Bloomsburg · LOCK HAVEN · MANSFIELD

COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SELF-STUDY REPORT 2024-25

Submitted to:

THE MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

A member of Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania (CU) was officially formed on July 1, 2022, when Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield universities were reconfigured as a single comprehensive university with multiple campuses and locations. The merger process, known as "integration," was authorized in 2020 by Act 50 of the Pennsylvania legislature; completion of the process is expected within a five-to-seven-year timeline. The integration process proved to be a massive undertaking, necessitating intensive planning, in-depth discussions, and mutual cooperation among a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders. From the very outset and throughout the ongoing integration process, MSCHE was consulted to ensure proper procedures were followed, including the submission of the complex substantive change request to enable integration to move forward.

CU is now the second largest of the ten PASSHE institutions, serving the northcentral region of the Commonwealth and beyond. CU's mission, vision, values, core commitments, and priorities align with Act 188, PASSHE's enabling legislation; Act 50 of 2020; the 2025 PASSHE priorities and goals; and MSCHE's standards, criteria, and requirements of affiliation. The mission statement clearly articulates CU's purpose:

> Our hard-working and determined students are at the heart of everything we do. Commonwealth University leverages the power of Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield to provide affordable, high-quality education emphasizing high-impact practices, personal and career connections, and inclusivity supporting all learners to succeed in our region and beyond.

Both the mission and vision emphasize key factors related to student success, such as the collaborative strength of our campuses, the accessibility and affordability of our institution, the relevance of high-impact practices and career-related experiences, and the importance of providing a welcoming, inclusive learning community.

The university's values elaborate on these key elements of student success, setting expectations for faculty, staff, and students as we embark together on our shared educational journey.

While working to unify programs, policies, processes, and systems, CU launched the MSCHE self-study process. CU members attended the fall 2022 MSCHE Self-Study Institute and leveraged engagement strategies used for CU's strategic plan to identify self-study institutional priorities and intended outcomes. This broadly consultative process used surveys, interviews, retreats, and town hall meetings to identify and vet the strategic plan and self-study priorities. Presentations explained the importance of identifying institutional priorities that are meaningful, forward looking, and focused on continuous improvement. The self-study institutional priorities are listed below:

- Explore curricular innovations, career pathways, high-impact practices, and holistic student support strategies designed to address goals for recruitment, retention, and credential completion
- Analyze survey results, studies, and data to inform institution-wide diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) initiatives designed to attract a more broadly diverse employee complement and student body and cultivate a more welcoming community
- Evaluate possible revenue generation and cost containment measures to achieve greater financial sustainability
- Examine survey data and strategies that will promote more effective communication with internal and external constituencies

The presentations also described the value of setting intended outcomes to guide a meaningful process and assess the self-study process. The process concluded with the adoption of four institutional priorities and four intended outcomes. CU chose a standards-based approach to the self-study process to facilitate achievement of the intended outcomes and an organized and comprehensive inquiry and coverage of the standards, criteria, and ROA. The four intended outcomes are listed below:

- Demonstrate how the institution meets the Commission's standards for accreditation and requirements of affiliation (ROA)

- Focus on continuous improvement in the attainment of the institution's mission and its institutional priorities
- Engage the institutional community in an inclusive and transparent self-appraisal process that actively and deliberately seeks to involve members from all areas of the institutional community
- Use insights and data to build sustainable planning and assessment structures, policies, and practices across the integrated institution

Through the discussion and analysis presented in each of its chapters, CU's self-study report addresses each of the four priorities and documents the achievement of these intended outcomes. As a further result of the self-study process, each chapter concludes with suggestions for ongoing continuous improvement relevant to that chapter's standard.

STANDARD I: Mission and Goals

As demonstrated in this chapter, CU's mission, vision, values, core commitments, and strategic priorities were developed through a consultative, transparent process involving a wide variety of stakeholders. The mission and vision highlight key factors related to student success, such as the collaborative strength of our campuses, the accessibility and affordability of our institution, the relevance of high-impact practices and career-related experiences, and the importance of providing a welcoming, inclusive learning community.

The self-study process for Standard I resulted in the following suggestions for improvement:

- Continue to engage the CU community in constructive discourse, deliberate planning, and meaningful assessment to realize fully the strategic plan priorities and commitments
- Follow processes to ensure the relevancy of the strategic plan by evaluating data and feedback for periodic adjustments in years three through five

STANDARD II: Ethics and Integrity

As demonstrated in this chapter, ethics and integrity are essential elements of CU's policies, practices, procedures, and daily operations. CU honors its contracts and commitments in good faith and presents itself truthfully by socializing and monitoring brand identity and practices to ensure accuracy.

The self-study process for Standard II resulted in the following suggestions for improvement:

- Pursue the *Strategic Communications* core commitment by refining strategies for both internal and external stakeholders based on market research, surveys, and focus groups
- Develop and implement additional strategies to address campus climate concerns and evaluate the effectiveness of those strategies

STANDARD III: Design and Delivery of the Student Experience

As demonstrated in this chapter, CU delivers undergraduate, graduate, professional, and certificate programs characterized by rigorous and coherent learning experiences in a variety of instructional modalities. Learning experiences and outcomes follow best practices, external benchmarks, and educational policies and procedures that govern CU.

The self-study process for Standard III resulted in the following suggestions for improvement:

- Continue to use assessment data to better understand needs, perceptions, and preferences regarding course modalities to achieve a balanced and effective distribution of modalities across the undergraduate curriculum
- Enhance initiatives that support *Academic Excellence and Innovation* by developing and promoting further an array of credentialing pathways and high-impact practices

STANDARD IV: Support of the Student Learning Experience

As demonstrated in this chapter, CU recruits traditional, non-traditional, international, in-state, out-of-state, transfer, underrepresented minority, early college, and veteran students, providing them with coherent and effective services to support their retention, persistence, and completion. CU commits to providing the holistic and inclusive support

and student engagement opportunities necessary to meet the needs of all students, preparing them for personal and professional success.

The self-study process for Standard IV resulted in the following suggestions for improvement:

- Continue to review and revise all student affairs policies through a DEIB lens and apply the policies consistently across CU according to the policy review schedule
- Refine the new CU web pages during the 2024-25 academic year to ensure easily accessible, accurate information for all stakeholders

STANDARD V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

As this chapter demonstrates, CU fosters a culture of assessment through faculty leadership, administrative support, oversight structures, systematic assessment processes, peer mentorship, and training. CU's assessment of student learning and achievement indicates that the institution's students are accomplishing educational goals consistent with their programs of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.

The self-study process for Standard V resulted in the following suggestions for improvement:

- Mature the general education (GE) and program assessment processes for all modalities to inform ongoing improvement of student learning outcomes and assessment processes and provide additional training and peer mentoring
- Further develop longitudinal data for key metrics and conduct ongoing analyses to inform GE and academic program changes

STANDARD VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

As this chapter demonstrates, CU has established integrated processes, resources, and structures to fulfill its mission, priorities, and goals. At the institutional, divisional, and unit levels, the planning, resource allocation, and assessment processes inform actions that continuously improve all aspects of the university.

The self-study process for Standard VI resulted in the following suggestions for improvement:

- Continue to implement facilities and technology plans to rightsize the campuses and locations and equip them with technologies and infrastructure that facilitate efficient and effective operations
- Use PASSHE's comprehensive planning process for annual and multi-year planning and target setting to monitor financial conditions and strategize on revenue generation and cost containment measures leading to an improved net financial position

STANDARD VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

As this chapter demonstrates, CU's approach to governance and leadership involves an innovative blend of a new shared governance structure appropriate to the integrated CU with the established policies and procedures of PASSHE. Exemplifying the precepts of shared governance, the university's structures ensure appropriate autonomy while fostering representation of all constituencies in decision-making processes through designated communication channels.

The self-study process for Standard VII resulted in the following suggestions for improvement:

- Adapt and refine shared governance structures and processes; facilitate training sessions and communication about governance roles, responsibilities, and outcomes; and continue implementation of the policy review schedule
- Continue analyzing results and implementing recommendations from studies, surveys, and assessment

INTRODUCTION

Academic Excellence and Innovation, *Student Success*, *University Success*, and a *Welcoming and Inclusive Community*: these strategic priorities characterize Commonwealth University's (CU's) mission-driven purpose and derive from the historical commitments of the three universities—Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield—that integrated operations in 2022 to form our new, multi-campus institution. As described throughout this self-study report, the newly formed Commonwealth University is committed to *Academic Excellence and Innovation* through the delivery of an affordable, high-quality educational experience and the fulfillment of the responsibilities outlined in Act 188 of 1982, the chartering legislation of Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education (PASSHE). Building on this commitment, both *Student Success* and *University Success* signal the institution's focused attention on supporting our students holistically to prepare them for personal and professional growth and doing so in a manner that ensures the institution's fiscal health and sustainability. Providing a *Welcoming and Inclusive Community* emphasizes that we aim to cultivate an environment where each individual matters and feels connected to the university and its ideals. This priority also encompasses serving our regional communities, partnering with businesses, schools, and organizations, and extending our reach to residents of the Commonwealth of PA and beyond as the university fulfills its education and service mission.

Informed by CU's mission, vision, and values, and aligned with its three core commitments—(1) *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging*; (2) *Strategic Communications*; and (3) *Thriving Students, Faculty, and Staff*—the strategic priorities propel the institution forward while at the same time honoring the significant histories of Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield. Through integration, a process that necessitated tremendous hard work, creative problem solving, and cross-institutional collaboration, the legacies of those three institutions have now been woven together into a strong, resilient fabric that constitutes the CU community.

Moving forward, this self-study, in conjunction with the priorities of PASSHE, enables us to build on our institutional strengths, identify areas for improvement, meet the challenges of the rapidly changing higher education landscape, and serve our students and our stakeholders with a passionate commitment to our mission, vision, and values.

HISTORIES OF BLOOMSBURG, LOCK HAVEN, AND MANSFIELD

Since their inception, Bloomsburg (BL), Lock Haven (LH), and Mansfield (MA) have focused on preparing students for professional and personal success and serving as economic engines in their respective regions. The three schools share a common history rooted in teacher education, serving as state normal schools in the nineteenth century and then state teachers colleges in the mid-twentieth century. In 1960, the institutions became regional comprehensives, operating as state colleges, until the formation of PASSHE redefined the institutions as universities in 1983. Since then, the primary enrollment drivers for each school have typically been in the fields of health professions, business, and education, broadly defined. While the schools share historical commonalities, they also feature niche areas and signature programs that distinguish their presence in the region.

INTEGRATION AND THE FORMATION OF COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

PASSHE was established in 1983 through its enabling legislation, Act 188, bringing 14 public universities under one umbrella. Since then, PASSHE's overarching structure remained unchanged until the 2017-18 system redesign launch followed by Act 50 of 2020, which authorized the Board of Governors (BOG) to restructure PASSHE's institutions through a consultative and transparent process. The resulting integration of three universities in the west (California, Clarion, and Edinboro) and three universities in the northeast (Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield) was an unprecedented change, reducing the number of PASSHE universities to ten.

Combining three separate institutions with long and proud histories into a single, multi-campus university is a decidedly complex, ongoing process expected to be completed over a five-to-seven-year period. Initial research, documented in the northeast implementation plan, involved the participation of 589 students, faculty, staff, and administrators in 16 working groups and 135 subgroups. The integration process has required intensive planning, in-depth discussions, and mutual cooperation from a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, alumni, administrators, system officials, bargaining units, local community leaders, the council of trustees at each institution, PASSHE's Board of Governors, state legislators, institutional and program accreditors,

state and federal agencies, and the foundations affiliated with each university, among many others. From the very outset and throughout the ongoing integration process, MSCHE was consulted to ensure proper procedures were followed, including the submission of the complex substantive change request to enable integration to move forward. While BL, LH, and MA shared many similarities given their origins as normal schools and state teachers colleges and their status as PASSHE universities, there were also significant differences in curricular design, academic organization, operational procedures, technology platforms, and local university "cultures." To put it broadly, it became immediately apparent in the early planning stages that "the way we do things" on one campus was not the way things were done on the other two. In addition, while there were some working relationships already in place across CU, for the most part, individuals on one campus or location did not know very many of their colleagues (if any) on the other two. Nevertheless, our internal and external stakeholders pitched in, formed close working relationships, and took up the challenge. To assist with the integration process, consultants were engaged to facilitate planning and track progress with 97% (nearly 125) high-level milestones completed by the July 1, 2022, integration date. Figure I.1 names a few of the major tasks accomplished by or after the July 1 date.

Figure I.1: Integration Accomplishments

- Mission, vision, and values statements were created, along with a new CU strategic plan.
- After much discussion and planning—including consultation with the governor's office—the councils of trustees at each institution were transitioned to an integrated CU council of trustees.
- A new academic organizational structure was created, and academic departments were combined across CU.
- The university's internal shared governance models were compared and debated, and a new unified model consisting of a university-wide senate with local assemblies was adopted and implemented.
- Faculty came together to synthesize three curricula into a single program array and devised teach-out plans for legacy programs.
- A new general education (GE) model was adopted after considerable review and discussion.
- A transitional and permanent institution-wide assessment oversight structure was developed and implemented.
- Three different student information systems (Colleague, Jenzabar, and PeopleSoft) were transitioned to a fourth (Banner OneSIS), just one of nearly 200 technology changes and integrations that were necessary to unify operations across the university.
- Budgets were integrated into a single CU budget in SAP, the enterprise resource planning software.
- Policies and procedures were reviewed and synthesized.
- Workflows were mapped and reviewed, and best practices were implemented.
- Three separate institutional websites were consolidated into a single CU website.

As a result of these intensive efforts, BL, LH, and MA now operate as a single, integrated institution—Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania—with all the campuses and locations working together to fulfill the institution's mission:

> Our hard-working and determined students are at the heart of everything we do. Commonwealth University leverages the power of Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield to provide affordable, high-quality education emphasizing high-impact practices, personal and career connections, and inclusivity supporting all learners to succeed in our region and beyond.

Pursuing our mission, vision, and values will benefit our university's most important constituency: its students. In what follows in this introduction, we describe at a high level the following items:

- the formation and dissemination of CU's brand identity
- the development and implementation of CU's program array
- information technology (IT) integrations
- current enrollment data
- diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) efforts
- financial sustainability
- CU's organizational and leadership structure

For this report, when we refer to a CU "campus," we mean BL, LH, and MA, each of the previously independent universities. "Locations" or "affiliated locations" refer to those additional instructional sites closely affiliated with a particular campus. For example, Clearfield is a location affiliated with LH, and Sayre is a location affiliated with MA.

CU BRAND IDENTITY AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

The transition from three legacy institutions to a single multi-campus university necessitated a brand identity shift with which, admittedly, not all stakeholder groups were initially comfortable. Such a response is understandable given that BL, LH, and MA had constituencies that strongly identified with the institutions as separate universities with distinct historical legacies. To assist with the transition away from using the term "university" in association with BL, LH, and MA, CU developed a brand identity style guide to govern the dissemination of our brand identity as Commonwealth University. As a result, CU markets itself as Commonwealth University in print and digital media for prospective student and supporter audiences. Individual campuses and locations of CU are referenced as Commonwealth University-(campus/location), CU-(campus/location), or simply the campus or location name without "university" applied.

The brand identity style guide has been presented to numerous CU bodies, including the council of trustees, the full university-wide senate and its local assemblies, president's cabinet, alumni boards at each campus, divisional and unit meetings, retreats and planning sessions, CU's town hall, and the student government associations. Presentations and communication to the CU community direct members to the strategic communications and marketing SharePoint site to find the brand identity style guide and materials that facilitate ready compliance with the guidelines. CU and campus logos, wordmarks, letterhead, Zoom backgrounds, slide deck templates, email signature templates, and an online stationery store are easily accessible there. Scripts were deployed for answering the phones and were socialized through one of the periodic email reminders about brand identity guidelines.

Consistent with the brand identity style guide, the legacy websites were updated with revised CU logos and wordmarks. With the launch of the unified CU website at commonwealthu.edu on June 25, 2024, the legacy sites found at bloomu.edu, lockhaven.edu, and mansfield.edu have now been superseded. The university continues to own the legacy URLs and redirects any traffic from those sites to commonwealthu.edu. Additional information regarding CU's brand identity and strategic communications may be found in the chapter on Standard II.

CU PROGRAM ARRAY

Of all the changes necessary to achieve the integration of BL, LH, and MA, many would consider the creation of a single CU academic program array to be the most daunting, and with good reason. While the decision could have been made to simply adopt one university's curriculum and declare that to be the CU program array going forward, the faculty and the administration chose the more laborious, but ultimately more rewarding, path: bringing the faculty together across the university to review the existing curricula (including all courses and programs) and to discuss, debate, and ultimately devise a new, integrated program array for CU, with the intention of maximizing educational opportunities for all students and ensuring the relevancy of learning experiences and credentialing pathways.

To establish curricular processes for the integrating universities, the faculty union (APSCUF) and PASSHE agreed to an interim side letter, Article 31.E - Curriculum Committee, authorizing the creation of an interim curriculum committee (ICC). This 12-member body included equal representation from each campus and developed processes for submitting and approving program and course approvals, including general education. The ICC distributed processes and forms following approval at state APSCUF meet and discuss (M&D) and provided ongoing, regular communication with academic leadership and faculty with all relevant updates. The agreed-upon procedures and forms integrated expectations of BOG policies and guidelines. For example, program proposals were required to include student learning objectives, program course checklists, and program degree mappings. A CU curriculum SharePoint site was established to provide easy access to all processes, forms, timelines, tracking, and FAQs. In spring 2023, the ICC transitioned to the permanent university curriculum committee (UCC); collectively, the ICC/UCC approved 296 program proposals (including concentrations) and 2,279 courses as part of the program array integration process.

While a few academic programs were unique to a single campus and thus did not need substantial revision when included in the CU program array, the vast majority of programs had two or three iterations, each with differing course nomenclature, program names and requirements, track and concentration options, and even, in some cases, differences in the degree awarded (BA vs. BS). Working collaboratively over two years, the faculty developed proposals for integrated versions of all majors, minors, and certificates to be included in the CU program array. During this intensive process, every course supporting the CU curriculum was reviewed and updated. In many cases, key strategic partners, including alumni and employers, were engaged to provide input into program design and its relevancy for the employment marketplace. High-impact practices were embedded into the curriculum in alignment with CU's mission

statement, forming a "professional map" for each program. "Legacy" courses were identified and incorporated into teach-out plans for current students remaining in their existing programs, with those courses slated for deletion once the teach-out is completed. The majority of legacy courses were crosswalked to the new CU curriculum to ensure the efficient delivery and assessment of the legacy and CU programs.

While the faculty were coming together to develop the new program array, a separate faculty GE advisory council was commissioned to conduct the necessary research to select a unified GE program. The advisory council analyzed existing campus GE programs, MSCHE guidelines, AAC&U essential learning outcomes, a current literature review, survey feedback, and input from academic administrators. The group narrowed their recommendations to two models: LH's legacy GE program and Shippensburg University's existing GE program. After considerable input and debate regarding these models (including an open comment period, several informational forums, and a non-binding faculty straw poll), the ICC recommended the adoption of Shippensburg's model in early May 2022. The administration approved the recommendation that same month. The new GE curriculum includes five curricular themes (*Foundations*, *Interconnections*, *Citizenship and Responsibility*, *Natural World and Technology*, and *Creativity and Expression*) and 16 program goals aligned with PASSHE's and MSCHE's requirements for GE as well as AAC&U's essential learning outcomes. More detailed information on the GE program, its content, and its alignment with MSCHE expectations is included in the chapter on Standard III.

In conjunction with the curricular review and the development of CU's program array, the administration, faculty, and IT personnel determined the best ways that technology could support the delivery of the array. Where needed, courses were developed to be delivered in different modalities (face-to-face, synchronous online, asynchronous online, blended) to ensure course and program availability was similar regardless of the campus or location. In addition, innovative classrooms with the latest technology were implemented on each campus, including special Zoom classrooms featuring follow-me cameras, high-impact sound, and large LED screens that provide remote students with a closer approximation to being in the classroom physically. Special "weConnect" classrooms were implemented to provide an immersive setting that erases the boundaries between remote and in-person experiences, providing high-definition video and sound in a collaborative setting where students and faculty work together interactively across CU. The chapters on Standards III and V provide more information about distance education delivery, training, and assessment.

CU also implemented a workforce development office aimed at providing non-credit training programs in high-demand fields such as healthcare, IT, and business. Recognizing that college-level learning also occurs outside the traditional classroom, this office partners with academic departments to offer students the opportunity to earn academic credit for prior work, training, and life knowledge and apply those credits toward an associate or bachelor's degree.

The culmination of these curricular efforts resulted in the launch of the CU program array in fall 2023, with 99% of programs available for enrollment by incoming students, transfer students, and those current students who chose, through advisement, to shift from their legacy program to a newly implemented CU program. The nursing programs, whose integration required a slightly different timeline due to specialized program accreditation and the state nursing board, launched its new curriculum in fall 2024.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATIONS

With the integration of BL, LH, and MA into Commonwealth University, IT became a fundamental driver for realizing the vision of the new university. Nearly 200 technology integrations or major changes were developed and implemented, including the PASSHE-selected new student information system (SIS), Banner OneSIS.

In 2021, an IT assessment was completed identifying which critical systems should be updated first. Specifically, the acquisition and implementation of a new customer relationship management system unifying CU was paramount to student recruiting and enrollment management. The university selected Slate and completed implementation in early 2022. The merger of three systems into one instance was the over-arching goal with an emphasis on cloud-based implementations for greater flexibility and cost optimization. In January 2023, the creation of one new instance of Microsoft 365 was completed following the decommissioning of the three separate instances of Office 365. Immediately following Microsoft 365, all non-athletics employees were moved to a new email address that captured the new university name. As result, @commonwealthu.edu email addresses were made as primary prior to the beginning of the spring 2023 semester. In spring 2022, as a member of the first PASSHE transition cohort, CU began

implementing a new PASSHE-wide SIS, Banner OneSIS. Uniquely at CU, this effort required the integration of three disparate, on-premise operating SISs into a single, uniform, cloud-based SIS. This effort was unique in that no other PASSHE school had these circumstances, and Ellucian Banner had never before conducted an implementation of this nature, transitioning from three separate systems into one. Full implementation was completed by May 2024.

Additional technology projects included the implementation of 145 enhanced videoconferencing, Zoom, and weConnect classrooms enabling diverse, all-inclusive instruction irrespective of geographic location of students and faculty; implementation of a single cloud-based help desk solution and a unified organization; implementation of a single, unified active directory; improved data center facility and network infrastructure at MA including wired and wireless networks; standardized policies and procedures; establishment of a new cybersecurity function; and integration of systems across the university. Further discussion of IT infrastructure, sufficiency, access, funding, and integrations may be found in the chapter on Standard VI.

ENROLLMENT AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Many higher education institutions across Pennsylvania and the nation experienced record high enrollments that peaked around 2010, followed by a decade of slow decline that has not bounced back post-COVID-19. The enrollments for CU and at each campus have mirrored this trend with enrollment declines tracking with or somewhat greater than the decline in traditional-age students. Declining student demographics and diminished state support resulted in financial challenges among many higher education institutions—including PASSHE universities—prompting PASSHE to implement the system redesign process to address enrollment challenges, expand learning opportunities, support student success, and ensure financial sustainability. CU's enrollment trends overall and by campus are shown in Table I.1. Headcount enrollment from fall 2023 to fall 2024 was essentially flat.

Table I.1: Headcount Enrollment by Campus and Level							
Campus	Student Level	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Bloomsburg	Graduate	697	696	676	636	694	732
	Undergraduate	7,992	7,740	7,069	6,804	6,485	6,474
	Total	8,689	8,436	7,745	7,440	7,179	7,206
Lock Haven	Graduate	410	436	454	411	414	488
	Undergraduate	2,752	2,727	2,466	2,449	2,202	2,214
	Total	3,162	3,163	2,920	2,860	2,616	2,702
Mansfield	Graduate	23	12	13	14	11	25
	Undergraduate	1,640	1,780	1,790	1,779	1,302	1,170
	Total	1,663	1,792	1,803	1,793	1,313	1,195
Grand Total		13,514	13,391	12,468	12,093	11,108	11,103

Source: Fall Census (15th Day of Semester)

The institutional research (IR) enrollment dashboards provide charts and tables that depict CU's enrollment demographics. Overall, enrollment is predominantly in-state, undergraduate with modest growth in the graduate student population over the last seven years. For fall 2024, all campuses enrolled a greater percentage of Female (60.8-61.8%) and White (79.54-82.31%) students, with LH and MA being equally as diverse (around 12.6-12.7% URM students) and BL slightly higher at 14% URM students. Pell-eligible students represent a greater percentage of the MA (42.9%) population than students enrolled at BL (31.3%) and LH (36%). First-generation students (denoted by those who completed parents' education level for 2023 FAFSA filers) represent 32.7% of students across CU. MA's campus is more residential (49.9% on-campus students), than LH (28.6%) and BL (41%).

Moving forward, goals are set to increase enrollment in both the undergraduate and graduate student populations through the ongoing refinement of a net price and merit-aid strategy that increases CU's affordability. Enhanced marketing efforts of the expanded academic program array to broader regions in Pennsylvania and neighboring states will draw a more diverse population. Strategies to increase persistence are also designed to increase overall enrollment. CU projects overall enrollment to stabilize within the next two recruitment cycles as we continue to refine our enrollment management strategies. See Standard IV for discussion of student recruitment, retention, and achievement.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING

CU continuously engages with faculty, staff, and students to advance the institution's goals and has elevated DEIB as a core commitment in the strategic plan. As stated in the strategic plan, DEIB encompasses central guiding principles and efforts to ensure CU students and employees feel valued, supported, and empowered. The corresponding strategic plan priority, *Welcoming and Inclusive Community*, has as its overall goal the fostering of an inclusive and welcoming university culture and the development and strengthening of connections among our multiple campuses and locations and within our local communities. Our commitment to DEIB, as embedded in the strategic plan, enriches our CU community and is instrumental to our institutional success.

We uphold our commitment to DEIB throughout the CU community by:

- Actively supporting and promoting the intellectual and personal growth of our students, inside and outside of the classroom
- Providing workshops, training, and programs designed to broaden the knowledge and understanding of DEIB within our CU community
- Ensuring that all learning and living environments throughout CU are welcoming and capable of serving all individuals

CU's office of DEIB leads and supports university-wide initiatives focused on the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty, staff, and student body, while fostering an inclusive and equitable CU community. The positive change achieved through focused initiatives and purposeful activities and events helps to create and sustain an inclusive learning, living, and working environment where all members of the CU community feel that they are welcomed, valued, and supported. DEIB-related efforts include CU's participation in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities' (AASCU's) 15-institution transformation accelerator cohort as described in Standard II. In addition, CU's DEIB web page includes links to DEIB-affiliated clubs, centers, and commissions on the BL, LH, and MA campuses, along with a calendar of events and an incident reporting form.

References to DEIB are woven throughout all chapters as they relate to the relevant standard. Please note that the DEIB office added "belonging" to its name during the 2022-23 academic year, the same year that DEIB was established as a core commitment in the strategic plan. Previously, it was the DEI office. This document includes references to both DEIB and DEI; the latter abbreviation is used primarily when referencing external offices and initiatives (for example, PASSHE's DEI office and DEI mini-grants).

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

As articulated in BOG Policy 2019-01-A: University Financial Sustainability, PASSHE "has established annual reporting mechanisms that allow all stakeholders to have greater awareness of each university's academic, financial, and operational conditions." One of these mechanisms, the comprehensive planning process (CPP), is an annual and multi-year planning and target-setting process to monitor financial conditions and strategize on revenue generation and cost containment measures, with the goal of improving CU's net financial position. Complementary to the strategic plan, the CPP serves as a system and university planning toolset, capturing university goals in areas that the BOG has prioritized. The CPP includes strategies for measuring and achieving those goals through board-affirmed metrics, the program array, net price strategies, and financial strategies. The BOG policy and CPP are intended to ensure each university's long-term financial sustainability, which is critical for PASSHE's long-term stability.

FY2022-23 financial metrics were mixed, with the viability ratio meeting the target level and cash balances just under target levels, showing evidence of the university's good reserve levels. However, continued declining enrollment trends resulted in negative operating margins. Additionally, ongoing integration efforts, the lack of a full awareness of the physical condition of LH and MA, and faculty CBA costs have created unforeseen expenses. As revenue and expenses are the primary drivers influencing financial strategies, and with the diminishing Pennsylvania student population affecting our main revenue source, budgetary measures must focus on controlling expenses related to personnel, operations, facilities, and student aid. Full details are included in the chapter on Standard VI.

Stabilizing enrollment levels is essential to ensuring the university's long-term financial sustainability, and CU has implemented actions to achieve that end. Institutional student aid plans were expanded in 2023-24, and ongoing adjustments to institutional aid will ensure fiscal and enrollment stability by 2027-28. Thus far, CU's institutional aid strategy has resulted in an increase of Pell-eligible students and URM students from FY2022-23 to FY2023-24, and a

reduction in student unmet need to $8,100, lower than the system average. Increases were achieved in first-time, first-year enrollment and overall graduate-level enrollment. Retention rates for first-to-second-year students, URM students, and Pell students improved. CU is developing pathways and expanding student support services to increase persistence and reduce the time to degree, which should reduce the total cost to the student and improve enrollment, retention, and graduation rates. As discussed in Standard IV, results from these initiatives are encouraging, with 2023-24 enrollment levels stabilizing based on an increase in new students and CU's overall retention-to-second-year rates.

Sufficient human resources, technology, and facilities exist and, in some cases, exceed requirements to accommodate current and planned enrollment. Combining rightsizing with recruitment and retention initiatives will align resource areas with long-term enrollment projections. PASSHE's and CU's processes for evaluating and monitoring resources, especially financial, allow CU to adjust during each budget cycle as necessary to address any concerns.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

With the inception of Commonwealth University on July 1, 2022, the institution's initial organizational structure consisted of five divisions: academic affairs, enrollment management, fiscal affairs, student success and campus life, and advancement. The academic affairs division featured five university-wide colleges; previously separate academic departments were combined into single departments spanning across the multi-campus institution and assigned to the appropriate college. On April 17, 2024, the president announced in a university-wide email that the academic organizational structure would be further refined to achieve additional efficiencies and promote collaborations across previously separate units. The reorganization was effective with the 2024-25 academic year. Per the reorganization, the previous five academic colleges now function as three colleges:

- The College of Science and Technology and the College of Health Professions have combined to become the College of Health, Science, and Technology
- The College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities and the College of Education and Human Studies have joined forces to become the College of Arts, Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences
- The Zeigler College of Business remains a separate college but restructured its five departments into two

Each of the three colleges is led by a dean, assisted by one or more associate deans. Academic department restructurings, including the business departments mentioned above, reduced the number of departments from 28 to 19. This departmental reorganization was achieved mainly through combining departments that have close disciplinary associations. For example, the department of English and the department of languages and cultures will now operate as one unit: the department of languages, literatures, and writing.

Additional refinements were made to the divisional structures. As announced in the president's email communication distributed on August 1, 2024, units previously housed within the student success and campus life division are now integrated into academic affairs or enrollment management. CU's five divisions therefore consist of academic affairs, administration, enrollment management and student affairs, fiscal affairs, and advancement, with the administration division encompassing units such as strategic communication and human resources/labor relations. The chapter on Standard VI includes additional information regarding projected savings resulting from this reorganization. Figure I.2 shows the high-level structure, with each functional division led by a vice president.

Figure I.2: High-Level Organizational Structure
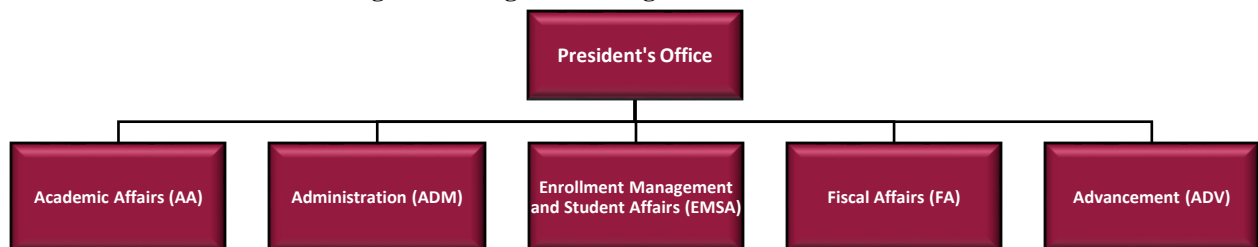
Within this basic structure, the president's office encompasses the functions of institutional effectiveness, facilities management, and executive administrative support. The president, chief of staff, divisional vice presidents, and functional leads of core operations, a collective known as the president's cabinet, remain accountable for planning, assessment, and resource allocation for the implementation of institutional, divisional, and unit action plans. In

addition, with the CU president and provost both based at BL, the LH and MA campuses each have a designated "campus administrator," a senior-level manager who serves as the administrative point of contact for that campus.

SELF-STUDY INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

While working to unify programs, policies, processes, and systems, CU embarked on the MSCHE self-study process that follows a complex substantive change like integration. CU members attended the fall 2022 MSCHE Self-Study Institute and leveraged engagement strategies used for CU's strategic plan to identify self-study institutional priorities and intended outcomes. This broadly consultative process used surveys, interviews, retreats, and town hall meetings to identify and vet the strategic plan and self-study priorities. The presentations explained the importance of identifying institutional priorities that are meaningful, forward looking, and focused on continuous improvement. The sessions described the value of setting intended outcomes to guide a meaningful process and assess the self-study process. The process concluded by adopting four self-study institutional priorities (see Table I.2) and four intended outcomes.

Table I.2: Self-Study Institutional Priorities Linked to MSCHE Standards/ROA and CU Priority Areas		
Institutional Priority	Link to Standards for Accreditation and ROA	Link to CU Strategic Plan Priority Areas
1. Explore curricular innovations, career pathways, high-impact practices, and holistic student support strategies designed to address goals for recruitment, retention, and credential completion	Standards I, II, III, IV, V, VI Requirements 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15	Academic Excellence and Innovation Student Success University Success Welcoming and Inclusive Community
2. Analyze survey results, studies, and data to inform institution-wide DEIB initiatives designed to attract a more broadly diverse employee complement and student body and cultivate a more welcoming community	Standards I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII Requirements 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15	Academic Excellence and Innovation Student Success University Success Welcoming and Inclusive Community
3. Evaluate possible revenue generation and cost containment measures to achieve greater financial sustainability	Standards I, II, III, IV, VI, VII Requirements 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15	Academic Excellence and Innovation Student Success University Success Welcoming and Inclusive Community
4. Examine survey data and strategies that will promote more effective communication with internal and external constituencies	Standards I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII Requirements 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 14	Academic Excellence and Innovation Student Success University Success Welcoming and Inclusive Community

SELF-STUDY APPROACH AND PROCESS

CU chose a standards-based approach to the self-study process to facilitate achievement of the intended outcomes and an organized and comprehensive inquiry and coverage of the standards, criteria, and ROA. CU embraced the three intended outcomes prescribed by MSCHE and chose an additional outcome. The four intended outcomes are listed in Table I.3 and linked to the MSCHE standards and ROA and to the strategic plan priority areas.

Table I.3: Self-Study Intended Outcomes Linked to MSCHE Standards/ROA and CU Priority Areas		
Intended Outcome	Link to Standards for Accreditation and ROA	Link to Strategic Plan Priority Areas
1. Demonstrate how the institution meets the Commission's standards for accreditation and requirements of affiliation (ROA)	Standards I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII Requirements 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15	Academic Excellence and Innovation Student Success University Success Welcoming and Inclusive Community
2. Focus on continuous improvement in the attainment of the institution's mission and its institutional priorities	Standards I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII Requirements 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15	Academic Excellence and Innovation Student Success University Success Welcoming and Inclusive Community
3. Engage the institutional community in an inclusive and transparent self-appraisal process that actively and deliberately seeks to involve members from all areas of the institutional community	Standards I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII Requirements 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15	Academic Excellence and Innovation Student Success University Success Welcoming and Inclusive Community
4. Use insights and data to build sustainable planning and assessment structures, policies, and practices across the integrated institution	Standards I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII Requirements 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15	Academic Excellence and Innovation Student Success University Success Welcoming and Inclusive Community

Steering Committee and Working Groups

The president appointed two MSCHE steering committee (SC) co-chairs to lead the 24-member SC and eight working groups (WGs) through the self-study process. The co-chairs invited qualified faculty and staff, with the president's endorsement, to chair WGs and to serve on the SC. The SC included the co-chairs, WG chairs, a student, and administrative staff. To support the intended outcome of "a self-study process that engages the institutional community in an inclusive and transparent process," the co-chairs also solicited expressions of interest from the faculty, staff, and students to serve on the WGs. Altogether, nearly 70 CU community members served on the MSCHE SC and WGs, and the entire complement actively supported the self-study process. Seven WGs were each assigned one standard to review. The eighth WG assembled the evidence inventory and the verification of compliance with accreditation relevant federal regulations report (i.e., *institutional federal compliance report*). Each WG addressed both a general WG charge and a charge related to its specific responsibilities for reviewing a standard and/or compiling evidence.

In fall 2023, the WGs conducted gap analyses to identify and document any compliance issues or gaps that should be addressed. In spring 2024, the WGs developed WG reports comprising analytical narratives of their research and identifying areas of strength, opportunities for change and innovation, and suggestions for improvement. The WG reports and draft evidence inventory were posted on the MSCHE reaccreditation web page in mid-March 2024, and the CU community was invited to provide feedback anonymously through an online comments box, by contacting a SC member, or during each campus's spring 2024 local assembly. All comments were shared with WG chairs, and the WG reports were revised as appropriate. From May through July 2024, the WG reports evolved into chapter drafts as the SC co-chairs coordinated efforts with WG chairs and key university personnel to complete the narrative. An introduction and chapter drafts were collated into the draft self-study, and the CU community was invited to give input into the draft sent to the team chair in September 2024 and a revised draft in November 2024. Both team chair and team site visit dates were selected, and according to MSCHE guidelines, self-study documents were shared.

Timeline and Communication

The Self-Study Design included a three-year timeline of key steps, and CU implemented the self-study process according to the timeline. CU also implemented a comprehensive communication plan to inform and solicit input from key constituencies and committee chairs. As part of the plan, the CU MSCHE Reaccreditation 2025 web page was established. It houses information about the MSCHE and its standards; CU's reaccreditation and self-study process, including links to the SC and WGs, communication plan, and timeline; and draft and final documents for review. The communication plan included ongoing updates through various media, at CU-wide forums, and with faculty, staff, and student governance structures. Special initiatives ensued to create and distribute to students short informative videos about CU's strategic plan and the reaccreditation process and a MSCHE course shell in Brightspace that houses the videos and quizzes. Faculty were encouraged to use these resources in fall and spring first-year seminars and other classes. MSCHE information was shared in CU Succeed, the Triad emails, electronic boards, and flyers.

ORGANIZATION OF SELF-STUDY REPORT

Following this introduction, the requirements of affiliation (ROA) section includes a table mapping each ROA to the standard(s) and/or evidence inventory where addressed. The remainder of the self-study is organized by standard. Each chapter begins with references to self-study institutional priorities and the ROA addressed. Each chapter narrative includes (1) an introduction; (2) discussion and examples as appropriate to the university's compliance with each standard and criterion, with improvements made or in progress; and (3) a conclusion that provides major findings and opportunities for improvement.

Each chapter includes underlined text indicating that one or more documents related to that text are listed in the evidence inventory document and exist in the MSCHE portal. As a companion document, the evidence inventory includes a list of all documents by standard/criterion in the order the documents appear first in the self-study chapter/section, though the documents may be referenced multiple times in each section. The evidence inventory also includes a "notes" column to offer additional information about the evidence (e.g., page numbers indicating where to find important information). The university updated the self-study report with fall 2024 census data, but most other statistics are reported for 2023-24, since final year-end data will not be available until after the self-study submission date. The MSCHE portal includes evidence collected through that date. A glossary of acronyms, terms, and definitions is included at the end of the document. Overall, this self-study report provides a thoughtful examination of policies, processes, structures, and actions to demonstrate CU's ongoing commitment to fulfilling its mission and goals.

REQUIREMENTS OF AFFILIATION

To maintain Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) accreditation, an institution must demonstrate that it fully meets the requirements of affiliation (ROA). CU's compliance with the ROA is demonstrated through the self-study report, evidence inventory documentation, and verification of compliance with accreditation relevant federal regulations report (i.e., *institutional federal compliance report*). Table I.4 references the sections of the self-study report that address each ROA. The beginning of each self-study chapter also references the ROA in italics below each standard's general statement of requirements.

Table I.4: Requirements of Affiliation Mapping			
ROA #	**SELF-STUDY SECTION**	**ROA #**	**SELF-STUDY SECTION**
1. Authorized to operate	Introduction Standard I Evidence Inventory	**9.** Offers rigorous, coherent, and assessed programs	Standard III Standard IV Standard V Evidence Inventory
2. Operational with actively enrolled students	Introduction Evidence Inventory	**10.** Integrates key goals into institutional planning	Standard I Standard III Standard IV Standard V Standard VI Evidence Inventory
3. Graduates students	Not applicable	**11.** Has documented its financial resources, funding base, and plans for financial development	Standard VI Evidence Inventory
4. Communicates with the MSCHE	Self-study (all sections) Evidence Inventory	**12.** Discloses legally constituted governance structures	Standard I Standard II Standard VII Evidence Inventory
5. Complies with government laws and regulations	Standard II Verification of Compliance with Accreditation Relevant Federal Regulations Report Evidence Inventory	**13.** Avoids conflict of interest	Standard II Standard VII Evidence Inventory
6. Complies with MSCHE, interregional, and inter-institutional policies	Standard II Verification of Compliance with Accreditation Relevant Federal Regulations Report Evidence Inventory	**14.** Makes available accurate, fair, and complete information	Standard II Verification of Compliance with Accreditation Relevant Federal Regulations Report Evidence Inventory
7. Has mission and goals	Introduction Standard I Evidence Inventory	**15.** Has sufficient core of faculty and professionals	Standard III Standard IV Standard VII Evidence Inventory
8. Evaluates educational and other programs	Standard III Standard IV Standard V Standard VI Evidence Inventory		

STANDARD I: MISSION AND GOALS

The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

[Standard I addresses *Self-Study Institutional Priorities* for Academic Programs and Support; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Financial Sustainability; and Communication and *Requirements of Affiliation* 1, 7, 10, 11, and 12]

INTRODUCTION

PASSHE's mission is set forth by its enabling legislation, Act 188. As member institutions, BL, LH, and MA had established similar mission statements that aligned with Act 188, especially with PASSHE's primary purpose of providing a high-quality education at the lowest possible cost. Commonwealth University's (CU's) unified strategic statements align with PASSHE's purpose and primary mission as stated in Act 188, placing learning and student success at the center of all we do. PASSHE's policies and procedures also guide how the institutions operate sustainably to deliver on the promises of this legislation.

MISSION AND GOALS (CRITERION 1)

Development and Approval of Mission and Goals

CU's mission and goals are clearly defined in the mission, vision, values, and strategic plan and evolved from a consultative, transparent process. CU's inaugural strategic statements were developed over a two-year time period. In 2021-22, CU commissioned Blue Beyond Consulting (BBC) to facilitate a year-long engagement process with key internal and external constituencies, including a cross-campus mission, vision, values steering committee, to arrive at the strategic statements that were endorsed by the Council of Trustees (COT) as documented in the August 9, 2022, meeting notes. BBC undertook significant document review to build a common context and engagement strategies to identify shared aspirations and align mission, vision, and values statements. Key involvement activities included:

- Two senior cabinet workshops to envision statements and build relationships and trust across CU
- 17 one-on-one stakeholder interviews to gather input from leadership teams, administrators, deans, department chairs, trustees, and key student and alumni leaders
- 23 focus groups with students, faculty, staff, alumni leaders, community members, employers, and trustees
- Two surveys for students, parents, alumni, faculty, and staff to determine constituencies' future priorities
- Collaboration with a cross-campus mission, vision, and values steering committee
- Campus visits to meet in person with key constituents
- Presentation of and conversation about the mission, vision, and values working drafts for trustees

Building upon those initial engagement strategies, BBC worked in 2022-23 on strategic planning in consultation with a three-person core team, president's cabinet, and the broadly representative strategic planning committee (SPC). During the first three months, BBC consulted with the core team, president's cabinet, and key stakeholders to seat the SPC, which included representatives from employee groups, alumni, and boards. BBC conducted background research and interviewed stakeholder groups. The fall concluded with an extensive review of PASSHE and CU plans, metrics, research studies, survey results, MSCHE standards and reports, dashboards, and the strategic plan survey results collected to inform institutional priorities and goals.

The SPC met in three retreats, and presentations were provided at university-wide forums to review and refine the strategic plan framework. Following a March 2023 survey of faculty, staff, students, and alumni to validate draft documents, the SPC met in April and refined the plan before presenting it and soliciting final feedback at local assemblies and the May COT meeting. The university-wide senate endorsed the five-year strategic plan at its inaugural meeting on September 14, 2023, and the COT endorsed it on October 6, 2023.

The mission, vision, values, core commitments, and priorities align with Act 188, PASSHE's enabling legislation; Act 50 of 2020, authorizing legislation for integration; 2025 state system priorities and goals; and MSCHE standards and ROA, making them relevant to higher education expectations. The mission, vision, values, strategic priorities, and core commitments form the strategic plan that identifies student success as central to the purpose of our multi-campus institution. The mission and vision highlight key factors related to student success, such as the collaborative strength

of our campuses, the accessibility and affordability of our institution, the relevance of high-impact practices and career-related experiences, and the importance of providing a welcoming, inclusive learning community. The values elaborate on these key elements of student success, setting expectations for faculty, staff, and students as we embark on this educational journey together. The strategic plan clearly articulates CU's three core commitments, which are threaded throughout the four priorities, goals, initiatives, and metrics. The strategic statements are listed in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Mission, Vision, Values, Core Commitments, and Priorities

Commonwealth University Mission
Our hard-working and determined students are at the heart of everything we do. Commonwealth University leverages the power of Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield to provide affordable, high-quality education emphasizing high-impact practices, personal and career connections, and inclusivity supporting all learners to succeed in our region and beyond.

Commonwealth University Vision
Commonwealth University will be a premier regional public institution that supports and prepares all students for success in the global workforce by providing an accessible and transformative educational experience.

Commonwealth University Values
- Student-Centered
- Welcoming and Inclusive
- Accessible
- Innovative and Exceptional
- Collaborative
- Resilient

Core Commitments
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)**
  Serve as central guiding principles and efforts that ensure all students and university personnel can feel valued, supported, and empowered
- **Strategic Communications**
  Ensure effective communication across the organization while elevating our reputation externally
- **Thriving Students, Faculty, and Staff**
  Foster a culture that embraces growth and well-being so that students and university personnel can thrive

Strategic Priorities and Goal Statements
- **Academic Excellence and Innovation**
  Provide an innovative and transformative educational experience that prepares graduates and credential earners to succeed in meaningful careers and beyond
- **Student Success**
  Provide holistic and inclusive support to meet the needs of all students and prepare them for personal and professional success
- **University Success**
  Ensure fiscal sustainability, increase enrollment, and develop cutting-edge systems and processes to attract and retain diverse students, faculty, and staff
- **Welcoming and Inclusive Community**
  Create an inclusive and welcoming university culture while developing and strengthening connections among our multiple locations and within our local communities

Institutional goals include general education learning goals and goals stated in the comprehensive planning process (CPP) narrative. The CPP is a comprehensive planning tool that evolved from PASSHE's redesign initiatives to align PASSHE and university goals toward greater financial sustainability as guided by BOG Policy 2019-01-A: University Financial Sustainability Policy. The CPP serves as a multi-year planning process that integrates academic program planning, university goals, and financial and budget projections to support programs, goals, and sustainability. CU's CPP sustainability goals align with both PASSHE and CU priorities as discussed under Criterion 2.

Internal and External Contexts and Constituencies

The mission and goals also address external constituencies (e.g., boards, alumni, community members, business and industry professionals, and non-profit and governmental agencies) as well as internal constituencies and contexts evolving from collaborative participation of key stakeholders. Those groups offer various perspectives informed by institution-wide and program assessments, market analysis, and professional experience. Volunteer boards and program advisory councils include employers, community members, students, and alumni; provide advice about strategic needs and demands; strengthen communication; and connect internal with external constituencies. These interactions formally and informally influence planning at all levels. For example, during 2023-24, the electronics engineering technology advisory board members assisted faculty in revising three program student learning outcomes,

delivered four in-person presentations to students, provided feedback on year-end course projects, and hired four junior students into summer-fall paid co-op programs. Program changes initiated with input from CU's PreK-16 council and IU17 BLaST superintendent advisory council resulted in establishing a consistent 2.8 GPA threshold for initial teacher preparation admission; infusing more social, emotional, and positive behavior supports in curricular, field, and clinical experiences; and enhancing teacher preparation curricula special needs (exceptionalities) and English language learners to meet Pennsylvania Department of Education assurances and competencies (e.g., professional ethics, structured literacy, and culturally relevant and sustaining education).

All strategic plan priorities relate to internal and external contexts and constituencies. Such priorities as *Academic Excellence and Innovation* and *Student Success* have direct implications on our faculty, staff, and students in terms of the education provided and pedagogical and support strategies for doing so. These priorities also acknowledge the positive and influential impact of community organizations, educational entities, non-profit organizations, and businesses. Priorities for *University Success* and *Welcoming and Inclusive Community* emphasize the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) and require consistent and transparent internal communication while developing positive and strategic relationships with the surrounding communities. CU's mission addresses external and internal contexts with a student-centered approach to preparing graduates for success in our region and beyond as they contribute to the global workforce.

Guiding Decision Making

The mission and strategic plan core commitments, priorities, and goals guide decision making through the established action planning, budgeting, resource allocation, and assessment processes as shown in Figure 1.2. The strategic plan priorities and core commitments align with the CPP and shape divisional and unit plans. Strategic plan core commitments, priorities, and goals directly tie to divisional and unit goals, initiatives, measures, and targets as stated in annual reports. The planning process uses both a top-down and bottom-up approach where actions that support the priorities and goals may evolve from innovative thinking within unit, divisional, cabinet, board, and committee meetings. The actions are informed by external factors and internal assessments, and those compelled by PASSHE, accrediting bodies, statewide educational needs, occupational demand, demographic trends, and economic conditions.

Figure 1.2: High-Level Planning, Budgeting, and Assessment Processes
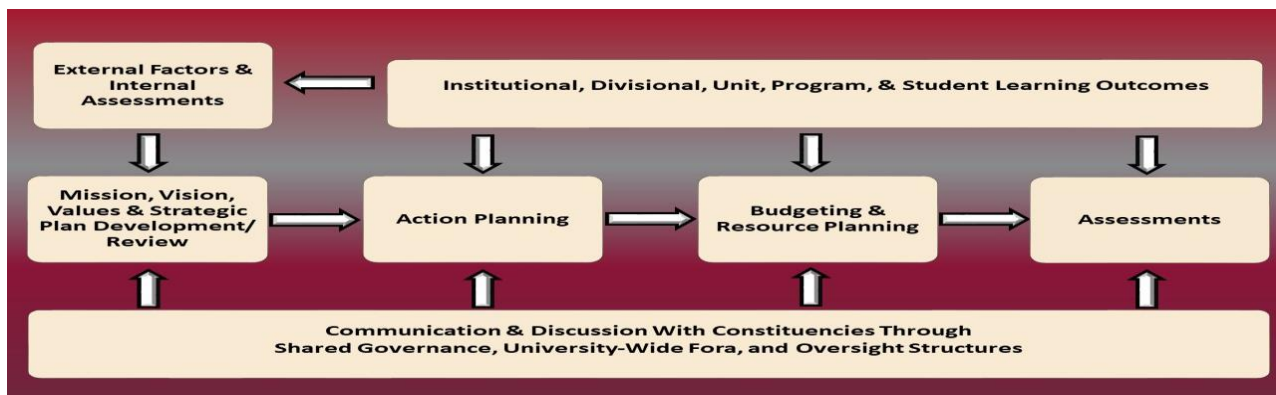
As described in the institutional effectiveness plan, linking actions to resources ensues through budgeting and various plans like the CPP, capital budget, operating budgets, and resource plans (e.g., technology, facilities, and staffing complement plans). Annual budgeting for divisions directly ties resources to advancing the mission and strategic plan. For example, $26.7M of operating funds were allocated for institutional aid toward increasing enrollment and over $3M were invested in advanced classroom technology to elevate academic excellence.

Input into the resource plans happens at various levels in the organization through budget requests, line-item requests, and various meetings. Although assessment of action plans, resource allocation, program outcomes, and student learning outcomes is formalized annually at year end, ongoing communication and discourse takes place throughout the year with key constituencies. The president's report and campus alumni magazines feature the mission and goals with prominent initiatives aligned to them. Discussion occurs in regularly scheduled and ad-hoc meetings especially through university-wide forums, shared governance convenings, and committees like the senate, local assemblies,

town halls, meet and discuss, and SPC meetings. Retreats, planning sessions, divisional/unit meetings, and forums establish a means by which internal stakeholders know and support these strategic statements.

For example, the university participated in a PASSHE-administered climate survey, analyzed the results, and reported the findings at the October 2022 town hall and on the web. At the town hall, the DEIB officer explained how survey findings informed immediate actions and progress to create a DEIB plan, designate permanent DEIB staff at MA, establish the multicultural resource center at LH, and create a diversity outreach and retention position at BL. Other progress points included forging strategic partnerships with educational and community partners for recruitment and retention (e.g., MA's Southern Tioga School District and BL's Columbia Child Development Program) and collaborating on the system-wide diversity summit, an annual professional development conference.

Support for Scholarly Inquiry and Creative Activity

Underlying the mission and especially the priority for *Academic Excellence and Innovation* is the pursuit of and support for scholarly inquiry, creative activity, professional growth, and innovation across the institution. Two bulleted points under *Academic Excellence and Innovation* speak directly to the support of scholarship and creative activity:

- Enhance and support student-faculty engagement through the expansion of scholarly and creative works
- Invest in employee professional development to advance scholarship and creative works, innovation, and effectiveness

Described in Standard III, support structures for faculty and students are provided through the library, which supports academic and scholarly success with four physical locations, interlibrary loan, and online databases. Support also occurs through the center for teaching and learning, office of research and sponsored programs, faculty professional development grants, grant writing support through our partnership with the Indiana University of PA Research Institute (IUP-RI), and research scholarships for students. As an example of illustrating the impact of such support, a faculty member in the department of exceptionalities earned three grants totaling $847,370 during the 2022-23 fiscal year to assist our regional school districts and nonprofits with initiatives focused on youth mental health. The faculty member's grants were supported in part by both the office of research and sponsored programs and IUP-RI, which provided pre- and post-award services. In addition, policies and/or procedures on evaluation, promotion, tenure, and faculty awards include provisions that value scholarly activity, creativity, and professional development. The GE program, CU's catalog (e.g., including degree maps), and research and scholarly events also emphasize the importance of scholarly activity appropriate to various disciplines. Collectively, these support mechanisms for the mission and goals, among others, elevate scholarly activity as appropriate to the university's Carnegie Classification of Master's Colleges and Universities: Larger Programs.

Publicity and Awareness of Mission and Goals

CU's mission, vision, values, and strategic plan are highly visible on the web and in key documents. Internal and external stakeholders can view the CU mission, vision, and values statements and the strategic plan documents by hovering on the "About" tab on the CU home page and choosing the links for "Mission, Vision, and Values" and "Strategic Plan." The "About" dropdown menu also includes links for the president and leadership; diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging; and the university senate and governance, among others. The page for the president and his leadership team includes additional links for the student handbook, the president's report, *Common Ground*: the president's podcast, and town halls. The information provided is updated regularly throughout the year to ensure accuracy. The mission statement is also published in widely distributed documents like the student handbook and on the HR web page; results are discussed regularly at institution-wide meetings (e.g., town hall) and oversight committees (e.g., the SPC).

Periodic Evaluation of Mission and Goals

The information provided in Criterion 4 describes in more detail the assessment process for evaluating the mission and goals, which happens more comprehensively every five years with periodic review throughout and at the end of each year. The CU community can offer feedback at any time via the strategicplanning@commonwealthu.edu email or through the web-based feedback form. Key performance indicators (KPIs) and other strategic plan metrics are presented through dashboards, spreadsheets, and reports to gauge progress on achieving mission and goals. The feedback and outcomes guide the SPC's conversations on what, if any, changes to recommend to leadership about the strategic statements, initiatives, or measures. The high-level KPIs are shown in Table 1.1 and, across all four priorities,

address such areas as enrollment, student achievement goals and data (disaggregated by URM and Pell), financial sustainability, communication, and DEIB.

Table 1.1: Strategic Priorities and Key Performance Indicators	
Academic Excellence and Innovation • Headcount Enrollment • Retention to Second Year • Four- and Six-Year Graduation Rates • Student-to-Faculty Ratio	**University Success** • Retention to Second Year: URM, Pell • Four- and Six-Year Graduation Rates: URM, Pell • Net Operating Margin • New Gifts and Pledges • Student Diversity: URM, Pell • Employee Diversity
Student Success • Average Unmet Need • Placement Rates • Student Success Program Composite Rating	**Welcome and Inclusive Community** • Climate Survey Ratings • Engagement with Local Communities • Strategic Communications

Note: Student achievement measures, e.g., retention and graduation rates, are calculated per the PASSHE data definitions

INSTITUTIONAL GOALS (CRITERION 2)

Institutional goals, stated in the strategic plan as core commitments, priorities, and goals, are realistic, appropriate to higher education, and consistent with CU's core mission of providing an accessible and affordable, high-quality education that prepares students for success. CU's mission, vision, priorities, and goals align with Act 188, which endeavors to deliver undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts and sciences and in applied fields. CU's program array coheres with this blend of offerings and the *Academic Excellence and Innovation* priority articulates the intent to deliver high-quality, transformational educational experiences.

PASSHE's CPP process adds another layer of goal setting and requires goals linked to the strategic plan and aimed at achieving sustainability. Goals set through the 2023-24 CPP process aim to (1) stabilize and grow enrollment (CPP-1); (2) elevate diversity, equity, and inclusion (CPP-2); and (3) ensure financial sustainability (CPP-3). Table 1.2 shows how the institutional goals (i.e., strategic plan [SP] or general education [GE]) align with mission, CPP 2023-24 goals, 2025 state system priorities, and MSCHE standards, demonstrating consistency among the statements and appropriateness within the higher education milieu.

Supporting the mission's emphasis on high-quality education, institutional goals also include the GE themes, goals, and objectives. During the integration process, CU adopted Shippensburg University's GE program. Significant research and comparative analyses revealed that this GE program adheres to the BOG Policy 1993-01-A: General Education at State System of Higher Education Universities and external benchmarks like the AAC&U essential learning outcomes for liberal education. In addition, the BOG Policy 1993-01-A, Section D., Compliance with Middle States Commission on Higher Education and University Responsibilities specifically outlines the GE components and mandates compliance with MSCHE standards and requirements of affiliation.

Other sources of evidence for program-specific goals include compliance with program accrediting standards for all accredited programs, disciplinary standards, and further alignment with the AAC&U high-impact practices, most of which are embedded in GE and program learning activities (e.g., first-year experiences, common intellectual experiences, and learning communities; capstone courses; diversity/global learning; service learning; internships; and collaborative assignments). See Standard III for greater discussion of these learning experiences.

GOALS ON STUDENT LEARNING AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT (CRITERION 3)

The priorities listed in Table 1.2 focus on student learning and institutional improvement and are supported across the institution by action planning, resource allocation, and assessment that inform and guide programs and services. Consistent with mission, the priorities are student-centered, elevating student achievement above all else. They focus on promoting or supporting student learning, providing access and affordability to learners from diverse populations, and providing various educational pathways.

Table 1.2: Mission, Priority, Goal Alignment				
Institutional Goals (SP* or GE**)	Mission (Excerpts)	CPP 2023-24 Goals	2022-25 State System Priorities	MSCHE Standards
SP Priority: Academic Excellence and Innovation	• Students are at the heart of everything we do • High-quality education emphasizing high-impact practices • To succeed in our region and beyond	CPP-1: Enrollment CPP-2: DEI CPP-3: Sustainability	Opportunity/Outcomes Affordability/Grow Operate Sustainably Partnership Invest in People/Infrastructure	SI, SII, SIII, SIV, SV, SVI
SP Priority: University Success	• Students are at the heart of everything we do • Affordable • Supporting all learners	CPP-1: Enrollment CPP-2: DEI CPP-3: Sustainability	Opportunity/Outcomes Affordability/Grow Operate Sustainably Invest in People/Infrastructure	SI, SII, SIII, SIV, SV, SVI, SVII
SP Priority: Student Success	• Students are at the heart of everything we do • Personal and career connections • Supporting all learners	CPP-1: Enrollment CPP-2: DEI CPP-3: Sustainability	Opportunity/Outcomes Affordability/Grow Partnership Invest in People/Infrastructure	SI, SII, SIII, SIV, SV, SVII
SP Priority: Welcoming and Inclusive Community	• Students are at the heart of everything we do • Inclusivity • Supporting all learners	CPP-1: Enrollment CPP-2: DEI CPP-3: Sustainability	Opportunity/Outcomes Affordability/Grow Partnership Invest in People/Infrastructure	SI, SII, SIII, SIV, SV, SVI, SVII
GE Themes: Foundations Interconnections Citizenship and Responsibility Natural World and Technology Creativity and Expression	• Students are at the heart of everything we do • High-quality education emphasizing high-impact practices • Personal and career connections • Inclusivity • To succeed in our region and beyond	CPP-1: Enrollment CPP-2: DEI CPP-3: Sustainability	Opportunity/Outcomes Affordability/Grow Operate Sustainably Partnership Invest in People/Infrastructure	SI, SII, SIII, SIV, SV, SVII

*The three core commitments (i.e., DEIB, strategic communications, and thriving students, faculty, and staff) are embedded in all four priority areas for alignment
**The five GE themes encompass 16 program learning goals

Goals that Support Student Learning

The *Academic Excellence and Innovation* and *Student Success* strategic priorities involve initiatives directly related to student learning, even though all priorities support this endeavor. *Academic Excellence and Innovation* includes aligning the curriculum with market and student demand to ensure the program array is relevant and the curriculum represents disciplinary and industry standards. The five GE curricular themes and 16 learning goals (stated in Standard III, Table 3.6) alongside program-specific learning goals articulate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that graduates should possess. Emphasizing AAC&U high-impact practices and workforce development programs to increase credentialing options and career and degree pathways affords educational opportunity to a broader array of learners. Qualified faculty and staff deliver instruction utilizing cutting-edge technology supported by technology investment, professional development, and faculty scholarly activity. The CU assessment council (CUAC) supports student learning by articulating and overseeing how student learning outcomes are collected, analyzed, and used to inform actions for improving such areas as curricula, learning activities, and assessment processes.

Student Success complements efforts to foster student learning with the student success centers' holistic support approach and opportunities for networking, mentoring, and developing career readiness. Ongoing enrollment management efforts increase affordability through an institutional aid strategy and assist with making informed financial decisions. Other priority areas like *University Success* focus on providing resources (e.g., faculty, staff, facilities, technology, and funding) for student learning. A *Welcoming and Inclusive Community* fosters a culture that values and supports all learners and perspectives and brings about an engaged community and sense of belonging. Collectively, the KPIs (see Table 1.1) and other selected metrics that gauge progress toward mission and goal attainment include student achievement goals (disaggregated by URM and Pell) and DEIB principles.

Goals that Support Institutional Improvement

Goals and strategies support institutional improvement and reside in key planning documents, including the strategic plan; its supporting divisional and unit plans (part of the annual reports), which include CU's administrative,

educational support, and student support areas; and the CPP. Additionally, the institutional effectiveness plan describes how CU operationalizes its priorities and goals toward continuous improvement of the institution and its offerings. CU focuses on institutional improvement through planning and budgeting, revenue generation, and efficient and strategic use of resources, sentiments that underlie the *University Success* priority and goal statement.

Consistent with strategic and annual planning processes, CU engages in planning at all levels, considering external influences and internal assessments. These processes have generated a mission, vision, strategic plan, and CPP that align with each other and focus on institutional improvement. Initiatives are articulated annually in the administrative, educational support, and student support plans. In the Nuventive assessment platform, the divisions and units map to the strategic plan commitments, priorities, goals, and initiatives. The mapping illustrates how units support the goals and drive improvement through the measures, targets, and year-end results. IR's public dashboards provide significant longitudinal data on student and institutional outcomes, and the KPI and selected metrics dashboard documents strategic plan outcomes. Table 1.3 provides examples of strategic initiatives across divisions and 2023-24 results.

Table 1.3: Goals Supported by 2023-24 Initiatives and Year-End Results		
Priority/Goal	**Initiative**	**2023-24 Results**
Academic Excellence and Innovation; University Success; Welcoming and Inclusive Community	Launch and market the CU program array featuring the new brand identity in print and digital showcase pieces, television, radio, and billboard ads	Distributed over 15,000 admissions road pieces, 26,000 discover pieces and 48,000 viewbooks; hosted 61 major showcase days (BL=29, LH=17, MA=15); ran six-month digital ad campaign for Zeigler College of Business and garnered 5,439,582 impressions, 18,500 clicks, and 57 direct conversions; launched Spotify ad campaign and received 44,438 impressions with 97 clicks.
Academic Excellence and Innovation; University Success; Welcoming and Inclusive Community	Establish a DEIB committee in each academic college to develop initiatives tailored to the college's academic programs and majors	Established a DEIB committee in each college, held planning meetings, and established bylaws; the committees were reorganized in fall 2024 to align with the new academic college structure.
Academic Excellence and Innovation; University Success; Student Success	Refine need-based and merit-based aid strategies informed by 2022-23 assessments and leverage institutional and foundation funding to increase enrollment and retention	Restructured the award process to apply foundation dollars alongside institutional merit aid, allowing us to make our best offer upfront. The institutional merit spend was directly supported by an estimated $500,000 in foundation dollars. Emergency funds (>$400,000 across CU) are awarded as need-based aid to lower balances, address hardships, and provide for textbooks, housing, and required travel.
Academic Excellence and Innovation; University Success; Welcoming and Inclusive Community	Create specific recruiting events that target URM prospective students throughout PA school districts	Collaborated with Senator Haywood at his invitation (following his January 2024 report on campus climate) on a college expo for about 150 students and held four other special events; sponsored 21 bus trips from urban areas with 1,234 total visitors; and held 251 college visits and fairs at various diverse schools/districts.
Student Success	Make data-informed changes to align health and wellness resources, ensuring student access to mental health and other services	Received more student-of-concern cases related to wellness resulting in additional referrals to the office of student well-being and expansion of student wellness coaching, funded through a grant received in 2023-24. CU continued to expand the number of cooperating partners for the annual fresh check days for mental health promotion and suicide prevention. Also, the health and counseling centers actively participate on the CARE team to refer and receive referrals from them.
Academic Excellence and Innovation; Student Success; University Success	Finalize campaign priorities and conduct feasibility studies for the fundraising campaigns for the planned rollout for each campus	Conducted the BL feasibility study and selected three campaign pillars and 11 priorities for BL's campaign; feasibility studies are planned with campaign launches for LH in 2026 and MA in 2027.
Academic Excellence and Innovation	Identify and document industry-recognized credentials that align with courses and degree programs	Received approval for 13 non-credit and industry-recognized credentials in program areas relating to healthcare professions and law enforcement.

The institutional effectiveness plan provides a high-level summary of the key resource plans that support our priorities and goals. CU's overarching resource plan, the CPP, encompasses the budgeting process, and the ancillary plans for managing the staffing complement, technology, and facilities. The vice president for fiscal affairs holds the responsibility for developing the CPP, which includes the budget. Standard VI further describes the staffing complement, technology, and facilities plans and how key resource areas support institutional improvement.

Toward accomplishing its mission and goals, CU receives support from the affiliate university foundations and student governments. In collaboration with advancement, the foundations provide CU with over $8M in mission-critical support, including scholarships, professional experience grants, fellowships, and academic and athletic program

support, with a $100M combined endowment. The campus-based student governments oversee student programming and administer more than $4.4M in student activity fees across CU. These fees fund programs and services that enhance student development and enrich personal growth through fostering participation in social, cultural, multicultural, intellectual, recreational, community service, campus governance, and leadership opportunities.

ASSESSMENT OF MISSION AND GOALS (CRITERION 4)

As described in Criterion 1, the five-year strategic planning cycle provides for the periodic evaluation of the mission and goals, which includes collaborative participation from a broad array of constituencies beginning with the evaluation of the mission statement and then the development of supporting priorities, goals, initiatives, and metrics. CU's first comprehensive strategic planning process was completed in October 2023, beginning the five-year cycle. The process moves to developing divisional and unit plans, resource allocation plans, and assessments; gathering data and outcomes; and reporting results and analyses annually. The CPP process also requires goal setting and sustainability planning, providing another layer of evaluating achievement of mission, goals, and institutional effectiveness with bi-annual reports submitted to PASSHE. For example, CU refined the 2024-25 CPP goals to include the consolidation of academic and administrative structures to address further financial sustainability.

The COT materials document vice presidents' reports that update progress on priorities and goals. The president's and vice presidents' reporting on goals and institutional priorities to the COT and CU at senate, local assemblies, town hall meetings, and meet and discuss assesses progress related to the goals, resource allocation, and outcomes. The meetings invite questions and comments that inform change. The president's cabinet holds weekly meetings and retreats and discusses goals, initiatives, measures, and outcomes. For example, discussion at the January and March 2024 retreats led to an expanded list of KPIs and defining measures for student success and strategic communications.

The institutional effectiveness plan describes high-level assessment processes at the PASSHE, institutional, divisional, unit, and program levels. These assessments include an evaluation of mission and goal attainment and are discussed further in Standards III, IV, V, and VI. From broad to more specific, some assessments include regular review of the board-affirmed metrics, KPI and selected metrics dashboard; institutional research dashboards; financial risk assessments; divisional, unit, and academic program annual reports; university-wide forums; effectiveness of resource allocation; and CUAC and assessment committee reports. CU's annual reporting and the management performance evaluation assess student learning and institutional effectiveness based on their respective role in the processes. These processes help inform next year's actions, identify mission and goals refinement, and close the assessment loop.

The SPC and CUAC serve key roles in assessing institutional effectiveness by reviewing outcomes and feedback from the CU community; giving annual progress reports on mission, strategic plan, and unit plan implementation and goal attainment; and making recommendations regarding the strategic plan or operational areas to president's cabinet. For example, the May 13, 2024, SPC meeting replicated the strategic plan update delivered to the senate and COT, reviewed results via the dashboards, discussed CU's newly defined measures, received CUAC recommendations to improve assessment processes, and solicited SPC recommendations for cabinet. The SPC advanced to cabinet the recommendation to continue the KPI dashboard build out, implement new measures, and share the high-level CUAC recommendations. At the end of year one, no substantive changes to the mission and goals were recommended.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

CU's consultative engagement strategies led to clearly defined mission and goals that align with its founding legislation, are student-centered, and guide decisions at all levels. Following the development of unified strategic statements and goals, CU established planning, budgeting, resource allocation, and assessment structures and processes. This work has ensured effective implementation, ongoing dialogue, and regular evaluation of progress through measurable KPIs and feedback outlets that allow for plan adjustment. As CU navigates year two of the strategic plan, we build on the accomplishments to date and continue to strengthen CU as a premier regional public institution. To accomplish this vision as well as priorities and commitments, CU should do the following:

- Continue to engage the CU community in constructive discourse, deliberate planning, and meaningful assessment to realize fully the strategic plan priorities and commitments
- Follow processes to ensure the relevancy of the strategic plan by evaluating data and feedback for periodic adjustments in years three through five

STANDARD II: ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

[Standard II addresses *Self-Study Institutional Priorities* for Academic Programs and Support; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Financial Sustainability; and Communication and *Requirements of Affiliation* 5, 6, 12, 13, and 14]

INTRODUCTION

CU demonstrates ethics and integrity by focusing its efforts on fulfilling its mission and strategic statements through the actions of leadership, faculty, staff, and students. The mission highlights our commitment to an "affordable, high-quality education emphasizing . . . inclusivity supporting all learners." Our vision emphasizes that the institution will provide "an accessible and transformative educational experience" for our students, while our values and priorities underscore the importance of being student-centered, resilient, collaborative, accessible, innovative, welcoming, and inclusive. Finally, CU's three core commitments—(1) *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging*; (2) *Strategic Communications*, and (3) *Thriving Students, Faculty, and Staff*—are essential to the strategic plan's success. CU's efforts that demonstrate these core commitments are fundamental to Standard II. Tangible actions throughout the CU community demonstrate how CU enacts these strategic statements, as articulated in CU's institutional effectiveness plan, and strives to foster a positive living, learning, and working environment for all key stakeholders. Planning, resource allocation, assessment, and continuous improvement processes include interim and annual year-end reporting in the assessment platform, at university forums, through oversight committees, at president's cabinet, and to the CU Council of Trustees (COT). These processes and reports provide ongoing evidence of CU's dedication to accomplishing its mission and goals.

Ethics and integrity are essential elements of CU's policies, practices, procedures, and daily operations. Ethical principles inform policies, which are accessible via the policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines web page, human resources (HR) web page, the student handbook, the code of conduct, and the various collective bargaining agreements (CBAs). Specifically, CU's policies address discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, gender identity, conflict of interest, and student conduct, among other topics. The code of conduct and academic integrity policy for students are designed to cultivate a culture of integrity in societal and academic contexts. CU's new transparent governance structure openly communicates policies, decisions, and financial matters.

Educational and professional development experiences equip students, faculty, and staff to act ethically and with integrity. The GE program theme *Citizenship and Responsibility* embeds ethical reasoning and critical analysis in the curriculum to inform students about making ethical decisions and fulfilling their societal responsibilities. Moreover, employee training ensures that faculty and staff understand their responsibilities as a CU community member.

As a state institution, CU is subject to state laws protecting the public interest. CU honors its contracts and commitments in good faith, with actions for delivering a quality and affordable education, upholding vendor contracts, and implementing CBA provisions. For instance, CU implements negotiated compensation and benefits packages, fair performance evaluation and promotion provisions, and committee and governance structures as stated in CBAs. CU regularly reviews its contracts through negotiations and policies per the senate constitution and the policy on policies.

Areas with primary responsibilities for communication adhere to professional standards and codes of conduct set forth by professional organizations (e.g., the American Marketing Association [AMA] code of conduct and the international Council for Advancement and Support of Education [CASE] principles of practice for communications and marketing professionals at educational institutions) and state guidelines for data integrity. CU seeks to present itself truthfully by socializing and monitoring brand identity and practices to ensure accurate data and information.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM, INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM, AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (CRITERION 1)

CU commits to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property through its mission, vision, values, policies, programs, and initiatives. The mission and *Academic Excellence and*

Innovation priority advocate for high-quality education, high-impact practices, and advancing scholarship, creative works, and innovation. The values emphasize being:

- Welcoming and Inclusive: to encourage robust dialogue, intellectual curiosity, and diversity of thought
- Exceptional and Innovative: to build connections to new opportunities and programs, leveraging alumni, employers, and cutting-edge research

These values excerpts, the APSCUF CBA, student handbook, and CU policies cohere to protect these freedoms and create a campus culture that supports them. CU is also an affiliate member of Scholars at Risk, an organization that protects scholars' freedom to think, question, and share ideas; has held a CU-wide information session about the cause; and delivers an experiential course to promote the awareness of the persecution of academics and imprisoned scholars.

Academic and Intellectual Freedom

The APSCUF CBA Article 2, Academic Freedom, provides faculty members with "full freedom in research and in the publication of the results . . . [and] freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject" (p. 3). Articles 2 and 4 remind faculty of the academic responsibility they carry to assure accuracy, appropriate restraint, and respect for others' opinions and to safeguard academic freedom by fulfilling their duties as a faculty member according to the CBA. The academic freedom and responsibility language corresponds to the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure on the AAUP web page.

In the student handbook, the student code of conduct articulates ideals and responsibilities and states the following:

The university community exists for the pursuit of learning, the transmission of knowledge, the development of students as scholars and citizens, and ultimately, for the general well-being of society. Freedom of inquiry, speech, action, and expression is indispensable in the attainment of these goals. Students, as members of the university community, are encouraged to engage in a sustained, critical, and independent search for knowledge. The student conduct program supports this endeavor through policies that balance the freedom of the individual student with the interests of the university community as a whole, and procedures that apply these policies in an equitable and consistent manner.

CU supports academic and intellectual freedom in many ways. The libraries provide resources and services to promote intellectual pursuits, with print and digital holdings. Librarians provide library research guides, information literacy sessions, and research assistance. Faculty mentorship and discourse ensue through CU's center for teaching and learning (CTL) with locations on each campus. CTL facilitates dialogue among faculty, encourages exchange of ideas, and disseminates information to advance teaching and learning. Sponsored research, grants, leaves, sabbaticals, and awards affirm a commitment to academic and intellectual freedom. More information is available in Standard III.

Freedom of Expression

Freedom of expression encourages discourse, develops awareness, and builds tolerance and understanding. CU is committed to the open and free exchange of ideas to enhance the learning environment, inside and outside the classroom. To uphold this commitment, CU transparently presents expectations and makes them accessible on the web in strategic statements, policies, and the HR web page. New employee and student orientations introduce CU's commitment to freedom of expression while town halls, meetings, training, and programming reinforce it.

The APSCUF CBA, Article 2, asserts that as citizens and members of a learned profession, faculty are afforded the freedom to speak or write free from university censorship or discipline. Policies such as PRP 2100 - Policy on Time, Place, and Manner Guidelines for the Exercise of Expressive Activities ensure various forms of freedom of expression for members of CU's community and the public with respect to time, place, and manner limitations. The policy addresses appropriate use of CU buildings and grounds. Updated in 2023, the policy identifies designated public and university forum areas and covers areas utilized regularly by advocacy groups, protests, or election/political events. While student protests have not occurred at the campuses and locations, CU proactively undertook initiatives to educate the CU community in light of First Amendment challenges around the nation. In spring 2024, an expressive activities handout was created, with feedback from campus student government leaders, about the exercise of expression and provides a digital and physical overview of freedom of expression activities and resources. Staff and CU police can distribute these resources in real time to students, faculty, and staff with questions or concerns during an active event. Finally, CU has instituted a First Amendment landing page, built as an FAQ in early 2024, that will evolve as materials are added.

CU employs organizational communications to reinforce these values and expectations. Regular updates are conveyed through official communication channels, e.g., president's emails, that reinforce the institution's commitment to facilitating an environment where diverse perspectives can be freely expressed and contribute to the rich tapestry of academic discourse. This multi-faceted approach ensures that the ethos of open dialogue and the value it brings to the classroom are deeply ingrained in the university culture. Opportunities for free expression exist across CU and include visual and performing arts shows, student-run radio and newspapers, and posts on student social media pages. Each campus has a student-run newspaper including *The Voice* (BL), *The Eagle Eye* (LH), and *The Flashlight* (MA); BL also operates a radio station: WHSK the Husky Student Radio. In literary journals, CU publishes the BL *Literary and Art Journal* as well as *Prism: Arts and Literature Magazine*, a collaboration between MA and LH. Finally, each academic year, each campus hosts student art exhibitions, also open to CU and local communities. Students gain an appreciation for different perspectives through all GE program themes but especially through *Interconnections*, which emphasizes mutual respect and tolerance through meaningful discourse, and *Creativity and Expression*, which explores how artistic works are imagined and created.

Intellectual Property

Intellectual property rights protect inventors' ideas and creative efforts, and several protections exist for members of PASSHE universities. Act 188 and the related state-owned University Intellectual Property Act, 24 P.S. § 2521 et seq., give CU and its faculty the ability to develop and market intellectual property owned or created by an employee. The provisions allow private individuals to use public resources lawfully. The APSCUF CBA (Articles 39 and 41) defines faculty-developed ideas, inventions, materials, and creative works resulting from scholarly activities as intellectual property owned by the faculty who created them. Similarly, CU policy, PRP 2910 - Patents and Copyrights, clarifies that copyright, patent ownership, and royalties arising from the normal course of faculty duties belong to the faculty member. PRP 2550 - Acceptable Use of Technology Policy, also endeavors to protect the rights of all university community members as IT users must respect intellectual property rights and are prohibited from copyright infringement, including illegal file sharing of video, audio, and software. CU supports and enforces all applicable Commonwealth of PA and federal statutes on copyright and intellectual property. CU's information technology web page provides guidelines in this regard.

CAMPUS CLIMATE AND DIVERSITY (CRITERION 2)

CU fosters respect among all community members in its *Welcoming and Inclusive* value statement, *Welcoming and Inclusive Community* strategic plan priority, and related goal to "create an inclusive and welcoming university culture while developing and strengthening connections among our multiple locations and within our local communities." The APSCUF CBA Preamble promotes respect and inclusion by encouraging its members to "cooperate in mutual respect and harmony" and "show respect for the opinions of others." Aligned with the mission, the *Interconnections* and *Citizenship and Responsibility* GE program themes and learning goals cultivate student awareness and sensitivity to cultural differences, social justice, global perspectives, equity, and inclusion. The sheer breadth of the GE curriculum, through its 16 learning goals, exposes students to diverse thinking, ideas, theories, and modes of inquiry. Co- and extra-curricular activities celebrate differences as support programs, advocacy groups, and student organizations advance awareness, appreciation, and support for individuals and groups of varying characteristics.

The student handbook and code of conduct outline behavior expectations reflective of respect, responsibility, and integrity. Students can voice concerns as outlined on the student complaints and concerns web page. Students are directed to the dean of students for complaints and concerns and director of student conduct for conduct issues. The student complaints and concerns; policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines; and HR web pages point students and employees to CU policies and offices that establish a supportive living, learning, and working environment, and address issues, complaints, concerns, and appeals. CU policies espouse values prohibiting discrimination and harassment, including PRP 4789 - Harassment and Discrimination Policy, PRP 2060 - Americans with Disabilities, PRP 4902 - Affirmed Gender Marker Policy, and PRP 4790 - Sexual Misconduct Policy. Alongside numerous clubs/groups and celebrations, Table 2.1 provides examples of initiatives that support campus climate and diversity.

Table 2.1: Examples of Entities and Initiatives in Support of Campus Climate and Diversity

Entity or Initiative	Brief Description
Chief Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Officer (CDEIBO) and Activities	The CDEIBO plays a critical role in fostering an inclusive and equitable environment across the entire institution by exercising strategic vision, interpersonal skills, and an unwavering commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable living, learning, and working environment in support of the mission and strategic plan. The CDEIBO collaborates with divisions, offices, commissions, and community partners to drive progress in achieving strategic priorities. DEIB sponsored 205 events/activities last academic year, a 15% increase over 2022-23.
University Disability Services (UDS) and Chief Accessibility Officer	The chief accessibility officer, a position created in fall 2023, oversees UDS and ensures equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities and accommodation needs are met. Oversight includes PRP 2060 - American with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. In 2023-24, UDS delivered 13 ADA trainings engaging members from all divisions and three ADA-legal trainings. UDS also served 1,139 students in the fall and 1,081 students in the spring across CU, increasing registration rates year over year by 3.44% and 2.02% respectively with 483 total new registrations.
Title IX Office	The Title IX coordinator oversees the Title IX office and deputy coordinators at each campus to provide supportive measures to faculty, staff, and students and ensure that complaints are handled promptly and equitably, with fairness to all parties involved. Staff members conduct numerous educational programs regarding the university's processes and policies and general awareness regarding sexual misconduct and related matters.
Center for Global Engagement and Study Abroad	The director, campus-based staff, and faculty study abroad coordinators facilitate semester, year-long, and faculty-led short-term programs across the globe. The center also promotes cultural programming and global awareness in the local community. In 2023-24, 84 students studied abroad (up from 55 in 2022-23) and 124 international students studied at CU (up from 83) as interest is rebounding from COVID-19. In November, the center also hosted international education week, an initiative of the Department of Education and State Department Bureau of Cultural Affairs.
Multicultural Resource Center	Each campus offers a multicultural resource center (MRC) that is inclusive and welcoming for all members of each campus community. These centers serve as educational safe zones for individuals of all backgrounds, nationalities, abilities, ethnic groups, sexual orientations, religions, and social identities. The MRC is dedicated to helping students cope with the challenges associated with succeeding and graduating from CU. The primary task of each center is to advance and celebrate the diversity of our CU community and to advocate for the needs of its students.
Women's Resources	Each campus hosts a women's resource center, overseen by a director, and/or a women's commission that advocates for women's issues and supports students regarding issues of sex, gender, sexual violence, personal safety and health, social justice, and educational equity. The center and commission jointly sponsor events like the annual Take Back the Night event that focuses on sexual assault topics.
LGBTQA Commission	Each CU campus has a commission on LGBTQA affairs and/or LGBTQA/PRIDE centers. The commissions and centers work for social justice for students, faculty, and staff who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or asexual (LGBTQA), particularly on issues related to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Their role is to educate the campus and community and to advocate for equality and enhance visibility.
Sankofa Conference	Held in February each year, this one-day conference helps students learn, understand, and appreciate the rich cultural heritage of people of African descent. It promotes unity and understanding among students and is a forum for discussion and learning. In spring 2024, 204 students (134 non-CU and 70 CU students) participated.
Multicultural Field Day	This event focuses on building unity, connecting students, and strengthening a sense of belonging for all CU students through organized outdoor activities. LH hosted the fall 2023 event for 250 students.
Out of Classroom and Into the Community	Led by the director of outreach initiatives, students volunteer for a community-based, service-learning project in urban areas of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, giving visibility to CU and serving community needs. The initiative saw a 45% increase in participation (106 BL students in 2022-23 increased to 154 CU students in 2023-24) at the original two sites and with the addition of a third site at Williamsport.
DEIB Spring Career Expo and Career Colors	As part of DEI mini-grants, each campus sponsors a career expo for employers who identify as being dedicated to DEIB and have interest in hiring candidates from diverse backgrounds, demographics, and life experiences. The March expos included 140 students, 15 alumni, and 44 employers. A five-part 90-minute career competency series, directed toward URM students, provided instruction on resume writing, interviewing, job-interview search strategies, networking, salary negotiation, and budgeting; a total of 168 students participated, and 99 students completed the series.
It's On Us PA	Part of a statewide campaign, It's On Us PA invites members of the educational community to reframe the conversation around sexual violence and pledge to be part of the solution. CU received $60,000 in 2023-24, and results included a total of ten trained rape aggression defense (RAD) instructors, an increase in employee's complying with mandatory reporter obligations likely connected to the toolkits issued to all employees, and three student organizations participating in the incentive program. The groups received $2,200 in "swag." Overall, the Title IX Office received 31 more reports than the prior year, as the outreach and education appear to be breaking down barriers to reporting.

CU's commitment to celebrating differences appears in its *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging* core commitment and *University Success* priority. With respect to diversity, CU proactively recruits for a more diverse student body and employee complement, despite the challenges of being located in rural and predominantly White communities in northern and central Pennsylvania. The communities lack proximity to more urban communities with services and opportunities that tend to attract diverse populations. To enhance its diversity profile, CU invested in three multicultural admissions recruiters; sponsored 21 bus trips for 1,234 prospective students and families from

urban areas; participated in 251 college visits and fairs targeting URM schools/districts; and engaged in five other targeted recruitment events in 2023-24. Outreach occurred with local businesses to offer personal health and care products for ethnically diverse populations. Activities such as the spring 2024 Washington, D.C., field trip to the National Museum of African American History and Culture provide options for activities in urban settings alongside a full slate of events and activities offered by DEIB, student involvement, etc. Table 2.1 provides several examples.

CU recruitment initiatives include posting all vacancies to indeed.com, higheredjobs.com, and diversity.com, and departments can allocate additional funds to more specialized outlets for various positions. Beginning July 1, 2024, PASSHE purchased for sister universities a membership to the Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC), which supports member institutions in recruiting and retaining diverse employees. While HERC identifies additional strategies, retention efforts include events like DEIB-sponsored faculty and staff networking socials that provide information about DEIB-related offices, build relationships, and foster a sense of belonging. CU sent representatives to the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) conference, and the executive search firm, WittKeiffer, assisted with the provost's search. WittKeiffer leveraged both broad and targeted personal outreach and advanced sourcing techniques to identify exceptional, diverse candidates. These efforts resulted in outreach to over 3,200 individuals in the search slate and 60 applications. Although candidates are not required to self-disclose gender or race/ethnicity data, the pool included at least 16 candidates of color and 13 women (four of whom identified as women of color).

CU closely monitors its key performance indicators (KPIs) for campus climate, student diversity and achievement, and employee diversity. As described in Criterion 9, CU conducts campus climate and DEIB surveys periodically. The 2022 PASSHE-administered climate survey results were used in the strategic plan development and guided DEIB programming and interim assessments in 2023-24. As measured by URM enrollment, student diversity decreased from 14.1% to 13.5% in fall 2024, and employee diversity is at 5.74% in fall 2023, up slightly from 5.52%. Student success measures include both URM and Pell-eligible retention-to-second-year rates and four- and six-year graduation rates, as described in Standard IV. Since integration, CU experienced an increase in retention-to-second-year rates from 61.0% to 67.1% for the fall 2023 URM cohort and 66.7% to 73.3% for the fall 2023 Pell-eligible cohort.

GRIEVANCE POLICIES (CRITERION 3)

CU is committed to providing accessible opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to voice concerns, ask questions about policy and practices, and report complaints and grievances without fear of retribution. Policies and processes facilitate the timely, proper, and equitable addressing of reports. As stated in Criterion 2, web pages for student complaints and concerns; policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines; consumer information; the student handbook; and HR give ready access to avenues to address complaints, concerns, and appeals. Web pages link to the academic grievance, non-academic grievance, academic integrity, nondiscrimination, sexual misconduct, and ADA policies as well as incident reporting forms or procedures for students of concern, the code of conduct, hazing, and student government concerns. A general complaint process exists for issues not covered by a CU policy or procedure (information is included in an opening-semester email). The dean of students receives and refers appropriately general complaints. Complaint logs are kept to assist in continuous improvement efforts.

Online resources also provide complaint processes for CU and external agencies that ensure protection of rights and fair treatment and comply with the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008 and Title IV. Complaint processes and information for the PASSHE, Pennsylvania Department of Education, MSCHE, and National Council on State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) link from the student complaints and concerns web page.

New student and employee orientations discuss expectations and disseminate policies. In fall 2024, CU implemented a new faculty onboarding process that gives an overview of CU, policies, teaching resources, and support information that guide and inform individuals. Relevant portions of this new onboarding process were expanded to new CU staff. Emails sent by the administration division at fall semester start provide students, faculty, and staff with information about where to locate resources, policies, and processes for complaints, concerns, and appeals. Student awareness campaigns feature a where-to-go poster with QR codes that link to policies and contact information. On the employee side, a "Respect Works Here" campaign incorporates CU's nondiscrimination statement and reinforces values of being accessible, welcoming, and inclusive.

CBAs outline grievance rights and procedures for faculty and staff. The APSCUF faculty CBA (Article 5) and coaches CBA (Article 4), AFSCME and Supervisory Memorandum (Articles 37 and 38), OPEIU (Article 34), POA (Article 37), SCUPA (Article 13), and SPFPA (Recommendations 38 and 39) CBAs include grievance procedures, that by law, are applied to all members of the bargaining units fairly, in good faith, and without discrimination. The grievance procedures include timelines for prompt handling and outline appeal procedures.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST (CRITERION 4)

As a PASSHE university, CU adheres to Commonwealth of PA regulations, PASSHE policies and procedures, and the CU PRP 2751 - Conflict of Interest policy, all of which address conflict of interest. Policies, procedures, CBAs, and professional standards also guide behaviors across CU, particularly regarding admissions, financial aid, procurement, and personnel practices. The State Adverse Interest Act prohibits state agencies, the Board of Governors (BOG), COT, and public employees from having an adverse interest in a contract, representation for a contract, or decision making about contracting. The PA Public Official and Employee State Ethics Act lists restricted activities including conflict of interest, seeking/accepting improper influence, and voting conflicts, etc. Conflict of interest provisions in the BOG bylaws, PA Council of Trustees (PACT) handbook, and Commonwealth of PA Management Directive 505.7, Chapter 13, Conflict of Interest (pp. 106-109) reference and align with these laws. The BOG, COT, and covered employees, including departmental chairpersons and administrators, complete statement of financial interest forms annually. Processes are overseen by the president's office for the COT and by HR for employees.

The BOG Policy 2012-01: Conflict of Interest describes the procedures for the chancellor, presidents, and PASSHE employees to prevent and deal with actual occurrences or the appearance of conflict of interest when auditing or reviewing PASSHE operations, monitoring grants and subsidies, and processing procurement or contracting. The Management of Financial Conflict of Interest, State System Procedure/Standard Number 2016-22, addresses conflicts related to research, education, and service activities to mitigate financial conflicts. The procedures protect the quality and objectivity in research, maintain credibility and integrity of faculty and staff, and ensure public trust. CU's PRP 2751 - Conflict of Interest supplements the Ethics Act requirements and addresses conflicts where financial or personal interests may or appear to compromise a person's judgment or actions. Where interests could affect research or educational activities, PRP 2751 requires disclosure prior to submitting a proposal to the funding entity.

CBAs prohibit employees from serving in positions that decide on appointment, evaluation, tenure, promotion, and sabbatical of an immediate family member. Various units have adopted professional standards for ethics and institute controls that eliminate conflict of interest. For example, admissions abides by the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC) *Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission* which includes steps to avoid conflict of interest. The principles prohibit incentive payments based on productivity measures, forbid accepting rewards or remuneration to influence decisions, and require adherence to standards. Financial aid staff avoid conflict of interest by adhering to professional standards set forth by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) in its *Code of Conduct and Statement of Ethical Principles* and by the government.

The student billing/bursar's office maintains internal control procedures that contain system security and controls for fund management and cover billing, accounts receivable, financial aid, loan disbursement, waivers, and scholarships. Segregation of duties and controls are built into the profile and permissions of software platforms, including the Banner OneSIS, Slate customer relationship management, and SAP enterprise resource software.

The Commonwealth Procurement Code, Act 57 of 1998, the BOG Policy 2010-01-A: Expenditures of Public Funds, the BOG Policy 1998-04-A: Procurement of Goods, Services, Supplies, and Construction and procurement web pages guide contracting processes. Provisions address conflicts of interest and outline steps that procurement officers and CU follow in the contracting process. Shared services procurement at the chancellor's office oversees compliance with all aspects of the bidding and contracting processes, ensuring that the university contracts with responsible and competent vendors and honors contracts with prompt payment provided upon work completion and inspection.

PASSHE established a fraud, waste, and abuse hotline for incident reporting, allowing confidential reporting of potentially inappropriate situations. Employees, students, and community members can report incidents like abuse, improper conduct, policy violations, theft, fraud, ethical concerns, legal violations, intercollegiate athletics violations, and environmental health and safety issues. CU members are encouraged to report improper activities, including pursuing benefits or advantages in violation of law or policy or for perceived conflicts of interest.

FAIR AND IMPARTIAL PRACTICES (CRITERION 5)

CU commits to fairness and impartiality in its hiring and employment practices. CU follows established search procedures and CBAs that guide practices for all positions to ensure consistency and objectivity in hiring. After presidential approval, searches may commence. Job postings specify selection criteria and qualifications consistent with CU, professional, and/or specialized accreditation standards. CU uses PeopleAdmin, a talent-management software system, to develop job postings, which undergo layers of review, including those by HR. These checks assure agreement on job responsibilities, credentials, application materials, etc. HR meets with search committee chairs and members to review the hiring process and enforces search protocols, assuring steps comply with equal employment opportunity (EEO) and CBA requirements. HR assists with placing appropriate advertisements to develop qualified, diverse applicant pools. This oversight promotes consistency and fairness in recruitment and selection processes. New employees receive an appointment letter or contract outlining basic terms of employment.

The CBAs set forth a uniform and impartial foundation for decision making in employee hiring, evaluation, and disciplinary processes. Staff and non-represented employees are evaluated using union- or system-approved evaluation instruments. HR monitors these processes, using DocuSign to move documentation through various steps; however, CU is using the PeopleAdmin performance management program for non-faculty employees following its successful launch in 2023-24 for non-represented employees' performance evaluation. The program is used to notify supervisors in advance of employees' evaluation date; distribute forms and job descriptions to verify currency; and route evaluations to the employee, supervisor, and reviewing officer for review, discussion, and signature. The deans and provost oversee faculty evaluation and tenure processes per the APSCUF CBA and CU policies and apply provisions to all faculty regardless of teaching level and modality. The CBAs set provisions for promotion, discipline, and dismissal, which are applied equally to all employees. Employees can exercise their right to request a union representative during meetings that may result in discipline or dismissal and to grieve. CBA provisions assure due process and provide steps to forward unresolved grievances for consideration up to and including arbitration.

BOG policies and procedures (e.g., BOG Policy 1984-14-A: Terms and Conditions of Employment of Senior Policy Executives, Management Directive 505.7: Personnel Rules, BOG Policy 1983-01-A: Merit Principles, and Non-represented Employee Performance and Reward Manual) govern employment conditions of senior executives and managers. The BOG policy on senior policy executives applies to presidents, vice presidents, and academic deans regarding their appointment, conditions of appointment, and termination. The personnel rules set forth guidelines for recruitment and selection, probationary periods, evaluation, discipline, and separation. Managers use the PeopleAdmin platform and the employees' guide to complete an annual management performance evaluation and development document. Part IIA of the document outlines goals and actions for the upcoming year in alignment with the strategic plan priorities and commitments. In August of the following year, managers receive an annual evaluation, which compares goals to outcomes and links to merit pay. Merit principles, applicable to certain management employees, and discrimination and harassment policies reference fair treatment in personnel processes and address employee discipline and dismissal for non-represented employees. If a personnel action arises, PASSHE legal counsel leads CU through any required due process steps. For example, a wrongful termination case that originated prior to integration resulted recently in an award for the plaintiff. Even though an appeal is in process, the decision has raised concerns among the CU community in terms of the financial impact and campus climate.

HONESTY AND TRUTHFULNESS (CRITERION 6)

CU designated a *Strategic Communications* core commitment that advances timely and accurate communication to key stakeholders. CU divisions and employees are responsible for ensuring honesty and truthfulness in external and internal communications. Processes and practices align with professional standards and ethics like those espoused by NACAC for enrollment management or AMA for marketing. Strategic communications and marketing (StratComm) adheres to CASE *Principles of Practice for Communications and Marketing Professionals at Educational Institutions*.

As posted on the web, StratComm oversees communication guidelines and procedures and works diligently to ensure that interactions with the media and the public provide accurate representations aligned with the CU brand. CU markets itself as Commonwealth University in print and digital media for prospective student and supporter audiences. All newly created and refreshed admission materials and ad campaigns were updated with "university" solely applied to CU and not the legacy universities. Consistent with the guide, templates for diplomas and transcripts were updated with the CU seal. In text, references to Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania, Commonwealth University, Commonwealth U, or CU are used. Individual campuses and locations of Commonwealth University are referenced

as Commonwealth University-(campus/location), CU-(campus/location), or simply the campus or location name without "university" applied. In graphic identifiers, the word "university" was removed from legacy logos and is now only applied in reference to CU. StratComm has established a brand identity style guide and socialized it widely across CU, including new employee onboarding. The guide, supporting materials, and a SharePoint site provide easy access to CU and campus logos, wordmarks, letterhead, Zoom backgrounds, slide deck templates, email signature templates, and an online stationery store, which promote compliance and consistency. StratComm developed scripts for answering the phones and socialized them through one of the periodic email reminders about brand identity guidelines.

Working with third-party vendor OHO Interactive, CU consolidated its legacy websites at bloomu.edu, lockhaven.edu, and mansfield.edu and the temporary CU microsite into a single, streamlined web experience at commonwealthu.edu. The website consolidation was an 18-month project that included several phases. The CU community was engaged as early as the discovery phase through surveys and focus groups. Ongoing communication through email, meeting updates, and town halls informed and engaged constituents. During the content development process, content developers consolidated content into draft CU language and shared it with subject matter experts for the program, department, center, etc. The web team enhances content post-launch and responds to employee requests for updates.

StratComm understands that CU communicates with stakeholders across various formats and serves as the gatekeeper for communications. StratComm and enrollment management work closely in developing recruitment and marketing plans. They also conduct weekly strategy meetings to review and verify all print and digital recruitment content and planned collateral, including for the web and social media. The StratComm, admissions, and academic affairs teams collaborate to create a repository of program-specific academic marketing collateral in the StratComm SharePoint site, which is shared with department chairs to review for accuracy and provide updates as needed.

CU's efforts toward honesty and truthfulness are reflected on the consumer information web page in compliance with HEOA and MSCHE public disclosure policies. Criterion 8 describes compliance with public disclosure requirements and how IR verifies data and reports to key stakeholders. Criterion 9 discusses the policy review process with resources like CU's web page, policy on policies, and policy review schedule. CU's senate constitution provides for creating, reviewing, and approving policies. Both PASSHE and institutional policies serve as primary communication tools.

ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY (CRITERION 7)

Consistent with Act 188, CU's mission, vision, values, and *Student Success* priority promote affordable and accessible, high-quality education. CU strives to make education accessible and affordable for students and their families.

Accessibility

CU's values state in Figure 2.1 the faculty, staff, and student perspectives with respect to accessibility, ensuring availability of resources and personal assistance to support educational opportunity and student achievement.

Figure 2.1: Value for Accessible (as shown on the web)

Many students encounter barriers to access higher education, such as geographical, technological, physical, socio-cultural, educational, and financial. CU draws heavily from the rural counties surrounding its sites, in which many students are first generation and educationally or economically disadvantaged. The university's geographic distribution across central Pennsylvania offers access to place-bound students as well as high school students interested in early college. CU's early college program offers high school students a supportive environment to take courses online, face-to-face, or through concurrent enrollment in MA's approved districts at much lower or no cost, where donor funds help to offset costs. Dual admission and program-to-program articulation agreements also lower cost and afford students at community colleges a head start and seamless transfer to CU. The technological investments at CU sites, including weConnect rooms discussed in Standard III and the learning management system, facilitate high-quality distance learning environments, extending CU's reach and access to a broader program array across CU and beyond.

The admissions website houses CU's easily accessible online application, which provides a gateway to a personalized application process and ready connection to the admissions counselor responsible for recruitment activities where the student is located. Admissions materials and activities promote CU's high-value, affordable option to people from various backgrounds, extending to high-yield, urban areas with more diverse populations. CU recruits diverse populations and monitors success with IR dashboards filtered for URM, first generation, Pell-eligible, etc., students. CU enrolls 33.8% of its students from the lower socio-economic status and 32.7% are first generation. CU's participation in the second chance Pell experimental sites initiatives (SCP ESI) provides an example of a special population—incarcerated individuals—for whom CU seeks to provide educational opportunities. Thirty-eight students completed the spring 2024 semester at the Muncy and Mahanoy state correctional institutions.

As described in Standard IV, CU offers programs and services to remove barriers and promote success. Disability services provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities and educates the CU community on equitable treatment of individuals with disabilities. Student success programs give access and support to at-risk students who may be educationally disadvantaged or underprepared for college-level work. These efforts, among other initiatives, are designed to give access to a more diverse student population.

Affordability

Making education affordable is the premise upon which the PASSHE universities, including CU, were built. This topic dominates discussions at all levels. For example, Chancellor Greenstein's advocacy at the House Appropriations Committee in 2023 and 2024 increased state funding to allow the BOG to hold in-state tuition flat for seven consecutive years, an unprecedented tuition freeze. In podcasts, interviews, news releases, and presentations, President Hanna publicly endorsed lowering the cost of attendance through CU's high school partnerships and merit-based aid.

To this end, CU consulted with RNL on financial aid optimization strategies that leveraged funding options for students. RNL and CU representatives collaborated to design merit-based aid strategies, increasing yield by an average of 6.8% as compared to pre-integration. In 2022, CU's combined yield equaled 26.4% compared to 39.9% in 2023 and 37.5% in 2024. Changes to Pell eligibility provided larger grants to economically disadvantaged students, which, coupled with a wide-reaching merit-aid strategy, were expected to reduce unmet need and provide greater access to high-achieving and low-income prospective students. The admissions and financial aid teams also leveraged more than $400,000 in need-based aid as emergency funds for students with substantial need to reduce balances for registration and to address other hardships. Individuals with industry-recognized credentials can have their prior learning evaluated for academic credit, reducing the time-to-degree completion, making college more affordable. With five associate degree programs, students can choose to stop out at that level and work but then re-enter to pursue a bachelor's or graduate degree. To promote affordability for MA students, CU implemented a strategy to offer in-state tuition and in-state merit awards for six counties in the southern tier of New York. In the performing arts, a new band scholarship, requiring participation in marching band, was offered to 27 incoming first-year students: five at BL, nine at LH, and 13 at MA. Awarded in fall 2023, CU's $2.5M National Science Foundation S-STEM Grant funds the CU-THRIVE scholars' program for students to receive up to $15,000 per year to fill unmet need. For 2024-25, CU awarded over $110,000 to ten talented high-need students, giving access to careers in science, technology, and engineering.

Following RNL studies and significant consultation, CU invested more than $26.7M in institutional aid in 2023-24, including leveraging foundation funds in a renewed aid approach. An additional $1M was awarded to 205 students at MA based on a combination of GPA and unmet billable costs after applying the standard aid package. The foundations provided significant aid through 1,091 scholarships (including those from the MA Foundation, a community foundation that supports the MA campus) that impacted 2,122 students in 2023-24 for a combined total of more than $4.4M. CU gauges affordability through the strategic plan KPIs of holding flat or decreasing average net price and unmet need. Both measures are favorable, sitting below the PASSHE average. RNL's July 2024 analysis resulted in a revised institutional aid plan to take a more strategic approach to leverage funds by conducting an individualized analysis of each student's need and potential to enroll. This approach will maximize impact and reduce need while ensuring long-term financial sustainability with lower aid spending.

Funding Sources and Options

CU offers several types of assistance to students and families. CU's cost of attendance and financial aid and consumer information web pages comply with public disclosure requirements and provide information about the cost of attendance less aid, a net price calculator, funding sources, and refunding options for all sites, levels, modalities, and residencies. In fall 2024, 33.8% of CU students were Pell eligible, with a higher percentage at MA (42.9%) and LH

(36.0%) than BL (31.3%). In 2023-24, 83% of first-year and transfer students received financial aid, up from 54% in 2022-23, resulting from the new institutional aid strategies.

<u>Financial aid events and communications</u> enhance understanding of the financial responsibility inherent in attending college before and after students' enrollment. In 2023-24, the financial aid and admissions offices coordinated to administer over 25 financial aid touchpoints via the web, email, print, social media, and events. The cost of attendance and financial aid web page includes additional resources, providing detailed web pages on the FAFSA simplification and completion process with written instructions, YouTube videos, and ways to connect with staff. Slate sends eight monthly next steps emails to prospective students, five of which are dedicated to financial aid, FAFSA, and financial literacy. Print materials include a <u>campus visitor financial aid guide</u> and financial aid mailers, tailored to in-state, out-of-state, community scholars, or transfer students. Financial aid created CU social media campaigns on the primary platforms with timely, need-to-know information and participated in four virtual information sessions and in-person events (e.g., accepted students' day, open houses, and major showcases). Scheduled and walk-in one-on-one financial aid appointments and telephone assistance help answer student and parent questions regarding funding.

Financial Literacy

CU's <u>strategic plan</u> advanced financial literacy within the *Student Success* priority, which states that CU will "Comprehensively embed financial literacy to enable informed decision making regarding financial aid packaging, scholarships, and student employment opportunities." Collaborative 2023-24 initiatives led by financial aid include:

- Partnering with admissions on a live FAFSA workshop series about paying for college, budgeting, and loan repayment for incoming prospective students and families throughout the recruitment cycle, including to high school students in their sophomore, junior, or senior year as well as to transfer students
- Collaborating on orientation and/or pre-semester mascot days at each campus on financial literacy topics, which include presentations from the PA state employees credit union, PSECU
- Presenting at TRIO SSS programming and first-year seminar courses, which include financial, health, and wellness components and involve partnerships and materials provided by local and state credit unions, local grocery stores (e.g., to calculate cost of meals based on ingredients), etc.
- Sponsored in-person events across CU to encourage FAFSA completion and share financial literacy information (e.g., FAFSA Fridays, FAFSA/Scholarship Talk)
- Collaborated on seven DEIB-sponsored financial literacy open houses for all students but with targeted outreach to multicultural groups to learn about financial aid, scholarships, loans, and general financial literacy
- Added financial literacy information into the debt letter distributed through CampusLogic

Some additional initiatives related to access and affordability are presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Examples of Access and Affordability Initiatives in Support of Campus Climate and Diversity	
Entity or Initiative	**Brief Description**
URM FAFSA Filing GAP Analysis	Conducted a fall 2023 review of filers showing a greater percentage of URM students did not complete the FAFSA. Outreach (email campaigns, counselor meetings, and DEIB-sponsored FAFSA workshops) increased filing by 22%.
Last Dollar Assistance Program	Awarded $46,564 during 2022-2024 to URM students to reduce unpaid balances so they can register for classes. The program started at LH and BL and expanded to MA in the spring of 2024.
Early College Program Funding	Operates through >100 partnerships with public and private schools to enroll qualified students. Students earn college credits at 75% tuition reduction and receive automatic general acceptance for full-time enrollment upon successful completion of the program. Through EITC funding, C&N Bank donated $40,000 to support early college at MA. A $15,000 PASSHE Foundation donation supported future early college programming for CU.
TRIO SSS	Supports URM students to enroll and persist in college with accessible program services and staff, advising and mentoring, career exploration, financial aid counseling, financial literacy programs, scholarship opportunities, and more. In 2022-23, CU served 201 BL participants, 230 LH participants, and 202 MA participants.
Inclusive First-Day Access Programs	Affords students the latest online educational materials at prices below the typical cost of books. CU leverages volume purchasing for immediate electronic access to materials. The library posts links to low-cost publishers, ebooks, and materials in the electronic collections. Estimated student savings equaled $1.1M, impacting 9,615 students in fall 2023, 8,885 students in spring 2024, and 4,706 students across summer/winter sessions.
Veterans Affairs	Provides a school certifying official for GI bill benefits, campus resource center/veterans lounge, military-related organizations and/or Army ROTC, joint services transcript evaluation for academic credit, and veterans celebrations (BL's military appreciation week, MA's annual Veterans Day luncheon, LH's Army ROTC military ball).
PA Hunger-Free Campus Grant	Addresses food insecurity with a $60K grant at BL, MA, and LH to expand pantry services with food purchases and refrigeration, upgrade existing facilities, and create a more standard system of food delivery and supply sharing.
University Disability Services (UDS)	Refers students to the PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, which provides funding support for tuition and assistive technology/devices for students with disabilities based on eligibility.

COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL, STATE, AND COMMISSION POLICIES (CRITERION 8)

CU complies with federal, state, and commission policies, exercising due diligence with timely and accurate reporting. The evidence inventory and the verification of compliance with accreditation relevant federal regulations report (i.e., *institutional federal compliance report*) verify compliance with federal, state, and MSCHE policies reporting requirements, and requirements of affiliation (ROA). To comply with the HEOA, Pennsylvania Right-to-Know Act and other legislation, the consumer information web page provides a single point of access to required information.

Census data, used for official reporting, conforms to PASSHE and Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) standards. In compliance with the BOG Policy 1988-03: Data Collection and Reporting, IR supplies data to PASSHE for use in its data repository and data warehouse according to the annual data collection plan and established definitions and standards that align with IPEDS. Subjected to rigorous validation processes, these submissions enable PASSHE to meet CU's federal and state reporting mandates. IR also stores the data to fulfill other external reporting requirements. While PASSHE handles most federal and state reporting requirements, IR assists with NCAA graduation success rates; teacher education reporting to the Pennsylvania Department of Education; Act 101 reporting to PHEAA; and MSCHE and specialized accreditation reporting. IR's web page publishes an extensive library of public dashboards with CU and program-specific data disaggregated by student population.

The accreditation and consumer information web pages link from the "About" dropdown on the home page and acknowledge CU's MSCHE accredited status with the published Statement of Accreditation Status (SAS). A list and links exist for specialized accreditations. CU complies with MSCHE policies and procedures by submitting to MSCHE on-time supplemental information reports and substantive change notifications. Documented on the MSCHE SAS, examples of recent submissions include the complex substantive change (CSC) request (2022), seven requests to close additional locations (2022), and six supplemental information reports as follow ups to the CSC and annual institutional update (2022, 2023, 2024).

PERIODIC ASSESSMENT (CRITERION 9)

Board-Affirmed Metrics, KPIs, and Selected Strategic Plan Metrics

CU provides accurate data necessary for effectively assessing operations, establishing continuous improvement practices, and following federal, state, and local regulations. PASSHE's board-affirmed metrics, CU's KPI and selected metrics dashboard and workbook, and IR dashboards track student and employee diversity, disaggregated retention and graduation rates for URM and Pell-eligible students, unmet need, and net price. Related to Standard II, other KPIs measure progress in areas like campus climate, strategic communications, new gifts and pledges, and community engagement. Working closely with CU's administration, IR established and regularly updates a KPI and selected metrics dashboard that shows baseline data, where available, and current results against year-five strategic plan targets. Year-one results show progress toward accomplishing the strategic plan.

Annual Reports and Unit Assessments

Each summer, CU's divisions and units report assessment results for the measures and targets established during the planning cycle, including units related to this area. The year-end assessment results inform action plans and next year's initiatives. Some units also prepare year-end reports to comply with external reporting requirements, which tender analyses and recommendations for improvement. For example, TRIO SSS submits its annual performance report each January following the close of the academic year under review; in 2022-23, each campus met its project's approved objectives. The nursing programs also submit annual reports to the State Board of Nursing.

Policy Review

Following integration, CU adopted 200 interim policies, including 50 academic policies created by a working group to ensure common academic policies during the transition, ten student-facing policies to create a common campus life platform, and 140 legacy BL policies. All 200 policies were deliberately designated interim to ensure appropriate review, revision, and endorsement by the new senate, the shared governance structure. Per the constitution, adopted in March 2023, the senate regularly "deliberates, advises, and communicates concerns regarding matters related to the policies, functions, administration, and sustainability of the university," and establishes how policies undergo regular review and revision. Policies predominantly originate in the senate (sub)committees, where data-informed recommendations are first made. During 2023-24, CU established all standing committees and assigned the 200

policies to the appropriate committee for review, revision, and formatting according to senate's policy template. Committees review policies for naming and formatting conventions, consistency across CU, alignment with national best practices, student-facing and clear language, and necessity. Policies can be consolidated or abolished where appropriate. Following senate committee review, the policies require executive committee review and then first and second readings at the full senate. Campus-specific local assemblies review policies between first and second readings.

To ensure an effective policy review process, CU partnered with Student Ready Strategies, a consulting firm that provides technical assistance in institutional policy development. They delivered two workshops. The senate and committee leaders attended the fall 2023 workshop, and all committees were welcomed to the spring 2024 workshop. Committees applied the workshops' principles to policy revision, and three policies underwent the full review process and received final approval by the president on May 31, 2024. Those policies included the CU Policy 0-01: Policy on Policies, CU Policy 1-02: Academic Integrity Policy, and CU Policy 7-02: First Year Seminar Exemption Policy. With a voluminous set of interim policies requiring review, CU developed an expedited process and a policy review schedule, which accounts for priorities. According to the policy review schedule, senate approved an additional nine CU policies/procedures and 13 interim policies, withdrew 12, and removed 24 from the inventory that were superseded by new CU or interim policies. As a continuous improvement initiative, CU also developed in June 2024 a senate policy communication plan checklist that broadly notifies the CU constituencies of new/revised policies and ensures the website is current.

Committees and Task Forces

The strategic planning committee and CU assessment council review KPI and selected metrics and proffer recommendations for change to the president's cabinet. Committees formed through the new shared governance system or on an ad-hoc basis to address emerging needs are also vital to CU's assessment and continuous improvement processes. The following examples provide evidence of their importance to institutional effectiveness.

Transformation Accelerator Cohort (TAC) Team
In October 2021, CU (formerly BL) was accepted into the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) 15-institution transformation accelerator cohort (TAC). This initiative helps identify best practices and make data-informed strategies to eliminate achievement gaps and promote student success for URM. An institutional transformation assessment was administered to personnel (n=50 respondents) from academic affairs (including department chairs and faculty), student affairs, fiscal affairs, and senior administration. The team did initial data review and deepened reflections in Portland, Oregon, where they participated in intensive data analysis and strategy setting. Discussion led to refining IR dashboards to make more accessible disaggregated data on URM student achievement. The team also drafted three priorities for creating training that increases advocacy and promotion of diversity, closing the equity and achievement gaps for URM students, and establishing a climate built around cultural competency and inclusivity. These priorities aligned with climate survey results and actions, such as developing a DEIB strategic plan, establishing the LH multicultural center, and conducting outreach initiatives (e.g., at mid-term and for financial aid). Analyses identified needed resources resulting in increased staff at LH and MA in DEIB, Title IX, Pride, and the women's resource center. Tables 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 report outcomes from the TAC initiatives.

Complaint and Concern Working Group
Pre-semester fall 2023 preparations and insights from applying the complaint processes in 2022-23 identified the need for an ad-hoc group to unify processes and improve communication to students and employees related to student concerns, complaints, and appeals. The ad-hoc group included those with key responsibilities (e.g., dean of students, chief of staff, student conduct, DEIB, IE, Title IX, and disability services). Through initial group dialogue, decisions resulted in creating incident report forms in the Maxient software platform for student conduct and concerns. Maxient provides a repository for concerns and complaints, producing a complaint log of cases to identify the need for change.

The group compiled a single point-of-access web page, established points of contact (PoCs) for offices likely to receive complaints, and socialized new processes through emails and a pre-fall 2023 training session. Questions raised at the session revealed the lack of a dedicated faculty/staff process to report complaints and concerns. A process and form were created and socialized through an October 2023 training session, which featured scenarios to demonstrate appropriate use of policies and procedures, so PoCs better understand how to handle various circumstances. Improvements included an annual summary to ensure analyses occur and actions are taken. Opening semester emails and Triad announcements are sent to employees to remind them about relevant policies and complaint reporting processes. As stated in Criterion 3, awareness campaigns included distribution of hard copy and digital materials. The student complaint log listed 15 complaints in fall 2023 and 22 in spring 2024 that were responded to, referred, and/or

resolved. For example, ten students complained about slow Wi-Fi on the BL campus, and IT immediately acted to increase the license limit on one of the "traffic shapers." The resolution was communicated to the students.

Institutional Surveys and Studies

CU assesses its learning, working, and living environments through surveys and studies, and its campuses have long-standing practices of using such surveys as NSSE and first destination. The institutional effectiveness plan lists the high-level surveys conducted periodically. Results are presented at town halls and were provided to Blue Beyond Consulting for developing the strategic plan. IE's survey web page gives access to dashboards and reports that present CU's longitudinal or current data. Three examples of surveys are provided below.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
CU evaluates data received from NSSE and regularly reviews institutional and comparative data for trends or issues. Interestingly, the spring 2022 survey coincided with efforts to integrate on July 1, 2022, yet reflected favorably on student perceptions of the campus environment. Aspects include opportunities for interacting with persons from diverse backgrounds, feeling supported for overall well-being and academically, using support services, and attending campus events that address political, social, and economic issues. CU is slightly above, just below, or equal to the average senior student ratings for peers from PASSHE, its Carnegie Classification, and NSSE overall (see Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: Average NSSE Ratings for CU and Peer Groups – Campus Environment
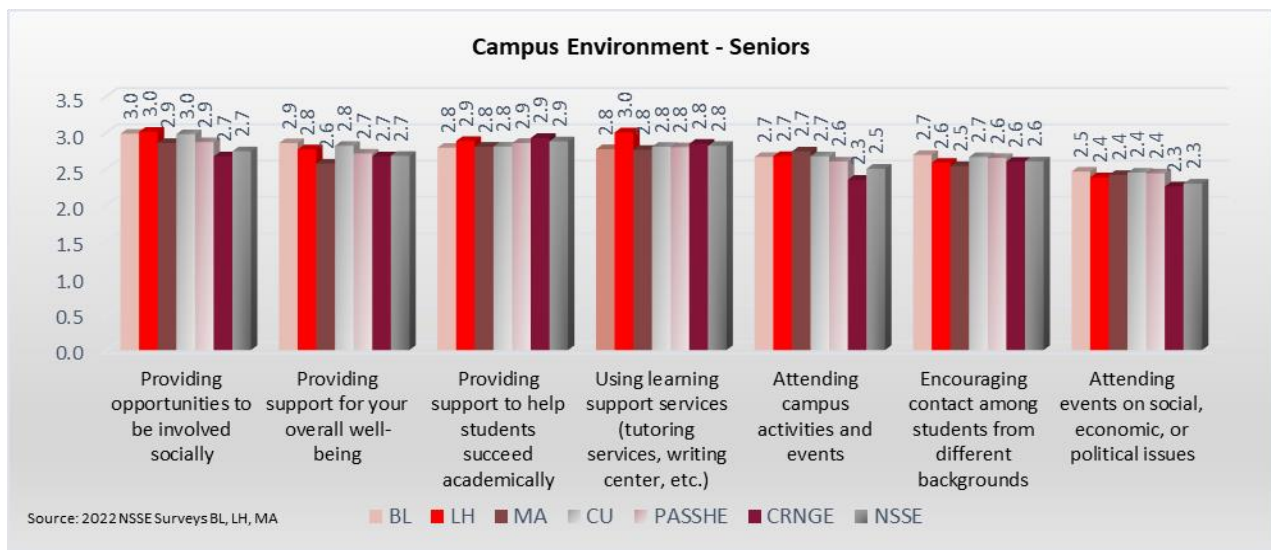
Climate Survey
During the 2022 spring semester, CU students and employees participated in a PASSHE-administered climate survey. Results were presented at town halls and revealed strengths and opportunities for improvement in seven key categories. Strengths included perceptions that CU sites are safe and welcoming to diverse populations, value diversity and inclusion, hold beliefs that people should be able to express political and religious views, and advance student success. Table 2.3 includes examples of opportunities for improvement and visible actions resulting from the climate survey, which augmented actions by the TAC team and DEIB offices. The climate survey was used to develop CU's strategic plan and informed the *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging* core commitment and related initiatives. A follow-up survey is slated for fall 2025 to evaluate the impact of changes. However, to gauge progress in the interim, DEIB has conducted numerous assessments of DEI mini-grant and campus programming to determine student, faculty, and staff perceptions of the initiatives' impact on climate. Survey results for all DEIB programming in aggregate indicate that 97% (n=732/757) of participants felt the programming helps improve campus climate and affirmed the relevance of these initiatives. The majority (75%) of respondents in all programming indicated that the current campuses' climate is welcoming and inclusive or moving in the right direction.

Table 2.3: Opportunities for Improvement and Actions in Response to the Climate Survey	
Opportunities for Improvement	**Action(s) Since August 2022**
Perceptions that senior leadership could increase consultation with stakeholders at all levels of the organization around key decisions	• Conducted regular town halls • Held campus administrators', provost's, and president's open office hours • Created a student advisory board and held meetings • Endorsed new senate structure and attended regularly scheduled senate, local assembly, and committee meetings to answer questions • Issued CU-wide emails with answers to questions asked at town halls that required follow up
Expressed concerns about increased workload and job responsibility	• Reviewed regularly staffing plans and hired positions in critical areas across CU (campus-based staff in DEIB, the dean of students office, and student success) • Conducted navigating change workshops to address workload, burnout, and change management • Held and recorded training sessions for front-facing systems and maintained issues log for Banner and Degree Works to resolve user concerns and create work efficiencies
Perception of lack of responsiveness to concerns	• Held forums to share information and receive input • Revamped and socialized information on complaints, concerns, and appeals processes • Launched the respect works here campaign • Received $90,000 from PASSHE to support strategic, DEIB-focused high-impact training • Sponsored academic and co-curricular programming and professional development • Delivered events designed to address discrimination, harassment, and racism • Established the Robert and Dolores Lynch multicultural center at LH • Created the student experience task force and implemented recommendations

Overall, survey results reflect favorably on campus climate, especially at MA; however, in January 2024, Senator Art Haywood called out four PASSHE campuses, including MA, as being hostile to students of color. This report received media coverage, and MA's inclusion was prompted by one isolated incident where the campus was targeted by a neo-Nazi group whose eight-person demonstration moved from downtown Mansfield to publicly accessible areas of campus. In response, CU held a peace march that attracted over 600 participants. President Hanna and Mansfield's mayor attended, students spoke, and campus and borough police were available to answer participants' questions. The characterization of the activities in the Senator's report caused discomfort for MA faculty, staff, and students and appeared unfair, especially since the neo-Nazi group's actions were protected by First Amendment rights and CU acted appropriately. President Hanna responded to the Senator's report by sending an email to the CU community explaining what happened, acknowledging the hurt inflicted on CU and MA by the report, and encouraging members to seek support services as CU continues to strengthen bonds in the community and celebrate diversity.

Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) Studies

In October 2023, RNL conducted an organizational/operational assessment of marketing, admissions, DEIB, financial aid, institutional research, and retention and student success. RNL reviewed data, documents, and the institution's website against a standard set of effectiveness indicators and conducted stakeholder interviews. Data was evaluated against expectations, best practices, and general user experience expectations pertaining to the website. The combined quantitative (stage 1) and qualitative (stage 2) analyses enabled RNL to benchmark CU against national best practices and current state of competencies, staffing levels, policies, processes, organizational structure, and technologies.

CU's overall rating on this study was characterized as "accomplished" (2.11 on a 3-point scale). RNL reported that the score "reflects that the institution has worked extremely hard during the first two years of integration to develop a comprehensive enrollment management model . . . . It is important to view the maturation scores for this assessment in the context of integration but, more importantly, regarding for implementation of the Slate CRM and Banner OneSIS across three institutions simultaneously" (EM organizational and operational review, slide 4). Notable strengths were in marketing, admissions, financial aid, and institutional research with more opportunities for maturation in DEIB and student success. Examples of RNL recommendations and 2023-24 actions and results are included in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: RNL Organizational & Operational Review 2023-24 Results	
RNL Recommendation	**Results in 2023-24**
Engage alumni to brainstorm and support DEIB initiatives in terms of time/treasure/talent	Spearheaded campus-specific alumni engagement activities like BL's 2023 homecoming outreach, bringing 60 URM alumni back to cultivate them to serve as speakers for special events, mentors, and donors; LH's Black history month four-member alumni panel in 2023; and MA's ESPN radio host, Freddie Coleman, visiting his alma mater twice in spring 2024 to engage with MA students and deliver the commencement address.
Communicate with the CU community the plan and process for launching the new website in June 2024 and the process for building academic content	Conducted regular email communication with the CU community and individual outreach by the webmaster throughout the spring 2024 semester. The February 2024 town hall provided an update and opportunities for questions. More details are included in Criterion 6.
Work closely with academic programs and departments to identify key differentiators by program along with student stories and profiles	Established a continuous year-round training cycle for admissions and StratComm teams to meet with department chairs to learn more about the programs. The information gathered feeds directly into two working documents: A "content catalog" for marketing purposes and a "recruiter playbook" for the admissions team.
Build more robust parent and influencer communications at the point of application, including strong affordability messaging, outcomes, and information regarding pathway programs to graduate studies	Developed a parent and supporter's field guide that discusses CU's high-value proposition, tuition and scholarship opportunities, graduate outcomes and acknowledgments, and more.
Create a formal planning group that includes others outside of admissions, including financial aid, orientation, current students, athletics, and faculty	Created an academic recruitment advisory panel composed of an admissions director and key faculty members to gather feedback/ideas on recruitment programming, collateral, and strategies. Also, an enrollment council meets monthly to refine, implement, and assess enrollment management strategies.
Continue to build on the community outreach initiatives rolled out at MA between CU and local school districts and the BL model rolled out with local head start programs as well as support of local community days	Held a breakfast program for key MA community partners, including school districts, in fall 2023 and continued engagement meetings with six school districts to establish processes, pricing, and financial opportunities for the early college program. Efforts established a communication link between workforce development and the northern tier career center to develop articulation credit pathways.

Data Integrity and Transparency

With the launch of the Ellucian Banner OneSIS and Degree Works audit tool, CU contracted with a third-party consultant, Ferrilli, to assist with implementation issues, reporting features, and data integrity in 2023 through May 2024. During registration, advisors used Ferrilli's office hours to resolve issues immediately. Housed in SharePoint, a Banner – Degree Works issues log (i.e., open-access, Excel workbook) with tabs for "open issues" and "resolved" allowed faculty and staff to document concerns and track the status and resolution. The CU-Ferrilli team met weekly to discuss reported issues from training needs, documentation, and transfer equivalencies to data integrity and coding. The CU-Ferrilli team worked to resolve reported issues to improve the user experience and reporting capabilities. From the standpoint of transparency, IR developed public dashboards, which are accessible on IR's web page and were socialized at president's cabinet, council of deans, chairs meetings, assessment workshops, and in the Triad. Ongoing dashboard improvements have occurred since their launch in response to user questions, including adding dashboards, tabs, and/or filters for URM, athletics, and special programs (e.g., honors, Act 101, TRIO SSS, majors/concentrations, minors, first destination, and graduate student retention and graduation rates, among others).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

CU remains faithful to its mission through its pursuit of strategic priorities and operational excellence. CU honors its contracts and commitments and adheres to pertinent laws, regulations, policies, and professional and accrediting standards. CU strives to represent itself truthfully, preserve its trust with the public, eliminate conflicts of interest, remain impartial, and uphold commitments. To provide positive living, learning, and working environments, CU fosters academic, intellectual, and expressive freedoms; follows ethical principles; seeks to enhance campus climate; and promotes diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Support for access and affordability extends outreach to diverse populations and fosters student achievement. Assessments through studies, surveys, working groups, and year-end reporting on goals, concerns, complaints, and appeals bring focus to areas in which CU can continuously improve. As CU transitions legacy policies and pursues strategic priorities and core commitments, CU should do the following:

- Pursue the *Strategic Communications* core commitment by refining strategies for both internal and external stakeholders based on market research, surveys, and focus groups
- Develop and implement additional strategies to address campus climate concerns and evaluate the effectiveness of those strategies

STANDARD III: DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence of all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.

[Standard III addresses *Self-Study Institutional Priorities* for Academic Programs and Support; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Financial Sustainability; and Communication and *Requirements of Affiliation* 8, 9, 10, and 15]

INTRODUCTION

CU's mission opens by declaring that "students are at the heart of everything we do." The research conducted to develop CU's strategic statements revealed that faculty and staff at BL, LH, and MA genuinely feel this way about their role in students' learning, development, and well-being. CU commits to the growth and success of students by pledging "to provide affordable, high-quality education emphasizing high-impact practices, personal and career connections, and inclusivity supporting all learners to succeed in our region and beyond," as stated in our mission. To fulfill this mission, CU invested significant effort to develop a new program array that delivers undergraduate, graduate, professional, and certificate programs characterized by rigorous and coherent learning experiences embedded in face-to-face (F2F) and distance education delivery methods. Learning experiences follow best practices, external benchmarks, and CU's educational policies and procedures. Faculty-led and administrative oversight ensures compliance with policies, aligning learning experiences with higher education expectations across all programs.

COHERENT STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES (CRITERION 1)

Coherent student learning experiences across all campuses and locations, degree levels, and modalities result from adhering to PASSHE's Board of Governor's (BOG's) policies, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) guidelines, accrediting standards, and CU policies and procedures. Consistency, rigor, and synthesis of learning ensue from policies, procedures, guidelines, and/or initiatives for degree programs and general education (GE), including the first-year experience, high-impact practices (HIPs), and assessment.

Degree and Certificate Programs

Currently, the academic program inventory documents CU's 21 master's, 54 bachelor's, and five associate degree programs, 77 minors, 15 certificates, and nine certification programs. CU also features doctoral degrees in audiology and nursing. BOG Policy 1990-06-A: Academic Degrees, BOG Policy 1993-01-A: General Education, and PDE guidelines govern the number and distribution of credits for degree requirements and unify the undergraduate curriculum through GE learning goals. Baccalaureate degrees must consist of 120 total credits, with a minimum of 40 credits in GE coursework and a minimum of 42 advanced-level credits. Parameters are established for particular degree types. For example, all Bachelor of Science degree programs must consist of 40 to 60 credits of required coursework in the major, including cognates. The university curriculum committee (UCC) oversees the curricular process and ensures proposals undergo a thorough review and comply with policies and guidelines. The degree requirements create cohesion and rigor across different degree awards requiring a range of credits devoted to GE, major and cognate, advanced coursework, and professional degree requirements. Higher education credentialing programs meet the PASSHE guidelines for GE and academic programs and applicable accreditation standards.

General Education

As discussed in Criterion 5, CU's GE program offers a common intellectual experience with sufficient scope and breadth across five core themes and 16 learning goals, including a first-year experience. The GE handbook emphasizes that learning across disciplines fosters integration of knowledge and develops skills in diversity, civic and cultural awareness, communication, problem solving, and critical analysis. Developing competencies across multiple disciplines fosters synthesis of knowledge, innovation, and adaptability for interdisciplinary problem solving and innovation. Both the UCC and GE council (GEC) ensure compliance with BOG policies and the GE handbook.

CU's mission and goals emphasize high-impact practices, as defined by AAC&U. While initiatives for first-year experience, learning communities, and global/diversity provide essential foundations for learners, other experiences such as capstones, internships, practica, undergraduate research, and study abroad facilitate synthesis of learning. Further discussion of high-impact practices may be found under Criterion 4 in this chapter.

Program and Course Development and Approval

Course and program proposals begin at the department level and undergo rigorous approval processes that include multiple feedback outlets. These processes ensure curricula emphasize coherent, relevant learning experiences. New program proposals comply with the BOG policies for academic programs and GE and follow PASSHE procedures and templates. The proposals must include a program description, needs analysis, demand data, collaborative initiatives, required resources, and program SLOs. Full proposals must demonstrate student and market demand, resource sufficiency, plans to mitigate against financial risk, and a budget. PASSHE personnel and peer chief academic officers undertake a critical review before new programs are presented to the Council of Trustees and then PASSHE for final approval. This layered review bolsters the proposal's strength, coherence, and relevancy. New minors, concentrations, and certificates require CU's approval and notification to PASSHE. New course proposals begin in the department, and as documented in minutes, UCC evaluates proposals based on need, impact, and relevancy. Graduate council reviews graduate-level courses and programs with a recommendation to UCC.

Locally, the UCC created bylaws, workflows, forms, and a SharePoint site for the curriculum management system. During 2022-23, as CU created the new program array, each proposal included a program tracking sheet, program degree map with sequencing plan and course checklist, and master course syllabus form. The forms reflect BOG policies and relevant guidelines. For example, the program tracking sheet requires total credits, in-major credits, and directed GE. Proposals include learning objectives, program course checklists, and degree mappings, which communicate what students will know at program completion and the pathway to achieve it. Following a deliberative process, CU transitioned the curriculum management system from SharePoint to the Coursedog platform, which provides access for faculty and staff to see curricular proposals, approvals, forms, and workflows. With training and open office hours held by the UCC's forms subcommittee, Coursedog was implemented in spring 2024 and houses course and program proposal forms, tracks where proposals are in the process, and provides opportunity to use feedback. Proposals include all components of the curricular proposal form and a master syllabus.

Program Assessment Review

Following CU's approval of curricula in 2022-23, program faculty completed a program assessment review (PAR) in transition document in May 2023 including fundamental components for systematic assessment. The process required programs to submit program descriptions, student learning objectives, curriculum maps, an assessment plan, and program analysis with a basic action plan. The curriculum map shows how program student learning objectives are introduced, reinforced, and mastered in required courses and learning experiences and gives a view of program coherence, rigor, and synthesis of learning across the curriculum (see the sample curriculum map in Standard V, Figure 5.3). Faculty received feedback on their PAR in transition reports from the faculty assessment liaison and IE. The PAR process was revised as described in Criterion 6, transitioned to the Nuventive Solutions Premier assessment platform, and serves as an annual academic program planning and assessment process. Moving forward, the PAR process requires faculty to review/update curriculum maps and assessment plans, report academic year-end results, and document data-informed actions, culminating in the annual report PAR. The annual report format aligns with the revised BOG program review policy and procedures so that each program's annual report PAR can be aggregated and used for the basis of a comprehensive, five-year PAR according to the academic program review schedule, template, process, and timeline.

FACULTY (CRITERION 2)

CU hires qualified faculty and professionals with appropriate credentials to design, deliver, and assess student learning. Through a rigorous hiring process, appropriate course assignments determined by deans and chairs, systematic evaluation, and professional development, faculty fulfill their responsibilities to deliver a high-quality student learning experience. The APSCUF collective bargaining agreement (CBA) outlines a process for new faculty appointments. After presidential approval, searches may commence. Faculty job postings originate in academic departments and specify selection criteria and qualifications consistent with CU, program, and specialized accreditation standards. Standardized search procedures within CU's talent management software, PeopleAdmin, help develop a diversified applicant pool and ensure qualified candidates are advanced through the search process.

CU assures faculty are rigorous and effective in all aspects of faculty work through comprehensive probationary review, tenure, post-tenure, and promotion processes mandated by the APSCUF CBA, Articles 12, 14, 15, and 16. Probationary and temporary faculty are evaluated each semester through standardized end-of-semester student surveys, peer evaluations of teaching effectiveness, and departmental committee and chair evaluations of teaching, scholarship, and service. Deans also review probationary and temporary faculty folders each year. This tiered review process provides opportunities at each level to offer feedback and mentorship to junior faculty, suggest opportunities for improvement, and recommend faculty for renewal or nonrenewal. Aggregated data on student course evaluations coupled with summaries for faculty scholarly work and service show that CU faculty meet expectations for teaching excellence and actively contribute to a wide breadth of scholarly and service outlets. On a scale of 0-4 (0=lowest and 4=highest), faculty evaluation ratings for spring 2024 reflect favorably on teaching effectiveness with above average ratings in all categories, ranging from 3.24 for course rating to 3.58 for involving students, which also includes showing enthusiasm and facilitating independent thinking and problem solving (see Table 3.1). Spring 2023 through spring 2024 ratings also compare favorably to fall 2022 (our first semester following integration) in all categories.

Table 3.1: Average Faculty Evaluation Ratings						
Session/Year	Instructor Rating	Course Rating	Progress on Objectives*	Involving Students**	Communicating ***	Evaluations ****
Fall 2022	3.29	3.12	3.32	3.54	3.39	3.51
Spring 2023	3.42	3.19	3.41	3.62	3.47	3.58
Fall 2023	3.38	3.19	3.37	3.60	3.44	3.55
Spring 2024	3.40	3.24	3.40	3.58	3.46	3.55

Source: CU fall 2022-spring 2024 student evaluation database
*Learned terminology, fundamental theories and principles, application of course material, how to learn, communication
**Showed enthusiasm, facilitated independent thinking and problem solving, encouraged student involvement
***Prepared, made clear explanations, conveyed significance of subject matter, course materials
****Used grading procedures in course outline and explained evaluations

Per CBA Article 12, the materials collected for faculty evaluation (both regular, temporary, and part-time) must provide evidence of effective teaching, the fulfillment of professional responsibilities, scholarly growth and professional development, and service to the university and/or community. These categories are also at the basis of the tenure and promotion processes, which include evaluations and recommendations from relevant individuals and committees at the departmental, college, university-wide, and administrative levels. Post-tenure reviews are similar to those for probationary faculty and are governed by Article 12. They consider student survey-based feedback and departmental faculty, chair, and dean reviews of teaching, scholarship, and service in the promotion processes.

CU has attended prudently to ensure sufficient faculty and professionals exist to deliver the academic programs and services at campuses and locations. When CU integrated, significant deliberation occurred to establish home campuses and a presence of academic and academic support leaders at each campus. A home campus was designated for the provost, deans, and associate deans across CU, along with a regular weekly schedule indicating their planned physical presence at the other campuses. Faculty were assigned to academic departments that were unified across CU, and department chairs and assistant department chairs were elected to provide leadership at that level.

Trends for student/faculty ratios provide measures of faculty sufficiency. Table 3.2 shows IPEDS data with trends for student FTE/instructional faculty FTE. Instructional faculty are primarily those who teach; the category excludes librarians, counselors, special program directors, athletic directors, athletic trainers, and faculty in administrative positions. Ratios for CU overall, LH, and MA appear below peer/PASSHE averages and slightly above for BL, suggesting sufficient faculty across the campuses, with faculty balancing loads through distance learning or voluntarily traveling to another campus for F2F delivery. PASSHE uses a different method to calculate student/faculty ratios, which also indicates sufficient faculty. The CPP documents the longitudinal data for the PASSHE ratio.

Table 3.2: Student/Faculty Ratio (as defined by IPEDS)			
Institution/Peer Group	2020	2021	2022
Peer Average	19.4	18.7	18.7
PASSHE Average	18.5	18.7	18.7
BL	20.2	19.5	20.7
LH	14.8	15.5	16.2
MA	14.0	15.3	14.3
CU	17.7	17.8	18.4

Source: IPEDS fall enrollment and fall staff. Notes: Student FTE is one FTE for a full-time student and .403543 for a part-time student (based on IPEDS research); faculty instructional FTE is one FTE for a full-time faculty and 1/3 for a part-time faculty; IPEDS 2023 data were not available when the self-study report was finalized.

As noted earlier, our faculty are expected to excel in teaching, scholarship, and service. The new faculty orientation program provides opportunities to acclimate to CU and learn about expectations in these key areas. HR oversees new faculty orientation, and the faculty-led center for teaching and learning (CTL) addresses areas of responsibility through a wide range of training opportunities. As part of a strategic plan onboarding initiative, Blue Beyond Consulting collaborated with HR and CU staff to refine the orientation process, which was rolled out in fall 2024.

The sabbatical committee administers policy and procedures for evaluating and making recommendations on sabbaticals to the president who may grant sabbatical leaves for up to seven percent of the faculty each year. Faculty may also be granted alternative workload (reduced teaching) for scholarship or for program development. Faculty support is provided for pedagogy through the CTL, led by a faculty director with 50% alternative workload. CTL assesses faculty interests and offers programming including webinars, workshops, book clubs, e-mail communication with teaching and advising tips, and a resource archive and calendar of events in our Brightspace learning management system (LMS). The LMS houses content around advising, ADA compliance, student success, and software systems. CTL offerings feature teaching and research content, including improving DEIB in our learning environments, effective advising, managing AI usage, and stress reduction. CU provides educational technology support through our CU academic technology services (CATS), which includes our LMS support team and instructional designers who sponsor regular training and individualized consultations for all faculty around academic technology needs.

CU also provides many forms of support for external grants. In general terms, these include (1) the office of research, led by the dean of graduate education and the director of research compliance, and (2) pre-award and post-award services and training in grantsmanship provided through a contract with the Indiana University of PA Research Institute (IUP-RI). The IUP-RI assists faculty with identifying opportunities, constructing budgets, communicating with granting agencies, and submitting final proposals. The office of research assists with all research compliance needs, additional training, and individualized consultations. During 2022-23, CU received two National Science Foundation (NSF) awards. Both focused on improving student persistence and success in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM), and both principal investigators applied for their first NSF grant.

In addition to external grant coordination, CU's faculty professional development committee solicits, reviews, and awards internal grants. Each fall, there is an RFP for projects with a budget up to $3,000. Each spring, there is an RFP for smaller projects with a maximum budget of $3,000 and larger projects with a budget of $7,000. The total funding amount awarded annually differs depending on available funds but is about $35,000. Faculty professional development travel committees award funds in each college, which total more than $130,000 each year. Graduate education also offers funding for faculty travel for graduate-level initiatives like conferences and career fairs. Internal grants from the office of research support scholarship and teaching innovation and, in 2023-24, included 16 grants totaling $76,875. The provost's and deans' offices provide funding for faculty projects, training, and innovation. For example, the College of Health, Science, and Technology awarded nearly $25,000 in areas such as conferences, publication funding, equipment, and special events like the math contest. Colleges may also have foundation funds for mission-related activities; the Zeigler College of Business spent nearly $30,000 in foundation funds for conference travel. The PASSHE faculty professional development council also awards professional development grants up to $10,000.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS (CRITERION 3)

CU provides many points of access to descriptions of CU degree requirements that help students, parents, faculty, staff, and other parties understand legacy and CU degree and program requirements. The academic program web pages and academic catalog publish information on academic program requirements (with links to course descriptions, degree maps, curriculum checklists, legacy program crosswalks, and Degree Works) and expected time to completion. Also linked from the catalog, the GE web page provides access to the GE handbook and GE program requirements.

The "My CommonwealthU" web page includes open-access links to and information about degree maps, crosswalks, master schedule and registration information, and contact information for key offices and services (e.g., the technology helpdesk and the registrar's office), designed to help students understand degree requirements and seek assistance. It also provides links to systems like Banner (our SIS), Degree Works (our degree audit system), CU Succeed (our student success system), Coursedog (our academic planning platform), and Brightspace (our LMS).

In compliance with FERPA regulations, Banner provides students, faculty, and staff access to students' legacy and CU academic records, including such features as curriculum and courses, prior education and training, the unofficial transcript, class schedule, graduation application, and Degree Works, the academic advising and planning tool. The

unofficial transcript summarizes how transfer courses map to CU courses and shows coursework for sessions taken here and transferred to CU. The Degree Works audit worksheet describes graduation requirements for the major (including concentrations), GE, minors, and free electives. The audit worksheet shows how completed courses meet degree requirements and explains when courses do not count toward the degree (e.g., withdrew, failed, repeated, remedial). The audit lists courses in progress and helps students understand time-to-degree completion. Degree Works includes a "what-if" function so students can explore other majors. Students and faculty use web-based resources and degree audits to track progress toward degree completion, especially during in-person registration and advising, which is required for students to receive registration clearance. These tools allow students to monitor progress.

CU's website describes other higher education pathways or credentialing options that include educational partners. Supporting the *Academic Excellence and Innovation* priority, initiatives with high schools, career and technical education, and non-credit, workforce development providers offer options to a broad demographic of learners. Table 3.3 provides examples of progress made to increase opportunities during 2023-24.

Table 3.3: Examples of Educational Pathway Initiatives and 2023-24 Progress		
Educational Opportunity	**Pathway(s)**	**2023-24 Progress**
Early College (dual enrollment)	High school students can earn up to 12 credits per semester that can be applied to their academic major of choice.	Increased from 67 to 101 articulation agreements
Workforce Development Trainings	Non-credit training (online and on campus) in high-demand occupations such as healthcare, public safety, and information technology provide employee upskilling and professional credentials that can be granted as CU credit toward an academic degree.	Increased from 35 to 44 trainings
Credit for Prior Learning	Students earn credit for their prior work and training. Credentials were approved in exercise science, healthcare, and public safety.	Increased from 0 to 13 approved industry-recognized credentials for academic credit
Career and Technical Education	Graduates from high schools or career and technology centers who successfully complete eligibility requirements receive college credits upon enrollment in CU's criminal justice, early childhood education, exercise science, health science, middle level education, middle and secondary health and physical education, and secondary level English, math, science, and social studies education programs.	Increased from 12 to 48 articulation agreements

Other examples of pathways include the second chance Pell experimental sites initiative that offers courses to incarcerated individuals with the potential of earning a rehabilitative justice certificate. Army ROTC also has a presence on the campuses providing military science courses and training that may lead to becoming a commissioned military officer. CU's ROTC unit, housed at LH in 2023-24, includes students at Lycoming and Penn Colleges, enrolling 42 students in spring 2024, including 19 from CU. BL's 29 cadets were part of the Bucknell University unit.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT (CRITERION 4)

The student success centers are organized to deliver a holistic array of academic and student support services. Beginning with the recruitment and admissions processes, the admissions website and acceptance communications direct students to academic support programs and resources under the student success center umbrella. In keeping with best practices, undergraduate students enroll in first-year experience (FYE) activities such as new student orientation, mascot days, welcome week, and a first-year seminar (FYS) alongside other high-impact practices (HIPs). While this section describes the student success center and academic support, other engagements through advising, student support, athletics, and student activities are discussed in Standard IV.

Student Success Centers

Students can utilize the student success center on each campus; the centers provide academic support for transitioning to college, connect students with campus and community resources, and assist with time management and study skills. Each center includes a student information desk as a single point of contact for students to seek answers, identify resources, and receive referrals. The centers help first-year students with their transition to college through new student orientation and new student programming that utilizes best practices. They identify vulnerabilities of at-risk students and invite them to participate in programs such as early start and partnership in achieving student success (PASS). These programs provide students with peer mentors to assist in their academic pursuits and transitions. Co-located in the student success center, other academic support services address special needs including disability services, TRIO SSS, Act 101, and DEIB.

Orientation and the First-Year Experience

With the executive director's leadership and campus-based staff, in-person or virtual orientation for first-year and transfer students is offered prior to their first semester. Summer, pre-fall, and pre-spring orientation programs inform students and their supporters about college transition, academic expectations, and campus and community resources.

CU's mission emphasizes a commitment to HIPs and programs fulfilling that mission, such as FYE and college transition programs. Previously, all campuses delivered an FYS, which is included in the new GE *Foundations* curricular theme. FYE, student success, and advisement personnel work closely with early start programs such as BL's Jump Start, LH's Academic Success Program, and MA's Mounties PEAK, and with learning communities (LCs), FYS courses, and academic advisors to lay the foundation for success. First-year initiatives offer programs and mentoring that cover key topics such as study skills, time management, mindfulness, wellness, and cultural diversity.

As part of GE, CU developed an FYS course that enrolls all first-time, incoming students with sections available on all campuses. As a HIP and student success strategy designed to increase retention, most sections are offered F2F on the student's home campus. FYE coordinated 93 fall 2023 courses, 10 spring 2024 courses, and 73 fall 2024 FYS courses. Training is provided to faculty teaching FYS classes based on best practices and research from the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition at the University of South Carolina. A training session discussed how to merge student success elements with the instructor's chosen theme and directed faculty to resource personnel at each campus to guest lecture or provide information on pertinent topics. In spring 2024, a debriefing session was held to gather instructor experiences. Suggestions recommended that faculty build detailed policies into their syllabi on assignments, use the Brightspace gradebook for transparency of grades, meet individually with enrolled students early in the semester to forge relationships, use accountability groups to build community, and incorporate FOCUS2 as a class activity. In fall 2024, a Brightspace site was established and communication sent to faculty on best practices. Scheduled events are shared regularly so that instructors can encourage student participation.

The National Resource Center, as well as other nationally recognized organizations such as the Washington Center for Improving Undergraduate Education, have informed other FYE program initiatives at CU including LCs at BL and a new initiative known nationally as first-year interest groups (FYIGs). A director for these CU FYE programs collaborates with faculty, staff, and students across the CU campuses to develop and refine LCs and FYIG models. Successful LCs have occurred at BL pre-integration and continued in fall 2023 and 2024 with nine LCs, including one for the honors program, with over 500 students enrolled. In fall 2024, LH offered an honors LC with peer mentors, and MA will launch one in fall 2025. For the fall 2024 FYIG pilot, five sections were offered at BL, two at LH, and two at MA. The FYIG pilot uses the FYS course as the vehicle to incorporate student peer leaders who encourage engagement during class and attend out-of-class activities as part of a web-based, first-year student events calendar. The peer leaders complete an in-person, full-day workshop paired with their FYS faculty member on such topics as rapport building, faculty-peer leader expectations of each other, campus resources, and course activities planning.

High-Impact Practices

In addition to FYE, CU provides opportunities for engaging in HIPs. Based on research, these practices facilitate deep learning and improve outcomes for all students, including students that are underrepresented in higher education. Recognizing the impact, CU emphasized ensuring consistent practices occur across CU. As mentioned above, FYEs (including FYS and LCs) are implemented on the campuses, and working groups designed a consistent university-wide model for these initiatives. High-impact topics like diversity and global learning are embedded in GE learning goals, and CU supports study abroad, which is beginning to experience enrollment growth since COVID-19.

Study abroad is available to all CU students, who can consider a study abroad course in any of nearly two-dozen countries through the center for global engagement. Options include CU faculty-led study abroad courses (2024 options included courses in Italy and Jamaica), short- or long-semester programs through established exchanges with universities abroad, and courses offered by affiliates and overseen by the center for global engagement.

The senior NSSE responses from students who either completed or planned to complete HIPs (as listed in Table 3.4) provide evidence that all of CU has placed a significant emphasis on HIPs. The results compare favorably to peers, especially for LCs and internships; however, CU commissioned a high-impact practices ad-hoc committee to streamline definitions and track experiences not currently recorded in Banner OneSIS as foundational work to focus planning on HIPs and increase the array of opportunities.

Table 3.4: Comparative 2022 NSSE Results for Select High-Impact Practices (HIPs)							
Which of the following do you plan to do before you graduate?	**BL**	**LH**	**MA**	**CU**	**PASSHE**	**Carnegie**	**NSSE**
Study abroad program	5.9%	3.3%	0.0%	4.9%	4.5%	4.8%	7.8%
Work with a faculty member on a research project	18.5%	26.2%	29.1%	20.6%	19.7%	17.0%	20.7%
Learning community (LC) or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together	35.4%	26.2%	35.4%	34.0%	23.3%	17.9%	20.8%
Formal leadership role in a student organization or group	43.3%	40.4%	50.5%	43.5%	35.3%	24.1%	30.5%
Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, portfolio, recital, comprehensive exam, etc.)	40.6%	57.5%	78.1%	46.5%	42.3%	41.3%	43.3%
Internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching, or clinical placement	56.2%	59.9%	52.2%	56.4%	49.9%	39.0%	44.1%

Source: 2022 NSSE Surveys for BL, LH, and MA

As described in Standard IV, the alumni and professional engagement office spearheads the Professional U initiative, through which a subset of HIPs are coordinated. Students, faculty, alumni, employers, and community partners interact through internships, faculty-mentored research, and study abroad; industry-specific employer career fairs; academic colleges' career development specialists; and faculty-led centers of professional practice.

Students may explore enriching learning experiences through the Eileen Jones Honors College. The honors college, with chapters at BL, LH, and MA and over 500 students enrolled, includes a rigorous curriculum focusing on academic excellence, civic and community service, leadership development, global awareness, and high-impact experiences. All honors college students are encouraged to study abroad. Donor-funded grants and scholarships make international study, scientific field research, scholarly and fine arts residency programs, and professional internships affordable.

Research also serves as a key component of the honors college, faculty-sponsored independent studies, and competitive proposals and grants. The annual undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative activities grants competition is open to any undergraduate student and provides up to $4,800 in wages and $1,000 in supplies for research or creative works. Student research is presented at regular CU events such as the College of Health, Science, and Technology research day, the honors college fall and spring receptions, and the health professions interprofessional education event. Students in all colleges regularly present research findings at regional and national meetings, including annual meetings of the Northeast Regional Honors Council, Northeast Geological Society of America, Society for the Advancement of Management, American Academy of Audiology, American College of Sports Medicine, National Student Nurses Association, the DevLearn Conference and Expo, and many others. Along with Bucknell University, Susquehanna University, and Geisinger Health System, CU sponsors the Susquehanna Valley Undergraduate Research Symposium and regularly sends ten or more students to present research each year. Criterion 6 provides information on graduate student research and funding.

Library

CU's libraries connect people with information resources, teach students information literacy skills, and develop collections in support of CU curricula, cultural, and leisure pursuits. With a director housed at MA and assistant directors at LH and BL, faculty librarians and staff serve CU faculty, staff, and students with accessing materials via physical collections at home sites, interlibrary loan, and online databases. Accessibility to most online resources is available regardless of students' location, as is the ability to consult with library faculty and staff. The libraries are fully integrated and have merged the searchable catalogs, which include thousands of links to e-resources as well as bibliographic records of physical materials. As compared to other PASSHE schools, CU's materials are relatively equal for physical holdings as a percent of the library collection (per IPEDS) but include a much higher percentage (25% CU vs. 9% peers) of digital serials versus digital books (30% CU vs. 55% peers). Library instruction goes beyond basic orientation and focuses on information fluency skills and mastery. The libraries also partner with the student success centers to hire, train, and assess student workers who serve as peer research consultants. Librarians are actively involved in supporting FYS courses, curricular development, and scholarly research with a library faculty member dedicated to each academic department for library instruction, research assistance, and collection development. For example, a sample FYS lesson plan includes library-supported learning outcomes focusing on the ability to determine information needs, develop research strategies, and interpret and evaluate research. Per the 2023-24 library instruction report, library faculty presented 183 sessions to 3,791 students.

Distance Education (DE)

For decades, CU's campuses delivered a modest amount of GE and academic program courses via DE and a limited online program array. The onset of COVID-19 necessitated DE delivery of all programs and courses. Following COVID-19, the percentage of DE delivery remained elevated as compared to pre-COVID levels due to leveraging faculty resources for the delivery of legacy program teach-out and providing access to programs and courses across CU. While the overall trend for post-pandemic DE delivery declined for undergraduates, the decline was less than Carnegie Classification or PASSHE peer groups as cited in CU's 2023 IPEDS data feedback report. Peers ranged from 47-59% of students not in any spring 2023 DE courses as compared to CU's 38%, indicating higher levels of CU's undergraduate DE delivery. Since CU's fully online programs were graduate, the percentage of graduate students enrolled in exclusively DE courses was higher and increased from 35% in fall 2022 to 58% in fall 2023, with 24% in at least one but not all DE. Interest in and recruitment for graduate online programs like clinical mental health counseling, sport and performance psychology, school counseling, and education programs continue to increase enrollment at that level.

Faculty deliver DE courses; create and share course content, materials, activities, and assessments; and communicate with students in CU's Brightspace LMS. Brightspace houses training content specific to faculty, staff, and students. For example, faculty training includes topics like key technologies, assessment, ADA, and professional development, while student training focuses on accessing technology and resources. Brightspace is supported by CATS, as noted under Criterion 1. CATS is composed of five instructional technologies and design professionals who provide support and DE/instructional design services. CATS manages instructional systems, provides training and resources, and oversees a student worker support center to answer support tickets for employees and students on Brightspace, Zoom, and other instructional technology. Three of the CATS staff completed the ACUE effective online teaching practices comprehensive course in 2021 to ensure currency in pedagogy and technology use.

Prior to integration, all campuses offered DE training. For example, prior to 2021, 208 BL faculty completed the voluntary teaching online certification course, and 25 faculty completed voluntary Quality Matters training. In 2022, 63 faculty and staff completed ACUE effective online teaching practices comprehensive course, and in 2023, another 32 were enrolled. In fall 2024, CU offered the ACUE module promoting active learning online to 64 faculty. CATS has offered DE training to faculty and shares training responsibility with IT for distance and multi-modal classrooms integrating enhanced video conferencing, Zoom, and weConnect room technologies. Table 3.5 describes room types and counts beyond standard room technology.

Table 3.5: DE Instructional Rooms		Room Counts		
Room Type	**Description**	**BL**	**LH**	**MA**
Enhanced Video Conferencing Room	Outfitted with in-room cameras, microphones, and touch panels to support distance education instruction via a video conferencing platform	27	18	16
Zoom Room	Set up to work with Zoom room technology via Zoom web conferencing tools	0*	63	16
weConnect Room	Set up to work with the weConnect learning platform from Barco that allows learners to attend physically and/or virtually	2	2	1

*Nine new Zoom rooms are planned as part of the McCormick renovation and BL campus updates

Employees and students can access Microsoft 365, LinkedIn Learning, and Adobe Creative Cloud for DE needs. Faculty teach synchronous sessions online via Zoom. Instruction is supported in Brightspace, which integrates with products like Microsoft 365, Mediasite, Respondus LockDown Browser and Monitor, Turnitin, Springshare LibApps, and LinkedIn Learning. The inclusive access program for inexpensive, first-day access to textbooks integrates with Brightspace via VitalSource and an array of publisher integrations. In fall 2023, CATS added the Brightspace add-on Creator +, giving faculty the ability to create interactive elements and formative assessments in their course content.

CU has collected DE assessment data through surveys and evaluations. During integration, CU conducted a 2021 newU student survey that indicated the majority of students preferred F2F delivery. However, 45% of students indicated their willingness to take up to 25% of their GE, major, and elective courses online, and an additional 25% of students would be willing to take 50-100% online. The survey revealed that students would be more comfortable taking GE courses via DE than major courses. During the spring 2024 semester, CU responded to student comments about increased DE delivery at the smaller campuses and locations and conducted another first-/second-year student survey to determine student preferences. Consistent with 2021 results, the more recent survey revealed that the majority (87.5%) of students preferred F2F delivery for major classes and fewer (but still a majority at 50.43%)

preferred it for GE. However, two-thirds of students also indicated that they desire a broader program array even if it means more DE delivery. Ultimately, CU acknowledges the importance of achieving an appropriate distribution of DE when delivering the undergraduate curriculum, relying on student feedback (as noted above) to better understand student needs, perspectives, and preferences regarding course modalities. More information on DE assessment related to student learning and evaluation is included in Criterion 8.

Co- and Extra-Curricular Activities

Students can enhance their academic experience with co-curricular activities such as clubs, organizations, athletics, and leadership opportunities. CU has 57 varsity athletic teams (23 at BL, 21 at LH, and 13 at MA). Non-varsity athletes can choose club sports (17 at BL, ten at LH, and one at MA) and intramural sports (14 at BL, 11 at LH, and five at MA). More than 200 additional student clubs and organizations exist in a wide range of areas such as gender and women's issues, government and policy, community outreach, and fitness. CU has indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and fitness classes. Each campus has a modern student recreation center and fitness opportunities for students, including swimming pools, tracks, gymnasiums, tennis courts, ball fields, and yoga and dance studios. More information on student affairs and athletics is provided in Standard IV and on student government in Standard VII.

GENERAL EDUCATION (CRITERION 5)

In 2021-22, a working group was commissioned to do research for selecting CU's unified GE program. The working group analyzed existing campus GE programs, MSCHE guidelines, AAC&U essential learning outcomes, a current literature review, survey feedback, and input from the campuses' provosts. This research informed the representative GE advisory committee (GEAC) as they also reviewed governing policies, guidelines, and five curricula from legacy campuses and two other PASSHE schools, resulting in a recommendation to the interim curriculum committee (ICC) of three of the five programs for consideration. The ICC selected the two most implementable curricula (i.e., from LH and Shippensburg) for consideration and gathered additional feedback. CU held a ten-day comment period, offered three open forums, and conducted a faculty non-binding straw poll. Two Shippensburg colleagues shared insights and answered questions about their process, implementation, and assessment in an April 27 recorded session. After the session, the ICC shared the feedback received, recommended the Shippensburg model, and announced the proposal selection and rationale to all faculty on May 5, 2022; the administration subsequently approved the data-informed recommendation. During the 2022-23 academic year, faculty developed and UCC approved 377 GE courses following the course approval process outlined in Criterion 1. Another 29 GE courses were approved during 2023-24. During the spring of 2023, current students were advised of their option to remain in legacy programs or opt into the new GE curriculum, an option that remained available until July 1, 2024. Crosswalks were created to demonstrate how students could complete their legacy GE requirements using the approved CU courses and indicate how their legacy credits fit into the CU GE program. The entering fall 2023 cohort was enrolled in CU's GE program.

The legacy and now current GE programs meet PASSHE content guidelines, which specifically mandate compliance with MSCHE standards. CU's GE curriculum combines five curricular themes and 16 program goals aligned with the PASSHE and MSCHE requirements (see Table 3.6) and the AAC&U essential learning outcomes, which illustrates how CU's liberal education approach conforms to higher education expectations. The GE handbook describes the program, which ensures students can pursue breadth of study and acquire fundamental skills.

As shown in Table 3.6, the *Foundations* GE curricular theme includes five learning goals achieved through courses and learning experiences. Part of a larger FYE, the first-year seminar (FYS) complements intentional skill development in written communication, oral communication, quantitative reasoning, and critical analysis. Acquiring fundamental skills prepares students for college and life success. Building on *Foundations*, the remaining four GE curricular themes continue requisite skill development and cover the breadth of knowledge characteristic of a model GE curriculum. *Interconnections* allows students to discover human behavior, social interactions, and global communities while *Citizenship and Responsibility* fosters the ability to make well-reasoned judgments, decide ethically, and act responsibly. *Natural World and Technology* prepares students to use scientific inquiry/principles and technology to explore issues, evaluate data, and solve problems. *Creativity and Expression* affords students opportunities to gain an appreciation for the arts and literature. Combined, these GE themes and goals enable students to meaningfully connect ideas, develop intellectual skills, navigate complex problems, and become informed citizens.

Table 3.6: Mapping of GE Program Curricular Themes and Goals, PASSHE Requirements, and AAC&U Essential Learning Outcomes

GE Program Curricular Theme	GE Program Goals	PASSHE Requirements (aligned with MSCHE)	AAC&U Essential Learning Outcomes
Foundations (15 credits)	• First-year Seminar • Written Communication • Oral Communication • History • Quantitative Reasoning	• Oral and written communication • Critical analysis and reasoning • Information literacy • Expanding cultural and global awareness • Scientific and quantitative reasoning	• Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical World and Natural World • Intellectual and Practical Skills
Interconnections (9 credits)	• Diversity • Global Perspectives • Foreign Languages	• Study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives • Expanding cultural and global awareness • Preparing to make well-reasoned judgements	• Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical World and Natural World • Personal and Social Responsibility • Intellectual and Practical Skills • Integrative and Applied Learning
Citizenship and Responsibility (6 credits)	• Citizenship • Ethical Reasoning • Critical Reasoning	• Study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives • Critical analysis and reasoning • Preparing to make well-reasoned judgements	• Personal and Social Responsibility • Intellectual and Practical Skills • Integrative and Applied Learning
Natural World and Technology (9 credits)	• Natural World • Technology	• Scientific and quantitative reasoning • Technological competency	• Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical World and Natural World • Intellectual and Practical Skills • Personal and Social Responsibility
Creativity and Expression (6 credits)	• Literature • Arts • Creativity	• Critical analysis and reasoning • Study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives	• Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical World and Natural World • Intellectual and Practical Skills

Note: the BOG Policy 1993-01-A: General Education requires a minimum of 40 GE credits; CU's program complies with a 45-credit GE program

Providing students with opportunities to develop competencies across disciplines fosters knowledge integration, innovation, and adaptability necessary to solve complex interdisciplinary problems while creating awareness of the interdependence among people and ideas and creating openness to differences. Per the BOG Policy 1993-01-A: General Education, these GE objectives are addressed in undergraduate degrees with varying credit requirements for different degree awards. Bachelor's degrees must include 40 to 48 GE credits, while the AS, AAS, and AA require a minimum of 24, 21, and 30 GE credits respectively. CU's GE program for bachelor's degrees requires 45 credits.

The GE council (GEC) consists of 12 faculty members from colleges, sites, and disciplines that deliver GE courses, and two non-voting administrative representatives. GEC oversees the GE program by (1) initiating, reviewing, and recommending GE policy changes; (2) reviewing and recommending GE curriculum; and (3) coordinating mentoring and assessment. For curricular review and approval, the course proposal template requires the submitter seeking course inclusion in GE to provide a master syllabus and essential information about which theme/goal, how the course fits the theme/goal, and how course student learning objectives map to GE student learning objectives, including how methods and course structure allow students to achieve outcomes. The GEC recommends to the UCC an action on each GE course proposal. The UCC recommends to the provost, who renders the final decision on curricular proposals. Each semester, the GEC implements data collection for GE program assessment of all learning goals. A program review process follows the five-year cycle for which data submitted each semester and up through the designated semester is used to conduct a deeper review of the selected learning goals, which is discussed further in Standard V. Curricular approval, assessment, and program review processes ensure coherence and program authenticity.

GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION (CRITERION 6)

As listed in the academic program inventory (API), CU offers 23 graduate/professional training programs, many with tracks and certification options. Nineteen of 23 graduate/professional programs are accredited. Graduate programs with the highest enrollments include master's-level programs in clinical mental health counseling, physician assistant, nursing, business, and education. CU also offers doctoral degrees in audiology and nursing.

To receive program approval, all graduate programs must comply with the BOG Policy 1990-06-A: Academic Degrees and associated procedures. The graduate council and dean of graduate education review and oversee all graduate

policies, programs, and curricula. Programs are required to demonstrate that students have a culminating experience through a thesis, research project, comprehensive examination, or an integrative experience that synthesizes theory and practice as described in the catalog and academic program pages. Programs meet this requirement through capstone courses, action research, clinical, practicum, and/or field experiences requiring various forms of research, scholarship, and independent thinking. CU supports graduate student learning through internal funds for materials and travel needs for graduate student research (e.g., $300 in 2022-23 and $600 in 2023-24 was requested and allotted) as well as travel funds to support research presentations (e.g., $5,800 in 2022-23 and $3,300 in 2023-24).

Many programs require students to complete a clinical placement/practicum/field placement, and others include these as options. These experiential learning environments place a high premium on independent thinking, challenging students to solve real-world problems in real time. For example, students in the speech-language pathology master's program can learn through experiences in the on-campus (BL) speech, hearing, and language clinic and in our local schools. Students in our master's in biology program regularly participate in field and lab work with their faculty. Numerous opportunities for graduate students to develop independent thinking occur through graduate assistantships related to their field of study, student support services roles, and research assistantships. CU offers graduate assistantships in CU units including athletics, strategic communications and marketing, and student services.

Per the graduate faculty appointment guidelines, graduate faculty are primarily individuals who have earned terminal degrees in their discipline, have a record of teaching effectiveness, and engage in scholarly work that undergoes critical review by professionals in their discipline. CU applies the same faculty search procedures to graduate searches as it does undergraduate, requiring that candidates meet posted qualifications. Graduate faculty receive the same resources for instruction and research as undergraduate faculty.

THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS (CRITERION 7)

CU's faculty, administrators, and/or staff oversee the design, delivery, and assessment of student learning opportunities and work alongside its educational partners in compliance with its new third-party provider policy and procedures. CU has worked diligently to develop a third-party provider inventory and secure documentation in accordance with the policy. CU partners with employers around the state to offer clinicals, internships, and student teaching and with international schools for study abroad. CU does not partner with third-party recruiters, though a systemwide initiative led by the chancellor's office is underway. Currently, CU does not have any written arrangements; however, CU determined through the self-study process that substantive change requests are appropriate to address the arrangements in place for the respiratory therapy and radiologic technology programs. CU is filing those requests with MSCHE.

In 2023-24, CU's new credit for prior learning (CPL) policy was fully approved and posted on the web page. Per the policy, CU faculty oversee the evaluation of credentials and recommend the number of credits and/or course equivalency awarded. A SharePoint site houses approved CPL credentials on a program list. Beyond credential evaluation, CU gauges success in this area by increasing the number of approved credentials year over year.

CU archives career and technology center (CTC) articulation agreements (by school and program) on SharePoint. Procedures for evaluating CTC programs require that faculty review the Pennsylvania Department of Education's CIP and accompanying task list; discuss how the CTC covers the content; and recommend the number of credits and course equivalencies if appropriate. CU strives to increase the number of executed articulation agreements year over year.

Non-credit bearing workforce development trainings are available to the community in health, computers, leadership, and public safety as examples. The workforce development office (WFD) maintains a list of training and education partners on their web page that offer non-credit certificate programs designed to provide skills for professional-level positions and industry-recognized certifications for in-demand occupations. Before entering into a partner agreement, WFD sends emails to all faculty, department chairs, and deans sharing information about non-credit training opportunities with a request that faculty interested in providing instruction contact WFD. If a faculty member agrees to the dates and compensation, a non-credit instructor pay agreement is issued, and the faculty member provides the instruction. If there is no faculty interest, WFD contracts with one of its education partners to provide the training. CU also participates in the Workforce and Economic Development Network (WEDnet) training grant program to help companies seek training for upskilling the workforce.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES (CRITERION 8)

Periodic assessment of academic, educational support, and student support programs occurs to review and improve the student learning experience. In Standard V, Figure 5.1: Assessment Oversight Structure shows that IE coordinates assessment with the faculty assessment liaison, the CU assessment council (CUAC) and its committees, and the GEC. The CUAC receives committee reports and provides recommendations through the strategic planning committee to the president's cabinet. All academic programs, accredited and non-accredited, are assessed annually. During integration, all programs conducted reviews to develop the CU curriculum. In accordance with the BOG Policy 1986-04-A: Program Review and related procedures, CU is implementing a program review schedule, template, process, and timeline (see Criterion 1). Self-studies for specialized accreditation and accrediting agencies' reports offer evidence of review and analysis for those programs.

Academic Program Assessment

The academic program assessment committee, the faculty assessment liaison, and IE oversee academic assessment processes to ensure academic program assessment utilizes data for decision making, resource allocation, and improvement. Following integration, faculty developed their new curricula in 2022-23, and the program assessment review (PAR) in transition report, user guide, and 2022-23 evaluation rubric guided the assessment process described in Criterion 1. The faculty assessment liaison and IE staff provided individual mentorship, assessment training, and feedback to programs via a scoring rubric to improve assessment plans. A high-level summary report of submissions and aggregate scores were provided to the academic program assessment committee, deans, and associate deans. During and after the fall 2023 assessment committee and council of deans' meetings, members suggested changes to the annual report, web pages, data dashboards, training, and reporting that were documented in the committee report and implemented. Assessment process changes for the permanent annual report PAR are discussed in Standard V.

In 2023-24, the new permanent planning and assessment process was moved into the Nuventive Solutions Premier assessment platform to generate the annual report PAR. The platform aligns with the annual report with tabs for general information, curriculum maps, assessment plan and results, and the annual summary and action plan (including strengths, weaknesses, resource needs, and actions). The 2023-24 program summaries and action plans focused on declining enrollment, financial sustainability, student learning, and career preparation. Table 3.7 provides examples of an undergraduate program from each college and an example of an online, graduate program. The examples include excerpts of program analysis and actions reported in the annual report PAR. The evidence inventory includes an expanded Table 3.7 with more examples and documentation. Examples, results, and actions also are included in Standard V. Following the annual report submission, IE staff and the faculty assessment liaison used the revised rubric to evaluate the annual report and provide feedback to program assessment coordinators and deans to improve the assessment process. Aggregate results and actions are shared in Standard V, expanded Table 5.7, and the evidence inventory.

General Education Assessment

The GE council (GEC) holds responsibility for assessing CU's institutional learning goals. The GE web page provides information about the GE program themes, goals, and learning objectives. The site links to the GE handbook, curriculum maps, rubrics, data collection worksheets, and Qualtrics data submission form. For all 16 learning goals, GE data collection occurs from the GE courses offered every semester. The GEC provides a high-level data summary report each semester and updates the GE dashboard posted on the website. As shown in Standard V, Table 5.5, assessment reviews with a deeper analysis occur on a five-year rotation with a full program review slated for 2028-29. The GEC shares reports with the UCC, CUAC, and faculty at large, including changes recommended as a result of assessment. The fall 2023 results focused on communicating expectations, offering training, refining the assessment process, and implementing data-informed changes at the course level as described in Standard V. The review process for new GE course proposals is both thoughtful and rigorous; GEC meetings feature deep discussions regarding the integrity and coherence of the program, ensuring course proposals align with learning objectives. New course proposals are sometimes denied and/or returned to the proposer for revision with opportunities to receive mentorship.

Table 3.7: Annual Report PAR, Annual Summary and Action Plan (excerpts)	
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS (including Program Name, Level, and College)	
Program Analysis in 2023-24	**Action for 2024-25**
Healthcare Professions, AAS, College of Health, Science, and Technology	
This program allows for seamless progression for credentialed allied health professionals who lack an academic degree to complete a program of study that leads to an associate degree. Part of the 2022-23 action plan was to work with the workforce development office and through the credit for prior learning process to determine academic credit for healthcare credentials. Significant work was conducted in 2023-24 and multiple healthcare credentials were approved for credit which can be applied to this degree. Five students have applied these credits toward degree completion.	This program should be attractive to nontraditional students who wish to earn an academic degree, but marketing to this population continues to be a challenge. New splash sheets were created that describe the program, and faculty will work with CU admissions to market the degree program as a viable pathway for nontraditional students.
Criminal Justice, BS, AS, and Minor, College of Arts, Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences	
While the overall enrollment trend has declined, CJ's bachelor's, associates, and minor have all maintained a robust enrollment as compared to other majors. While retention rates are strong, they are lowered by the appeal of CJ from popular TV programs/movies that mislead students about the major and profession. Course enrollments have declined due to program changes and lack of a CU GE course. CU also does not have a graduate degree. Outcomes on multiple measures for each of the seven SLOs show 70% or more majors and minors are meeting expectations on nearly all measures, except for the history (60% met) and research (61% met) SLOs.	To increase enrollment, the program received approval for a conservation law enforcement concentration and offered two new courses that filled in fall 2024. The program seeks the approval of introduction to criminal justice for GE credit to offer students a useful GE course while increasing course enrollment. In collaboration with workforce development, Act 120 training and State Police Academy training were evaluated, and each training can count for up to 20 credits toward the AS and BS degrees. Plans to improve student learning for the history SLO continue as faculty spend more time discussing the history and the purpose of law enforcement in the United States along with the structure of and legal aspects in policing. The faculty also want to review/improve exam questions and ensure textbook availability by the first day of class. The course covering the research SLO included both under- and upper-classmen, which motivated changing the course to the 200-level to assure it is in the zone of proximal development. Ongoing monitoring continues.
Economics, BA and Minor, Zeigler College of Business	
Trend analysis shows declining enrollment in the major and minor (using both legacy and CU program data) and fluctuations in URM (44% in 2023) and Female (23% in 2023) enrollment, a discipline which historically has been less diverse. In-major retention has varied historically. While students met expectations for learning outcomes in 2022-23, the faculty implemented bonus quizzes before final exams in most courses used to assess SLOs, and for research, the program used one-on-one meetings during the semester, a sample student paper showing expectations, and faculty outreach to students who miss meetings. Assessments show that students are meeting expectations (i.e., 60% or more) for all SLOs; however, statistically significant lower results occurred in quantitative, qualitative, and computational skills of 74.83% in 2023-24 versus 85.88% in 2022-23.	Moving forward, the faculty feel it essential to organize formal and informal events where students can interact with economics faculty, gain insight into the economics major and minor, explore the economics program, and uncover the diverse opportunities it presents. Effectively leveraging alumni networks can enhance recruitment efforts by showcasing successful career paths and providing mentorship opportunities, inspiring prospective students to choose the economics major. Offering a diverse selection of upper-level courses including those in political economics, can attract more majors by allowing students to explore various specialized topics that align with their interests and career goals. SLO assessment will continue with multiple assessments and ongoing monitoring, particularly investigating why results declined in quantitative, qualitative, and computational skills.
GRADUATE PROGRAM (including Program Name, Level, and College)	
Clinical Mental Health Counseling, MS – Online, College of Arts, Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences	
This online graduate program posted several successes during 2023-24, including an increase in applications by almost 60%, an increase in completion rates to 53%, and 100% placement rates, with all graduates having a job within six months of graduation. 95% passed the NCE, but one section was below the national mean.	With enrollment growth, the program faculty continue to monitor the faculty complement to ensure the student-faculty ratio is consistent with the disciplinary accreditation standards. The program faculty strive to increase completion rates by (1) facilitating individual and group applicant interviews via synchronous technology, (2) informing students prior to each semester's registration process of the synchronous course schedule so students can plan their work-school schedules, (3) ensuring students are registered for appropriate courses each semester, (4) strengthening student-student mentoring processes, (5) encouraging students to share experiences and support each other during CMHC club meetings, and (6) providing more scholarship opportunities for students. While 95% of students passed the NCE, one section scored below the national mean which prompted ongoing monitoring and a course review to ensure the content aligns with the NCE and is strengthened.

Administrative, Educational Support, and Student Support Assessment

The administrative, educational, and student support assessment committee oversees all aspects of divisional and unit assessment in coordination with IE. Each summer, CU's divisions and over 60 units conduct operational planning, aligning their goals, initiatives, measures, and targets to the strategic plan. Plans are entered into Nuventive by September 15, and educational and student support areas complete annual reports in June - July. As part of the year-end assessment process, units articulate how outcomes inform change in action plans as well as what adjustments were made to next-year's goals, measures, and targets (see Table 3.8).

Table 3.8: Administrative, Educational Support, and Student Support Annual Reports (excerpts)		
Unit	**2023-24 Goal/Measure**	**2023-24 Year-end Result/2024-25 Action**
Faculty Development	**Center for Teaching and Learning:** Offer at least one training in topics that survey results indicate are most desirable	**Result:** *Target met* - CTL hosted 29 events in 2023-24 aligned to in-demand topics but also shifted recorded trainings from the web to Brightspace and housed materials in line with survey results; received 6,391 faculty visits, with at least 430 faculty visiting more than once **Action:** Implement recommendations generated from peer benchmarking due to decreased event attendance, restructure leadership and programming accordingly, and implement program assessment
First-Year Experience	**First-Year Seminar:** Implement new FYS100 across CU	**Result:** *Target met* - 103 sections offered in 2023-24 and 10 faculty selected to pilot the FYS peer mentor initiative in fall 2024 **Action:** Implement peer mentors and conduct comparative analysis between fall 2023 to the pilot peer mentor sections in fall 2024
Global Engagement	**Satisfaction:** 90% of international students satisfied with programming	**Result:** *Target met* - 90% of international students were satisfied with their experience at CU **Action:** Partner with the student activities office to expand programming for all students but intended to forge more opportunities for CU and international students to connect with other students
Honors College	**Fundraising:** Raise $500,000/year in foundation funding to support $2,000/student honors experience grants for 2023-2025	**Result:** *Target met* - Received $1M cash gift toward the Eileen Jones Honors College that will be distributed over two academic years **Action:** Reassess student financial assistance and continue to work on fundraising initiatives
Student Success	**Orientation:** Increase new student attendance at in-person orientation by 1% per year	**Result:** *Target met* - 87% students (n=2,256/2,579 deposited students on June 27, 2024) attended in-person orientation, up from 81% in 2023 **Action:** Continue to grow communication plans, send information earlier to students and supporters, and collaborate more with admissions to get orientation information at accepted students day events
Workforce Development	**Credit for Prior Learning:** Receive approval of five non-credit, industry-recognized credentials through the CPL process into degree pathways	**Result:** *Target met* - Received approval for 13 credentials primarily in health-related areas **Action:** Expand into entrepreneurship, accounting, business, IT. Onboard interested learners into credit-bearing programs, recognizing the learning and certification to shorten their path to a degree.

Similar to the academic side, the IE staff uses a rubric to evaluate each section of the annual report, providing a summary evaluation of the planning and assessment processes to the vice presidents and unit points of contact. A high-level summary report of submissions and aggregate rubric scores are also provided to the administrative, educational, and student support assessment committee and vice presidents for review. Following the first summary report and fall 2023 meeting, the committee met, reviewed the report, and recorded their suggestions in a brief feedback survey. The assessment committee's year-end report provided information about what suggestions for improvement were already implemented and what was recommended for next year. For example, the committee updated the user guide and rubrics and added materials to the web per committee recommendations but proposed to revise the committee structure and recognize those who do excellent work more publicly during 2024-25.

Distance Education Assessment

As described in Criterion 1, CU uses surveys and evaluations to assess DE delivery. Coding in Banner now allows for the review of student evaluations by modality. As reported in Table 3.9, spring 2024 evaluations show that students rate DE courses both above and below F2F average ratings depending on the delivery method. For example, students scored multi-modal, 80% online, and interactive TV "course ratings" on average higher than F2F instruction, while blended and solely online delivery scored lower. Other evaluation categories in Table 3.9 varied by delivery mode, with average ratings above and below the F2F ratings.

Table 3.9: Average Course Evaluation Ratings for Spring 2024						
Session/Year	Instructor Ratings	Course Ratings	Progress on Objectives	Involving Students	Communicating	Evaluations
F2F	3.51	3.27	3.46	3.67	3.54	3.66
Blended	3.39	3.20	3.31	3.54	3.43	3.53
Multi-modal	3.57	3.38	3.54	3.69	3.59	3.74
80% online	3.74	3.38	3.46	3.80	3.71	3.80
Online	3.34	3.19	3.37	3.54	3.44	3.56
Interactive TV	3.75	3.75	3.88	3.83	3.79	3.79

Source: CU fall 2022-spring 2024 student evaluation database; Notes: uses a 0-4-point scale, 0=poor and 4=excellent; teaching modalities are defined in the glossary

Similar, varied results were found when reviewing the 16 GE learning goals and associated student learning outcomes by modality. Using t tests ($p<.05$), an analysis of the fall 2023 student learning by modality indicated that significant differences exist for DE delivery, depending on DE delivery method versus F2F. In some cases, F2F average scores were significantly higher, while other cases revealed that F2F ratings were lower or no different than DE modalities. In Table 3.10, the citizenship and society student learning outcomes reveal that multi-modal delivery as compared to F2F received significantly higher levels for all three learning objectives (denoted in green), but online ratings for two of the three objectives showed no statistical difference in student learning. While survey results suggest that the majority of students tends to prefer F2F delivery, the preliminary GE results show that student learning can be equal to or greater in DE courses and likely relates to aspects of the course and instruction beyond modality.

Table 3.10: Fall 2023 Citizenship and Society SLOs Mean Comparison by Modality						
Category	Overall	F2F	Online	MM	BL	80-99 ONL
Civil Rights and Civil Liberties	3.82	3.62	3.95	4.49	N/A	N/A
Individual and Collective Action	3.92	3.81	3.79	4.92	N/A	N/A
Responsibilities of Citizenship	3.81	3.76	3.62	4.83	N/A	N/A

Source: Qualtrics GE Submission Form Data; Note: Green font represents significantly higher ratings as compared to F2F; uses a 1-5-point scale, 1=unsatisfactory and 5=mastery

Other Evaluations

Changes resulting from assessment arise in many ways, some of which are documented above; however, assessments, reports, and initiatives from internal areas like task forces or ad-hoc committees (e.g., high-impact practices and student employment task forces/working groups) as well as external influences such as accrediting standards, BOG policy changes, and CU's strategic initiatives may factor into program, college, and university plans as part of annual or ad-hoc reviews to improve student learning opportunities. For example, the library staff conducts the LIBQual assessment once every three years to assess current services and address areas in need of improvement. Changes were made in direct response to these assessment results. For example, in response to criticism from the 2021 MA assessment about outdated library technologies, the music library equipment was upgraded in 2023, and the library received more than 60 new laptops and desktops in April 2024. CU also administers NSSE and uses the rich data to review such areas as high-impact practices (see Criterion 4, Table 3.4), advising, and other topics.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

In its first year, CU developed academic program and GE curricula for programs at all levels that conform to state and PASSHE guidelines and implemented curricula alongside the teach-out of legacy programs. Focus on AASCU-defined high-impact practices was bolstered through initiatives like Professional U, the honors college, GE, and study abroad to provide robust learning opportunities. CU students benefit from multiple degree pathways and credentialing options that leverage workforce development programs and credit for prior learning. The center for teaching and learning offers support for professional development and DE alongside CU's provisions for scholarly activity through sabbaticals, alternative workload, and grant writing resources. Transitioning to Banner, Degree Works, CU Succeed, and the new CU website facilitated communication, early alerts, and advising to assist students in understanding degree requirements, tracking progression, and keeping informed. CU leveraged faculty expertise in student learning and program assessment to develop a systematic assessment process with an annual report PAR and five-year program review process. To continue enhancing the design and delivery of the curriculum, CU should do the following:

- Continue to use assessment data to better understand needs, perceptions, and preferences regarding course modalities to achieve a balanced and effective distribution of modalities across the undergraduate curriculum
- Enhance initiatives that support *Academic Excellence and Innovation* by developing and promoting further an array of credentialing pathways and high-impact practices

STANDARD IV: SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.

[Standard IV addresses *Self-Study Institutional Priorities* for Academic Programs and Support; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Financial Sustainability; and Communication and *Requirements of Affiliation* 8, 9, 10, and 15]

INTRODUCTION

CU is dedicated to student success, as articulated through its values, priorities, and core commitments. The *Student Success* priority commits CU to provide holistic and inclusive support to meet the needs of all students and prepare them for personal and professional success. The values and priorities also espouse creating a welcoming and inclusive living and learning environment, marked by the diversity of people and thoughts. These ideals are realized by recruiting traditional, non-traditional, international, in-state, out-of-state, transfer, underrepresented minority, early college, and veteran students. CU provides academic advising, mentoring, and academic and student support services, meeting a wide range of needs that extend from admission to post-graduation. CU offers an array of co- and extra-curricular activities through clubs, organizations, residence life, athletics, and intramurals. Ongoing review of policies, programs, and activities enables CU to continuously improve the services and support it provides.

ADMIT, RETAIN, SUCCEED (CRITERION 1)

CU has clearly stated ethical policies and processes for admissions and support programs that promote retention and graduation. The web-based catalogs and student handbook, as well as web pages for admissions, cost of attendance and financial aid, the registrar's office, and My Commonwealthu (a resource web page for CU), give students, parents, faculty, and staff access to public information in these areas.

Admissions

The enrollment management VP and AVP provide leadership for admissions, and campus-based directors oversee their site's recruiting for prospective students and supporters. Admissions counselors are assigned to geographic territories and categories (e.g., undergraduate, graduate, transfer, early college, and international) and recruit for all CU campuses and locations. CU admits students with a centralized process and unified standards.

Undergraduate and graduate admissions criteria are embedded in the application process. Undergraduate admissions recommends that applicants enroll in a college preparatory track in high school. Alternative educational preparation can be considered, including (but not limited to) experiential learning, career and technical training, or other appropriate pathways. CU remains SAT optional, not requiring scores for the application. Transfer admissions occur on a rolling basis, and requirements are detailed on the website. Application procedures for graduate admissions vary by program, but those differences are specified in the graduate application process.

Prospective students can search the admissions home page, learn about the campuses and programs, request to meet a counselor, and apply online. The admissions application, housed in the Slate admissions platform and accessed online, includes all program options and provides an interactive, customized experience based on each student's campus/location and program selections. After prospective students submit their application with program and campus/location preferences, the admissions portal adjusts throughout the process to provide relevant information.

CU contracted with Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) to help develop a student profile and recruiting strategies to target prospective students whose characteristics match the profile of those most likely to enroll. This work includes a situation analysis, competitor analysis, and review of year-over-year results on performance indicators (e.g., first-year enrollments, yield rates based on various characteristics, GPA profile, need levels, and FAFSA filing rates). The analyses were combined with admissions funnel goals and action plans into the annual recruitment and marketing plan. According to the plan, CU implemented a communication strategy that leverages print, email, and digital campaigns for students at all phases of the enrollment funnel. The strategy features parent and supporter communications with sequenced messaging for parents of students who applied, were admitted, and deposited, as well

as a parent and supporter's field guide. The campaigns include topics like financial aid/scholarships; application processing; safety, mental health, and student services; campus visits; and FAFSA filing.

CU also contracted with RHB, a marketing firm with expertise in Slate software services. RHB's contract for services included advisory and implementation services, end-user training, admitted student portal optimization services, and predictive engagement scoring to determine the likelihood of applying. RHB's assistance was vital to implementing Slate according to industry best practices and creating a strategic workflow necessary to recruit students across CU. This work has positioned CU to scale Slate across the institution for more targeted recruitment of populations like honors, early college, and non-traditional students. CU continues to use traditional recruiting strategies like open house, VIP day, instant decision day, campus visits, campus tours, accepted students days, and large group visits including bus visits. Collaborative faculty and staff opportunities include reinstating the faculty note card campaign, academic webinars, and major showcase days. Faculty are instrumental in developing program talking points for admissions counselors. The early college office working with the honors college enrolled students in courses to engage with the program prior to commitment and matriculation. Following consecutive smaller first-year cohorts, CU's funnel categories (as reported by admissions from the Slate CRM) overall and by campus (see Figure 4.1) experienced an increase for fall 2023 and fall 2024 (see Table 4.1) for a total two-year increase of 12.9%, suggesting a positive impact from the recruiting strategies.

Figure 4.1: Fall 2024 Admissions Funnel by Campus
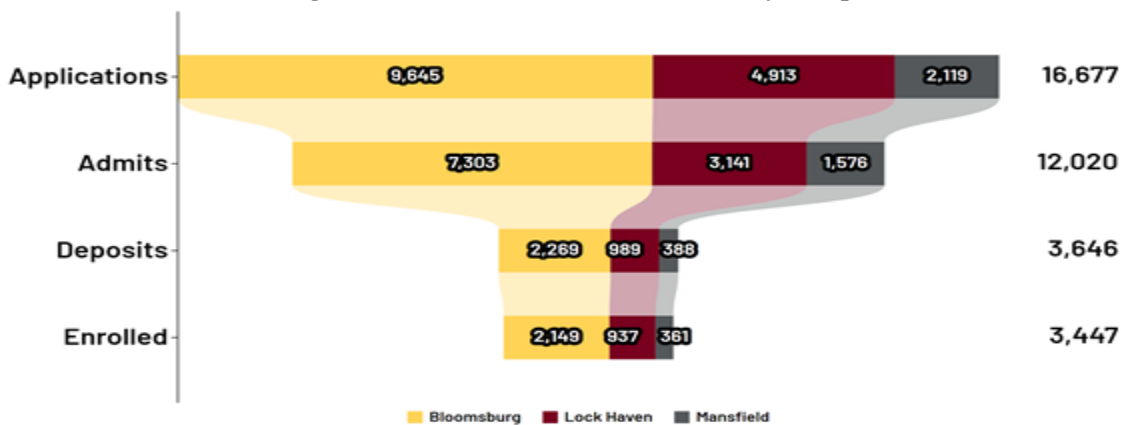
However, first-time transfer admissions were down at all campuses and by 16.3% overall in 2023. Efforts to increase all categories continued with the fall 2024 recruiting cycle, but special emphasis was placed on MA transfer application processing. Enrollment management worked collaboratively with the registrar's office and academic colleges to decrease delays by using Slate to support transfer credit evaluation at the point of admission. Transfer admissions increased 11% over last year, up from 391 to 435, and three-year trends show a 10.7% increase in first-year and 47.6% in the graduate categories.

Table 4.1: Admissions Funnel Numbers													
	Applications			Admits			Deposits			Enrolled			% Change
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024	2022-2024
First Year	11,850	12,022	13,014	8,880	8,938	9965	2,316	2,531	2,497	2,184	2,448	2,417	10.7%
Transfer	1,632	1,627	1,718	924	920	1,067	521	436	466	467	391	435	-6.9%
Graduate	1,497	1,684	1,945	713	870	988	508	590	683	403	510	595	47.6%
TOTAL	14,979	15,333	16,677	10,517	10,728	12,020	3,345	3,557	3,646	3,054	3,349	3,447	12.9%

Source: Slate CRM, based on admissions last data capture used for internal reporting

Cost and Affordability

Providing an accessible, affordable education inspires the historical and current missions and priorities of PASSHE and CU. Released in July 2022, the 2025 state system priorities emphasize the need to expand student affordability and grow enrollment by increasing student aid, limiting student cost, growing employer and statewide partnerships, and creating affordable credentialing pathways. System-level BOG efforts for implementing policy changes that rescinded institutional aid restrictions and held tuition rates constant for seven years show the system's devotion to affordability. CU remains committed through strategic plan priorities for *Student Success* and *University Success* that espouse access to an affordable education, connecting enrollment and student achievement to fiscal decision making.

Institutional Aid

Prior to integration, CU enlisted consultants to assist with enrollment management strategies, which included significant work toward offering more affordable options and optimizing merit- and need-based aid. Since award tiers and amounts varied across campuses, initial steps involved working with RNL to develop a common strategy and a comprehensive suite of enrollment solutions that included pricing and financial aid leveraging. Two RNL pricing studies, one commissioned by CU in 2021-22 and one by PASSHE in 2022-23, were conducted and pointed to the same insights and solutions. Initial results from RNL's competition analysis, affirmed by IPEDS comparative analyses, indicated that CU's students relied more on debt funding than students at other private and public four-year competitors, suggesting that the institutional aid strategy may position CU at a competitive disadvantage. As a result, CU developed awards for local students; adjusted in-state, out-of-state, and international merit-awards; and provided more consistent criteria across CU to ensure clarity in communicating to students and parents.

The cost of attendance and financial aid web page posted eligibility criteria and award tiers for (1) local community, in-state, out-of-state, and international first-year students, and (2) in-state, out-of-state, and community college partner transfer students. Criteria for renewable awards were posted on the web and, for example, required first-year students to maintain a 2.0 GPA and earn 24 credits by the end of the first year and maintain a 2.5 GPA with 24 credits in years two through four. Table 4.2 provides the 2023-24 tier structure of in-state, first-year students; similar tables were posted in 2023-24 for other award groups. After the July 2024 analysis of aid informed by RNL, the web was updated to include scholarship ranges and direct students to contact admissions for individual counseling on aid.

Table 4.2: Merit-Based Scholarships 2023-24 for First-Year, In-State Students				
Name	4-pt. GPA	% GPA	In-State per Year	In-State 4-Year Total
Chancellor's Scholarship	3.80-4.00	95%-100%	$5,000	$20,000
President's Scholarship	3.50-3.79	90%-94%	$3,000	$12,000
Trustees' Scholarship	3.00-3.49	85%-89%	$2,000	$8,000
Provost's Scholarship *awarded only at MA*	2.50-2.99	80%-84%	$1,750	$7,000
Dean's Scholarship *awarded only at MA*	2.01-2.49	75%-79%	$1,500	$6,000

To effectively expand the institutional aid strategies, CU actively sought partnerships with local school districts and community colleges. The local community scholar awards include merit-based scholarships and on-campus housing at any of its campuses for all qualified students in 50+ area school districts. First-time, first-year student enrollment from participating districts increased from 693 in fall 2022 to 928 in fall 2023 to 943 in fall 2024. The community college partner scholarships provide a seamless pathway for graduates from six community colleges to continue their education with renewable scholarships and guaranteed on-campus housing. CU has enrolled 109 transfer students in fall 2024 from community colleges with articulation agreements, compared to 99 for fall 2023 (a 10.1% increase).

Financial Aid and Cost Information

The executive director of financial aid and three campus leads oversee the financial aid function. A complement of staff operates on each campus and delivers financial aid presentations to new students and their supporters during campus visits, orientation programs, virtual events, and off-campus events (e.g., high school events to assist families with FAFSA completion). Staff members deliver classroom presentations, financial literacy events, email, and social media communications and offer one-on-one consultation via email, phone, F2F meetings, and virtual meetings.

The cost of attendance and financial aid, student billing, and consumer information web pages include accurate and comprehensive information regarding expenses, financial aid, additional scholarships, grants, loans, repayment, and refunds, providing information on application, awarding, over-awarding, federal verification, and satisfactory academic processes. The pages link to loan forms, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) information, and related resources like the JobX student employment platform. With the rising importance of financial literacy, financial aid offers events, information, and tools that help prospective and current students understand the effects of financial decisions (e.g., financial aid 101 virtual sessions, in-person FAFSA events, and print/web-based brochures).

CU uses CampusLogic, a financial aid software, and its platforms and solutions to facilitate processes. An automated financial aid platform, StudentForms, allows students to submit documents via a secure, online portal regardless of campus (e.g., information for verification of federal aid and professional judgments). CampusCommunicator enhances communication strategies, sending standardized award offers or debt letters with information on students' debt status, debt management, and financial literacy. CU recently launched VirtualAdvisor, which allows students to ask and receive answers to routine student questions in real time through an AI-powered chatbot, while staff monitor online

exchanges to address complicated concerns. Embedded on the CU web page, the chatbot acquires the ability to answer a greater breadth and depth of questions. Since launch and through June 2024, nearly 150 conversations occurred.

College Preparedness and Student Support

CU provides college preparedness and success programs that coalesce into an inclusive, student-centric approach. Led by the senior associate dean for academic support services, student success centers were implemented at all campuses and align with the strategic plan's *Student Success* initiative to "create and provide exemplary and holistic student services." Processes exist for identifying, assessing, admitting, retaining, and supporting students in attaining their educational goals. The admissions application provides data on academic indicators (e.g., GPA, SAT, and class rank) that identify students, potentially designating them eligible for early start and/or college access and opportunity programs. After reviewing academic indicators, economic eligibility is determined for programs like Act 101.

Leveraging the Slate CRM, the admissions office and program directors coordinate information sent to incoming students about program eligibility, participation, and application processes. Table 4.3 describes those program options for students with at-risk indicators at initial enrollment and high-level program attributes designed to support student achievement. While trends for retention-to-second-year rates vary for college access programs, TRIO experienced positive results with an increase from 58.3% for the fall 2022 cohort to 78.7% for the fall 2023 cohort and a 76.3% rate for the fall 2023 cohort URM program participants. Though the Act 101 rates dipped for the fall 2023 cohort, the three-year trend shows an increase of 2.5% in retention-to-second-year rates.

Table 4.3: Programs for Students with At-Risk Indicators			
Program	Campus	Leadership	Description
Early Start Programs (for students with at-risk indicators)			
Jump Start	BL	One executive director for all three campuses with support staff on each campus	Each campus offers a pre-fall semester, week-long session to preview college life, access resources, and receive academic support. Skill building includes preparing for first-semester courses, building study habits, utilizing safety measures, meeting students, and finding support for success. Learning outcomes include knowing the advisor's role, accessing health/wellness resources, building relationships, managing time, and knowing the buildings/resources. The programs require orientation, class attendance, study halls, and study skills/time management seminars, staff mentors, and a signed learning and behaviors contract.
Mounties PEAK	MA		
Academic Success Program	LH		
College Access and Opportunity Programs (for students with at-risk indicators)			
TRIO SSS	Each Campus	Director at each campus	A federally funded grant program, TRIO SSS provides intensive support for eligible students designated as low-income, first-generation college students, and/or students with disabilities. Enrichment activities help students transition to college by navigating academic, financial, socio-cultural, and personal issues that may impact students' ability to succeed. The program begins with a summer bridge component at LH and MA and continues for all participants from the first date of enrollment to graduation.
PA Act 101 Program	BL, LH	One executive director for all campuses with support staff on each campus	Serving eligible educationally and economically disadvantaged students from Pennsylvania, Act 101 supports students in their adjustment to college and preparation for academic success and aligns with innovations that promote student learning and success from the NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. The program begins with a summer bridge component at BL and LH and continues for all participants from the first date of enrollment to graduation.

The registration process for first-year students is overseen by academic affairs and supported by student success during orientation. In response to RNL's organizational/operational assessment, academic affairs and student success worked collaboratively to enable first-year students to leave orientation with a full schedule. When students attend summer orientation, they now select their themed first-year seminar according to their interests. The remainder of their first-semester schedule is selected by department chairs and registrar's staff according to placement results and major, program degree maps, and general education (GE) requirements ideal for first-year students.

In 2023-24, a working group with representatives from the College of Health, Science, and Technology, registrar's office, admissions, and student success convened to improve the math placement process, which differed across campuses and focused mostly on science, technology, and business majors. The group chose to use ALEKS, an AI-based learning and assessment system, for math-based placements and promoted it to help students improve placement scores, prepare for classes, and increase course outcomes. The group's work resulted in the following:

- Completed a detailed course inventory and analysis by college for every major and concentration and identified which majors should require ALEKS assessment based on required math and science courses

- Recommended all students take ALEKS even if not required by the major to prepare for math and science courses
- Collaborated on a communications plan to (1) use Slate to inform deposited students of requirements/ recommendations; (2) launch a CU web page on ALEKS math placement including FAQs, score ranges, cut scores, and course placements; and (3) distribute a flyer to deposited students using multiple outlets
- Distributed reference sheets to admissions of the majors and concentrations that require ALEKS and on pre-requisites and required MATH courses for each major and concentration
- Provided ALEKS placement presentations at the council of deans, college, and departmental meetings; new student orientations; and Zoom question/answer sessions for first-year students

For writing, placement is based on transcript evaluation of high school GPA for first-time students or college GPA for transfer students. Depending on cut scores, students are placed into a three-credit writing course; a three-credit course with a one-credit lab for additional writing practice; or a two-course (six-credit) writing sequence for students who require more attention to developing writing skills. During the last two years, CU used the cut score tables and course equivalences that slightly differed by campus based on legacy grading criteria and course offerings. The departmental writing committee is currently working toward a unified placement approach.

Academic Support Programs and Initiatives

CU offers a full array of programs and services to assist all students in their transition to college and provide academic and student support. The first-year experience begins with summer orientation, pre-semester mascot days, and welcome week. Orientation blends pre-orientation online modules, in-person summer sessions, and the day-time components of mascot days to orient to college life, expectations, services, and facilities. Evening mascot days consist of student engagement opportunities and campus traditions. Welcome week offers an expanded schedule of speakers, events, and engagement opportunities. The GE program requires the first-year seminar (FYS100). The GE program *Foundations* theme and FYS learning objectives intend to cultivate scholarly and academic success, engage with the CU community, foster personal development and wellness, and promote understanding of diversity and social responsibility. An FYS100 guide for the syllabus and course development was shared on the CU curriculum SharePoint site for faculty use in course preparation and delivery. In 2023-24, CU faculty delivered 103 sections of FYS100. In addition to first-year programs, Table 4.4 describes support provided through the student success centers.

Table 4.4: Student Success Centers Academic Support Programs and Initiatives			
Program	Campus	Leadership	Description
First-year programs	Each Campus	One executive director for all campuses with support staff on each campus	Support all students with such components as orientation, mascot days, welcome week, and a first-year seminar.
Tutorial and learning centers; writing-literacy engagement studio	Each Campus	Director at each campus	Deliver peer tutoring, supplemental learning, academic coaching, writing assistance, and on-line tutoring through NetTutor.
Exploratory to major programs	Each Campus	Faculty directors for BL/LH and MA that oversee staff advisors at BL/LH	Provide undecided students holistic advising to assist them with registration, scheduling, and determining a path to declare a major as soon as possible.
Partnership for achieving student success (PASS)	Each Campus	Executive director of student success and success specialists	Support students in academic jeopardy to develop and implement an academic improvement plan in consultation with the student's academic advisor.
Mid-term and final grade outreach	Each Campus	Executive director of student success and success specialists	Launch messaging campaigns to offer support or congratulations to students as appropriate to their grades.
General student assistance and programming	Each Campus	Executive director of student success and success specialists	Offer individual and group programming on a variety of topics including time management, study skills, student services, and tips for success, etc., through student success centers.

Advising and CU Succeed

Academic advising assists students in planning their educational pathway and remains a shared responsibility between the advisor and advisee. Students are assigned an academic advisor after admission and given an account on Banner OneSIS. Banner houses the academic transcript and degree audit (through Degree Works), which assist students, faculty, and staff in understanding degree requirements and tracking progress. As per the CBA, advising is a faculty role, and faculty members must hold at least five office hours per week. Some advising tasks (e.g., course registration and resolving scheduling conflicts) can be assigned to personnel outside the bargaining unit in cooperation with the faculty advisor and the department chairperson. Students are expected to meet with their academic advisor at least

once a semester to review their academic progress and course selection and receive registration clearance. As highlighted in Table 4.4, exploratory or undecided students are supported by faculty advisors and success specialists who assist in creating a realistic plan consistent with the students' academic, personal, and career goals.

The student success platform, CU Succeed, facilitates communication among academic advisors, instructors, students, and staff who support student learning. During each semester, advisors receive notifications from CU Succeed regarding their advisees based on flags, referrals, and kudos raised by the students' instructors, success specialists, and others in their "success network." Within the student success platform, advisors can review many of the tracking items raised for their advisees and notes pertaining to progress and meetings attended, such as with success specialists, graduate assistant academic coaches, tutors, and instructors. Students with mid-term grades of C- or below receive outreach to alert them of the grade(s) and to connect them with additional support. Outreach was implemented for 2,387 students in fall 2023 and 2,618 students in spring 2024. Mid-term grades are also posted in Banner and CU Succeed, helping students and advisors identify issues in certain courses before the semester's end to develop action plans with the aim of improving performance. Students, advisors, and student success staff are provided with notifications regarding advisees' academic status per the interim academic retention, probation, and dismissal policies. Student success staff use CU Succeed to notify students not in good academic standing (i.e., below 2.0 GPA) of their requirement to participate in the PASS program, described in Table 4.4, to discuss action plans.

Student Support Services

Students receive support services through such offices as disability services; counseling; housing and residence life; dean of students; and diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB). These offices offer services and programs that align with CU's mission and values of being student-centered, welcoming, and inclusive. Information on resources and support services at smaller CU locations is included in the evidence inventory.

University disability services (UDS) assists students by encouraging self-advocacy and working in partnership with members of the CU community to provide individuals with disabilities equal access to university opportunities. A large portion of the support provided is through reasonable accommodations to enrich educational experiences and student success. UDS also provides students with support through a peer mentoring program. This program aims to foster a sense of belonging, ease student transitions, encourage self-growth, and increase motivation and accountability. UDS educates the CU community on equitable treatment of individuals with disabilities. In 2023-24, UDS served 1,139 registered CU students in the fall and 1,081 in the spring, up 3.4% and 2% respectively including 483 new registrations; assisted with 2,316 regular and final exams; and provided 576 Glean notetaking accommodations.

The counseling centers also support students at each site. Counseling centers are staffed by counselors who meet Pennsylvania's professional counselor licensing requirements. A short-term psychotherapy model is followed. The services include individual counseling, referral to community providers for more intensive treatment, and group counseling. Free and confidential services help students cope with stress, traumatic incidences, educational problems, social issues, and relationship concerns. The centers use a brief, short-term treatment model with bi-weekly sessions. Students are provided up to 20 sessions while at CU. In 2023-24, counseling centers served 567 students (i.e., 310 BL students, 137 LH students, 120 MA students), and LH piloted a grief group with 13 sessions and 5 students. The counseling center's $14,000 DEI grant funded a mental health speaker for incoming first-year students at mascot days.

The student health centers provide health and wellness services, funded through student fees, to fulfill their mission of providing high-quality healthcare to all CU students. Student health services support our students' physical and mental health needs, promote optimal health and well-being, and strive to maintain a climate of sensitivity and compassion that values and respects all individuals. Services include physical exams and medical appointments with nurse practitioners, physician assistants, or physicians; evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment of common acute care conditions; convenient on-site prescription and over-the-counter medications to treat acute illnesses or injuries; and x-ray, laboratory testing, and referrals to specialty care and other CU offices. Additionally, nurse services include visits for medication injections, tuberculosis testing, self-care education, and telephone/portal message triage for medical issues. The student health centers had 7,594 student visits in 2023-24, up from 7,430 in 2022-23.

The office of the dean of students is staffed by CU's dean of students, a senior associate dean (BL), and two associate deans (one at LH and one at MA). The office assists students with situations that could adversely affect their academic success or holistic growth. Situations include prolonged absences, medical or personal emergencies, resource insecurities, and mental health or behavioral concerns. The staff connects students to resources on their local campus

and processes CU community referrals for students of concern. The dean of students chairs the CU campus assessment, response, and evaluation (CARE) team and provides case management for students of concern who do not rise to the level of the CARE team. In 2023-24, the team reviewed 133 cases and met 33 times to address concerns. In addition, the office of the dean of students is responsible for key policies in the student handbook, student complaints and concerns, and most of the campus life units, including student involvement, civic/community engagement, student recreation, wellness, and fraternities and sororities.

CU's office of DEIB leads and supports university-wide initiatives focused on the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body, faculty, and staff while fostering an inclusive and equitable campus and university community. Positive change achieved through focused initiatives and purposeful activities and events creates and sustains an inclusive learning, living, and working environment where members of the CU community feel welcomed, valued, and supported. DEIB sponsored 205 programs, training, and outreach activities across CU in 2023-24, a 15% increase over the previous year.

Alumni and Professional Engagement

Commonly known as the "career center," the career and professional development function is combined with alumni engagement to create the alumni & professional engagement (A&PE) unit within the advancement division. Under the leadership of the AVP for A&PE, each campus offers fundamental career and professional development resources, services, and programs to support students from acceptance through post-graduation. Students can access career development and alumni engagement professionals working with students, faculty, alumni, and employers. Supporting the mission and strategic plan, team members collaborate to support such traditional alumni programs and events as regional alumni gatherings, reunions, and homecoming and provide career education and services.

Alongside the A&PE team, CU faculty, staff, alumni, and employer partners comprise the Professional U career community to provide career education and networking opportunities and to connect students with internship and employment opportunities. The traditional career coaching and career education programs are available to students both virtually and in person. Career assessments like FOCUS2, career road trips to employer organizations, and on-campus recruitment expos are also available to all students. Signature offerings include a career intensive boot camp for third- through fifth-year students; the annual Professional U champions event which celebrates engaged faculty, alumni, and employers in our Professional U community; and academic-based, multi-day, professional conferences coordinated with CU faculty and staff. Successful college-based conferences were expanded in 2023-24 to all colleges. A&PE works with organizations to facilitate internships that generate academic credit. In the 2023-24 academic year, over 5,192 CU students engaged in career and professional development programs and connected with 864 alumni volunteers, marking an increase in volunteerism (up at BL=11%, LH=63%, and MA=45%). AP&E collaborated as a contributor on the student employment task force to redesign student "work study" as a high-impact practice/work-based learning initiative and co-led the Strada Grant for Professional U apprenticeships.

Working with the BL foundation, financial aid, and the budget office, A&PE collaborates in stewarding and awarding professional experience grants (PEGs). These grants are funded through the institutional budget and donations from alumni. PEGs help students with expenses associated with work-based learning experiences such as internships, study abroad, and study-away experiences, faculty-mentored research, service learning, and scholarly/creative activities. Since integration (as of 07/01/24), nearly $465,000 were awarded to 318 CU students.

Student Achievement Measures

CU's mission declares that students are at the heart of everything we do; the priorities for *Academic Excellence* and *Student Success* focus on supporting students by preparing them for both personal and professional success. Academic programs discussed in Standard III (e.g., honors, study abroad programs, ROTC, undergraduate research, and other high-impact practices) and those described in this criterion provide examples of how CU achieves that goal. Regular review and dialogue about key performance indicators (KPI) and selected strategic plan measures gauge progress and inform continuous improvement efforts during and at the end of the planning cycle. Easy access to the strategic plan's KPI and selected metrics dashboard and other IR dashboards provides overall and disaggregated data on retention and graduation rates for cohort, URM, and Pell-eligible students, among other populations. In addition to KPIs, divisions and units use more granular data and measures to investigate student achievement. For the fall 2022 cohort returning in fall 2023, CU experienced an increase in retention-to-second-year rates for URM, Pell-eligible, and all students (see Table 4.5). Additional increases for the returning fall 2023 cohort saw CU's overall retention rate climb to 77.6% with increases at each campus. During this time, CU's achievement gaps narrowed from 2021, as the URM gap was reduced from 12.3% to 10.5% (despite a slight increase at BL) and the Pell-eligible gap from 6.6% to 4.3% with

improvement at all campuses. In addition, CU's retention-to-second-year rates compare favorably with its peers on the IPEDS feedback reports 2023 as CU's full-time and part-time 2022 cohort rates exceed the IPEDS-selected peer and Carnegie classification peer groups (74% versus 73% in both cases) and equal the average rate for PASSHE peers. Investment in retention and student success occurred this past year, and despite integration, this cohort-based student achievement three-year trend improved in all respects. Ongoing and enhanced engagement efforts, through programs for at-risk students, will continue and expand as CU aspires to reach the KPI targets and enhance student achievement.

Table 4.5: Retention-to-Second-Year Rates									
Campus	Overall Cohort			URM			Pell-Eligible		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
BL	76.4%	76.9%	78.4%	65.3%	71.7%	68.8%	69.5%	72.9%	73.5%
LH	69.2%	71.1%	75.1%	53.8%	56.9%	64.6%	64.1%	65.7%	71.2%
MA	66.3%	69.0%	77.1%	50.8%	57.9%	59.3%	61.0%	62.6%	76.0%
CU	73.3%	74.8%	77.6%	61.0%	68.0%	67.1%	66.7%	69.6%	73.3%

Source: Student Data Warehouse, Official Reporting

While the success of these graduating cohorts was largely determined before CU integrated, student success efforts helped to advance these students through COVID-19 and integration to achieve the posted results. The IPEDS comparative data set for the 2016 cohort again reflects favorably on CU overall (1-4% higher than all peer groups for graduation rates at 150% of normal time) except for URM groups, although the report on PASSHE peers showed CU's graduation rate 2% higher for Black students, which may be a better comparison against schools with similar geographic and demographic characteristics. Tables 4.6 and 4.7 present four- and six-year graduation rates for CU, which show that URM and Pell-eligible students succeed at a lower rate than the overall cohort. Efforts to foster student achievement of URM, Pell-eligible, and at-risk students are discussed earlier in Criterion 1 and in Standard II.

Table 4.6: Four-Year Graduation Rates									
Campus	Overall Cohort			URM			Pell Eligible		
	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020
BL	45.7%	41.8%	45.8%	25.9%	24.1%	31.4%	35.2%	30.4%	34.2%
LH	35.3%	39.4%	39.3%	18.1%	14.9%	23.1%	36.8%	31.5%	33.5%
MA	44.0%	41.2%	39.3%	20.6%	24.6%	13.0%	38.7%	34.7%	31.3%
CU	43.2%	41.3%	43.4%	23.8%	22.4%	27.6%	35.9%	31.3%	33.5%

Source: Student Data Warehouse, Official Reporting

Table 4.7: Six-Year Graduation Rates									
Campus	Overall Cohort			URM			Pell Eligible		
	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018
BL	56.4%	56.6%	57.8%	40.2%	38.7%	39.6%	46.1%	43.9%	48.6%
LH	51.3%	47.4%	49.8%	24.8%	12.8%	31.3%	45.5%	37.8%	52.0%
MA	55.4%	56.5%	55.2%	39.2%	34.9%	29.4%	46.9%	51.0%	47.6%
CU	55.0%	54.2%	55.7%	36.5%	32.6%	37.0%	46.0%	43.0%	49.2%

Source: Student Data Warehouse, Official Reporting

TRANSFER CREDITS AND PRIOR LEARNING (CRITERION 2)

Transfer students at CU equal about 15.2% of new student enrollment, based on IPEDS definitions and reporting. The greatest number of transfers derives from community colleges (e.g., Luzerne, Northampton, Lehigh Carbon, and Harrisburg) and Penn State University. As described in Criterion 1, CU's first-time transfers were down in fall 2023 but increased in fall 2024 by 19.3% resulting from focusing on transfer enrollment, especially as one of three participating PASSHE schools involved with the transfer in action plan supported by the National Association of System Heads (NASH). Since 2022, CU engaged in action planning with a target of increasing by seven percent in-state transfers from two-year institutions who complete baccalaureate degrees within six years. To this end, CU successfully adopted the 30-credit transfer framework developed by the PA Transfer and Articulation Center (PA TRAC) (discussed in this section) to support transfers from community colleges to enter CU's four-year degree programs with complete GE requirements. CU also leveraged Slate to expedite transfer credit evaluation, occurring at the point of admission.

To facilitate transfer enrollment, CU's transfer credits and prior learning procedures are designed to be fair and equitable. Instructions exist on the transfer students web page, which includes information about course equivalency,

articulation agreements, dual admission, program-to-program (P2P), and reverse transfer programs. Students who transfer credits or gain prior learning credit are evaluated per CU and PASSHE policies.

Governed by BOG Policy 1999-01-A: The Student Transfer Policy and CU's undergraduate student transfer policy (PRP 3343), the evaluation and acceptance of college-level credits maximizes the number of credits toward degree completion for undergraduate and graduate students. The policy intends to reduce duplication of learning and time to degree while articulating earned credits (including GE and major) and credentials into degree pathways. According to policy, CU first applies college-level credits toward GE requirements, then to requirements in the major, and finally to elective credits. As a PASSHE university, CU recognizes the integrity, design, and validity of GE programs delivered at institutionally accredited postsecondary organizations. CU accepts GE and in-major coursework when comparable and qualified under the statewide equivalency framework, PA TRAC. Participating institutions list transfer courses and exam equivalencies (e.g., credit for college level examination program [CLEP] and advanced placement [AP]) in PA TRAC to help students understand what courses transfer and how they will be counted toward their degree. PA TRAC includes CU's equivalencies, and transfer students receive credit for equivalent courses. For example, Luzerne County Community College's MAT151: Analytical Geometry and Calculus and AP 0300: Calculus AB (score of 3 or greater) transfer as MATH160: Calculus I. The testing programs and services web page provides information about AP, CLEP, and Dantes subject standardized tests (DSST) for students and community members. Students can also petition to establish credit per the credit by department exam policy (PRP 3450).

Dual admission programs and P2P programs facilitate transfer credit and reduce duplication. Dual admission programs with six community colleges guarantee admission to CU and maximize coursework. The BOG transfer policy provides for guaranteed admission to a PASSHE university for transfer students with an associate degree from a PA community college or PASSHE institution. Undergraduate transfer students with an associate degree from an institutionally accredited organization in a parallel program or as part of the P2P statewide agreements are awarded full junior standing. They are not required to complete additional GE courses unless prescribed by their major or more than 60 credits to earn a 120-credit bachelor's degree in a P2P or other parallel program. Students transferring into a program with accreditation or licensing/certification standards may take limited additional credits to meet those standards.

Credit for prior learning (CPL) is a process that offers students the opportunity to petition for college credit based on prior knowledge, training, and skills gained through experiences outside the traditional academic setting. CPL assessment uses a broad range of tools that include nationally recognized and locally developed examinations, individual assessments, portfolio review, non-college education and training, industry-recognized credentials, and military training. Instructions for CPL and the CPL policy and procedures are posted on the workforce development web page. Collaboration occurs between the CPL director, department chairs, faculty advisors, disciplinary experts, and the registrar. Decisions made by faculty chairs are ratified by their academic department and dean. Throughout the process, the director, departments, and deans are responsible for safeguarding academic integrity.

STUDENT INFORMATION AND RECORDS (CRITERION 3)

CU recognizes the importance of protecting privacy and maintaining accurate records. CU follows policies and procedures for the secure and appropriate maintenance and release of student records in accordance with the FERPA, the Right-to-Know Act, and our own internal record retention standard (e.g., which specifies retention timelines and protocols to retain records in separate, secure locations). Policies are reviewed and approved per the process established in Standards II and VII, and specific policies and procedures outline students' rights to access academic records and the limited instances in which CU may share without consent. This information is shared with students through the registrar's office, student handbook, consumer information, and the My Commonwealthu web pages.

FERPA procedures protect students' records (e.g., academic, disciplinary, financial, disability, and medical records) and ensure the appropriate maintenance, access, and release of information. The FERPA web page includes definitions, regulations, access instructions, disclosure information, and forms. Generally, CU does not disclose information without the student's written consent, except for directory information; however, students have the right to withhold the release of directory information by completing a non-disclosure form. The registrar's office, student handbook, and cost of attendance and financial aid web pages include links to the FERPA release forms.

In addition, the FERPA treatment records and Personally Identifiable Information (PII) 20 U.S.C. 1232g(a)(4)(B) 34 CFR 99.3 protect student's rights and privacy as it relates to authorization to release or obtain protected health information. All employees handling these records comply with the FERPA treatment records and PII law. Health services securely stores student medical records. As required by Pennsylvania law, medical records are maintained for

a minimum of seven years from majority age to ensure the confidentiality, security, and physical safety of records. Release of medical information requires the student to sign a medical records release form granting permission.

Policies exist to protect disclosure of digital data through appropriate technology use. CU uses single sign-on with MFA authentication for identification security. Acceptable use of technology, academic integrity, and information security policies protect integrity and appropriate use of information. As a state university, CU is subject to the Right-to-Know Act and complies with the Right-to-Know policy for information requests. The policy states that requests must be submitted in writing to the designated agency open records officer. Requests must include the requester's name and the address to which the response will be delivered.

STUDENT AFFAIRS, STUDENT INVOLVEMENT, AND ATHLETICS (CRITERION 4)

CU is a vibrant and diverse community that offers students opportunities to learn and grow as part of campus life. Student activities and organizations give students opportunities to get involved and meet people. CU is committed to providing a well-rounded experience, with campus life and three strong athletics programs contributing to that goal.

Affiliate and Auxiliary Organizations

The AVP for student affairs works with the three affiliate corporations that serve as umbrella organizations to manage student affairs and engagement funding. Each one administers the student service fee portion for student activities according to its MOU and approved bylaws. This fee supports funded clubs and organizations, certain musical groups, intramurals, and athletics. All funded student groups must prepare and submit a budget to its corporation to receive funding. The organizations also oversee their policies, a well-rounded program of campus life, the university bookstores, and some additional services which vary by campus and location as shown in Table 4.8. Since integration, campus-based student organizations are coordinating activities like collaborative band performances, psychology clubs traveling to conferences together, and middle level clubs working across campuses, as examples.

Table 4.8: Affiliate Organization Oversight			
	Student Auxiliary Services, Inc.	**College Community Services, Inc.**	**CGA, Inc.**
Campuses/locations served	Lock Haven and Clearfield	Mansfield and Sayre	Bloomsburg
Corporation type	501c3	501c4	501c3
University store	Lock Haven	Mansfield	Bloomsburg
Additional services	Vending	Vending	Student housing complex

The AVP for student affairs also provides strategic oversight for the dean of students office (including student activities outlined in Criterion 1), health centers, student conduct, Title IX, and campus life and auxiliary operations. Auxiliaries such as housing, health centers, recreation, and student involvement are funded by student fees.

Clubs and Organizations

The office of student involvement works with student governments and campus-based programming boards to provide events, clubs, and organizations. Events include popular activities such as bingo, movies, trivia, comedians, specialty food nights, and CU-sponsored family events (e.g., family day and homecoming). CU accommodates a robust array of student clubs, covering a variety of interests. Coordinated by professional staff, the three campus recreation centers organize active intramural programs on a rotating and seasonal basis depending on student interest and trends and, in 2023-24, saw a 15% increase in hosted events, 3.6% increase in games played, and 20% increase in group fitness classes. Club sports are available through the same processes that govern clubs and organizations. The number of organizations, intramurals, and club sports scales to campus size; for example, BL offers over 200 clubs, LH is around 100, and MA operates 70. The interfraternity council (IFC) and panhellenic council are recognized as clubs/organizations, receive advising from professional staff members, and provide guidance for fraternities and sororities.

Housing and Residence Life

The office of housing and residence life (OHRL) provides living environments that enhance student development in support of CU's mission. OHRL also works to ensure students' needs and concerns are addressed through intentional conversations and connections to resources for at-risk students. In 2023-24, resident assistants completed 13,305 intentional conversations and interactions which allowed for referrals and follow up, increasing first-to-second-year residential retention by 7.37%. OHRL oversees the living and learning activities by administering housing requirements and policies included in the guide on campus living and through programming for on-campus students.

These programs align with the OHRL's learning goals, which include cultivating communities that build social connections and foster a sense of belonging, promoting responsible decision making, encouraging student involvement, and supporting the academic and future success of all students. Documented in the residence life annual report, each residence hall has an active programming and events calendar throughout the academic year, and in 2023-24, collectively held 1,024 programs across CU for total attendance of 22,020. With four residence halls offline, CU currently operates 16 residence halls across the campuses (BL = ten buildings, 3,308 beds; LH = three buildings, 1,077 beds; and MA = three buildings, 988 beds).

Athletics

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) approved CU's request to retain a full complement of NCAA athletic programs on the campuses that currently host them. The majority of teams belong to the NCAA's Division II, with a few exceptions as noted below:

- BL's 23 varsity athletic programs include an NCAA Division I men's wrestling program that competes in the Mid-American Conference (MAC)
- LH's 21 varsity athletic programs include Division I men's wrestling and field hockey. The men's wrestling program is an affiliate member of the MAC, and the women's field hockey team competes in the Atlantic 10 Conference (A-10)
- MA's 13 varsity athletic programs include sprint football, a member of the Collegiate Sprint Football League (CSFL)

Athletic programs continue to use their respective campus name, logos, colors, mascots, and traditions. At CU, student athletes comprise 12.3% of the student body with 593 students at BL, 561 at LH, and 208 at MA in fall 2024.

CU's athletics departments adhere to university policies and those set forth by the athletic conferences, NCAA, and in the athletics department policy and procedures manual, which includes the code of conduct. CU athletics departments comply with Title IX regulations and the NCAA sexual violence policy. Each athletics department collaborates with the department of Title IX to provide required training, education, a comprehensive CU sexual misconduct policy, appropriate due process, and additional direct outreach to student athletes, coaches, and athletic administration. The Title IX coordinator, in collaboration with athletics, implements a compliance plan including six key areas in policy, transparency, education, annual disclosure by athletes, confirmation, and standard operating procedures. The compliance memo to each athletics director documents the plan and Title IX compliance.

THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS (CRITERION 5)

CU follows PASSHE procurement policies and legislation for contracting, maintains oversight of all student support services defined by this standard and criteria, and specifically, does not use online program managers (OPMs). CU maintains arrangements for dining, LH and MA health centers/services, and consulting work to inform strategies or assist with technology/software solutions in such areas as enrollment management, financial aid, and marketing.

CU follows a process to request for service, contract, execute, monitor, and assess providers. CU contracted with Aramark following a 2021 request for proposal (RFP) process for dining services and works cooperatively to monitor services and resolve concerns using feedback methods, per the RFP. The quality assurance program elicits feedback on major topic areas including performance indicators, surveys, food quality, university liaison and student-specific communications, and periodic business and dining operations reviews. CU uses three ongoing assessments: (1) accessed via QR code posted in dining facilities, the voice of the consumer allows participants to send feedback directly to the dining director; (2) the periodic dining styles survey rates several factors including satisfaction, quality, service, and cleanliness; and (3) the food service committee educates student leaders in dining programs and organizations and seeks feedback in meetings to identify issues and agree upon program improvements. CU also contracts with Campus Dining, Inc. (CDI) for monthly quality assurance reviews that intentionally rate areas via a specified evaluation tool. Nine of 10 PASSHE universities contract with CDI, which provides comparative feedback on many of the elements mentioned above within PASSHE but also from similar programs throughout the continental United States. In 2023-24, for example, each CU campus met the performance indicators for the dining styles services with actual survey results from 52%-76% as compared to 45%-62% targets.

CU's director of the BL student health center/CU health service liaison oversees health services at all campuses. While BL operates its student health center, health service contracts include BL-Geisinger for physician services only as well

as LH-UPMC and MA-Guthrie for services at those affiliated locations as described in Criterion 1. The director oversees contract implementation, but evaluation of services also occurs through the student health services survey. In 2023-24, more than 91% of students who completed the survey answered "agree" or "highly agree," indicating that they were satisfied with the health services, exceeding the 90% target. Other survey results are available in the health centers/clinics 2022-24 annual reports, portions of which are reported in Criterion 6.

The evidence inventory includes a list of additional third-party providers or partners. As described under Criterion 1, RNL's consulting services provide data analysis and recommendations based on enrollment management best practices, while RHB assisted with the Slate software implementation. As described in Standard II, CU benefited from the collaborative assistance of OHO Interactive Services to assist with web design. These arrangements are evaluated by CU's review of timely and satisfactory deliverables in accordance with the contract for services. For example, CU and OHO met the July 1 go-live date ahead of schedule with the official website launch on June 25, 2024.

ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAMS (CRITERION 6)

Annual Reports and Unit Assessments

Administrative, educational support, and student support units articulate goals, measures, and targets at the beginning of the planning cycle and report outcomes (once available) and action plans at year end. CU's assessment platform, Nuventive Solutions Premier, houses this work and produces year-end annual reports in a standard format as shown in Figure 4.2 below. Assessments disclosed in annual reports take many forms, such as institutional or program-level surveys, participation data, program outcomes, and student achievement data. This multifaceted approach ensures we can tailor our resources and programming to optimally address student needs. Figure 4.2 represents an example of the 2022-23 health services annual report, which articulates a goal for increasing student access to naloxone and outreach efforts. The goal was supported by initiatives and multiple measures/targets. Year-end 2022-23 results show that the goal was met but that planned actions included more outreach to specific student groups and communication with the CARE team. The 2023-24 annual report documents meeting targets with increased distribution over 2022-23 at LH (up 39 boxes) and MA (up 11 boxes) and added distribution to locations in Clearfield (2 boxes) and Sayre (12 boxes). Health services did reach out to populations and the CARE team and promoted services through the weekly wellness spotlight, social media, and emails.

Figure 4.2: Annual Report 2022-23 for Health Services Example (excerpt)
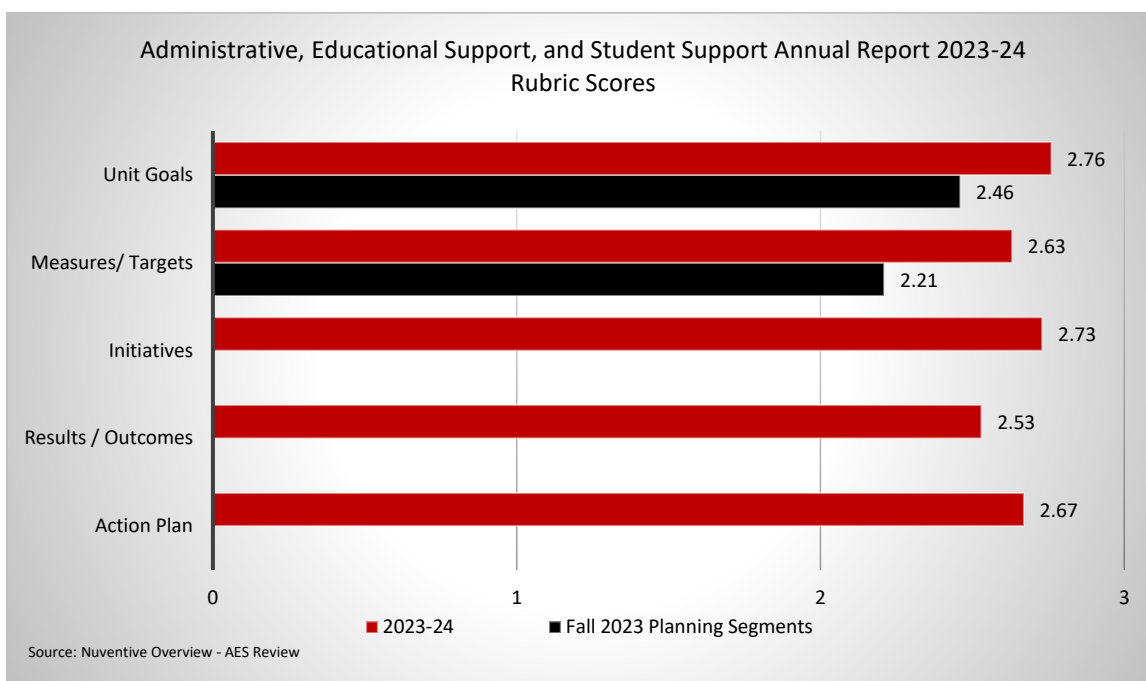
Naloxone Distribution and Outreach

Unit Goal: Increase student access to Naloxone and increase outreach efforts about safe Naloxone use to campus community groups and organizations.
Goal Status: Active
Goal Year(s): 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024
Initiatives: Collaborate with county naloxone programs, PA DOH, local and campus law enforcement, residence life, Dean of Students' office and student government to identify the student concerns related to the opioid crisis and provide resources and access to free Narcan. Creation of Naloxone kits and a process for anonymous, no-questions-asked pick up. Strengthen a bulk delivery ordering process through the DOH, distribution plans in student union buildings and provide feedback to the PA DOH regarding distribution numbers. Outreach and education efforts to Greek Life and athletics programs.
Additional Resouces Needed: Institutional Public Health Coordinator, PA DOH, AOD Director and Peer Support educators, Health and Wellness Educator

Measures	Results / Outcomes
Measure: Distribution plan development and implementation Tracking system implementation Number of Narcan distributions over 3 campuses over course of 2 semesters **Target(s):** 100% implementation of Naloxone distribution plan for residential, off-campus and commuter students 100% implementation of tracking system, collection of baseline data to establish next-year targets, and full reporting of key statistics to DOH Provided resources for 80-100% of student concerns identified through collaborative efforts with campus police, Dean of Students Office, AOD Director, Health and Wellness Educator, Student government groups	**Reporting Period:** 2022 - 2023 **Result / Outcome**: Distribution plan development and implementation was 100% met Tracking system implementation was 100% met. Resources were provided to students across the 4 campus locations through MarComm, health and wellness social media and campus wide emails. MA: 99 boxes Narcan distributed LH: 60 boxes distributed (less due to halted giveaway due to sabotage and questionable destruction of the medication) BL: 463 boxes distributed **Conclusion**: Target Met **Action Plan For Next Year (Initiatives)**: Action Plan Date: 06/16/2023 Action Plan: Campus outreach to student groups for Narcan education (Honors college) Ongoing Integrative collaboration through the CARE team regarding Narcan and overdose harm reduction communication **Related Documents**: Fentanyl student video 9-30-22 Updated Version.docx Narcan administration Narcan brown bags.docx CA.RA Overdose.Narcan talking points 9.15.22.pptx

More examples of goals, measures, and results from 2023-24 and data-informed actions for 2024-25 from unit annual reports related to Standard IV are listed in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Administrative, Educational, and Student Support Annual Report (excerpts)		
Unit	**2023-24 Goal/Measure**	**2023-24 Year-end Result/2024-25 Action**
Admissions	Decrease average time to decision to 10 days (down from 11.8 in 2022-23)	**Result:** *Target met* - 7.9 days **Action Plan:** Continue to refine the Slate CRM to achieve decreased response time
Dean of Students Office	Increase collaborative events between alcohol and other drugs, wellness, and student activities to nine events per year; increase the number of collaborative events between dean of students and other campus stakeholders to six events per year	**Result:** *Target met* – 11 total events held by establishing the dean's team (student employees) and offering two-three events at each campus; three fresh check days with AOD-wellness-counseling-res life; six paws in the halls programming; one love your body day **Action Plan:** Expand the dean's team to three students on each campus and increase the number of events to five per semester per campus
Enrollment Marketing	Develop at least one student success story per college per academic year with emphasis on merit scholars to align with scholarship promotion goal as well	**Result:** *Target met* – More than 50 total stories were published (including each college and surpassing the one per college goal) in outlets like the annual president's report, admissions materials, newly designed program handouts for on-campus events, flagship social media platforms, and online in our CU news section **Action Plan:** Amplify students' successes through storytelling and testimonials with strategic communications, campus leads, and admissions/enrollment management
Financial Aid	Host 15 information sessions online, on campus, and in the community with peer mentors and professional staff	**Result**: *Target met* – Held multiple events on each campus on financial literacy and FAFSA completion, exceeding our goal of 15 in the spring semester alone **Action:** Begin developing year-in-college specific financial literacy curriculum
Registrar's Office	Respond to the Banner issues-errors logs for courses, prerequisites, and Degree Works audits and address in 24 hours	**Result:** *Target met* – Resolved 1,026 issues on the issues log with timely initial response **Action:** Continue providing the issues and errors log during registration
Student Involvement and Activities	Increase attendance at student events by 5% at events hosted by the office of student involvement	**Result:** *Target met* – Increased attendance by 6.67%, with 46,729 attendees in 2023-24 up from 43,200 in 2022-23 with new programs like survivor BL season 1 and goat yoga at LH and MA **Action:** Implement the Modern Campus Involve software for CU
Student Success	Increase percent of PASS students on probation or warning who improve their GPA	**Result:** *Target met* – A total 65% of students improved their GPA as compared to 55% in spring 2023 **Action:** Pre-plan calendar of events for the whole semester and/or year, e.g., workshops on time management, stress reduction, study skills, etc., and distribute the first week of classes with weekly reminders and social media posts
Tutoring	Student survey rating of ≥4 on 5-point scale for positive experience supporting learning	**Result:** *Target met* – Average ratings on all questions were >4.0 indicating that students perceived tutoring positively influenced areas like their writing (4.26), academic abilities (4.31), knowledge of subject matter (4.57), and study skills (4.27) **Action:** Continue student survey to improve ratings and establish trend data

Institutional effectiveness (IE) provides training, one-on-one mentoring, and a user guide for annual reports and offers feedback to units via a rubric score and comments for improving the assessment plan and process. Following the review of the annual reports and 2022-23 assessment summary report, the 2023-24 rubric was used as a fall 2023 formative assessment to provide feedback on measures/targets and goals, as documented in the administrative assessment summary report fall 2023. As shown in Figure 4.3 (black bars), overall fall ratings for goals (x=2.46) and measures/targets (x=2.21) indicated opportunities for improvement in planning processes, and individual scores/feedback were shared with PoCs. The feedback focused on aligning to the strategic plan, selecting the best (not easiest-to-collect) success measures, and stating outcomes rather than initiatives or routine operational tasks. Individual mentoring and divisional/unit retreats allocated segments to planning. The annual reports were submitted and evaluated again at year end. Unit goals and measures/targets ratings increased from fall to spring (Figure 4.3 red bars) in those categories showing an improvement in the quality of the planning documents as documented in the administrative assessment summary report 2023-24.

Figure 4.3: Administrative, Educational Support, and Student Support Annual Report 2023-24 Rubric Scores

Administrative, Educational Support, and Student Support Annual Report 2023-24 Rubric Scores

Category	2023-24	Fall 2023 Planning Segments
Unit Goals	2.76	2.46
Measures/ Targets	2.63	2.21
Initiatives	2.73	
Results / Outcomes	2.53	
Action Plan	2.67	

Source: Nuventive Overview - AES Review

Committees and Working Groups

The standing senate committees include the enrollment management and the student affairs committees that established bylaws in 2023-24 and began reviewing policies assigned to each area. In addition, ad-hoc committees and working groups are instrumental to making program and process improvements. For example, the student withdrawal process working group report describes how the group established a new process and exit interviews, held five trainings, gathered feedback to refine the process, and received 105 student survey responses. The data was categorized by site, reason for withdrawal, and intent to return. While data analysis and committee work continue, this group discovered that the Banner set up allowed students to drop their full schedule, which is effectively a withdrawal from CU. The president's cabinet endorsed the committee's recommendation to adjust Banner, and the vice provost and registrar enabled restrictions in Banner to prevent students from withdrawing from their final course. Students withdrawing from their final class receive a message that dropping their final course requires the student to initiate the withdrawal process, and only when that process is complete will the registrar remove the final class.

The student experience task force was established as a proactive approach to identifying and solving impediments to student success to enhance the student experience and facilitate degree attainment. Within the task force, small working groups conducted outreach, gathered information, and developed solutions for student concerns. During spring 2024, the task force addressed such issues as notifying students about course modality changes during registration via a communication outreach process and conducting technology checks in all multi-modal classrooms to mitigate against technical issues. These actions were reported in cabinet updates and the task force's year-end report. Standards II, III, and IV share information for such working groups as student employment, high-impact practices, math placement, and student complaints and concerns. The CARE team's systematic review of concerns and follow up demonstrates continuous improvement that directly impacts students.

As stated in Criterion 1, the CARE team assists with situations that could disrupt a student's well-being and includes representatives from the dean of students office, student success, DEIB, housing, support programs, financial aid, university police, athletics, and other areas as needed. The dean of students office and CARE team collect information on students of concern cases, types, sites, and resolutions. While the team coordinates action plans for individual cases, the members review anonymized, summary data to anticipate and address student needs. Per 2022-23 data, an increase in managed cases at LH (138%) and MA (91%) resulted in one new associate dean of students at LH and one at MA to assist with students of concern case management and data collection. These positions decreased cases referred to the CARE team, which allows them to focus on higher-level cases. Trends revealed a high case volume

linked to class attendance, resulting in a revised <u>absence memo and extended medical illness process</u> in CU Succeed. The process launched in 2023-24 to improve faculty notification of student absences due to situations beyond their control. Faculty referrals increased by 97% from fall 2022 to fall 2023 in areas like mental health concerns, medical issues, and death of loved ones, and reports decreased for inappropriate anger (-22%) and verbal aggression (-67%). Increased reporting about immediate concerns appeared to reduce concerning behavior after the fact. An analysis of 2023-24 case types reveals an increase in wellness concerns, which has encouraged continued expansion of opportunities to collaborate with and refer students to the health centers, counseling centers, and student success teams.
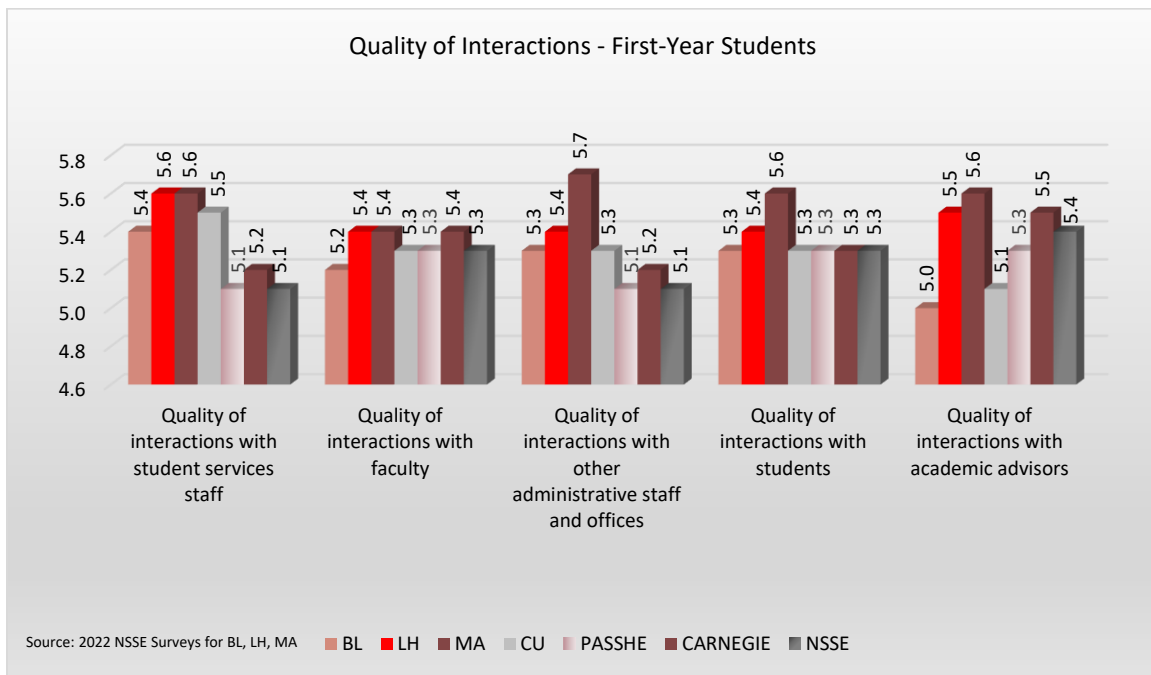
Surveys

CU conducts institutional and unit-level studies and surveys to identify the effectiveness of programs and services related to Standard IV. <u>IE's surveys web page</u> hosts institutional survey data. The following examples describe some ways in which studies and surveys are used to inform decision making and, eventually, to initiate change.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

<u>NSSE</u> was previously administered separately on the campuses at varying intervals but, moving forward, will be administered institution-wide on a three-year cycle. Results showed little variance on most categories for longitudinal data and peer comparisons. Many areas related to Standard IV were on a par with peers, including first-year and senior student ratings on providing support for overall well-being, supporting students to succeed academically, using learning support services, faculty and staff helping students adapt, intention to return, and overall experience. However, the spring 2022 survey administration revealed significant positive (+.4) change with ratings above all peer groups for quality of interactions with administrative staff and offices from both first-year and senior students and with student services staff for first-year students (see Figure 4.4). Lower scores for academic advising at BL were addressed by many initiatives, rolled out across CU, including initiatives like CU Succeed, Degree Works, the build-out of CU's success centers, and the center for teaching and learning (CTL) programs. During 2023-24, CU held advising training for CU Succeed, the importance of academic advising in higher education, creating belongingness, and responding to students in distress. CTL also added advising resources to Brightspace, and 430 faculty visited the Brightspace page for a total of 6,391 visits to access articles, videos on best practices in advising and student engagement, and links to mental health resources.

Figure 4.4: Average NSSE Ratings for CU and Peer Groups – Quality of Interactions

Quality of Interactions - First-Year Students

Source: 2022 NSSE Surveys for BL, LH, MA — BL, LH, MA, CU, PASSHE, CARNEGIE, NSSE

Category	BL	LH	MA	CU	PASSHE	CARNEGIE	NSSE
Quality of interactions with student services staff	5.4	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.1	5.2	5.1
Quality of interactions with faculty	5.2	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.3	5.4	5.3
Quality of interactions with other administrative staff and offices	5.3	5.4	5.7	5.3	5.1	5.2	5.1
Quality of interactions with students	5.3	5.4	5.6	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3
Quality of interactions with academic advisors	5.0	5.5	5.6	5.1	5.3	5.5	5.4

During the post-COVID and integration era, CU paid particular attention to the quality of interactions with student services and administrative staff, conducting intentional outreach, offering channels to express concerns and opinions, being responsive, and enhancing the student success centers' presence and build out alongside of student programming and activities. CU students indicated that they spent more time than peers engaged in co-curricular activities, preparing

for class, and socializing. CU senior students (43.5%) were more likely to hold a formal leadership role than students in all peer groups (35.3% PASSHE; 24.1% Carnegie). Even though students reported having positive interactions with staff, they indicated that they rely less on success specialists than they do on family and friends for advice. Though not surprising, CU used the data to create initiatives for success offices (including the spring 2024 rollout of MA's center), enhance first-year activities, and drive students in need to choose this key resource.

Climate Survey

The PASSHE-administered spring 2022 climate survey results serve as a KPI for overall climate and revealed CU's strengths and opportunities as described in Standard II. Climate questions on learning and support revealed that most students (76.4%, just above PASSHE peers) indicated that support for advancement and success is evident in their classes. This category revealed opportunities for improvement in providing need-based scholarships (49.4% satisfied) and mental health resources (56% satisfied). BL's healthy minds survey affirms that students report levels of depression and anxiety with more than half of the respondents having a mental health diagnosis. CU included both areas in the strategic plan. Efforts to address aid are included under Criterion 1. Such areas as the counseling centers, health centers, CARE team, and student life have addressed mental health through such services, programming, and initiatives as the following:

- Receiving JED campus status, which affirmed CU's use of evidence-based best practices in mental health
- Implementing a grant-funded wellness coaching program on improving behaviors on sleep, stress management, social connection, and substance abuse
- Extending BL's annual Fresh Check Day, a mental health fair now in its third year, to LH and MA
- Emailing CU's weekly wellness spotlight, which focuses on increasing awareness of resources available to students experiencing stress, physical issues, and mental health concerns while offering options for wellness coaching and events that promote well-being and stress reduction
- Offering long medical provider appointments to students with mental health concerns
- Offering medical appointments within 24 hours of contact with students expressing mental health concerns
- Meeting with mental health providers to collaborate and streamline mental health services
- Participating in health and wellness events, screenings, workshops, and programming across CU
- Piloting a grief therapy group at LH and working toward mirroring the initiative at BL

DEIB divisional goals focused on supporting a climate that champions DEIB in all communities and were informed by the climate survey results. During 2023-24, DEIB sponsored 101 campus climate activities and programs across CU, more than double the offerings in 2022-23. Survey respondents' (n=757) average rating of DEIB programming was 4.56 (on a 5-point scale; 5=excellent and 1=poor). Ratings revealed that 97% of participants perceived that DEIB programming positively influenced campus climate with students representing two-thirds (n=505 students) of the respondents. Perceptions also point to progress toward a more positive campus climate with 75% of participants stating that the climate is welcoming and inclusive or moving in the right direction.

First Destination

CU uses the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) standards and protocols for its post-graduation core survey on career placement and graduate/professional school enrollment. Program-specific questions provide academic colleges and programs with data for program planning. The survey is administered twice a year, in the spring and fall, and six months after graduation. While each campus's survey pre-integration differed and veered from NACE, a small working group created one CU survey realigned to NACE, providing a unified instrument, process, and survey dashboard. CU now uses the BL foundation callers to conduct follow up to enhance return rates at LH and MA. Survey data are available on IE's surveys and strategic planning web pages and measure the placement rates KPI. Results for 2023 assessments show CU's student achievement at a 93.6% placement rate, moving toward a 95% five-year target.

Ruffalo Noel Levitz

As described in greater detail in Standard II, RNL conducted an organizational/operational review which identified strengths and opportunities for improvement. CU implemented student success recommendations and made progress during 2023-24 as described in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: RNL Organizational and Operational Review of Areas Relating to Recruitment and Student Success, 2023-24 Results	
RNL Recommendation	**2023-24 Results**
Move to a more prescriptive scheduling process for entering first-year students. Schedules should be completed ahead of time so that students can review at orientation, with input specifically on their FYS. Free agency scheduling for new first-year students is not a best practice.	As part of the scheduling process, first-year students were surveyed (with a deadline of May 15) to indicate their choices for GE courses and were scheduled for all directed and non-directed GE courses as well as major courses prior to new student orientation. During orientation, first-year students selected their FYS course. Following the last new student orientation in June, 87% (2,262 of 2,584) of deposited students were scheduled for ≥12 credits.
Determine who should "own" CU Succeed and develop a detailed plan for roll out across CU including how it will be used, measured, and tracked to support student retention moving forward.	Housed in academic affairs and supervised by the vice provost and dean of undergraduate education, CU Succeed rolled out in fall 2023, with training sessions and tutorials available 24/7 on Brightspace and SharePoint. Over 40 CU administrative units, faculty, and advisors use CU Succeed to support students. System reports monitor student retention rates and usage each semester. For fall 2023 to spring 2024, retention rates were 82.5% for students flagged through the system, 79.9% for those who did not respond to flags, and 87.1% for those who did respond. Students with advisor meetings recorded in CU Succeed had a 95% persistence rate. Nearly 7,000 appointments were scheduled through the system during spring 2024, with 67% initiated by students, saving over 300 hours of faculty and staff time.
Develop consistent processes and timelines to assign advisors to new students and communicate such to the student.	Department chairpersons assign academic advisors to new students prior to and during new student orientation. Department chairpersons can review new student lists in the Slate CRM and add advisors. Clerical assistants run majors reports and check for advisor assignments.
Continue to improve the orientation experience across all three campuses with an understanding that certain programming must be consistent and other areas should allow for nuances at the various locations.	All session offerings were aligned as students and supporters heard from the same CU areas (e.g., DEIB, housing, involvement, and student success), but campus-specific information (e.g., traditions, lingo, mascots, tours) differed. Most students (88.7%) indicated that orientation helped them become more familiar with resources, and 80.8% responded that it helped them to be better connected with students, faculty, and staff.
Provide sufficient resources to stand up OneSIS, CU Succeed, and Degree Works for these software systems to improve and fully support the end-user experience for students, staff, and faculty.	Banner OneSIS (including Degree Works) was implemented and substantially funded by PASSHE for the Ellucian and Ferrilli (third-party provider) contracts, and CU Succeed was integrated. A dedicated training regimen ensured students, faculty, and staff received training on all systems using live Zoom training sessions, one-on-one help desk experiences, and written training materials. Errors during the spring 2023 launch were over 48,000 due to problems with prerequisite verification; errors were addressed immediately and reduced to 50 by day two. At fall 2023 go-live, 1,200 errors were reduced to 173 by day two, and in spring 2024, 48 errors reduced to 18 by day two.
Expand the automated communications out of Slate to prospective students and parents from groups across the organization.	In the 2023-24 cycle, CU implemented specific strategies leveraging Slate to send over 4.5M marketing emails to prospective students with over 824K emails to out-of-state prospective students.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Providing access to an affordable education, CU aims to recruit students whose interests match well with its mission and program array and to leverage aid options to benefit those students. CU has expanded a success model across CU anchored by the student success centers, the CU Succeed platform, early start/college access and opportunity programs, and the CARE team to address student concerns. CU supports all students through orientation, advising, and student services, while serving wide-ranging needs and interests of special populations. Student engagement occurs through numerous opportunities to participate in curricular and co-curricular activities, clubs and organizations, campus life, and the local community. CU's Professional U initiative elevates the importance of career and professional development with a team of professionals offering signature opportunities like boot camp, college-based conferences, and professional experience grants to offset costs associated with work-based learning opportunities. With a focus on data-informed continuous improvement, CU publishes dashboards with disaggregated data and survey findings to inform decision making. The student handbook's policies and procedures are easily accessible online, and support personnel are readily available to assist students from pre-admission to post-graduation. Already in progress, CU should do the following:

- Continue to review and revise all student affairs policies through a DEIB lens and apply the policies consistently across CU according to the policy review schedule
- Refine the new CU web pages during the 2024-25 academic year to ensure easily accessible, accurate information for all stakeholders

STANDARD V: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their programs of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.

[Standard V addresses *Self-Study Institutional Priorities* for Academic Programs and Support; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; and Communication and *Requirements of Affiliation* 8, 9, and 10]

INTRODUCTION

CU's assessment web page states, "A culture of assessment is vital to making informed decisions, advancing strategic initiatives, improving educational outcomes, and strengthening the entire organization." CU's legacy institutions established strong assessment practices that provided a foundation for assessing student learning and closing the assessment loop. Continuing this tradition, CU fosters a culture of assessment supporting the strategic priority for *Academic Excellence and Innovation* with administrative support, faculty leadership, oversight structures, systematic assessment processes, peer mentorship, and training. Table 5.1 describes the oversight committees and positions.

Table 5.1: Curriculum and Assessment Oversight	
OFFICES/COMMITTEES	
Committee/Office	**Purpose and Composition**
Institutional Effectiveness (IE)	Under the leadership of the AVP, IE coordinates efforts with all assessment councils, committees, and positions to facilitate assessment through training sessions, mentoring, technology support, and communications.
University Curriculum Committee (UCC)	The UCC serves as the recommending body to the provost and vice president for academic affairs on all matters affecting the development, modification, change, adoption, and implementation of the curriculum. This 16-member group includes 14 faculty members with representation from all colleges, campuses, and various disciplines, and two non-voting academic administrators.
Graduate Council (GC)	The graduate council makes recommendations to the UCC on graduate curricular proposals, maintains graduate school standards, ensures compliance with policy and procedures, and provides input on marketing and recruitment strategies. The 38-member group includes 27 graduate program faculty and 11 non-voting members (e.g., deans, associate deans, graduate admissions, marketing and communications, and administrative support staff).
General Education Council (GEC)	The GEC serves as the recommending body to the UCC responsible for the GE program, including course inclusion, program revision, and assessment. The faculty-led group comprises 12 faculty members from all colleges and disciplines that mainly deliver GE courses, and two non-voting administrative representatives.
Commonwealth University Assessment Council (CUAC)	The CUAC oversees all aspects of assessment, facilitates academic/administrative reporting, and ensures that recommendations derived from assessment are shared and result in action, creating a culture of data-informed continuous improvement. With representation from all campuses, the 15-member group includes the academic college assessment coordinators, academic support assessment coordinators, faculty assessment liaison, UCC and GEC liaisons, an at-large faculty member, and four administrative representatives.
Academic Program Assessment Committee	The committee oversees all aspects of academic program assessment. The committee includes five faculty college assessment coordinators, two academic and student support assessment coordinators, the faculty assessment liaison, administrative representatives from each college, and the AVP of IE.
Administrative, Educational, and Student Support Assessment Committee	The committee oversees assessment processes to ensure disciplined self-assessment of institutional effectiveness in administrative, educational support, and student support programs and helps the university share and utilize assessment data for decision making, resource allocation, and improvement. The committee consists of administrative/staff representatives from all campuses and divisions, a vice president, three administrative representatives, the faculty assessment liaison, and the AVP for IE.
FACULTY POSITIONS	
Faculty Assessment Liaison	Assessment efforts are supported significantly by CU's faculty assessment liaison, who leads the academic assessment efforts, mentors faculty, and provides ongoing communication with faculty across all campuses and in collaboration with IE. The liaison receives a 25% alternative workload assignment.
College Assessment Coordinators	College assessment coordinators are appointed to serve as links between department/program assessment coordinators and assessment committee(s). The coordinators communicate and elevate concerns and insights about program assessment to the academic program assessment committee. They attend committee meetings at least twice a year and the annual CUAC meeting.
Program Assessment Coordinators	Program assessment coordinators serve at the department/program level. Faculty use their discretion to organize (e.g., establishing optional department committees) to accommodate the needs of its department and programs. Coordinators are to collect program-level student learning data aligned with the identified academic program SLOs and reporting in accordance with the expected timelines, processes, and reporting technology tools.

The provost champions academic assessment by coordinating with faculty-led oversight committees, positions, and administrative offices to advance assessment for teach-out programs and CU's curriculum. Institutional effectiveness (IE) dedicates staff to institutional research, survey research, technologies, and student learning assessment. These positions support assessment committees that fulfill responsibilities for GE and program assessment.

The UCC provides university-level oversight of the curriculum. Graduate council recommends graduate-level curricula, and the GEC recommends GE program revision and course inclusion to the UCC. The GEC is responsible for GE assessment. The CUAC and its committees (including a dotted line for the GEC) coordinate CU's academic program and administrative unit assessment. Figure 5.1 indicates that program assessment coordinators, designated in each department/program by the respective faculty, are fundamental to academic program assessment. They coordinate assessment in their program and report student learning outcomes per the program's assessment plan housed in Nuventive Solutions Premier, the assessment platform. IE and the faculty assessment liaison support assessment as program assessment coordinators implement assessment plans and make data-informed improvements; college assessment coordinators gather program coordinators' insights and share feedback with the academic assessment committee; and committee reports are developed and distributed to the CUAC by the GEC, academic program assessment committee, and the administrative, educational, and student support assessment committee. The committees consider what, if any, recommendations should be forwarded to the strategic planning committee and president's cabinet. As a member of cabinet, the AVP for IE shares reports with cabinet and communicates their decisions to the faculty assessment liaison, oversight committees, and assessment coordinators.

Figure 5.1: Assessment Oversight Structure
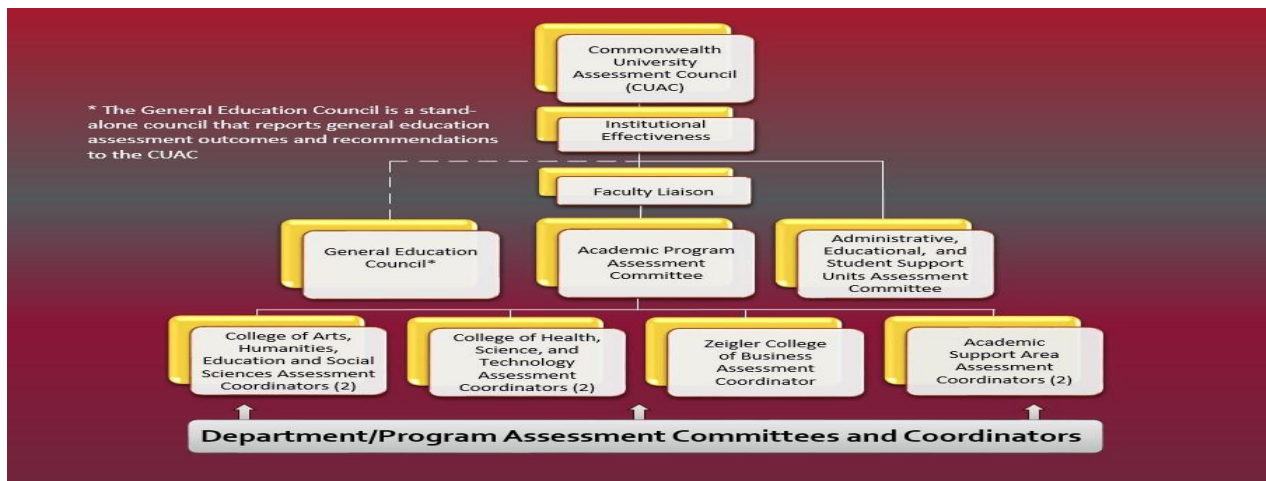
EDUCATIONAL GOALS (CRITERION 1)

Well-defined, clearly stated SLOs identify each educational program's purpose and provide transparency about what students should know and be able to do at program completion. Learning goals and objectives guide the content, learning strategies, and assessment. CU articulates SLOs at institutional, degree/program, and course levels that align with each other and with CU's mission, emphasizing a student-focused educational experience including GE and program curricula, high-quality educational experiences, and preparing global citizens. CU endeavors to create an exceptional academic experience regardless of delivery method and features high-impact practices. With curricular oversight, the UCC evaluates SLOs in curricular proposals, submitted to the curriculum management system using approved templates in Coursedog, a curriculum management platform. Curricular proposals initiate in the department and, after chair and college dean approval (including recommendations from any college curriculum committees), proceed to the GEC (if seeking GE designation), graduate council (if graduate-level), the UCC, and provost via Coursedog's signature routing. In Coursedog's program proposal form, the program information section requires basic elements (e.g., program level, degree designation, delivery methods, description) and SLOs. Coursedog's CU course proposal form asks for basic course information, prerequisites, GE designation, credits, and course schedule. The course proposal form also provides master course syllabus templates to download, complete, and upload as part of the course proposal. The master course syllabus templates, sections 11a.-11c. and 12., request information for SLOs and student assessment. Table 5.2 provides those sections for the PHIL101 undergraduate master syllabus as an example. Sections 11a. and 11b. show the alignment between course and GE SLOs; 11c. describes how the course methods and structure allow students to achieve SLOs; and 12. lists course and GE assessment methods.

Table 5.2: Master Syllabus Template for PHIL101: Introduction to Philosophy (excerpt)			
11. & 12. TABLE: STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT ASSESSMENT			
Curricular Theme and Program Goal: *Citizenship and Responsibility* - **Critical Reasoning**			
11a. Course Specific Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)	**11b. General Education Student Learning Objectives (*Complete this column for GE courses only*)**	**11c. How do the methods and structure of the course provide students with the opportunity to meet each aligned pair of General Education and Course Specific SLOs?**	**12. Student Assessment Include assessment(s) and whether they are suggested or mandated (e.g., to comply with accreditation or as a minimum standard)**
Students will identify and distinguish among important philosophical debates, movements, events, and actors relevant to the questions and problems covered by the course.	Conceptualization. The student identifies and explains an essential concept, as well as its relation to other relevant concepts.	Students are presented with a great range of philosophical concepts on all sides of the topics under discussion. Different viewpoints from disparate thinkers and points in time are compared and contrasted.	**Suggested course assessment:** Exams, quizzes, papers, presentations, or projects **GE Assessment:** Mandated exam questions as agreed upon by the department.
Students will formulate and compose evidence-based, clearly reasoned, logical arguments that address the philosophical questions and problems covered by the course.	Analysis. The student identifies the basic parts of philosophical concepts and their relation to each other, as well as demonstrating understanding of these concepts based upon the analysis of argument.	The course focuses on the analytical analysis of the arguments and theories addressed. The kinds of data and evidence relevant to advancing philosophical disputes is made clear through hands-on discussion and investigation.	**Suggested course assessment:** Exams, quizzes, papers, presentations, or projects **GE Assessment:** Mandated exam questions as agreed upon by the department.
Students will analyze and critically evaluate philosophical arguments and movements as they pertain to the questions and problems covered by the course.	Evaluation. The student applies the concept to a case or issue and determines the significance or value of the case or issue in relation to the concept, as well as its implications.	Class discussions and lectures will illustrate how philosophical theories are deeply interconnected and offer distinct perspectives on how to understand fundamental and perennial questions about how to act, what we can know, and the nature of reality.	**Suggested course assessment:** Exams, quizzes, papers, presentations, or projects **GE Assessment:** Mandated exam questions as agreed upon by the department.

Institutional (GE) Themes and Learning Goals

Following research, analysis, and vetting in spring 2022, CU adopted institutional (GE) themes and program learning goals from Shippensburg University that not only align with the CU mission but comport to MSCHE, PASSHE, and AAC&U expectations, demonstrating commitment to higher education expectations (described in Chapter 3, Table 3.6). The GE handbook and web page describe the GE program's rationale and purpose to place skills and knowledge acquisition in the context of liberal education and to develop fundamental skills in emerging careers. The GE curriculum is critical to the CU student experience and career preparedness. The GE program includes themes and goals, named in Figure 5.2, that embody the AAC&U learning goals and collectively lead to achieving CU's mission.

Figure 5.2: Mission Excerpts, General Education Program Themes, Learning Goals, and SLOs

MISSION EXCERPTS CONNECTING TO GE	GE PROGRAM THEMES (5)	GE LEARNING GOALS (16) and SLOs (49)	
• students are at the heart of everything we do • high-quality education emphasizing high-impact practices • personal and career connections • inclusivity • to succeed in our region and beyond	Foundations (15 credits)	• First-year Seminar	4 SLOs
		• Written Communication	3 SLOs
		• Oral Communication	3 SLOs
		• History	3 SLOs
		• Quantitative Reasoning	3 SLOs
	Interconnections (9 credits)	• Diversity	3 SLOs
		• Global Perspectives	3 SLOs
		• Foreign Languages	3 SLOs
	Citizenship and Responsibility (6 credits)	• Citizenship	3 SLOs
		• Ethical Reasoning	3 SLOs
		• Critical Reasoning	3 SLOs
	Natural World and Technology (9 credits)	• Natural World	3 SLOs
		• Technology	3 SLOs
	Creativity and Expression (6 credits)	• Literature	3 SLOs
		• Arts	3 SLOs
		• Creativity	3 SLOs

Each of the 16 learning goals includes three to four SLOs, which in aggregate comprise 49 GE SLOs. Competency levels for each SLO are defined in the curriculum rubrics that were used to develop course proposals. During the last

two academic years, 406 GE courses were GEC/UCC approved to deliver and assess learning goals and objectives. The GE web page lists all themes, goals, SLOs, and approved courses and includes crosswalks that show how CU's GE curriculum and courses align with the legacy GE programs, enabling students in teach-out programs and CU's current programs to achieve learning goals. Of the 16 learning goals, technology is listed under the *Natural World and Technology* theme. As an example, Table 5.3 shows more detailed definitions of the technology learning goal, SLOs, and examples of courses used to deliver and assess this goal.

Table 5.3: Example of GE Theme: Natural World and Technology - Technology		
Technology GE Program Learning Goal	**Technology SLOs**	**Examples of courses used to deliver and assess Technology SLOs**
Guide and prompt students to acquire knowledge, skills, and competencies regarding a broad range of computer technologies and software, and to use them responsibly	• **SLO1: Information Technology** - The student is able to apply knowledge of a range of computer technologies to complete projects and tasks (including, but not limited to web/mobile technology). • **SLO2: Software and systems** - The student is able to use software and systems to collect, gather, and analyze data for projects and tasks. • **SLO3: Appropriate Use** - The student is able to apply an awareness of ethics and/or security standards while using information technology.	Digital Foundation Python Programming Object-Oriented Programming with Java File Systems 1 Digital Earth Mapping and GIS Fundamentals Honors Technologies Seminar Virtual Teams Spreadsheet Analysis Introduction to Multimedia

As shown in Table 5.2, GE course proposals indicate if the author is seeking GE approval for a specified learning goal and document how the course achieves GE SLOs. The GEC provides mentorship to faculty colleagues as proposals proceed through the approval process to ensure that approved course proposals meet GE criteria and expectations. Upon approval, the course is entered or updated in Banner OneSIS, assigned GE course attributes, and added to the GE web page. Final documents are housed on SharePoint for approvals prior to spring 2024 until they are transitioned to Coursedog, which houses approvals that have occurred since then.

Degree/Program Level Student Learning Objectives

Faculty develop degree/program SLOs, which are shaped by the mission, institutional learning goals, and external standards. Last year, for example, CU faculty were asked to complete a program assessment review (PAR) in transition (discussed later) that prompted faculty to provide a rationale of what informed SLO selection. Responses included program benchmarking, disciplinary and accreditation standards, research reports, industry expectations, certification standards, state licensure requirements, and GE SLO alignment. Undergraduate and graduate CU programs are accredited by 21 specialized accreditors that provide standards and criteria for student learning met by specific SLOs.

Program SLOs are housed in curricular documents, in Nuventive, and on program web pages. Nuventive's curriculum map shows in which courses the program SLOs are introduced, reinforced, and mastered. Figure 5.3's curriculum map excerpt for the psychology major displays the Nuventive format, listing the courses vertically and the program's core SLOs horizontally, showing their alignment with each other. A more extensive list of 100- to 400-level courses and a separate psychology minor curriculum map are available on the platform. Nuventive enabled CU to map the GE learning goals to program SLOs to show the interrelationship between institutional and program levels.

Figure 5.3: Psychology Curriculum Map from Nuventive (excerpt)

ORGANIZED AND SYSTEMATIC ASSESSMENT PROCESSES (CRITERION 2)

This chapter's introduction describes the committees and positions responsible for supporting and overseeing the curriculum and/or student learning assessment. The UCC, GEC, academic assessment committee, and institutional-/program-level student learning assessments are faculty-led. Faculty members are key to assessment at all levels. They determine institutional and degree/program SLOs; recommend assessment methods; design and implement data collection and analysis tools; and peer mentor colleagues on assessment practices. CU established institutional effectiveness and program assessment processes during integration, through a faculty-led assessment and accreditation functional implementation team (FIT) subgroup with faculty representatives from all campuses. CU adopted Shippensburg's GE curriculum, used their GE assessment process, and made modifications. As stated in Criterion 2, SLOs and evaluation standards embody AAC&U liberal education expectations, accrediting and disciplinary standards, and student qualification and performance. Student preparation follows the professional expectations of alumni, community and business partners, and advisory boards that share insights about how student preparation aligns with professional expectations. For example, the Zeigler College of Business (ZCOB) advisory board members collaborated with accounting faculty to align undergraduate and graduate accounting curricula with the new CPA exam requirements, in part, by adding ACCT425(UG)/ACCT525(G) data analytics for accounting. Advisory board members helped coordinate a list of banking professionals to provide advice on the banking minor curriculum and conducted outreach to industry contacts to build a portfolio of new businesses that will hire our students for internships and full-time positions. Other examples of input from professionals in the field are shared in Standard I.

Institutional (GE) Assessment

As stated earlier, GEC oversees CU's institutional (GE) program curriculum development, assessment, and continuous improvement. The GE web page provides open access to learning goals, SLOs, assessment processes, rubrics, course data entry worksheets, and the Qualtrics (survey-based) data submission form. During 2023-24, the provost also sent emails to all faculty endorsing GEC's work and reminding faculty who teach GE courses of their responsibility to assess those courses, beginning fall 2023. To guide the process, the GEC sponsored five workshops, attended each of the deans' leadership team meetings, and posted the slide deck on the web, which described the assessment structure, process, cycle, and reporting. GE data collection occurs each semester for all 16 program learning goals and 49 SLOs.

Figure 5.4: Excerpt of Three-Page Course Data Entry Worksheet – Natural World

YOUR SUMMARY OF DATA COLLECTED							
Student Learning Objective (SLO)	**Levels of competency: How many students demonstrated each level of competency on the assessment method used to collect data.** Levels of competency are not the same thing as the grade earned on the assignment. Please utilize the rubric on the following page to determine what constitutes **un-satisfactory**, **emerging**, **developing**, **proficient**, and **mastery** levels of student competency.						Please **describe the *Use of Results*** for each Student Learning Objective. Please be specific. Several sentences are appropriate to give us a detailed look at **how** you plan to use this data to improve student learning in future iterations of the course. ***Please be prepared to submit one student artifact for each level of competency (unsatisfactory, emerging, developing, proficient, mastery) for each of the three SLOs.***
	Unsatisfactory	**Emerging**	**Developing**	**Proficient**	**Mastery**	**None ****	
SLO 1: *Scientific Method*	20	45	5	1			Since the majority of these students are first-year students, we would expect students to have only introductory knowledge of the scientific method. Results from this assessment indicate that most students are at the "unsatisfactory" or "emerging" levels when it comes to understanding the scientific method. In order to increase proficiency with the scientific method, consistency across the lab instruction and additional use of the method will be incorporated into the lab component of the course. In future classes, a scientific method quiz will be an embedded part of the lab for credit. Student performance on these questions will be used to more accurately assess their level of knowledge of the scientific method.
SLO 2: *Scientific Principles*	16	48	16	1			Data from this section of the rubric indicates that students have mostly an "emerging" understanding of scientific principles. After reviewing this data, the instructors believe that the current assessment tool is an inaccurate reflection of students' knowledge of scientific principles and their origins. In the future, student averages on the first two lab exams and first two lecture exams will be used to address this SLO, providing a much broader assessment of a variety of scientific principles covered in this course.

CU provides a three-page course data entry worksheet to help faculty prepare their submissions in advance of submitting data and narrative via the Qualtrics data submission form. Faculty members report course-level data, assessment methods, number of students assessed and meeting expectations, and how assessment data informs change. An excerpt from the natural world worksheet, p. 2, shows where faculty submitted data for GE from a lab activity containing questions aimed at assessing both SLOs. As described in Figure 5.4, this initial assessment method was determined to be insufficient and was adjusted to use a lab activity and accompanying quiz for SLO1, and specific exam scores for SLO2 to improve student learning or the assessment process. To establish sufficient data, faculty assessed GE courses each time offered during the 2023-24 academic year.

A high-level GE summary and analysis is conducted each semester. Faculty provided the first round of GE data by January 31, 2024, which included data for 378 GE courses assessed; the second round yielded 277 GE spring 2024 submissions by May 31, 2024. Results show the greatest opportunities for improvement in arts, foreign languages, ethical reasoning, natural world, oral and written communication, and first-year experience. Faculty included how they plan to improve student learning in GE courses across the curriculum, and examples are included in Table 5.4 for some of these areas. In general, course changes included strategies such as providing more examples, checklists, feedback on multiple drafts, video, practice sessions, tutoring, coverage of content, and reminders.

Table 5.4: Proposed GE Course Changes for Pedagogy or Assessment Process	
GE Learning Goal	**Proposed GE Course Changes from Data Submission Form in Qualtrics**
Arts	Results of my assessment of SLO 2 feel lower than expected for an introductory level Theatre Arts course. These results are pointing me to consider how to strengthen the curricular focus on textual analysis and cultural context for future iterations of the course. I plan to develop additional course content and consider new assignments connected to this SLO.
Foreign Languages	The result reflects the overall level of the students in this course. To enhance results, I will incorporate more conversational activities in class.
First-Year Seminar	I am confident the "design skills" approach can work well for first-year students to learn how design skills apply to their success in college. The ideation techniques utilized will need a higher point value and to be incorporated into class sessions through added team development work.
Ethical Reasoning	These results demonstrate to me that I need to be more intentional with the section on the ethical theories and approaches, which is at the start of the course, and build more opportunities into the higher-stake assessments for the students to display their understanding of the theories, their principles, and how to apply them. Typically, students did best with utilitarianism (which is similar to other classes). I will be adding crash course videos as well as additional explanations for this section of the text throughout the semester.
Natural World	Give students additional opportunities to apply scientific information to more diverse situations. Give additional opportunities for students to critically examine data and apply in appropriate contexts.
Oral Communication	It appears clear from the results that students struggled a little more with this assignment than some of the others that were assessed, especially considering that a few students chose not to present at all (as noted in the "unsatisfactory" column) due to fear of presenting in front of the class. I can continue to try and set aside some additional time in class to help students gain more confidence and comfortability with speaking in front of their peers. I can also encourage students even more than I already do to seek feedback from me on their application paper #2 assignment before they give their in-class presentation to make sure that the content of the paper and presentation is meeting the assignment requirements.
Written Communication	One of the more cognitively challenging aspects of this assignment is establishing a link between stating, explaining, and justifying each genre criterion. I will give students additional practice in this rhetorical strategy. I also plan to give examples of proper order. For clarity, criteria must be established before students measure their specific film by genre criteria.

More comprehensive analyses of learning goals occur on a five-year rotation, as shown in Table 5.5. For example, GEC will conduct a deeper review of the first-year seminar, written communication, oral communication, and quantitative reasoning data collected through spring 2024. Following spring 2027 data collection, a thorough five-year review of the entire program using eight semesters of data will occur. The GEC shares reports with the UCC, CUAC, and faculty at large including all assessment-driven changes. A GE dashboard is linked on the GE web page to share institutional student learning outcomes.

Table 5.5: General Education Assessment Review Cycle			
Year	Semesters of Data Collection	Program Learning Goal	Academic Year Review
Year 1	Fall 2023 – Spring 2025	First-year Seminar	2024-25
		Written Communication	
		Oral Communication	
		Quantitative Reasoning	
Year 2	Fall 2023 – Spring 2025	Historical Themes	2025-26
		Diversity	
		Global Perspectives	
		Foreign Language	
Year 3	Fall 2023 – Spring 2026	Citizenship and Society	2026-27
		Ethical Reasoning	
		Critical Analysis and Reasoning	
		Natural World	
		Technology	
Year 4	Fall 2023 – Spring 2027	Literature	2027-28
		Arts	
		Creative	
Year 5	Fall 2023 – Spring 2027	Five-year program review	2028-29

Program-Level Assessment

In 2021-22, planning for CU's program assessment began with the assessment and accreditation FIT subgroup, a multi-disciplinary, multi-campus group of faculty and administrators. The group examined practices at the integrating institutions and best practices in educational effectiveness assessment. The emergent assessment process at the program/degree level was driven by the expectation that assessment be meaningful, useful, and efficient. Table 5.6 outlines key steps in selecting CU's assessment technologies and process. All CU legacy institutions were long-time users of Nuventive (formerly Tracdat) as a planning and assessment platform, leading to its selection. Since Nuventive was launching a new platform and CU programs developed new curricula in 2022-23, the transition to Nuventive Solutions Premier occurred in 2023-24. Technologies like Qualtrics for surveying and Tableau for data visualization were also successfully used by one or more campuses and selected as the sole technology for that area. The assessment process operationalized first through the PAR in transition report in 2022-23. With stakeholder input, the process was modified and parlayed into an annual report, i.e., the annual report PAR for 2023-24 and moving forward.

Table 5.6: Key Steps in Selecting/Improving CU's Assessment Technologies and Process		
Forum	Timeline	Action/Initiative
AVP email of charge to IE FIT subgroups	Sep 30, 2021	Charged assessment and related technologies FIT leads to evaluate current processes, identify ideal state, and recommend the transition to ideal state for integration.
Assessment and accreditation subgroup and supporting technologies subgroup meetings	Oct 2021 – Jan 2022	Convened accreditation/assessment and supporting technologies FIT subgroups, reviewed current processes, did benchmarking, developed recommendations for the assessment process and sole technology for planning, assessment, and improvement (Nuventive Solutions Premier), survey (Qualtrics), and data visualization (Tableau).
OIE staff and subgroup leads	Dec 23, 2021	Finalized 31 workflows, the process of which caused deep reflection on proposed processes and informed development of the PAR in transition document.
OIE staff and assessment and accreditation subgroup lead	Feb – Mar 2022	Revamped, with additional benchmarking, BL assessment document and templates to address key components of the FIT subgroup recommendation and workflows with a transitional annual report, user guide, templates, program-level data dashboards with aggregated data across CU, and a glossary: a collective referred to as the program assessment review (PAR) in transition.
FIT subgroup, council of deans', and chairs meetings	Mar – Apr 2022	Presented PAR, received feedback, and made revisions on areas like wording, examples, glossary, timeline, dashboard links, and notes.
Assessment workshops	Jun 6 and Aug 8, 2022	Met with a consultant regarding faculty questions/concerns and new PAR process, offered two consultant-led assessment workshops, and used survey results to inform workshop two content, regarding reliability and assessment of multi-section courses.
Assessment and accreditation working group	Jul – Sep 2022	Developed the draft assessment structure proposal, revised membership per provost's feedback (8/3), and received approval from secretariat (9/19).
Assessment workshop and working session	Jan – Apr 2023	Delivered assessment workshop and working session with deans, chairs, leads, and assessment coordinators to review new assessment structure and PAR process, provide guidance, troubleshoot difficulties, and answer questions.
CU assessment council and committee meetings	Mar – May 2023	Convened CUAC (5/4), academic/academic support subgroup (3/2, 4/28), administrative/student support subgroup (5/3); feedback led to revised due date extension, CUAC membership, and agreement on the responsibilities for each group.

Program Assessment Review (PAR) in Transition

Table 5.6 outlines the deliberative process that resulted in the PAR in transition process. This process was used in 2022-23 alongside CU's curricular development and was intended to offer a concise, streamlined annual reporting method that would bridge the legacy and new degree programs. The PAR in transition requested an annual report from each program with a brief description (Table 1, p. 2 of narrative sections), program SLOs (Table 2), curriculum map (Table 3), an assessment plan (Table 4), and an annual summary and action plan (narrative sections). The PAR in transition user guide articulated the process and offered templates for a program assessment plan and annual report.

PAR Table 2 required that programs list all CU program SLOs; indicate whether they were retained, modified, or new; provide any unreported outcomes from legacy assessments; and briefly state what informed SLO selection. This information provided a view of how similar or different the CU curricula were to legacy programs. In fact, most programs either retained or slightly modified SLOs from legacy programs. Through crosswalks, the CU courses were used to fulfill legacy program requirements, enrolling students from both legacy and CU curricula. These circumstances allowed CU student learning assessments to reflect on student learning in teach-out and CU programs.

In 2022-23, CU delivered training sessions. Two summer sessions were provided by an external consultant to emphasize best practices in assessment, and two were delivered by the faculty liaison, faculty members with assessment expertise, and the AVP of IE. The January and March sessions reviewed the new assessment structure and PAR transitionary process described earlier. Sessions were recorded and posted on the program assessment web page with training materials for faculty to revisit and for orientation of new assessment coordinators. The AVP for IE and faculty assessment liaison also conducted one-on-one or small group mentoring sessions in person and via Zoom. In May 2023, assessment coordinators submitted the PAR in transition and received feedback to inform future work.

Following the submissions, IE staff used the PAR in transition 2022-23 documents to populate Nuventive Solutions Premier with program descriptions, curriculum maps, and assessment plans, so faculty were well positioned to report program and student learning outcomes for the 2023-24 academic year. The faculty assessment liaison and IE staff also provided feedback on the PAR in transition documents and process, via a scoring rubric. Individual feedback reports were shared with the program assessment coordinators, department chairs, and deans. A high-level aggregate summary for all programs was distributed and discussed at the academic assessment committee meeting, council of deans' meeting, and October 2023 assessment session. Remarks were shared about how to improve the quality of submissions for 2023-24. A second assessment session was held in November 2023 to launch the Nuventive platform. Insights from the report summaries and survey data collected from these meetings and training informed the changes made to the PAR in transition process and a follow-up April 2024 assessment session. The revisions were implemented in 2023-24 as the annual report PAR process, due May 31, 2024, and discussed in various sections of Criterion 5.

Annual Report Program Assessment Review (PAR)

For 2023-24 and moving forward, the revised PAR process was documented in a user guide and required a submission from each CU program, concentration, track, minor, and certificate in the approved program array. Assessment coordinators were asked to implement the assessment plan articulated in the prior year and complete an annual report at year end. In the fall 2023 training, faculty were encouraged to review and revise, where appropriate, their curriculum maps and assessment plans and more deeply consider data sources, e.g., SLOs, program dashboards, accrediting standards, professional organization guidelines, or market demand data available through external sources. The action plan required that programs analyze program data, articulate strengths and weaknesses, and state actions in accordance with findings. CU continues to follow this annual report PAR process as a primary means for programs to document assessment results (as reported in Criterion 3) and plan for the following year.

Five-Year Program Reviews and Accreditation Self-Studies

Before integration, the legacy institutions conducted annual and five-year program reviews, despite the BOG Policy 1986-04-A: Program Review being suspended in 2019 until revised in 2024. During integration, all CU programs, both administrative and academic, underwent a comprehensive review, which resulted in CU's new academic and administrative structure, program array, and curriculum. Accreditation self-studies and substantive change requests were also completed, requiring program faculty to consider SLOs, assessment plans, and outcomes. Program reviews are conducted according to an established program review schedule, which started in 2024-25 for accredited programs using on-cycle self-studies for program review. Unaccredited programs begin review in 2026-27. The five-year PAR aligns with the BOG procedures via the program review template, process, and timeline to ensure a comprehensive review.

Other Assessment Support and Communication

CU's institutional effectiveness plan provides an inventory of CU's assessment processes. The IE web page includes web pages that support assessment and publish student achievement and survey results. The IR director has launched dashboards with institutional and program-level outcomes such as retention and graduation rates. The dashboards filter to disaggregate data, e.g., by gender, race/ethnicity, Pell eligibility, residency, and first generation. The IR director provides data and ad-hoc reports to assist faculty with program assessment and accreditation reports.

IE's survey research director and applications developer assist with surveying on the Qualtrics platform. IE provides support for Chmura's JobsEQ software, a new labor market analysis tool. Institutional survey data and dashboards are posted for first destination, which is administered twice a year in the spring and fall, and for NSSE, given on a three-year survey cycle institution-wide. It was last administered in spring 2022 and is being administered in spring 2025. As mentioned, IE publishes student achievement and survey results in institutional and program-level dashboards. Links to the dashboards are posted in Nuventive for easy access when writing the annual report PAR. Results are shared in key forums like the president's cabinet, town halls, council of deans, and committee meetings. Emails, Triad announcements (internal newsletter), and training provide a means by which to communicate with key stakeholders. Reports shared through the curriculum and assessment committees provide results regarding student learning and achievement. Criterion 5 describes professional development and mentoring support.

USING ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR IMPROVEMENT (CRITERION 3)

Using SLO data for continuous improvement is the key to effective assessment. Assessment processes should result in evidence of data-driven institutional and program recommendations for program improvement and compliance monitoring of educational effectiveness structures and processes. Standard III shares examples from the first-year implementation of the annual report PAR. Even in the beginning stages, some closing of the loop occurred for actions proposed in 2022-23. Table 5.7 includes assessment examples from across the colleges, program levels, and modalities that document the use of student learning outcomes to inform planned and/or implemented changes to improve student learning and educational effectiveness. The evidence inventory houses an expanded Table 5.7 and an expanded Table 3.7 (see Standard III) with more examples and documentation.

Table 5.7: Student Learning Outcomes and Actions from Annual Report PAR (excerpts)	
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS (including Program Name, Level, and College)	
Abbreviated SLO, Map to GE, & Criterion	**Result & Action from Annual Report PAR**
Mathematics, BS, College of Health, Science, and Technology	
SLO: Solve problems in areas of calculus, algebra, probability, and statistics **Map to General Education Learning Goals:** • Quantitative Reasoning • Critical Analysis and Reasoning **Criterion:** 75% of students will score 75% or higher on the assessment questions	In spring 2023, students did not meet expectations on embedded exam questions in MATH270 (60% scoring >75%) and STAT141 (59.1% scoring >75%). During the 2022-23 academic year, formative assessments and assignments revealed that students at the LH and MA campuses (in the DE sections) experienced more difficulty. The instructors scheduled special (extra) office hours and increased availability for those students to assist with course material and help students understand expectations. This effort significantly increased learning and academic success, especially for students taking DE courses. Since integration, faculty have also honed their skills in teaching DE more effectively. In 2023-24, 82.5% of students met the criteria.
Theatre, BA, Minor, and Concentrations, College of Arts, Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences	
SLO: Demonstrate knowledge of theatrical design process and skills necessary to develop initial design ideas, research and present the design ideas, and collaboratively integrate them into an initial design concept presentation **Map to General Education Learning Goals:** • Creative • Critical Analysis and Reasoning **Criterion:** 70% of majors and 70% of minors meet expectations on final design rubric	Using a rubric in the fundamentals of theatre design, faculty rated 86% of minors (n=7) and 91% of majors (n=10) as met expectations for this SLO in 2022-23. While both majors and minors met expectations, the faculty developed a "comment catalog" to archive frequently observed opportunities for improvement and feedback, which could be tailored to each student. These comments were provided in addition to the standard responses generated from the rubric in the LMS. In 2023-24, faculty reassessed this SLO and 100% of minors (n=3) and majors (n=8) met expectations. Theatre assessments include small n-sizes which is truer for the concentrations in which skills specific to the theatrical disciplines are assessed via a capstone project. All (n=7) but one student (who withdrew for personal reasons) met expectations on the concentration SLOs.
Sport Management, BS, Zeigler College of Business	
SLO: Students will demonstrate an understanding of leadership in sport organizations **Map to General Education Learning Goals:** • Critical Analysis and Reasoning **Criterion:** 80% of students score 80% or higher (SPMG 332) on the case study assignment	Ratings on the case study in the fall 2023 did not meet the 80% threshold with just 54% of majors meeting expectations. The instructor spent more in class time on this assignment during the spring 2024 semester, and 80% of students (n=20/25) met expectations.

| **Table 5.7: Student Learning Outcomes and Actions from Annual Report PAR (excerpts)**	
GRADUATE PROGRAM (including Program Name, Level, and College)	
Physician Assistant, MHS, College of Health, Science, and Technology	
SLO: Successful completion of the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE) **Map to General Education Learning Goals:** • Citizenship and Responsibility • Critical Analysis and Reasoning • Diversity • Ethical Reasoning • Natural World **Criterion:** Meet or exceed the national mean for first-time pass rate as well as the 5-year average first-time pass rate	At the last review, students did not meet this objective by falling >2% below the national average on the PANCE exam. As a result, the program used the PACKRAT exam as a formative assessment to identify at-risk students. An intervention program (e.g., practice exams, directed assignments, study plans) was implemented for those with PACKRAT scores that indicated they were at risk. The 2023 class met target with a 92% first-time pass rate, equal to the national average and the program's 5-year first-time pass rate at 93% (using legacy data), also equal to the national average 5-year first time pass rate. Additionally, one-way ANOVA was used to conduct comparative analyses for 2021-2023 cohorts across the four sites (LH, CLFD, Harrisburg, and Coudersport) for 10 assessments on PANCE, PACKRAT, and end-of-rotation (OER) scores. Of all 10 assessments, the Harrisburg cohort mean score (x= 84.46) on the women's health-OER was significantly (p=.02) lower than the Lock Haven score (x=87.46). The faculty implemented additional women's health instruction utilizing a curriculum published by the Association of Professors of Gynecology & Obstetrics called uWISE as well as additional small group instruction with faculty for students who fail to meet competencies in identified areas (including women's health) during clinical rotations.

Source: Nuventive Annual Reports PAR 2022-23 and 2023-24

Distance Education Assessment

CU continues to use DE delivery for selected courses and programs and, during integration, assessed the technologies available at all sites and resources needed to deliver effective distance learning. A network infrastructure analysis found that MA had inadequate wireless network coverage and wired network infrastructure. Students were dropped from the internet and access points failed, impacting students' ability to complete assignments. Antiquated network switches and cabling made Zoom unreliable. Around $3.9M was invested in IT upgrades, including the infrastructure needed for weConnect and Zoom rooms, enhanced video and audio for instructional media, and faster, reliable Wi-Fi. As described in Standard III, CU also invested in faculty professional development on the various technologies that support DE and used first-/second-year student survey results to determine student preferences about course delivery. While students prefer face-to-face (F2F) classes and are open to a limited amount of DE delivery, student course evaluations show that ratings of DE courses are very good (>3.0 on a 0 to 4-point scale) for all evaluation categories for all modalities (See Standard III, Table 3.9). GE assessments reveal that student learning outcomes by delivery mode can exceed those of F2F as shown by the example in Figure 5.5. Outcomes for online learning and multi-modal (only offered in spring) exceeded F2F for the diversity learning goal and all SLOs. Results varied across learning goals, but data shows that DE learning outcomes can be greater than, equal to, or less than those achieved by F2F delivery. The physician assistant program SLOs support this assertion as noted in Table 5.7. The program uses DE delivery across sites.

Figure 5.5: GE Diversity Learning Goal – Percent Met Expectations
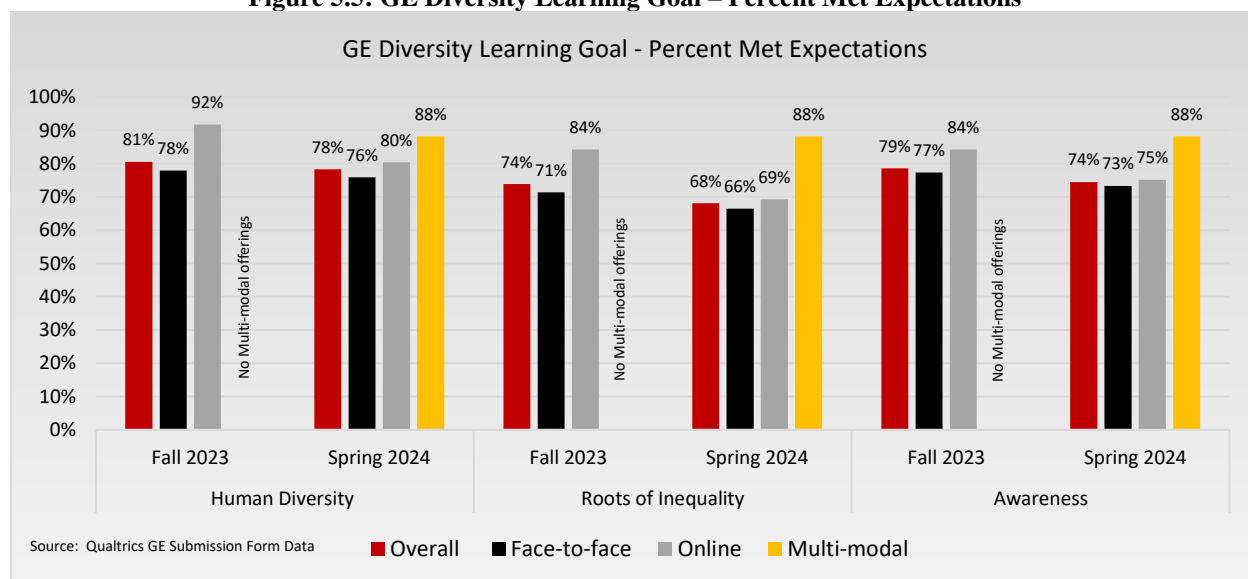
THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS (CRITERION 4)

CU does not have assessment services that contain learning activities or components that meet the definition of a third-party provider. CU does have agreements for Nuventive, Qualtrics, and the Brightspace LMS that support faculty and staff in their assessment work, but these are software products excluded as third-party providers per the MSCHE third-party provider procedures. Tableau and JobsEQ software are made available through PASSHE.

EFFECTIVENESS OF ASSESSMENT PROCESSES (CRITERION 5)

Processes at CU's legacy campuses were especially attentive to periodic review and continuous improvement of GE and program assessment, which inspired CU's approach. The assessment and accreditation FIT subgroup evaluated campus-based assessment processes and best practices in higher education. As described in Criterion 2, Table 5.6 documents a two-year process to assess the effectiveness of legacy assessment, vet recommendations, and refine assessment processes. Periodic assessment toward continuous process improvement occurs through the annual report process, administrative review, faculty mentoring, professional development, and external consultation. The effectiveness of assessment relies on faculty and administrators who serve in oversight and support roles.

Program-Level Reviews

Discussion leading to the annual report PAR provides a point at which faculty evaluate assessment processes and propose changes related to GE or program assessment. This chapter's introduction describes assessment roles and structures. Each program designates an assessment coordinator who serves as the program's conduit to information from training and receives feedback from the college assessment coordinators who serve on the academic program assessment committee. Faculty members' experiences and observations inform what works and what does not in the assessment process, proposing changes to include assessment instruments, assessment plans, sampling, and data collection. During the past two years, curricula and assessment plan development required significant deliberation about appropriate assessment tools as programs made choices about how to integrate three sets of SLOs, criteria, measures, targets, assessments, data collection methods, and cycles. While programs implemented assessment plans in 2023-24, this assessment round revealed opportunities to improve processes as faculty are still considering approaches to assess new curricula across CU. Below are two examples that summarize this kind of deliberation.

Visual Arts, BA: After reviewing past assessment methods, the department is determining the most appropriate assessment. Faculty collected 2023-24 data using versions of legacy practices while working to integrate them but have not agreed on the most appropriate method. The faculty unified 2023-24 data into a usable format with a target of 65% of BA students scoring 2 or higher where 0=not evident, 1=emerging, 2=competent, and 3=proficient. The average score for BA sophomore portfolio review was a 1.8 which is just below the target of 2, with 45.5% assessed BA students meeting or exceeding the goal. Analyses indicated that inconsistencies in collecting and evaluating data may have resulted in inflated and/or deflated scores in areas, and less than 50% of total majors were scored due to voluntary assessment at one campus. Setting a new integrated method for this assessment (i.e., sophomore portfolio review) is the primary objective for 2024-25.

Literature, GE Program: The English program is in the initial stages of developing assessments for both GE and program assessment. Program faculty are building verticality into GE assessment, integrating introductory, intermediate, and advanced courses to give a robust understanding of delivering the area's GE curriculum. For 2023-24, ENGL390: Shakespeare provided assessment data using a three-point rubric to assess a comprehensive, research-based essay. Using these data as a baseline, the program set a 70% target, and 73.3% (n=11 of 15 students, 7 English majors) met the standard. Predictably, English majors (85% met) outperformed non-majors (62% met). The department discussed the data at the August 2024 retreat, and in 2024-25, an introductory course is being used to assess this GE outcome. Over time, GE assessments will encompass a broad range of courses.

PASSHE's program review policy and procedures were revised in 2024. The AVP of IE served on the system-wide committee, and the provost provided feedback through the chief academic officers' meetings. CU reviewed the legacy processes and templates, which differed, to develop CU's review schedule, template, process, and timeline consistent with PASSHE's procedures.

Dean-Level Engagement in Assessment Review

Deans and associate deans are instrumental in supporting assessment and process improvement. Deans keep apprised of current assessment processes by attending training and receiving updates from the AVP of IE at council of deans'

meetings. Their input is solicited at least annually regarding improvements to the assessment process. The deans made recommendations to program review dashboards and the PAR in transition user guide. In fall 2023, deans and associate deans requested revisions in a feedback survey, which are reflected in the "evaluate" segment of the PAR - Nuventive user guide in Figure 5.6. The bullet points represent changes suggested by deans and associate deans to monitor college submissions, encourage faculty to improve quality, and recognize those faculty on quality assessment efforts and reporting.

Figure 5.6: Program Assessment Review User Guide Schedule (excerpt)
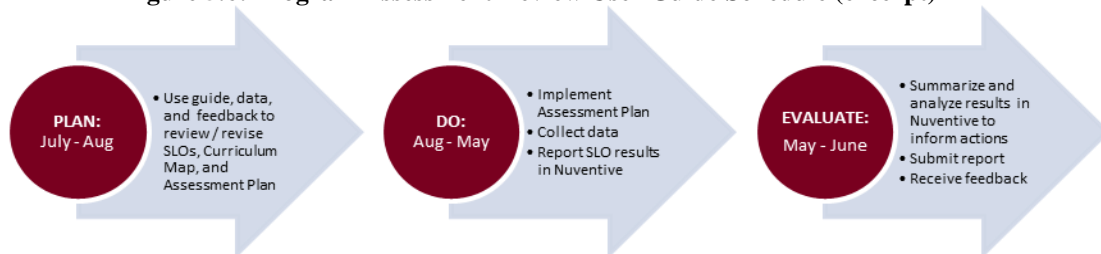
1. **Plan**
   Follow the user guide and consider results data, feedback (e.g., from the academic assessment rubric), and training when you review/refine the general information, SLOs, curriculum map, and assessment plan.
2. **Do**
   Implement the assessment plan, collect data throughout the academic year, and report outcomes in Nuventive Solutions Premier as soon as available but no later than May 31. *(Note: Due dates were changed to September 15 in the fall 2024 revision of the user guide)*
3. **Evaluate**
   Analyze results to inform actions and complete/submit remaining sections of the Annual Report PAR in Nuventive Solutions Premier by May 31. After submission, the OIE and faculty liaison will provide feedback on the annual report to inform faculty planning (via an assessment rubric), training sessions, and the academic assessment committee recommendations. Deans can access Nuventive and any of their colleges' programs therein, but they will also receive a summary report so they can:
   - know which programs submitted an Annual Report PAR in Nuventive
   - review the rubric ratings and comments on each section of the PAR for the college and each program
   - compare results to last year's ratings to see where improvements have occurred
   - understand where opportunities for improvement exist for the college and its programs
   - follow up with programs that did not submit or submitted reports with significant omissions or deficiencies to increase the number and quality of submissions
   - acknowledge programs that submitted exemplary reports

IE – Faculty Assessment Liaison Reviews

Following the annual report PAR submission described in Criterion 2 and Figure 5.6, the faculty assessment liaison and IE staff complete an assessment rubric for each program. The program assessment coordinator, department chair, and dean can access the results on Nuventive, and summary-level data is reported to assessment committees for use in improving the assessment process and ultimately, student learning. In June 2023, the liaison/IE team completed 100 rubrics for nearly 200 (75% submission rate) programs (multiple programs could be submitted in one report). The rubric gave numerical ratings on five report segments (using a 3-point scale) and offered collegial advice about how to improve the program's assessment process, especially for articulating program SLOs and conducting a deeper analysis of program data in the summary action plans. Figure 5.7 shows that the criminal justice program submitted an excellent report scoring a 3.0 on four of the five sections; however, the program scored a 2.0 on the program SLOs segment. The notes below laud the good work and suggest points of clarification.

Figure 5.7: Criminal Justice Program Assessment Review Rubric Notes (excerpt)

IE aggregates ratings and shares an academic program assessment summary on the reports' quality in the fall assessment training and meetings with assessment coordinators, chairs, deans, and assessment committees. IE uses

the rubric scores and other Nuventive analytics to produce the annual program assessment summary that was submitted to the academic program assessment committee and CUAC. Following the 2022-23 scoring, the assessment rubric was modified to align with the permanent annual report PAR process and committee suggestions. Over 85% of core programs completed annual reports and received scores, which were documented in the academic program assessment summary report 2023-24. Scores and feedback are in Nuventive and were discussed in the fall 2024 training and assessment committee meetings with an emphasis on increasing submissions, using assessment best practices, and more precisely reporting results for different program designations.

Assessment Committee Reviews

The academic program assessment committee, GEC, and CUAC review assessment results and make recommendations about GE and academic program assessment. Following the November 2023 academic program assessment committee meeting, a brief feedback survey was administered to document recommended changes to the PAR assessment process. Suggestions are addressed in other sections, but the implemented changes stated in the academic program assessment committee 2023-24 summary report are as follows:

- Include faculty scholarly activity and other five-year program review requirements in the annual report PAR so that programs collect the information each year that will be required for their five-year program review
- Have a review level for deans/associate deans and ensure they receive timely updates on compliance with submissions guidelines
- Include links to the new PAR user guide on the web
- Ensure data can be available for minors and concentrations
- Update the scoring rubric against the new Nuventive setup and provide more guidance about the quality of assessment and not just whether the section was completed fully or partially
- Show comparative results to see overall and by program where improvements have occurred over last year
- Show number and what percentage of programs submitted in 2022-23 versus 2023-24
- Provide summary assessment results, overall college ratings, and individual program ratings

Following the GEC fall 2023 and spring 2024 data analysis, the GEC prepared GE summary reports that were shared with the UCC and CUAC, including all changes recommended through assessment. For example, the reviews led to the following suggestions, the first four of which were implemented and last three are in progress:

- Consider having the GEC chair or members hold an open session or office hours to meet with faculty on the assessment process
- Email reminders on deadlines and ask faculty to complete the "use of results" to improve student learning
- Revise the data collection form to require separate submissions by modalities
- Develop the GE dashboard for sharing data
- Share assessment results with instructional faculty in each assessment area for group/area informational purposes, especially to understand where students appear to struggle most with meeting expectations
- Hold an assessment session with faculty on rubrics within each learning goal or at least theme but also discuss best practices on learning strategies for quantitative reasoning and multi-modal/distance education course delivery, especially as it relates to particular learning goals
- Recommend benchmark criteria and decide if proficient and mastered are appropriate for all learning goals

The CUAC's year-end report consists of the recommendations from the aforementioned committees. These recommendations were forwarded to the strategic planning committee and president's cabinet along with the following additional recommendations from the CUAC, which have been completed or are in progress:

- Adjust the outcomes/action plan submission date for administrative annual reports to July 15 and keep the next year planning date of September 15 with implementation of change in 2024-25
- Recommend a program review schedule for, at minimum, units that support the student experience and other relevant administrative units
- Recognize units/programs/faculty that do excellent work in assessment
- Provide professional development for GE, program, and administrative unit assessment which may require funding; collaborate with the CTL and leverage the CTL Brightspace area

The CUAC year-end report also incorporates the administrative, educational, and student support assessment committee report with suggestions informed by the administrative assessment summary report.

Nuventive Solutions Premier Platform Launch

Over the last two years, a working group consisting of IE staff and the faculty assessment liaison met regularly with the Nuventive representative to establish both the administrative and academic assessment modules. Initially, the Word templates used for the administrative annual assessment plan and the revised PAR template were provided to the representative to set up the platform. Once the initial set-up was completed, the working group met regularly to identify improvements to enhance functionality and user experience, which also included feedback from surveys and deans. Examples of changes beyond initial set-up show that the collaborative work included the following:

- Changed the curriculum map coding from summative to mastered per faculty feedback
- Established reporting capabilities for the deans to view college programs on the home-page dashboard
- Added a comprehensive program report for all programs
- Linked to the academic program index, which is the official repository of CU programs, and data dashboards on each program home page
- Revised the annual summary and action plan section adding in prompts, including (1) "Is your annual summary and SLO assessment complete?" and (2) "Are you ready to have your PAR reviewed?" A section was added for faculty scholarly activity per faculty requests and consistent with program review expectations
- Modified functionality to require the annual summary and action plan, which includes data-informed actions, to be completed before faculty could finalize submission
- Embedded the scoring rubric in the platform and created a dashboard to show summary results

Professional Development and Mentoring

As described in Standard V, CU sponsored professional development and training sessions using internal presenters (e.g., IE staff, faculty liaison, faculty experts) and external presenters. Post-session evaluations are conducted to determine how well the sessions are meeting needs and where improvements can be made. For example, the 11-28-23 assessment session evaluation revealed opportunities to clarify information and implement suggestions, and a follow-up email to clarify confusion and report on recommendations was sent to participants. The information reminded participants, especially new assessment coordinators, about their roles and responsibilities, where to find recordings and workshop materials, and how to seek assistance with Nuventive and request permission to various screens. Per suggestions, recorded training and materials were posted in Brightspace. As documented on the program assessment web page, CU has delivered eight assessment sessions since integration.

Working with IE, the faculty assessment liaison serves as a critical link between program faculty/assessment coordinators, assessment committees, and IE. The position receives three hours of alternative workload assignment to facilitate academic program assessment. Responsibilities include peer mentoring on assessment, leading the academic assessment committee, evaluating and providing feedback on the annual report PAR, and meeting with IE staff and CU's Nuventive representative about leveraging the Nuventive platform and reporting capabilities. The liaison conducts training and mentors faculty to improve the quality of assessment. Examples of one-on-one mentoring include consulting with middle level education faculty on developing unique SLOs for four concentrations, assisting theatre faculty reporting of unique SLOs for the minor and concentrations, and organizing music concentration SLOs to show individual cohort assessment for students from multiple concentrations.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Leading up to and through integration, intentional efforts were made to adopt proven approaches to educational effectiveness assessment by incorporating those from legacy assessment programs and benchmarking with best-practice schools. An institutional committee structure and positions were created to support and make recommendations on educational effectiveness assessment. In a very short time, faculty and academic support staff across CU engaged in GE and academic program assessment planning, data collection, and analysis using current technologies (i.e., Nuventive Solutions Premier, Qualtrics, Tableau), user guides, and templates. CU established systematic processes, which over time will allow collection of longitudinal data to better inform decision making. While CU has implemented assessment plans and already adjusted learning strategies and assessment processes, CU will benefit by continuing to do the following:

- Mature the GE and program assessment processes for all modalities to inform ongoing improvement of student learning outcomes and assessment processes and provide additional training and peer mentoring
- Further develop longitudinal data for key metrics and conduct ongoing analyses to inform GE and academic program changes

STANDARD VI: PLANNING, RESOURCES, AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

[Standard VI addresses *Self-Study Institutional Priorities* for Academic Programs and Support; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Financial Sustainability; and Communication and *Requirements of Affiliation* 8, 10, and 11]

INTRODUCTION

CU has established integrated processes, resources, and structures to fulfill its mission, priorities, and goals. These processes and plans exist at the PASSHE, university, and divisional/unit levels and align with each other. Provisions ensure decisions are well informed and allow for emergent strategies. Two comprehensive reviews commissioned by the Board of Governors (BOG) and the Pennsylvania General Assembly established a foundation for the system redesign, a sustainability-driven effort that influences all PASSHE universities' top-level goal setting, financial planning, and budgeting as described in this chapter. At the institutional, divisional, and unit levels, the planning, resource allocation, and assessment processes provide for the integration of system redesign and ongoing assessment into actions that continuously improve all aspects of the university.

CU's organizational structure includes the president's office and five divisions organized around key functional areas in higher education. Figure 6.1 shows the high-level structure with a vice president leading each division. In this structure, the president's office encompasses institutional effectiveness (IE), facilities management, and executive administrative support. The president, chief of staff, divisional vice presidents, and functional leads of core operations, a collective known as the president's cabinet, remain accountable for planning, assessment, and resource allocation.

Figure 6.1: High-Level Organizational Structure
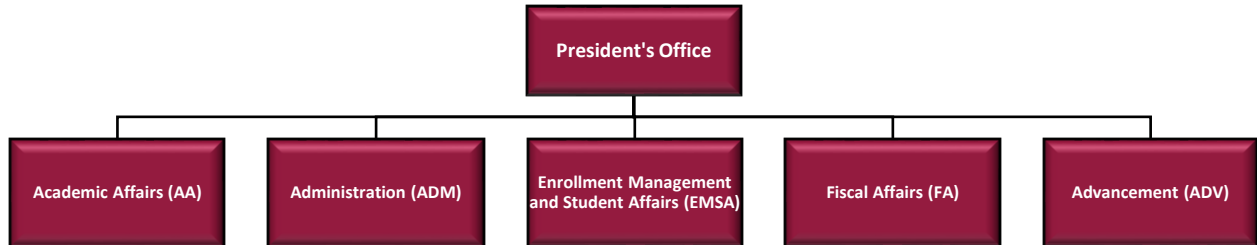
INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES (CRITERION 1)

Institutional Priorities and Goals Linked to Mission and Assessed

CU's mission, vision, values, priorities, and initiatives are clearly stated and posted on the web page. In developing these statements, CU and Blue Beyond Consulting gathered stakeholder input, reviewed periodic system- and university-level assessments, and referenced the northeast implementation plan, which summarized extensive research for integration. The strategic statements, core commitments, priorities, and goals draw upon system- and university-level research demonstrating alignment between state and local levels. CU's institutional effectiveness plan summarizes the key planning, resource allocation, assessment, and continuous improvement processes at all levels, ensuring that both institutional and unit goals are stated, aligned, assessed, and guide continuous improvement.

The institutional effectiveness plan includes the information in Standard I, Table 1.2, which depicts the alignment of CU's priorities and goals, comprehensive planning process (CPP) goals and associated board-affirmed metrics, 2025 state system priorities, and MSCHE standards. Complementary to the strategic plan, the CPP serves as a system and university planning toolset, capturing university goals in areas that the BOG has prioritized. The CPP also includes strategies for measuring and achieving those goals through board-affirmed metrics, program array monitoring, net price strategies, and budget and financial strategies.

Periodic assessment of institutional and unit goal achievement ensues through the CPP, institutional dashboards, surveys, and interim and year-end annual reporting. As noted previously, the CPP uses board-affirmed metrics and goals related to sustainability and linked to CU and PASSHE priorities, creating a cohesive foundation to support informed, transparent decision making about key budgetary levers (e.g., pricing and institutional aid). Multi-year targets are established for student success (i.e., enrollment and student outcomes) and university success (i.e., student support ratios, university financial strength, student affordability, and private giving). CPP goals for the academic program array, enrollment growth, and staffing levels support achieving these sustainability metrics and serve as key performance indicators (KPIs). The May and September CPP submissions provide an opportunity to reflect on results, refine goal setting, and consider adjustments to CU's strategic initiatives and multi-year projections.

Public dashboards on the IR web page are updated once data becomes available (e.g., on fall census date for enrollment and retention). Housed on the strategic planning web page, a KPI and selected metrics dashboard is used to demonstrate progress in achieving institutional goals. Survey results are published on IE's survey web page. The president's cabinet reviews the dashboards at least quarterly and survey results when available and reports results at CU forums. These checkpoints allow for interim adjustments to plans, measures, and targets. Year-end reports for all administrative units and academic programs mark divisional and unit progress toward strategic plan priorities, initiatives, and targets. Based on these annual reports, the CUAC and its committees prepare annual summary reports and recommend to the strategic planning committee (SPC) and president's cabinet actions for continuous improvement or strategic plan revisions. Committee work in 2023-24 led to six recommendations advanced from the CUAC in the year-end report through the SPC to cabinet. Those related to the strategic plan include building out the dashboards and implementing CU-defined measures where standardized assessments did not exist. Implementation occurred for student success, mental health, community engagement, and professional development measures, and initial assessment of strategic communications is underway. No substantive changes were recommended in 2023-24.

The institutional effectiveness plan describes how planning and resource allocation align to ensure adequate resources support strategic priorities. The budgeting process occurs within the context of PASSHE's CPP planning and budgeting guidelines and directives. The CPP contains revenue and expense projections for E&G, auxiliary, and restricted funds. The CPP operating projections are based on CU's annual budgeting process, and divisions must align funding requests to CU's strategic initiatives as described in Criterion 3.

Unit-level Goals and Initiatives Linked and Assessed

The strategic priority areas and institutional goals (including CPP goals) inform planning at all levels in the organization. Divisions and units articulate goals, initiatives, measures, and targets in the planning and assessment platform, Nuventive Solutions Premier. The mapping feature allows each unit to align institutional to unit goals, and the reporting tools generate an audit to ensure all priorities/initiatives are adequately supported. For example, the initial mapping report revealed that the financial literacy initiative could be supported better, which generated conversations within enrollment management and across divisions. Nuventive also provides a central location to report divisional and unit assessment results and action plans at year end, after which IE reviews the plans, provides a rubric rating, and offers feedback. The units use this feedback alongside assessment results to inform next year's planning and resource allocation as described in Criteria 3, 8, and 9. Table 6.1 features samples of data-driven multi-divisional strategies that were planned and implemented to support strategic plan core commitments and priorities.

Table 6.1: Data-Driven Strategic Plan Strategies			
SP Core Commitment or Priority	**Division**	**Strategy**	**Data Source**
Academic Excellence, University Success	AA, FA	Implement advanced technology classrooms, (weConnect=5, enhanced video conferencing=79, Zoom=61), funded by a PASSHE integration budget	Information technology plan
Student Success, University Success	EM, ADV, FA	Renew merit- and need-based aid strategies to increase enrollment and retention leveraging institutional and foundation funds	RNL studies, CPP, institutional data
Academic Excellence, University Success	ALL	Roll out three fundraising campaigns, one for each campus, to raise a combined $130M linked to strategic plan priorities for all divisions. BL's campaign launched fall 2024 with notable gifts of $5M for an honors college and $5M for nursing education benefiting students at all campuses	Case statements, feasibility study, matching donor interest with priorities
Welcoming and Inclusive Community, University Success, Student Success, DEIB	ALL	Allocate over $300,000 of PASSHE funding for student aid and mini-grants to fund proposals that support DEIB recruitment and retention initiatives, including programs like the high school diversity conference, preparing Philadelphia students for college success, a career competency series, and Wes Woodson's "I have anxiety (so what?)" keynote speeches	Climate survey, institutional data

CONSULTATIVE PLANNING AND IMPROVEMENT PROCESSES (CRITERION 2)

CU established planning and improvement processes and structures that are documented and communicated on IE's web pages for planning, assessment, and program review. Included on the website, the institutional effectiveness plan describes the integrated planning, resource allocation, assessment, and improvement processes that involve constituent participation. University forums, workshops, and emails also provide updates and guidance on processes and progress.

Key institutional planning processes use leadership and divisional retreats, forums, representative committees, task forces, and working groups to provide opportunities for input from CU's stakeholders. As noted in Standard I, Blue Beyond Consulting led the university in a two-phase, consultative process to develop CU's mission, vision, and values (phase 1) and strategic plan (phase 2). Following comprehensive engagement strategies (e.g., workshops, interviews, focus groups, surveys, and visits as detailed in Standard I), deliberation by a representative SPC, and myriad opportunities to vet draft documents with key stakeholders, the COT endorsed the strategic statements in 2022 and the strategic plan in 2023. The SPC charge transitioned from plan development to oversight, ensuring a representative body oversees implementation and keeps the plan relevant during the five-year period.

During the past two years, legacy and current shared governance and committee structures afforded key stakeholders a role in planning and improvement processes. The university-wide senate, its (sub)committees, and local assemblies, involved key stakeholders by sharing information and soliciting insights. Prior to COT endorsement, the strategic plan was presented at each local assembly and then senate per its bylaws. The senate and its committees are instrumental in policy development and revision as described in Standards II and VII.

The divisional and unit planning processes for setting goals, measures, targets, and initiatives at each level include participation as well. Vice presidents engage with their leadership teams in retreats and meetings, and departmental/unit leaders conduct unit planning. Input from these planning processes identifies gaps and adjustments for the strategic plan, resource plans, and unit plans, thereby providing both a top-down and bottom-up planning approach to arrive at final plans that drive improvement and resource allocation.

While assessment data is reviewed during the year and emergent strategies occur, leadership and team members engage in discussions that inform year-end assessment reporting for both academic programs and administrative units. Research by the assessment and accreditation FIT subgroup led to modifying and adopting BL's systematic program assessment review (PAR) process for academic program annual assessment reporting. Administrative, educational support, and student support programs follow the systematic process adapted from LH's unit reporting in Nuventive. User guides, web resources, training, and dedicated IE staff support CU's assessment coordinators and points of contact (PoCs). Year-end assessment results are entered into Nuventive, and CU's platform requires action plans informed by those results. The IE staff uses a rubric to evaluate submissions and offer feedback toward improving planning and assessment processes. The feedback includes comments on how well action plans incorporate assessment results toward continuous improvement. Rubric ratings and qualitative feedback are shared with assessment coordinators, PoCs, deans, vice presidents, and in aggregate, with assessment committees.

Co-led by the faculty liaison and AVP of IE, the CUAC includes representatives from academic (including general education), administrative, educational support, and student support areas to oversee, review, and reinforce assessment processes. Described in detail in Standard V, the assessment structure and roles support the university-wide council with three separate committees, college assessment coordinators, department/program coordinators, administrative PoCs, a faculty liaison, and IE staff. These bodies oversee assessment and continuous improvement. The CUAC forwards recommendations to the SPC. A feedback form and dedicated strategic planning email address exist for the CU community to share insights about strategic concerns or emerging issues. The SPC reviews KPI and selected metrics results, recommendations from the CUAC, and any feedback received from the CU community. The SPC documents this work in its annual report with recommendations to president's cabinet for plan adjustment, if needed.

FINANCIAL PLANNING AND BUDGETING PROCESS (CRITERION 3)

Overview of the Budgeting Process

Under the direction of the fiscal affairs vice president, the AVP of finance and budget leads the budget office in developing the CPP financial planning data, oversees budget loading, and tracks spending trends during the year. CU's budget and finances in general are reviewed and discussed with the senate finance committee from which feedback is provided to the fiscal affairs team. Committee members share information with the constituencies they represent. The

budgeting process occurs within PASSHE's planning and budgeting guidelines and directives, culminating in the CPP. The CPP was implemented in September 2020 as a key component of the system redesign. The CPP is an integrated, multi-year approach that consolidates and automates data reporting by streamlining and replacing multiple existing reports into a single Excel workbook and narrative document. The CPP comprises multiple data sets including a budget report, sustainability plan, board-affirmed metrics, academic program planning, goals, targets, and strategies. The CPP functions as an "early alert" system to identify potential areas of concern or systemic weaknesses that impact institutional financial sustainability. The CPP allows for intervention from the chancellor's office and engages peer support from other institutions in developing remediation steps that are reflected in updated sustainability plans.

The CPP financial templates contain detailed revenue and expense projections for E&G, auxiliary, and restricted funds, along with supporting enrollment and workforce projections, key assumptions, and the board-affirmed student success and university success metrics as critical performance measures. Per the BOG Policy 1993-03-A: Budget Reporting and Review, the BOG reviews the CPP and approves the budget within it, as does the COT. The operating projections included in the CPP are based on the university's annual budgeting process, which begins in January. The president announces the total operating budget to be allocated to the divisions. Budget templates are distributed to divisional vice presidents and fiscal PoCs for completion. The budget office meets with PoCs during the budget process to develop funding requests based on the strategic plan, operational needs, and outcomes. The budget templates are submitted by April 1 followed by budget meetings with the president, PoCs, and the budget office through mid-April to determine the operational funding needed to align with operational needs and strategic initiatives before finalizing the budget. The president confirms the divisional operating budgets, and allocations roll up into the mid-May CPP. Operating budgets are loaded into SAP by June 30 for personnel and operational spending on July 1.

Figure 6.2 shows CU's main funding sources, tuition/fee revenue (52.5%) and annual state appropriations (38.0%) from the Commonwealth of PA as allocated by PASSHE. Revenue projections in the CPP are determined each spring as next year's enrollment outlook becomes clearer. An established and regularly evaluated projection tool is used to forecast future enrollment levels using historical retention rates, projected CU graduating students, and targeted new first-time and transfer students, with appropriate adjustments as fall registration data becomes available. PASSHE's budget office provides multi-year estimates of appropriation funding levels and tuition rates set by the BOG.

Figure 6.2: E&G Revenues

Source: SAP BI - Commonwealth FY Trend
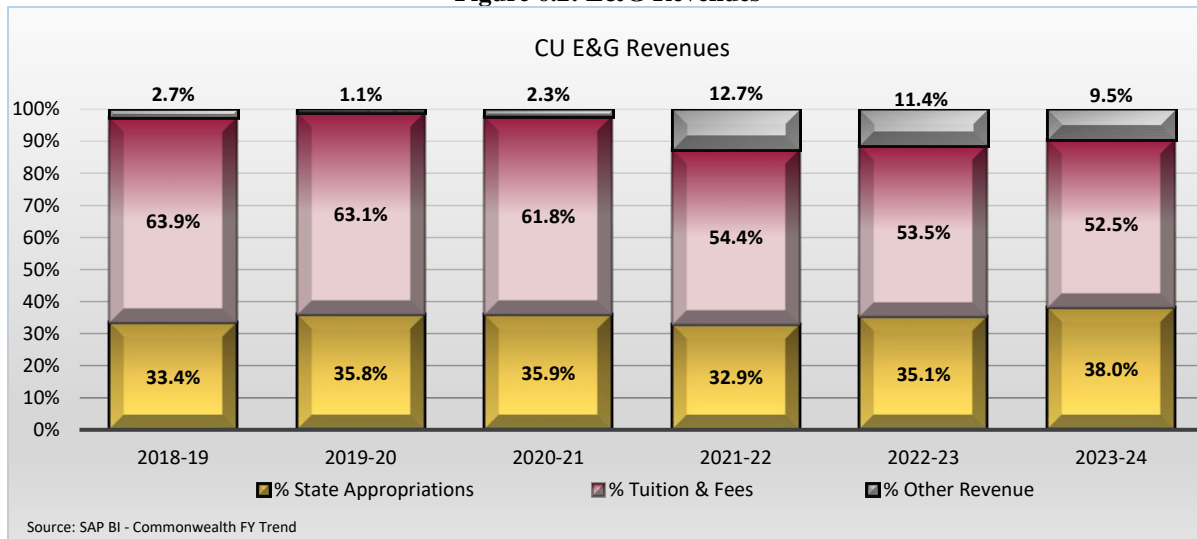
In-state tuition rates are set by the BOG at their July meeting; in addition to a firm rate for the next academic year, the BOG determines provisional rates for the following year to support multi-year planning. Student fees—E&G, room, and board—are set by the COT to be applied in the following year. The COT determines a provisional rate for the second year out and sets firm rates for the upcoming year. Reliable revenue projections can be made by combining the enrollment projections with established tuition and fee rates and a solid estimate of state appropriations. To address the "affordability gap" within the Commonwealth, the BOG has held tuition rates flat for seven consecutive years. The legislature supported this policy decision by increasing state appropriations by one-third over the past four years.

On the expense side of the budget, the following well-established processes are in place for all elements of cost:

- Personnel costs (accounting for about 60% of the unrestricted budget) are projected using the personnel budgeting module (PBM) of the SAP system, containing salary and benefit detail information for all existing personnel; compensation provisions of CBAs, covering about 88% of employees; and current and projected costs of each component of fringe benefits and payroll taxes. PBM also projects the cost of vacant positions and pool lines for items such as seasonal hires, temporary faculty lines, summer session contracts, and overload/overtime. Efforts to align the complement with current and projected student counts resulted in a reduction of personnel. With a focus on reducing operating expenses, CU reduced staffing levels with a 7.74% reduction during the past two years.
- Institutional student aid is estimated based on projected yield and retention rates for students who have been offered merit- or need-based aid.
- In consultation with executive staff, the president determines operating and student employment budgets based on the year's preliminary enrollment and financial outlook. Top-down totals are distributed in each division using an incremental budgeting approach, adjusting unit allocations based on priorities and data-driven actions that support the mission and strategic plan.
- Facilities and technology expenditures are estimated using the processes discussed under Criterion 6.
- Utility costs are based on historical consumption levels and incorporate rates built into multi-year contracts for electricity and natural gas.
- Charges for centrally managed services are set forth in consolidated university operations budgets prepared by the chancellor's office, reviewed by the council of university F&A VPs, and approved by the executive leadership group composed of the university presidents.
- Encumbrances required for legal and other settlements, facilities projects, technology, marketing, and other purchases are accounted for in the budget planning process. The recent legal decision based on a 2018 case resulted in a $5.3M encumbrance, reducing access to CU's reserves.

Linkage Between Planning and Resource Allocation

The budget reflects the planning and resource allocation decisions that are made as part of the planning process described under Criterion 1. Examples include the following:

- Changes to personnel lines (e.g., new lines, changes to temporary lines, alternate workload, and overload assignments) that are identified during the annual report review process are included in the PBM functional reporting tool. Progress toward annual personnel staffing goals is tracked through quarterly status reporting.
- Aligned with institutional goals, specific initiatives undertaken to support departmental goals are funded in various fund centers (e.g., technology fee, academic equipment, non-discretionary accounts, department operating budgets) and included in the CPP submission.
- Institutional student aid is included in the CPP based on decisions about merit- and need-based programs.

Several sub-processes focus on key areas that are mission critical (e.g., academic program and student support services planning) and encompass the resource allocation components (e.g., personnel, facilities, and technology). Linkage to strategic plan and unit objectives is embedded into the university, divisional, and unit planning processes described under Criterion 1 and is a prerequisite to resource allocation. The results of institutional planning are compiled in dashboards, Nuventive divisional and unit reports, and the CPP, which provides financial projections covering these plans for the current and upcoming fiscal years.

Capital Budgeting

Capital spending plan appropriations and annual Key '93 allocations (established by Act 50 of 1993, Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund Act for deferred maintenance) from the Commonwealth of PA represent a significant source of funding for E&G facilities upgrade and repair projects. Following BOG Policy 2000-02-A: Capital Facilities Planning, Programming and Funding, PASSHE universities submit a capital spending plan to vie for a portion of the roughly $70M in annual capital funding. Funding allocations are based on such factors as the university's project priorities, academic benefit, space alignment with enrollment and sustainability, cost savings, and the deferred maintenance backlog. A capital project justification for each proposed project outlines the need and links that need to the strategic plan. The new space and facilities subcommittee is briefed on the capital project list in the fall semester and then presents the list at the December or March COT meeting for approval. The plan is subsequently submitted to the chancellor's office and used to prepare the five-year system-wide capital plan. Recommendations from the past campus facilities master plans and the current integrated facilities master plan are being combined with the space needs alignment analysis to better meet CU's operational and programmatic needs based on projected student

enrollment numbers. This realignment process ensures adjusted/re-directed projects enhance the operation and programmatic academic needs of CU. Some current capital project work impacted by this realignment process and associated with strategic plan priorities includes the following:

- BL's McCormick building renovation ($20M), under construction with completion in summer 2025 to increase nursing student capacity *(Academic Excellence and Innovation)*
- LH's Robinson Learning Center and Stevenson Library renovations ($17M and $22M respectively), redirecting design development to upgrade current space while demolishing inadequate older space/buildings *(Academic Excellence and Innovation, Student Success, University Success)*
- MA utilities infrastructure upgrade ($24M), upgrading failed portions, eliminating portions to targeted demolition buildings, and expanding IT network distribution/capacity *(University Success)*

Key '93 funds, derived from a portion of PA real estate transfer taxes/fees, have provided approximately $12M during the current and past two fiscal years. While annual amounts vary with the real estate market, the annual amount has typically ranged from $2-4M. The FY2024-25 Key'93 allotment is $3.41M. These funds are directly applied to deferred needs. The annual projects work plan prioritizes impending need, impact to operations, work site access, proposed work schedule timing, and available funding.

ADEQUATE RESOURCES (CRITERION 4)

As stated in BOG Policy 2019-01-A: University Financial Sustainability, PASSHE "has established annual reporting mechanisms that allow all stakeholders to have greater awareness of each university's academic, financial, and operational conditions." These tools (e.g., financial risk assessment, financial statements and CPP) provide data for each university at the local and system levels. This policy is intended to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of each university, which is critical for the long-term financial well-being of PASSHE. The associated PASSHE Procedure/Standard 2019-40-A: University Financial Sustainability identifies four financial indicators that are measured annually, including performance expectations based on NACUBO standards by which to address deficient performance. These indicators—annualized FTE enrollment, operating margin, primary reserve ratio, and minimum reserves—focus on adequacy of resources and management thereof. CU's 2023-24 metrics were mixed, with cash balances just under target levels, exhibiting evidence of CU's ample reserve levels. However, continued declining enrollment trends that resulted in negative operating margins indicated signs of financial stress. Nevertheless, fall 2023 first-year student enrollment increased over fall 2022, showing growth potential, and annualized enrollment has begun to stabilize, moving from a 7.1% decline from 2021-22 to 2022-23 to 3.6% from 2022-23 to 2023-24. A final enrollment decrease of .7% is projected from 2023-24 to 2024-25 before stabilization in 2025-26.

CU's 2023-24 overall enrollment and revenue did not meet projections, with tuition falling short by about $9M. The expected revenue from early college students was overstated in the projection model, which was subsequently adjusted to appropriately count early college FTE moving forward. The institutional spend for merit awards resulted in increased enrollment but cannot be sustained long term. Adjustments to institutional aid strategies were made to create a financially sustainable model and achieve future enrollment goals. Negotiated and mandated salary increases elevated annual personnel costs by $9.1M. Table 6.2 shows that unrestricted net assets were substantial in relation to annual expenditures and debt levels in 2022-23 and remain sufficient at $65.2M after covering the 2023-24 shortfall.

Table 6.2: Commonwealth University Unrestricted Financial Projections									
Projections as of September 20, 2024 *(Dollars in Millions)*									
Unrestricted Budget Projections *as of September 20, 2024*	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	% Change from Prior Yr	FY 2024-25	% Change from Prior Yr	FY 2025-26	% Change from Prior Yr	FY 2026-27	% Change from Prior Yr
Total Unrestricted (E&G and Auxiliary) Budget									
Total Revenues	$297.0	$291.0	-2.0%	$326.4	12.2%	$290.4	-11.1%	$294.9	1.6%
Total Expenditures and Transfers to Plant/Other Funds	$304.2	$328.5	8.0%	$340.4	3.6%	$298.5	-12.3%	$296.2	-0.8%
Revenues Less Expenditures/ Transfers to Plant Funds	(7.3)	(37.6)		(14.0)		(8.1)		(1.3)	
Surplus/(Deficit)--Excludes Transfers to Plant/Other Funds	(4.5)	(32.9)		(13.6)		(7.7)		(0.9)	
Total Est Unrestricted Net Assets	$101.0	$65.2	-35.5%	$44.6	-31.6%	$30.5	-31.5%	$25.2	-17.5%
Total Est End of Year Cash Balance	$122.5	$82.9	-32.3%	$62.4	-24.7%	$48.4	-22.5%	$43.0	-11.0%

Source: CO-CPP Fall Update 2025

Stabilizing enrollment levels is essential to ensuring the university's long-term financial sustainability, and CU has implemented actions and made progress to that end. Enrollment levels have been adversely affected by well-documented declining demographic trends leading to fewer traditional-age students, challenges associated with integrating three universities, and increasingly intense competition among all higher education sectors. For example, competition for out-of-state students in 2023-24 increased with New York's Excelsior Scholarship program, which attracted more students to SUNY schools and away from Bloomsburg and especially Mansfield. As described in Standards II and IV, Ruffalo, Noel, Levitz (RNL) assisted CU in implementing a more sophisticated approach to leveraging aid for the fall 2023 cohort. While the strategy appeared successful by increasing the yield of new first-year students, CU's current financial position necessitated an evaluation of all operations, including institutional aid. Following RNL's July 2024 analysis, CU chose to take a more granular, strategic approach to leverage funds by conducting an individualized analysis of each student's potential to enroll and need. This new approach maximized impact and reduced need while ensuring long-term financial sustainability with a lower financial aid spend.

In addition to refining institutional aid strategies, multiple measures addressed enrollment concerns such as refreshing the academic program inventory to meet occupational demand and attract students, implementing recruitment and marketing plans informed by RNL research, and enhancing retention initiatives. Retention strategies include early intervention, student success centers, technology improvements, and DEIB initiatives. CU developed credentialing pathways in high-demand occupations and expanded student support services to increase persistence and reduce the time to degree, which should reduce the total cost to the student and improve enrollment, retention, and graduation rates. As discussed in Standard IV, results from these initiatives are encouraging, with an increase in new students and improvements in CU's overall retention-to-second-year rates with fall 2020 and 2021 cohorts at 73.3%, increasing to 74.8% for the fall 2022 cohort, and rising to 77.6% for the fall 2023 cohort with increases at all campuses.

Essential to the financial health of all public universities are consistent, reliable state appropriations. CU received approximately $84.6M (or 15%) of the system's $552.5M state appropriation, comprising almost 38% of the E&G revenue as discussed in Criterion 3. The FY2022-23 system's appropriation from the Commonwealth of PA included an unprecedented 15% increase, demonstrating a renewed partnership between PASSHE and the state. Increases in state funding have allowed PASSHE to hold tuition flat for seven consecutive years.

Effective July 1, 2022, the BOG approved revisions to BOG Policy 1984-06-A: Allocation Formula and related procedures. The updated formula distributes state appropriations to the universities based on two components: core operations and enrollment. The core operations portion provides funding to cover expenses associated with running a university with single and/or multiple campuses, regardless of student numbers, as well as differentiation by mission and integration status. The remaining 75% of the formula is enrollment driven, recognizing PASSHE's mission to support all students, undergraduate and graduate, in-state and out-of-state. The enrollment component also layers funding, in an additive manner, to support student success around several categories: URM students, Pell-eligible students, progress toward degree, and program level. This appropriation allocation formula is expected to be more stable than has been experienced in recent years. The implementation of the new formula, combined with the system's state funding increase, resulted in allocating CU $2.5M more in FY2022-23 state appropriations than originally budgeted and 4.5% more in 2023-24. Based on current assumptions, CU is projecting a 2.8% increase in 2024-25 and additional 2% increases in the out years.

In addition to receiving the largest single-year increase in state general fund appropriations, the state's FY2022-23 budget also provided $125M in one-time American Rescue Plan Act funding to PASSHE in support of system redesign. To date, $17.1M of these one-time resources have been awarded to CU for implementation of strategic priorities that align with the system's priorities. In 2024-25, CU will also receive $37.9M in facility transition funds from the governor and state legislature to assist with the retirement of housing debt. This generous assistance will result in an annual reduction of $2.8M in auxiliary debt service payments and will improve financial metrics, such as the annual operating margin.

Similarly, CU continues to seek funding sources to include matching state grants for capital projects (see the facilities planning section), pursuing other grants and sponsored activities, and partnering with campus foundations and other affiliated organizations. These actions help to meet multi-year fundraising goals with annual giving and launching separate comprehensive campaigns at the BL, LH, and MA campuses over the next three years, as discussed in the private giving section. These combined efforts are anticipated to increase revenue and eliminate the reliance on unrestricted net assets by FY2027-28. On the expense side, such major changes as organizational restructuring and consolidation, reducing personnel, reducing course sections with more strategic schedule development, rightsizing the

institutional footprint, strategically awarding institutional aid, and refining administrative and financial processes are discussed throughout this chapter and will help ensure adequate and efficient use of resources moving into the future.

Personnel

CU maintains a complement plan with faculty and staff positions approved under the current budget. The plan lists all labor costs (e.g., salary and benefits), permanency of position, position classification level, union affiliation, and assigned full-time equivalency (FTE). The plan provides the basis for calculating the student/faculty and student/non-faculty ratios, used as KPIs and calculated per PASSHE's definition, which differs from IPEDS. PASSHE benchmarks for student/faculty and student/non-faculty ratios indicate that the university maintains more than adequate faculty and staff. The metrics indicate that faculty staffing (17.6 students per faculty at CU versus 17.9 PASSHE average) and non-faculty levels (12.4 CU versus 15.1 PASSHE average) fell below system averages when measured on a per student FTE basis. Aligning the complement with enrollment trends and PASSHE benchmarks remains a primary CPP goal. The CPP narrative describes how CU plans to adjust resources and processes to stabilize CU and ensure financial sustainability. Strategies include reducing the complement through an internal "need" review process and streamlining processes and services as efficiencies are realized through integration. Since June 2022, CU reduced faculty and staff by 118 FTE and plans an additional reduction of 155 FTE through 2026-27, which includes removing up to 102 currently vacant positions from the complement, ultimately saving approximately $20M in annual personnel expenditures. Additional measures to reduce FTE include completing legacy program teach-out (reducing faculty FTE), adjusting course scheduling to reduce under-enrolled sections, reducing space and support staff needed to maintain it, restructuring, and filling only essential vacancies. When a need to hire is identified by the divisional vice president, each vacancy is evaluated by the president and associated divisional vice president for need and/or re-purposing to meet critical staffing needs and financial sustainability goals. Over the last year, comprehensive reviews of CU's organizational structure and personnel lines led to strategic changes that support institutional priorities, reduce costs, and gain synergies by combining divisions, colleges, and departments. Announced by President Hanna in April 2024, data-informed changes led to the reduction of administrative divisions from seven to five (for an estimated annual savings of $590K), and academic colleges from five to three (for an estimated annual savings of $1.34M). Effective fall 2024, the academic departments consolidated from 28 to 19 departments with an expected reduction of seven FTE and an additional reduction of 10.8 FTE positions as we complete teach-out of legacy curricula.

Private Giving

Private support serves as a catalyst for improvement and innovation for CU's engagement, programmatic, infrastructure, recruitment, and retention initiatives. CU has planned a comprehensive campaign with launch events at the BL campus in 2024, LH campus in 2026, and MA campus in 2027 for a combined CU campaign working goal of $130M. Campaign priorities benefit individual campuses and CU overall. In addition to generating significant strategic resources, the campaign messaging and shared theme will educate alumni and friends from all campuses on the value of CU and increased benefits to our students.

The first year of integration (2022-23) positioned CU well for the planned campaigns. All three campuses met or exceeded their fundraising goals, and notably, LH doubled their giving total from FY2021-22 with nearly $3M raised in 2022-23. In year two (2023-24), CU and its affiliates received over $30M in collective donor commitments, compared to $10M in FY2022-23, a 100% plus increase. BL exceeded $26M in commitments, a record-breaking year as documented in the philanthropy annual reports. LH significantly increased commitments for the second straight year and launched a campaign to support wrestling, while MA stood up a new campus-affiliated foundation to increase alumni giving. Notably, CU received two $5M gifts to name the CU school of nursing and the CU honors college. The resources from both gifts benefit all CU campuses and students.

Facilities management assists with managing the redevelopment assistance capital program (RACP) grant, which requires the advancement division's involvement in acquiring an institutional match. This funding stream can be used for the design, acquisition, and construction of a regional economic, cultural, civic, recreational, and historic improvement project and generate substantial increases or maintain current levels of employment, tax revenues, or other measures of economic activity. Currently, RACP grant requests totaling $4M have been submitted for the redevelopment of MA's North Hall and LH's Thomas Field House. These projects have multiple phases. Phase 1 of North Hall and Thomas Field House totals over $9.2M in renovation and construction.

Advancement seeks to operate with a cost effective, streamlined approach to administrative services. Most back-office services are provided by one foundation. This structure across the campuses reduces cost, increases efficiency, and

elevates productivity. Implementing this new structure fulfills a long-range plan for the campus foundations to use the same systems, processes, procedures, and vendors.

Physical Assets

The integrated facilities master plan serves as a strategic roadmap for the physical development and rightsizing of the campuses and locations over time. The plan combines strategic planning, architecture, and operations, aiming to align the facilities infrastructure with CU's overarching long-term goals. The master plan includes a space needs analysis which uses the established PASSHE space to student enrollment standards/criteria for the campus space types as defined in the NCES – Postsecondary Education Facilities Inventory and Classification Manual (FICM): 2006 Edition. This analysis established that in the five major educational space types, classroom (110), teaching laboratory (210), research laboratory (250), offices (310), and study facilities (410), all campuses had excess capacity in most, if not all categories as would be expected with reduced student enrollment. CU used each campus's past master plan reports (i.e., BL in 2014, LH in 2015, MA in 2016) as background information in the integrated facilities master plan as well as several data reports, including a unique Excel file tool structured to allow for space manipulation (reduction/adjustment) to examine various scenarios' impact on each building individually and the overall space type inventory. An iterative process is being conducted to identify the best building(s) combination to meet the necessary academic/programmatic space needs, maintaining adjacency for educational critical mass, and still reduce overall space and the associated support costs. Once the final recommendation is processed through the governance steps, it is anticipated to be a five-to-ten-year process with demolition funding provided by PASSHE during this period, as space reduction is a PASSHE priority.

Technological Infrastructure

CU has extensive reliable and redundant technology resources and infrastructure for both external and internal connectivity. The BL and LH campus fiber optic infrastructure connects all campus buildings with fully redundant datacenters at each campus. Each building on those two campuses is connected by fiber to its respective campus datacenter, with physical path redundancy built in. The MA campus utilizes a mix of fiber and copper for network connectivity. Fiber optic connectivity for the entire MA campus is currently in the planning stages. All three campuses are linked together by multiple protected ten-gigabit DWDM links across diverse carriers.

The four datacenters on the BL and LH campuses are classified as Tier III based on standards published by The Uptime Institute. Most on-premises university datacenters, outside of institutions classified as R1: Doctoral Universities, are typically either Tier I or Tier II; BL and LH datacenