and Eaton High Schools (low-income, first-generation youth)
- Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition Annual Conference (Hispanic/Latino, low-income, first-generation youth and families)
- Education Day for the Fort Collins Housing Authority, organized in conjunction with the Educational Opportunity Center
- GEAR UP collaboration *(—5A-3)*

A number of partnerships are also helping the college reach diverse students. Some prominent partnerships that directly support diversity are:

- Gateway to College partnership with school districts Adams 12 and Adams 50. This program, a replication of a national model, is designed to help drop outs finish high school and earn college credits. The majority of the drop outs in these districts are minority students. The program is under development and will start in fall 2008.

- Early College Partnerships with school districts Adams 1 and Adams 14 and extensive college courses offering at Skyline High in St. Vrain School District. All of these partnerships are with schools with relatively high percentages of low-income and minority students (over 75% in Adams 14) and relatively low college enrollment rates.

- GED partnership with Bueno HEP Center in Brighton. The Bueno HEP Center sponsors GED preparation classes in Spanish and English for Hispanic students. The College provides the GED testing for students who complete the program, and the Brighton Center has used funds from a grant from the Daniels Fund to provide college scholarships and support services to students who have completed the program.

- Masonry program partnership with the Rocky Mountain Masonry Institute. The program, started in 2007, is designed to train both high school students and existing workers, most of whom are minority, in local masonry companies.

- The Enhanced Education Project Partnership with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, described in more detail in Criterion 3C, which serves students with a variety of disabilities

The college also recognizes that it is not enough to recruit diverse students; we must also provide support services to help all students to succeed. Several of those services are detailed in our response to Criterion 3C. Some other effective support activities for diverse student populations include:

- The Lumina Grant – supports underserved student populations with tutoring, case management, and learning communities in developmental education classes

- Academic assistance provided by advisors trained to assist ethnic minority students

- A bridge program for students with GED's facilitates transition into college courses

- Assistive technology space and quiet testing for special needs students

- Technical assistance and support services provided to online students by an Online Student Success Coordinator

- Educational Opportunity Centers (EOCs) on each campus provide Myers-Briggs Type Inventory™ (MBTI) assessment, career counseling, and financial aid assistance to primarily low income and non-traditional aged students

- Resources for disabled students transitioning from the Poudre School District and Thompson Valley School District into the college

Student Life and student clubs and organizations also play an important role in promoting diversity. Our responses to Criterion 3 and 4 have described a wide variety of programming that promotes diversity. These include student clubs like the Gay/Straight Alliance and campus events including international fairs, Cinco de Mayo and Day of the Dead Celebrations, and extensive Native American and Black history month programming.

Course delivery methods have evolved to meet the changing needs of students, who demand flexible course scheduling in order to continue their education in spite of complex work and family schedules. In spring 2006, 71% of overall enrollment in online courses was female. That same semester, we also offered 132 hybrid courses–part online and part classroom – to increase the scheduling flexibility for classes that rely on a hands-on component to achieve the learning goals, e.g. many lab science courses *(—5A-5)*.

The college has also responded to the generational shifts from "baby boomer" to gen "X" to "millennials" by adapting instructional and support strategies. Changing world views, value systems, career and life goals, and knowledge of technology have precipitated discussions among faculty, administrators, and staff on appropriate ways to interact with students. One change has been the increased expectation for quick access to information. For instance, 1,079 out of 2,623 courses in spring 2007 used a Blackboard™ course site for communicating at least basic course information, such as the course syllabus and grades, so they can be accessed anywhere, at anytime, via the Internet *(—5A-6)*. Faculty are also experimenting with high-tech methods of communicating information, including pod-casting lectures, blogging, and instant-messaging. Student Services deans recently acquired software called ConnectEd™ that facilitates automated delivery of e-mail, phone, and text messages to students to make them aware of important deadlines, services, and safety information.

Service to Communities

Front Range Community College's service area is vast, stretching from North Denver to the Wyoming border, and including all or portions of Adams, Boulder, Broomfield, Larimer, Jefferson, and Weld counties. With three campuses and one center serving 22,785 students, FRCC is the largest community college in Colorado. FRCC offers programs and courses at its local campuses based on the needs of students and communities served by those sites.

One way the college serves such an extensive area is by offering a broad set of outreach services to schools, businesses, and communities. In addition to the outreach services described earlier that are particularly targeted toward ensuring diversity, the college's outreach programs and activities include:

- Delivery of semester schedules to distribution points at over 100 businesses, schools, and organizations throughout service areas

- Timely response to email inquiries and requests for information

- Campus tours for students and their families (including individuals and groups from schools and community-based organizations and their instructors, counselors, and case managers)

- On-site placement testing at area high schools

- The Smart Start Program, a one stop registration program offered at area high schools that targets students from diverse backgrounds and/or lower economic backgrounds

- Academic and financial aid advising with prospective students at area high schools
- On-campus High School Visit Days for high school students
- Information updates for high school teachers, counselors, and administrators throughout the service area
- Presentations to internal and external constituencies–for example, to critical skill high school classes, students at the Centers for Adult Learning, and Student/Parent College Nights
- Booths and presentations at key community events such as the 5th Annual Greeley Fiesta, the Great Colorado Marketplace Education Fair, Discovery Career and Lifestyles, and the Adams County Fair
- Workforce Development Specialist visits to area businesses and organizations to ascertain their employee development needs
- Satellite sites of the Small Business Development Center to serve minority owned small businesses in Adams County

Analysis of Service to Constituencies

The services and outreach activities described above are reviewed each year to determine their efficiency and effectiveness. In order to tailor these services and programming to the needs of diverse constituencies, the college uses environmental scanning, collaborative dialogue, internal evaluations of services, focus group reports, surveys of employers of graduates, student surveys, discussion with secondary institutions and public colleges and universities, visits to community sites, and other information gathering formats.

For instance, FRCC's staff works together to determine needs for specific student services and to determine the college's capacity to provide these services. One example is student orientation sessions, which have been modified over time to reflect changing student needs *(—5A-7)*.

Environmental scanning, in use at the college since the mid-1990s, is used in creating all key planning documents, e.g. strategic plans, academic master plans, facilities master plans, and technology plans. The findings from environmental scanning help guide the development and enhancement of college programs and services by providing detailed information about the constituencies and communities the college serves.

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) is in charge of the college's environmental scanning, often at the request of administration and other entities wanting the latest demographic, socio-economic, or occupational data. The OIR web page states:

> Environmental Scanning is a widely accepted technique for monitoring the pulse of change in the external environment, whether it is in political, economic, technological, or social arenas. It can provide information to help guide institutional decision-making by alerting managers to trends and issues that may affect the organization's future.

The OIR Environmental Scanning web page includes the following reports based on environmental scans *(—5A-8):*

- Colorado Projections for High School Graduates
- Colorado Demography
- Census 2000: Colorado Counties
- Census 2000: Colorado Cities or Zip Codes
- Census 2000: FRCC Report
- Colorado Job Vacancy Surveys
- Colorado Hourly Wages by Occupation
- Colorado Occupational Projections

Another key source of information is the Front Range Community College Area Advisory Council, a seven-member council appointed by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education. The council serves as a liaison between the college and communities and provides advice about long-range planning and maintaining contact with area employers and local school boards. The college president uses the Area Advisory Council as a sounding board for service areas' needs and expectations.

In addition, each Career and Technical Education program has an advisory committee whose members represent a particular business, industry, or profession: these groups meet at least twice each academic year. Advisory committees provide input regarding current business and industry needs for personnel, training for new workers, work ethics, and information to assist in curriculum development. They also provide industry-related information, mentoring, internships, shadowing, donation of materials and equipment, as well as expertise in the field for continuing review of curricular currency.

College representatives continually gather feedback about the college and the community's needs through membership and participation on various community and professional boards and organizations such as the following:

- Workforce Investment Boards
- Economic Development Agencies
- Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)
- Chambers of Commerce
- Rotary Clubs and other service organizations
- The League of Innovation in Community Colleges
- American Association of Community Colleges
- Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)
- U.S. Technical Advisory Group ISO
- North American Association for Environmental Education
- American Association of University Women
- National Council for Workforce Education (NCWE)
- Northern Colorado Business Assistance Consortium
- National Council of Instructional Administrators (NCIA)
- Area School District's District Advisory Boards
- American Association of Women in Community Colleges
- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators
- Higher Learning Commission
- National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO)
- Community College Business Officers (CCBO)

To determine whether services are meeting student needs, students and employees are surveyed on a regular basis regarding their satisfaction with FRCC services, and we use a variety of methods to assess student learning.

Students complete course evaluations asking them to highlight strengths and weaknesses of their courses each semester so courses can be modified in future semesters. Graduates take the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) test to determine general competencies they learned at FRCC. The academic success of FRCC transfer students is compared with students who initially enroll in four year public institutions: Front Range students consistently perform as well or better than those starting in four year public institutions. Graduates of CTE programs take national certifying exams, and the college follows up with employers regarding their satisfaction with our graduates *(—5A-9)*.

Response to Needs of External Constituencies

The college's continuing education programs, offered by Institutes for Community and Professional Development (ICPD), offer a variety of learners extensive personal and professional development programs, such as computer applications and multimedia technology, management and business, occupational health and safety, process analysis and improvement, motorcycle rider safety training, building codes, personal finance, real estate, English as a Second Language, foreign language acquisition, and Emergency Medical Services *(—5A-10)*.

Academic Year 2008	08F	08M	AY to Date
# of Registrations	1,357	1,374	2,731
Total Revenue	196,110	120,864	316,974
Unduplicated Headcount	1,146	993	2,095 *

* unduplicated for AY

Each year, ICPD staff evaluate community needs for continuing education and change course offerings based on community input. This input comes in a variety of forms. Course enrollments are a method of assessing need or interest. Another is individual feedback; course evaluation forms often include suggestions for new course offerings. Finally, comparison of college programs with other continuing education programs helps the college gauge its ability to serve the needs of constituents.

The ICPD works closely with the State Office of Economic Development and International Trade to assist local companies in obtaining grant funds for training and retraining workers. The Institute of Community and Professional Development/Larimer Campus (ICPD/LC), for example, has administered over two million dollars of Colorado First and Existing Industry Grants for business and industry in the service area. Annually, the college provides outreach funding from over 40 additional grants to companies throughout the service area. These grants enable companies to provide technical training such as lean manufacturing, supervision, blue print reading, and computer training. These grants include Lumina Grants, Colorado Department of Education Grants, and Gateway to Teaching Grants. ICPDs on all three campuses provide client-specific customized training programs for local business and industry.

In addition, the Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) at the college are collaborations between the United States Small Business Administration, Colorado's Office of Economic Development and International Trade, and FRCC. The SBDC provides free, confidential one-on-one business counseling for small businesses, low-cost non-credit business training, and offers the Colorado Leading Edge program. In addition to these services, the SBDCs assist clients with obtaining loans and identifying local resources for businesses. This assistance is provided to all legal US residents.

The Westminster SBDC primarily serves Adams and Broomfield Counties. It also provides services to residents throughout the Denver Metro area. The Fort Collins SBDC primarily serves Larimer County. It also provides services to residents throughout the Northern Colorado region.

The SBDCs use formal and informal channels to obtain feedback from its clients. Surveys, in the form of workshop evaluations, counseling evaluations, and impact surveys are used formally. Evaluation forms for counseling and training and review of studies released by County and City Economic Development Departments are used. Informally, the SBDCs have a variety of listening posts in the local community that include chambers of commerce, city and county economic development personnel, business owners, and consultants. Based on informal and formal assessment, the SBDC determines needs and creates training to address these needs *(—5A-11)*.

Core Component 5B:

Front Range Community College has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

Front Range Community College continues to build organizational capacity and honor existing and new commitments. It serves as a gathering place, organizing force, and academic partner which promotes and creates opportunities for constituents in the community. The college frequently works cooperatively with its constituents to create these opportunities. Several structures, planning processes, co-curricular activities, educational programs, as well as physical, financial, and human resources help the college work successfully with its constituents.

Communication with Constituencies

The college has a long standing history of effective connections, engagement, and services. The expansion of Front Range Community College into sites throughout the service area is evidence of this history. Responding to local needs, the Larimer Campus was added in 1988 by converting the existing Larimer County Voc-Tec Center into a college campus. The Larimer Campus is currently working on establishing a new satellite facility in Loveland to meet growing demand. Small outreach centers were opened in Boulder in 1992 and in Longmont in 1995 to serve growing demand in Boulder County. The centers grew rapidly, and were combined into a full service Boulder County Campus in south Longmont in 2002. The Brighton Center was added in 1998 to address educational needs in the eastern portion of Adams County. Creation of each campus was based upon local educational needs. At all campuses local officials facilitated the college's ability to establish sites by offering assistance with land, facilities, and other needs.

Faculty and staff are strongly encouraged to participate in community activities; in fact, community service is one of the areas on which faculty are evaluated on their annual performance reviews. Staff and faculty serve on many governmental and civic organizations within the college's service areas *(—5B-1)*. These organizations include local and regional workforce boards, economic development councils, chambers of commerce, service organizations, volunteer organizations, and ad hoc local initiatives. These memberships are a vital tool for keeping a pulse on community needs, challenges, and opportunities.

Students are also encouraged, and sometimes required, to participate in service learning, internships, or job co-ops. For example, nursing, EMS and other allied health students participate in required clinicals.

Similarly, community members serve on college advisory boards (see Core Components 4C and 5A). These boards provide vital feedback regarding current trends and needs in specific disciplines and professions.

The college's Area Advisory Council – made up of community leaders in the service area – advises the president on strategic matters pertaining to the college. As noted on the college web page, "The Front Range Community College Area Advisory Council serves as a liaison between the college and the community and provides advice about long-range planning, maintaining contact with area employers and local school boards, setting budget priorities, establishing policies, and reviewing curriculum, student services and public service needs." *(—5B-2)*

The college supports the FRCC Foundation through donation of office space and some staff support, as a way of raising funds for students and as a means of connecting with the community. For example, a key initiative of the foundation is raising funds to support a full scholarship for one student each year from the over 50 high schools in the FRCC service areas. This initiative has allowed the college to better connect with high schools and engaged donors who had not been associated with the college previously. In addition, when the foundation awards scholarships, it invites staff and community members to read applications and propose awardees. This process involves community members in key decisions and helps build relationships between staff and communities.

The foundation has a two-tiered organization that promotes community involvement – a college-wide foundation board and local campus advisory councils of community leaders and alumni working with students, faculty, and staff to support ongoing growth of the college and student scholarships. Golf tournaments, other events like the Larimer Campus "Friends in Harmony" celebration, and the awarding of student scholarships provide an opportunity for foundation members to share the college's good work with community members.

Coordinators of Student Recruitment at each campus demonstrate college recognition of the value of community connections and partnerships. Recruiters engage with community leaders, school officials, parents, and students to share the benefits of education at Front Range Community College and seek opportunities for strategic partnerships. Responsibilities of recruiters include:

- Collaborating with key contacts (high school counselors, case managers) in the community to connect prospective students with program options and student services available at the college
- Making presentations on college programs and enrollment procedures in area high schools.
- Representing and providing information about college programs and services at area community events.
- Recommending changes to the college web site and responding to online inquiries from potential students *(—5B-3).*

In addition, each campus has high school program directors or coordinators who engage the community by providing educational opportunities for high school students. Programming is different on each campus to reflect the heritage of the campus and the community's needs. At Larimer, the focus is on an extensive career/technical program that is offered under contract with two local school districts. Over 400 high school students each year come to the campus for programs including Automotive, Welding, Med Prep, and Animal Science *(—5B-4).*

In Westminster and Boulder County, the focus is on transfer courses offered on high school sites and on campus. The Boulder County Campus has offered college courses at nearby Skyline High School for eight years, while the Westminster Campus has been offering classes at two different high schools for three years. Westminster Campus also has a growing partnership with a local high school for an early college program that brings more than two dozen high school students to campus each year.

A relatively new trend at the Westminster Campus is to partner with local high schools on career technical programs. For 5 years, the college has provided the Automotive Repair Program for Adams District 50. In 2006 it began to draw students from Adams District 12, and in 2007 is serving students from Adams District 14. The Westminster Campus has also started partnerships with District 27J to offer welding at a high school site and with Adams District 50 to offer masonry on another high school site.

The Brighton Center also has a strong high school program, offering college courses to typically 30 high school students per semester. The center is developing an early college partnership with a local charter school.

The college's Marketing and Advancement Department plays a large role in creating outreach to and collecting feedback from the community. Annually it administers a marketing program designed to promote enrollment in credit and non-credit courses, increase awareness about college offerings, and position the college with businesses and industry as a primary provider of training. Some of the vehicles used to accomplish this are:

- A recruitment magazine, non-credit course schedules, and other promotional material mailed directly to a targeted audience of residents deemed likely to attend a community college
- Awareness advertising during enrollment periods–print ads and schedule inserts in newspapers, cable television ads, and movie theater advertising
- Media spots such as press releases and feature stories
- The college website and e-communication

Marketing and Advancement regularly conducts focus groups throughout service areas to gather feedback on community perceptions of the college (—5B-5).

College Support for Engagement

Each year the college undergoes a budgeting process to allocate resources to entities throughout the college. As noted in Core Component 2B, the bulk of the college's allocation is directed to the campuses to cover current enrollment, with new initiatives approved through President's Cabinet. Following are examples of resources that support effective programs of engagement and service:

- College membership in community organizations, e.g. Rotary Club, Economic Development Corporations, and Chambers of Commerce
- Upkeep of the swimming pool, which is used largely by community groups, on the Westminster Campus
- Westminster Campus contribution to a staff member to the Adams County Education Consortium
- Funding to support annual gallery exhibits, open to the public, in the art departments at each campus

- Funding to support continued upkeep of the college parking lots for student parking as well as community motorcycle courses
- Library study rooms open to the community for free throughout the year
- Funding to support a college presence in Second Life, a new online virtual community

A significant college resource that supports engagement is the Office of Institutional Research. According to the office's website, "The Office of Institutional Research at FRCC accurately and completely collects, manages, analyzes, and reports data for the purpose of supporting and anticipating the needs of the communities we serve, meeting external mandates, and supporting college-wide decision and policy making." The IR office processes course and program evaluations for credit and non-credit offerings. Feedback from surveys from a variety of constituents and focus groups encourages college engagement with them. Surveys administered by OIR annually include a currently enrolled student survey, an alumni survey, an employer survey, and others. This feedback allows the college to continually meet the demands and needs of communities. Ideas for new courses, suggestions for instructional design and pedagogical practices, and recommendations for program guidelines emerge through this process.

Planning Processes and Engagement

The college's most recent strategic plan is evidence of the commitment to engaging with its communities. The plan was based in part on a number of focus groups with key constituents, including business leaders, minority group leaders, high school principals, students, and parents. The plan also drew from extensive analysis of data describing the economic and social needs of the communities.

One of the key tenants of the plan is "FRCC leads community vitality and sustainability by strengthening partnerships and responsiveness" *(—5B-6)*. That commitment has meant that in other planning processes and in program design, the college will look to respond to community needs.

The college's Facilities Master Plans are important examples of engagement *(—5B-7)*. In accordance with the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education's policy, BP 16-10, Facilities Master Plans also identify important public space needs. For example, the Fort Collins and Westminster Campuses have joint-use libraries that are collaborative efforts

between the college and local communities. The Larimer Campus has added a nature trail open to the public, while the Westminster Campus has an agreement with the City of Westminster to operate part of the campus land as city open space, with the city constructing and maintaining trails that link the land to adjacent city land. All three campuses provide meeting space for a variety of community organizations.

Co-curricular Activities and External Communities

FRCC's Student Life provides many co-curricular activities that allow students to engage with each other and the community. Following is a list of some of these activities:

- Annual Halloween Carnivals planned by students, faculty, and staff; these free events open to the community.
- Arts And Craft Fairs – coordinated by students, faculty, and staff; these free events open to the community.
- Political candidate forums–to sponsor candidate forums for political races.
- Guest speakers –The college brings in guest speakers. Speakers are sometimes linked to themed monthly recognitions such as Women's History, Cinco de Mayo, Black History Month, Disability Awareness Month, and Native American Month. Some past speakers are:
  - Penfield Tate, former Colorado State Representative and Senator
  - Paul Martin, author of One Man's Leg – A Memoir
  - Sergeant Allen Dale June – Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient
- Co-sponsored events – Several programs are sponsored by student life, academic departments and outside community agencies. Some of those events include:
  - annual blood drives – LifeSpan Wellness
  - Asian cooking classes – Rocky Mountain Chinese School
  - help with tax returns – VITA Program
  - Iman Kazerooni, Iraqi citizen tortured during Saddam Hussein's regime – Philosophy Department
- Performing arts presentations –Student Life offices and the art departments provide opportunities for artists to perform and show their work. Some of those cultural events included:
  - Cultural Arts Fair on the Westminster Campus, co-sponsored with the North Metro Arts Alliance, and featuring musical performances by professional and amateur groups representing a variety of musical traditions as well as diverse visual art

- Sean Smith – Tennessee singer/songwriter
- Seven Falls Indian Dancers – Colorado Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts
- Through a Child's Eyes – An Art Exhibit Featuring Art by Children – Presented by The Academy, Children's Place at FRCC, Arapahoe Ridge Elementary, Prairie Hills Elementary, Running River School, Shining Mountain Waldorf and Woodrow Wilson Academy.
- Children's Theatre at the Longs Peak Student Center Plaza
- Arts Kaleidoscope at the Rialto Theatre

The college's facilities are also frequently used by community groups. Some of the many examples include:

- The Westminster Rotary Club has held Wednesday lunch meetings on campus for almost a decade

- The Rocky Mountain Chinese School uses college facilities for Chinese language classes

- The Larimer Campus annually hosts a Boy Scouts Merit Badge University

- VITA (provided a VITA site on the Larimer Campus for the 2007 tax season; averaged approximately 20 returns per week from February to April)

- Vaccination clinics open to the public – at least one per semester

- Speakers on veterinary matters (Dr. Temple Grandin – professor who designs large animal handling facilities for McDonald's meat producers spoke on large animal behavior – and Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald (small animal doctor who appears on Animal Planet's Emergency Vets)

- Continuing education programs for Certified Veterinary Technicians and Employment Fairs for Veterinary Clinics (at least one per year)

- Host community night at the Stargazer Observatory every month for the general public

- Speaker Carlotta Walls Lanier, a member of the Little Rock Nine (a large contingent from Colorado State University attended) and speakers on current events, such as writer/radio journalist David Barsamian

- The Dental Assisting Program has its clinic open to the public; in addition, the "Give Kids a Smile" weekend in spring 2007 provided free dental care for numerous local low-income families.

- Children's Theatre summer performances open to the public

Core Component 5C:

The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

The constituencies that depend on FRCC are broad and varied. Previous sections have highlighted many of the ways we respond to our most visible constituents, our students, through direct services, extracurricular learning options, and instructional excellence. Below we note how we serve our diverse communities, as well as ways we partner with other organizations to both serve current students and serve two other key constituents, K-12 systems and local businesses.

Honoring Diverse Students

Front Range Community College serves diverse student constituencies in many ways. For instance, Student Life provides activities and programs for diverse populations. Following are some of the activities conducted throughout the 2006-2007 school year:

- Native American Awareness Month – activities included Australian Aboriginal Music, Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations, and World War II Navajo Code-Talker

- Black History Month and Women's History Month – activities were held to promote examination of prejudice found in American Society

- Hispanic Heritage Month – included timelines depicting historic and social events and salsa dance lessons

- The Iraq War and Terrorism and Defining Islam – presentations given by guest speaker Inam Kazerooni

- Chinese Heritage Celebration – activities included Chinese New Year's Festival, Autumn Festival, cooking classes, and Tai Chi demonstration

- International Students Educating the Campus Community – a showcase of the college's cultural diversity as students representing over twenty countries provided food, art, and dance

- Disability Awareness Month – an image and narrative display of fifty Americans famous for their individual achievements, despite their disabilities

- Human Rights and Awareness Film Series – films that showcase a different, diverse populations every month were shown

- Eating Disorder Month – programming and films surrounding those who struggle with eating disorders
- Single Parent Holiday Program – gift cards to local children's clothing and toy store were given to forty financially disadvantaged students
- World Expo and Student Art Show – featured art from various cultures
- Women's History Month – a celebration including speakers and passive displays
- Off Campus Recruiting – speaking engagements with PSEO students at local high schools

College and University Partnerships and Transfer Agreements

Increasingly our students seek preparation for transfer to four-year schools. FRCC has responded in several ways, including participating fully in a statewide guaranteed transfer program, creating new institution specific transfer agreements and creating other specialized partnerships with four-year schools.

All Colorado community colleges, including FRCC, participate in the state of Colorado's statewide transfer program, called gtPATHWAYS. The program guarantees students the ability to transfer designated individual courses and complete Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Degrees to arts and sciences programs at all but one (The Colorado School of Mines) of the public four-year colleges in Colorado.

The heart of gtPATHWAYS is a common set of general education requirements for all public universities and colleges, two and four year, in Colorado. The statewide general education curriculum is organized into five categories: communication, mathematics, arts and humanities, social and behavioral sciences, and natural and physical sciences, each of which, except for mathematics, is further divided into more specific subject area requirements. All colleges in the state must accept in transfer at least 31 credits of courses that meet these requirements and must apply those courses to the college's general education requirements or to a student's major requirements. The transfer guarantee is limited to courses in which a student earns a "C" or better and is limited to the number of credit hours required for each subject area. The GT program is detailed at: http://highered.colorado.gov/Academics/Transfers/gtPathways/curriculum.html *(—5C-1)*.

Each college or college system establishes its own general education requirements in accordance with the gtPATHWAYS requirements, and then can nominate its general education courses for statewide guaranteed transfer designation. A course can only qualify for guaranteed transfer after it has been reviewed and approved by faculty statewide and then approved by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. Because of common course numbering, all community colleges share a common list of GT courses that they can offer. The community college system currently has over 100 courses designated as GT, almost all of which are offered at FRCC.

The college strives to help students transfer successfully by identifying all GT courses in the course schedule and in the catalog. The college has also been a leader in submitting new courses for inclusion in the guaranteed transfer program, in order to increase student choices. The college submitted 5 of the 10 new GT courses that the CCC system proposed in fall 2007.

In addition to the gtPATHWAYS program, the Colorado Community College system has negotiated a series of programs specific agreements to allow community college courses and degrees to transfer into five specific programs not covered by gtPATHWAYS. In three cases, Business, Early Childhood Education, and Elementary Education, students can transfer a complete Associate of Arts degree to all the comparable four-year programs in the state. In Nursing, students can transfer the majority of their credits from the Associate of Applied Science degree, and in Engineering students can transfer 34 selected credits.

To supplement the system wide agreements, FRCC has developed individual articulation agreements to address specific student needs. One recent agreement between the College and the Colorado School of Mines (CSM) allows FRCC students to complete 60 credits before transferring to highly competitive CSM engineering programs. The agreement was signed by CSM only after CSM faculty reviewed FRCC courses and teaching methods in detail. One unique aspect of the agreement is that students attending FRCC and following the articulation protocol can take a freshman level multi-disciplinary course at CSM and pay community college tuition rates.

A second key transfer agreement, between FRCC and Regis University, allows students in our Interpreter Preparation Program (IPP) to transfer over 90 credits into one of two specially created BA programs for student seeking to become either community interpreters or educational interpreters. The transfer agreement addresses recent changes in licensure rules for interpreters that will require most of them to have bachelor's degrees. The Regis agreement includes a capstone senior year course developed in cooperation with FRCC IPP faculty.

The college has a variety of other arrangements with Regis, which, while not formal articulation agreements, are recognized by Regis and published on the Regis website. These include 3+1 agreements in business and in teacher education. In addition, the college has agreements with several other four-year schools. Two recent agreements allow transfer of a 60 credit Associate of General Studies degree to criminal justice programs at the University of Northern Colorado and Metropolitan State College of Denver. The college also has broad articulation agreements with several other colleges and universities, including Columbia College, Franklin University, and Cappela University.

The results of our efforts to assist students in transferring have been quite positive. In 2006, FRCC had the highest number of students transfer to four-year schools of any Colorado Community College. In AY 2005-06, the last year for which we have a complete report, 1267 FRCC students transferred to public four-year colleges in Colorado. In spring 2007, there were over 1200 former FRCC students enrolled at Colorado State University, and in spring 2006 (the last year the data is available) there were just shy of 1300 former FRCC students enrolled at the University of Colorado Boulder and over 2000 enrolled at Metropolitan State College of Denver *(—5C-2)*.

Students who do transfer appear well prepared for success at four-year schools. A detailed analysis of students who transferred to Colorado State University from FRCC as of 2004 indicated that the roughly 1300 transfer students still enrolled had CSU GPAs of approximately 2.75 and had completed on average over 90 total credits. On average, 50 were from FRCC and 40 from CSU *(—5C-3)*.

Our strong relationships with four-year schools go beyond transfer agreements. While all the FRCC campuses have good relationships with their closest four-year partners, the relationship between FRCC Larimer and Colorado State University, while largely informal, is particularly strong. The relationship has been nourished by outreach by campus administration, but perhaps even more by frequent individual contact between faculty and advisors at the two institutions. In spring 2006 and fall 2007, approximately 300 students were enrolled in both FRCC Larimer and CSU, attesting to the ability of students to move seamlessly between the institutions. *(—5C-4)*.

In addition, the Larimer campus collaborated with CSU on a National Science Foundation grant designed to attract and prepare Northern Colorado high school students for careers as electrical engineers. Our sociology faculty have recently collaborated with CSU sociology faculty on a new agreement to promote transfer of criminal justice courses. The Veterinary Technician program at Larimer also has a strong partnership with CSU; FRCC and CSU have teamed together to offer clinical rotations at the CSU Veterinary Hospital. This allows our students to assist in operations, cancer treatments and dental work on large and small animals. It allows the CSU Veterinary students to learn how to use veterinary technicians in their practice.

A second strong partnership has developed between the Westminster Campus and Metropolitan State College of Denver (MSCD). MSCD has agreed to offer the final 2 years of three degrees – business management, marketing, and criminal justice – on site at the Westminster Campus. The first semester of the management and marketing degrees was fall 2007; criminal justice will begin fall 2008. FRCC and MSCD are also negotiating on other possible joint programs. FRCC is providing classroom and office space for the classes and for MSCD faculty and a full time student advisor *(—5C-5)*.

A third partnership is developing between math faculty at FRCC Westminster and the math education department at CU-Boulder. In an attempt to improve pass rates in developmental math courses, the departments have collaborated with the Freudenthal Institute of the Netherlands to implement curriculum and pedagogical techniques that have improved student learning and success in College Algebra in the Netherlands; Some of those techniques had already been tested successfully at CU-Boulder and the math education department there has been working with us to see how relevant they are in a community college population. One FRCC Westminster faculty member has successfully piloted the new curriculum in two sections of College Algebra and recently conducted training with math faculty to expand the curriculum to other sections.

Responding to the K-12 Community:
High School Partnerships

In each of our communities, FRCC collaborates actively with local school districts. Our largest and oldest partnership is in Larimer County, where the Larimer Campus developed from a joint area vocational school maintained by three area school districts. When FRCC took over operation of the facility, it also maintained operation of the high school career-technical training programs for the districts. Currently the FRCC Larimer High School Program serves 398 students from 12 area high schools in 12 different training programs. Signature programs include culinary arts (located in a new state-of-the-art-kitchen in nearby Fossil Ridge High School), ironworking and industrial welding, automotive repair, wildlife, forestry, and natural resources, and medical career/ certified nursing assistant.

Most of the Larimer Campus High School Programs share facilities with the college career-technical programs, enabling both programs to benefit from up-to-date labs and equipment. In addition, many of the credits from the high school courses articulate to college programs. On average, about 25% of these students go on to enroll in the FRCC Larimer college program for which they were trained *(—5C-6).*

The Boulder County Campus has partnered for 8 years with Skyline High School in Longmont to offer college classes at the high school. Several hundred students have taken advantage of the program since it began. The campus is currently (fall 2007) offering a broad slate of courses, ranging from English Composition to Ethics to Astronomy. As Skyline transitions to become a magnet for STEM and the Visual and Performing Arts, the Boulder County Campus is working closely to ensure curricular alignment and to adjust course offerings. In addition, the Boulder County Campus has more recent partnerships with Erie High School.

The Brighton Center has developed an early college partnership with the nearby Brighton Charter School. After some dialog and trial runs with FRCC Brighton, the charter school reformulated its mission two years ago to make dual enrollment courses the focus of its academic planning for most of its students. In fall 2007, over 20 charter school students were enrolled in college courses at the Brighton Center. As part of the partnership, FRCC staff helped the charter school design a series of support services for dually enrolled students, including identifying the curriculum the students would need to complete in their early high school years to be prepared for college classes and in developing academic supports for students to help them succeed in college courses.

The Westminster Campus has an extensive list of high school partnerships. The oldest is the campus' 7-year-old agreement with Adams District 50 to provide automotive repair training for the district's students on the college site. The college has recently expanded its automotive offering and now has over 30 high school students from Districts 12, 14, and 50 enrolled in automotive courses.

Other recent partnerships with K-12 districts include:

- Brighton Health Sciences Academy. The college partnered with Brighton High School in 2002 to develop a Health Sciences Academy and college classes to teach BHS students on the Brighton Campus. The college provides career information and guest speakers.

- Bueno Hep (Brighton High School Equivalency Program). FRCC worked with the Bueno HEP (High School Equivalency Program) Center in Brighton in recruiting, providing college tours, resume writing, interview skills, and in collaborating with the Educational Opportunity Center for career assessment and interpretation. In 2005, and again in 2007, FRCC was awarded a grant from the local Daniels Foundation to provide scholarships for GED recipients; a majority of recipients were graduates of the Bueno HEP program.

- Amgen Biotechnology Education Partnership

  - In the summer of 2007, the three campuses were awarded a grant from Amgen Foundation to train high school faculty in real-world biotechnology processes. Amgen is providing funding, equipment and supplies. Shortly after the grant was awarded, Amgen personnel and FRCC faculty collaborated to train over a dozen educators.

  - In 2006, Thompson School District obtained a grant from Amgen Foundation to provide professional development for elementary and secondary teachers. Thompson School District contacted specific FRCC faculty to provide these workshops for elementary school teachers.

- Science is Elementary Program. Responding to the lack of professional development in science education for elementary school teachers, in 2004 three Larimer Campus faculty developed an innovative curriculum to help teachers explain basic science concepts. In 2005 and 2006, they trained three classes of teachers with funding of $40,000 from the Honda Corporation and $30,000 from the Xcel Corporation.

- Bridge to the Future Program. In 2004, Adams County One Stop, Workforce Boulder County, Adams County Twelve Star Schools, St. Vrain Valley School District, and FRCC partnered to provide academic, career, personal, and college preparatory services to 40 youth facing significant barriers to high school graduation and subsequent post secondary enrollment. From this partnership, Bridge to the Future, the Colorado Office of Workforce Development funded a program targeted for non-native speakers of English, first generation college students, and those of low socioeconomic status.

- Adams County Education Consortium and Gateway to College (described below)

Responding to a Broad Community Need: Addressing Rising High School Dropout Rates in Adams County

Over the last ten years, the high school drop out rate in a portion of the area served by the Westminster Campus has increased significantly; in one district in the City of Westminster, the two high schools now average less than a 70% completion rate. Several neighboring districts have similar rates.

In the fall 2004, meetings initiated by the president of FRCC and two school superintendents brought together representatives of five local school districts, two key business groups, and three adjacent community colleges. Over the course of a year of study, the group developed the Adams County Education Consortium, which began in 2005 and now includes five school districts, three community colleges, six businesses, and Adams County Economic Development. This partnership was formed to increase high school graduation rates and improve work readiness of high school students in Adams County. The consortium has sponsored professional development events for teachers, including Workforce Connect, which helps teachers understand challenges businesses face. Westminster Campus Vice President Andy Dorsey is the president of the consortium for 2007-2008.

Because of data discussed in consortium meetings, FRCC began examining options for reducing dropout rates. Beginning in 2006, FRCC forged a partnership with Adams Districts 12 and 50 to become a replication site for the nationally recognized dropout recovery program, Gateway to College. In October 2007, the college was awarded a grant from the Gates Foundation, through Portland Community College to fund the program start-up. Staffs from the two school districts were integrally involved in preparing the

application for the program and have committed to partner with the campus in implementing the grant. The goal of the grant is help over 300 high school dropouts return to school in the next three years by taking dual credit high school and college courses, following a highly regimented program that has been successful in Portland and several other sites. More information on the program is at www.gatewaytocollege.org. *(—5C-7).*

Responding to the Business Community: Community Partnerships and Programs

A third key constituency is business and local governments. The college has engaged in a number of specific partnerships with business to address broad community needs. For example, in 2006, the Longmont Economic Gardening Initiative (LEGI) was developed by the Economic Alliance, a collaboration between the FRCC's Longmont Campus, the City of Longmont, Latino Chamber of Boulder County, Longmont Area Chamber of Commerce, Longmont Area Economic Council, Longmont Area Visitors Association, Longmont Downtown Development Authority, the Longmont Entrepreneurial Network, Longmont Small Business Association, and the Small Business Development Center.(http://www.ci.longmont.co.us/legi/index.html) *(—5C-8).* By leveraging public and community resources, LEGI assists local businesses to grow, thereby helping to create and retain local jobs. Any business in Longmont is eligible to participate.

A second key partnership was the Northern Health Care Consortium, composed of nine area hospital systems, one extended care system, Regis University, the University of Northern Colorado, the state nursing director, and Front Range Community College. In 2002, the consortium was awarded a large grant to train workers to fill openings in occupations facing critical employee shortages, provide opportunities for employees in low-skilled positions, and provide opportunities for non-native and low-skilled employees. The grant was managed in large part by FRCC. It ran through 2006 and funded several successful training programs, including the following:

- Trained certified nursing assistants to become licensed psychiatric technicians
- Provided ESL classes for facilities and dietary staff
- Trained certified nursing assistants and expanded of the certified nursing assistant internship program

- Developed a healthcare office assistant program
- Created an Electro Neuro-Diagnostic Tech program and trained 7 hospital staff to become END technicians

A third key business partnership is the Adams County Micro Enterprise Project. The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at the Westminster Campus was the lead agency in helping Adams County develop a program to help low-income residents start and expand businesses. As part of the program, the college provided training to 255 residents and business counseling to over 100 residents. The project ended in 2006, but as of fall 2007, the college and the county are negotiating, to re-start it.

At both the Larimer and Westminster Campuses, the college partners with the Small Business Administration to run Small Business Development Centers. The Centers help prospective and existing small businesses with one-to-one counseling as well as regularly scheduled seminars. Topics include marketing, finance, legal issues, and related topics. The one-to-one counseling is provided in large part by volunteers recruited and trained by the center directors.

FRCC also collaborates closely with regional Colorado Department of Labor One Stop Workforce Centers to enhance access to career and technical credit college programming as well as customized programs for specific audiences. A current example of the latter involves FRCC's partnership with the Broomfield County Workforce Center to provide intensive ESL and occupational skills training for 18 non-native English speaking employees who lost their jobs due to a plant closure. The project required the college to respond quickly to develop a customized approach to meet the unique challenges confronting this population of Vietnamese low-level English speaking adults.

Responding to the Business Community: Career Technical Programs

In addition to business partnerships, FRCC has responded to specific business needs by creating Career and Technical Education Programs that help businesses address specific workforce needs. Among the most recent examples of these programs are:

- Larimer Campus Advanced Placement Nursing Program

- Masonry Program: In 2007, the college began a partnership with Adams School District 50 and the Rocky Mountain Masonry Institute (RMMI) to offer Masonry classes at District 50. The partnership began after RMMI approached the college seeking to address a coming shortage of skilled Masons. The initial class of students were recruited from unskilled laborers working at companies that support the institute. The long term goal is to provide training opportunities for existing workers, high school students, and, in partnership with the Adams County Workforce Center, laid off workers seeking retraining.

- Steel Detailing Program. In response to a request from the construction industry, in fall 2007 the Architectural Engineering and Construction program at the Westminster Campus began a new program to train steel detail drafters. The program is using specialized software provided by firms in the industry and has developed curriculum based on extensive discussion with industry representatives.

Responding to the Business Community: Customized Training

Finally, the college has developed a series of non-credit, customized trainings to serve individual business needs. Customized courses are coordinated by the Institute for Community and Professional Development (ICPD), based on the Larimer and Westminster Campuses. Institute staff work with independent trainers and faculty to identify clients' needs, and design specific training and education. ICPD serves client companies that range in size from five to eight thousand employees. In FY 2006, over 2000 workers at over 50 local organizations received customized training from ICPD (Source: CCCS Workforce Training Survey, Spring 2007) *(—5C-9)*.

ICPD staff and consultants have developed several areas of specialty. They include:

- Business Writing and Communication Skills
- Conversational Languages
- English as a Second Language
- General Management and Leadership
- OSHA Health and Safety
- Process Control Techniques
- Six Sigma Certification Training and Lean Manufacturing
- Time Management and Process Improvement
- Geometric Dimensioning and Tolerancing
- Computer Software

Core Component 5D:

Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provide.

Community colleges are charged with providing the best education, skills development, and community services possible based upon their resources and capacities. Front Range Community College is committed to ensuring it responds to the needs of students and the communities it serves. To achieve this, the college regularly analyzes the value of its programs to internal and external constituencies.

Internal and external constituencies have regularly participated in focus groups and perception surveys – the most recent administered in 2006. The college's Office of Institutional Research conducts the many surveys, including the following, in part to determine satisfaction with services the college provides:

- Alumni Survey
- Currently Enrolled Student Survey
- Employee Survey
- Employer Survey
- Graduate Survey
- Vocational Graduate Follow-Up Survey

The college regularly holds focus groups to obtain information about constituencies' views of the services the college offers. In 2006, the college hired Restorative Solutions, Inc. to conduct focus groups to gather information for the Higher Learning Commission continued accreditation self-study process *(—5D-1)*. During August 2007, the Boulder County Campus conducted focus groups in partnership with the town of Frederick to explore the need for and interest in college courses being offered at Frederick High School.

College in services and professional development activities use feedback from evaluation forms to determine if constituencies' needs are being met. Public events have regular debriefing sessions during which the value of services, and possible means for improvement, is discussed. The Area Advisory Council, Foundation Board, Local Advisory Councils, CTE Advisory Committees, Student Government Association, and other groups offer substantive feedback on the college and its offerings. This information is used to evaluate and improve services.

Public Access

Successful engagement builds effective connections between the college and its communities. Front Range Community College offers more than education and training. As an important community institution, the college is a significant contributor to the community's quality of life. Examples include cultural events and events that promote civic responsibility, community cohesiveness, and lifelong learning.

One civic leader who participated in the 2006 community focus groups noted, "…FRCC occupies an important place in the community and it appears that access for all is an important priority" *(—5D2).* This is evidenced by Westminster and Larimer Campus joint-use library partnerships with the Cities of Westminster and Fort Collins.

All campuses are proactive in sponsoring art exhibits of the work of students and external artists, and in promoting art spaces/galleries for their communities. The art exhibitions are well attended, which indicates their perceived value. Exhibit openings (6 per year at the Larimer Campus) usually bring in about 50-70 people. On average 40 people a day (Monday through Friday) visit the Larimer Campus art gallery. The Westminster art gallery had 2,585 visits in 2004 *(—5D-3).*

Other examples of public access and engagement include:

- In March 2006 the Boulder County Campus sponsored a High School Visit Night, welcoming prospective students and their families from various local high schools within the St. Vrain and Boulder Valley School Districts.
- On Thursday, October 19, 2006, the Larimer Campus hosted a forum of Fourth District candidates for the Colorado Senate, which was well attended. In response to the 2006 Accreditation Survey, a full time faculty member mentioned that FRCC hosted well-attended Stargazer Observatory days open to community members. The faculty member suggested that this become an annual event because it was an excellent opportunity for the community to visit an observatory. Between 500 and 700 community members visit the observatory every year *(—5D-4).*
- The Boulder County Campus hosts History Day. Students from local middle schools and high schools submit projects and papers that receive recognition by vote of FRCC faculty, staff, and administration. This event attracts 250 people annually *(—5D-5).* The winners go on to state and national competitions.

Program Accessibility

In focus groups, civic and business leaders said programs at FRCC provide singular experiences. Examples are the Nursing Program, the Interpreter Preparation (IPP) Program, English as a Second Language (ESL), the Emergency Medical Program (EMT), and the Veterinary Technician programs.

The Westminster Campus has an award winning Interpreter Preparation Program (IPP). Relationships with both the deaf and interpreting communities are fostered by sponsoring additional training opportunities for working interpreters and members of the deaf community. FRCC faculty, staff, and students support the deaf community through participation with the Rocky Mountain Deaf School; DOVE (Advocacy Services for Abused Deaf Women and Children); and the Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH). The IPP student club and the Student Colorado Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (SCRID) actively support and maintain close connections with the Colorado Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

Another civic leader at a 2006 focus group meeting noted the value of the Machining Technology Training (MAC) program and its comprehensive curriculum *(—5D-6)*. In spring 2007, the college offered a total of 28 machining sections.

Further, the importance of the nursing program to hospitals and medical centers--many FRCC graduates are hired immediately upon completion of their programs--was noted in a focus group report. A civic leader stated, "The positive evolution of the Larimer Campus LPN program to the RN degree program is a forward move for the community." He also expressed concern that "the demand for RN graduates is greater than the college's current capacity" *(—5D-7)*. The speaker underscored the need for FRCC to expand its program and increase its nursing faculty to better prepare for the future of our health care system.

FRCC is committed to providing quality programs for refresher, upgrade, and recertification of professionals for occupational growth:

- The college regularly provides exceptional recertification programs for paramedics, elementary education, multi-media graphics, and computer information systems.
- Front Range Community College hosted the statewide Colorado Association for Developmental Education (COADE) Conference in October 2006. Sixty professionals from community colleges and four-year institutions attended.

- ▪ In support of paraprofessional education, the WorkKeys™ Test, required by the No Child Left Behind Act, is offered.
- ▪ Recertification for paramedics requires passing a class, Basic Refresher (EMT 126). According to the Director of Institutional Research, in AY 2006-2007 eighty-five students enrolled in this course *(—5D-8)*.

Community Service

According to the 2006 Student Survey for Accreditation, FRCC students serve the community in valuable ways. For example, students participate as court appointed special advocates (CASA) for abused and neglected children, join Americorps, are active in Coloradoans for Fairness, volunteer for tax work through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA), and are members of Kids@Heart, an organization that provides nationwide day nurseries, kids clubs, and crèche facilities.

Other Community Service activities include:

- ▪ Boulder County Workforce Development and the Boulder County Campus received a grant to provide education for individuals on parole and probation.
- ▪ The 2004 President's Report notes successful Disability Awareness Month activities, including a speech by Miss Wheelchair Colorado, a performance by the drama group Phamaly – made up of actors with disabilities–and a panel of four individuals with disabilities, three of whom were FRCC students .
- ▪ The college's joint-use libraries have been an overwhelming success as demonstrated by usage reports. For instance, the Westminster College Hill Library reports approximately 400,000 individuals visited the library in 2006; the library rents out conference rooms 2,200 times each year to groups such as the Scouts, Rotary, and Home Owners Associations.

Strengths, Concerns, Recommendations

Strengths:

1. The college effectively seeks to serve diverse communities, through extensive outreach and partnerships, student support services, and Student Life programming.

2. Front Range Community College continually monitors the needs of current and prospective students, the general community, and responds to those needs effectively.

3. The college encourages faculty, staff and administrators to be active participants in the community through myriad activities. This engagement helps connect the college with the community, provides service to the community, and provides Front Range the necessary information to respond effectively to community needs.

4. The college is an active participant in community economic and business development through the work of its Institute for Community and Professional Development, Small Business Development Center, and membership in local organizations such as workforce boards, economic development groups and chambers of commerce.

Concerns:

1. Although the Westminster Campus, of all the college campuses, serves the most ethnically and economically diverse community and has steadily increased minority enrollment in the last decade, the campus is not fully engaged with key Hispanic and Hmong leaders and agencies that serve those communities.

2. Ethnic diversity of faculty and staff is lower than in the college service area.

3. School district partnerships, which are among the most extensive of all the college's partnerships, can be resource intensive.

4. In the climate of the rising costs of post-secondary education, there is a concern that it may not be realistic for the college to meet all the needs of communities in its service areas.

Recommendations:

1. Continue to pursue funding to expand scholarship opportunities for students, especially through involvement with the FRCC Foundation.

2. Westminster Campus staff need to continue to develop community partnerships to serve the needs of growing Hispanic and Hmong populations in its service area.

3. The college may need to prioritize its services to the community to assure that resources are not spread too thin.

4. Front Range Community College should continue to be strategic about expanding existing partnerships and developing new ones, particularly with K-12 partners.

Federal Compliance and Request for Accreditation

Federal Compliance and Title IV

Credits, Program Length and Tuition

Front Range Community College's courses are based upon semester credit hours with contact time based upon the "Policy and Procedures for Reporting Full-time Equivalent Student Enrollment" of the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE). The contact hour ratio varies based upon the instructional activity type. For all courses, a contact hour is defined as 50 minutes. Lecture classes require 15 contact hours per semester credit. Other types of instruction, including laboratory, clinical and internship instruction, have contact hours ranging from 22.5 to 45 per credit. All credit courses must be included in the Colorado Community College Numbering System (CCCNS) and approved by the FRCC Curriculum Committee, as well as the State Faculty Curriculum Committee (a committee including two faculty representatives of each state system community college) and the Educational Services Curriculum Committee (a committee of the vice presidents of instruction from each state system community college). Course credits are specified by the CCCNS but the contact hours may vary from college to college based upon instructional activity type. The course schedules of the college may be "audited" periodically by the CCCS or the CDHE to determine that the contact hours are in compliance with the CDHE designated ratios.

Most fall and spring semester courses are 15 weeks in length and most summer semester courses are 10 weeks in length, however, late starting courses and courses less than 15 weeks in length are available to meet student needs and provide multiple entry points to education at FRCC.

Other scheduling options include flex classes, providing flexibility of learning at the student's own pace; hybrid classes, which combine traditional classroom structure with online activities and content; and online classes delivered via the Internet. Online and hybrid courses are assessed for content consistency, teaching effectiveness and student learning equivalency to traditional courses. The foundations for ongoing assessment of hybrid and online courses are established and reviewed by the online learning office and the faculty advisory committee for online learning.

The college also provides students the means to earn college credit for non-college or experience-based learning obtained outside the sponsorship of accredited postsecondary educational institutions through Credit for Prior Learning (CPL). Students may demonstrate requisite levels of prior learning through standardized tests (such as CLEP and DANTES), institutional challenge examinations, industry certifications and portfolios. Detailed information about credit for prior learning is found in the College Catalog. Applications and instructions may be obtained on our website at http://www.frontrange.edu/frcctemplates/frcc6.aspx?id=725 (under the General Information section).

Regardless of instructional delivery method, FRCC's courses and syllabi are consistent in designation, curricula and competencies to similar courses offered by all other Colorado public community colleges and four-year colleges and universities. Course equivalencies are designated and monitored through CCCS's Common Course Numbering System.

In accordance with Colorado law, designated FRCC general education credits are guaranteed to transfer among all Colorado public higher-education institutions with a grade of C or higher in those classes. Those courses and credits are also listed in the College Catalog and on the college website.

The CCCS and CDHE also specify the requirements for program length. Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of General Studies Degrees must be 60 semester credits in length. The Associate of Applied Science degrees may be 60 – 75 credits in length. Certificate programs must be a minimum of two courses and the maximum length is 45 credits. Information about program and graduation requirements may be found in the college catalog.

Tuition at FRCC is consistent with the tuition charged by other Colorado system community colleges. Tuition and fees are established by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) through legislative enactment (C.R.S. § 23-60-202(1)(c)). Information regarding tuition rates and additional fees is clearly described in the College catalog and each semester's course schedule. Tuition rates are common for all courses except nursing courses and online courses; higher tuition rates in those programs have been standardized system wide, are clearly identified in college publications, and reflect higher program costs. Also, a high cost course fee of

$5.70 per credit hour is charged to defray the cost of materials, supplies and equipment associated with high cost courses as determined by the SBCCOE. Courses with high cost course fees are designated in each semester's Schedule of Classes and online at FRCC's Web site. Other fees may include registration fees, program fees, student center/campus center fees, student/parking and facility fees. "Charges," which differ from "fees" (described above), include, for example, credit for prior learning charges and testing charges. These charges are established by the college. Also see the Semester Course Schedule.

Beginning with the fall 2005 semester, the State of Colorado enacted sweeping reforms establishing the College Opportunity Fund (COF). Rather than subsidizing higher education for in-state students by giving a block of money directly to each college, the state, via the System office, now sends this money, as a stipend, to the institution, if the student authorizes the use of their stipend. The stipend money appears as a credit on each student's tuition bill. Information about COF is readily available online, in the College Catalog and Schedule of Classes. Information is also available on the Web site of the Colorado Department of Higher Education.

Compliance with the Higher Education Reauthorization Act

FRCC complies with the Title IV requirements of the Higher Education Reauthorization Act as amended in 1998. FRCC's Federal Student Financial Aid Program loan default rates for the past three years fall beneath the Title IV default rate threshold of 10%: FY2003 = 5.5%; FY2004 = 6.6%; FY2005 = 9.1%. Default rates tend to fluctuate with similar patterns in the local economy. The college holds all documents relevant to Title IV compliance: The Program Participation Agreement (PPA); Eligibility and Certification Renewal (ECAR); Letters, publications and information about compliance with financial responsibility standards; limitation, suspension or termination (LST) actions; audits by the Inspector General of the United States Department of Education (USDE); and the default rates for the most recent three years as established by the USDE. All information regarding audit findings and program reviews for the Financial Aid Office is housed in the office of the Director of the College-Wide Financial Aid Director.

Campus Crime and Graduation Rate Statistics

In compliance with the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990, FRCC Public Safety compiles and releases an annual report (Jeanne Clery Act Informational Report) of FRCC campus crime. Campus crime statistics and information on campus security policies are available to current and potential students. See the current class schedule for the latest information.

FRCC provides information about completion and graduation rates on FRCC's Website. Information about crimes on campus and public safety programs are published in the class schedule each semester and are available from the Public Safety Office. This is in compliance with the Federal Student Right to Know and Campus Security Act. Individuals interested in knowing about FRCC's financial status are assured that FRCC is subject to the State's Open Records Act, as an agency of the State of Colorado. The audited financial statements of the CCCOES System, including those for FRCC, are available to the public in the libraries of the Westminster and Larimer Campuses.

Advertising and Recruitment Materials

Front Range Community College provides accurate information regarding its programs, services and policies in the FRCC Catalog, FRCC Student Handbook, Schedule of Classes, program brochures, the college website and other advertising and recruitment materials. The college provides information about its affiliation with the Higher Learning Commission, and the Commission's address and telephone number are listed in the FRCC Catalog, the Course Schedule and the college website.

Professional Accreditation

Front Range Community College 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.

The following FRCC programs are accredited/approved by special agencies:

- Automotive Technology: National Automotive Technological Education Foundation, Inc. (NATEF)

- Dental Assisting: Commission on Dental Accreditation, a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation and by the United States Department of Education

- Dietetic Technology: The Dietetic Technology Program is currently granted accreditation or approval status by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education of The American Dietetic Association, 216 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60606-6995, (312) 899-5400

- Emergency Medical Services: (Boulder County, Larimer and Westminster Campuses), Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Emergency Medical Services and Prevention Division

- Heating, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration: Partnership for Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Accreditation (PAHRA)

- Machining Technology: National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS)

- Medical Assisting: The certified Medical Assisting Program, Boulder County Campus, is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (www.caahep.org) upon the recommendation of the Curriculum Review Board of the American Association of Medical Assistants Endowment (AAMAE). CAAHEP, 1361 Park Street, Clearwater, FL 33756, (727) 210-2350

- Nursing: Colorado State Board of Nursing

- Pharmacy Technician: American Society of Health System Pharmacists (ASHP)

- Practical Nursing: Colorado State Board of Nursing

- Veterinary Technology: American Veterinary Medical Association (Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities)

Requirements of Institutions Holding Dual Institutional Accreditation

Front Range Community College is not affiliated with another CHEA or 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 community constituents served by Front Range Community College were notified in December 2007 of the self-study process and, through advertisements placed in the newspapers in Westminster, Boulder, Longmont, Fort Collins, Loveland and Brighton, invited to submit Third Party Comments to the Higher Learning Commission. The notice was also sent to local chambers of commerce. Letters inviting third-party comment were sent to local school districts and public officials, and this request was also posted on the FRCC website (www.frontrange.edu) and published in the college's student newspapers and Frontline Online, the college's official campus newsletter distributed by campus e-mail.

Invitation for Public Comment

As part of an ongoing continuing accreditation process, Front Range Community College is scheduled to undergo a comprehensive visit on February 25-27, 2008, by a team representing the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

For the past two years, Front Range Community College has been engaged in a process of self-study, addressing the Higher Learning Commission's requirement for accreditation.

The visiting evaluation team will gather evidence that this self-study is thorough and accurate.

As part of its ongoing effort to make the accreditation process responsive to a broad range of constituents, the Commission has integrated the federally-required (1998 Higher Education Act Amendments) third party comment process into its regular accrediting processes. Since the 1997-98 academic year, the Commission has required institutions undergoing comprehensive evaluation (initial or continued candidacy or accreditation) to publish basic information about the visit in appropriate publications and invite the public to provide written comments to the Commission. The Commission will forward these comments to the evaluation team to include in its review of the institution.

The public is invited to submit comments regarding FRCC to:
Public Comment on Front Range Community College
The Higher Learning Commission
30 N. LaSalle Street, Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60602

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. The Commission cannot guarantee that comments received after the due date will be considered. Comments will not be treated as confidential and should include the name, address and telephone number of the person providing the comments.

Comments must be received January 25, 2008

For more information about the Higher Learning accreditation process, visit the organization's website at: http://www.ncahlc.org

Institutional Records of Student Complaints

To comply with the Higher Learning Commission policy, FRCC maintains records of the formal, written student complaints filed with the offices of the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Academic Officer and the Chief Student Services Officer including information about the disposition of the complaints, and those referred to external agencies for final resolution.

Since FRCC has a college system with site-based administrative leadership, compliance with the policy will include the top three administrative levels at each site as well as the college wide level. In addition to the President, the campus Vice Presidents, Deans of Instruction and Deans of Student Services will record the process of complaint resolution and the outcome for any formal, written complaint received.

Definitions:

Complaint: A formal, written complaint is one regarding some alleged type of adverse action against a student from a decision made by the institution or alleged violation of student rights. A grievance may or may not be a complaint based on the above guidelines. Appeals which request a re-examination of a decision are not considered a complaint unless there is some type of adverse action against a student from the decision or some alleged procedural unfairness is documented.

Student: A student is an individual who is currently enrolled full or part-time or who has recently been enrolled in the institution. Previously enrolled students may be considered a student if they meet the criteria to re-enroll without having to reapply for admission. If the individual would have to reapply, then the complainant is not a student for the purposes of this policy.

Formal Written Complaint: Only complaints in writing that are mailed or delivered to an appropriate officer, or those referred back to the college by the Higher Learning Commission, are considered formal complaints. These written complaints must be addressed to an officer of the college and be signed by the student. Informal communications from students such as emails or faxes will not be considered a formal written complaint.

Procedures:

Step 1: Administrators (Dean, Vice President or President) receiving a formal written complaint will complete the FRCC Record of Student Complaint Tracking Form after a concern has been resolved/concluded. The administrator resolving the complaint must inform the student registering the complaint that information about complaints must be shared with the Higher Learning Commission for accreditation purposes but that individual identities will be shielded.

Step 2: The Complaint Tracking Form and all paperwork involved in the complaint resolution will be forwarded to the Office of the Dean of Student Services. The Dean of Student Services will maintain records of the complaints.

Step 3: The Dean of Student Services will be responsible to provide the complaint tracking records to the Higher Learning Commission reviewers upon request. Tracking will include at least the two years prior to the date of the evaluation visit.

Other Student Complaints

Students who have other complaints should be referred to the Dean of Student Services at their respective campuses whose staff will assist the students by referring them to the appropriate campus office.

Request for Continuing Accreditation

This self-study documents and verifies that Front Range Community College meets the five evaluative criteria as listed in the Handbook for Accreditation of the Higher Learning Commission. The college has made a conscientious effort to not only identify concerns, but also list recommendations for improvement in these areas. Front Range Community College therefore requests continuing accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

FRONT RANGE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE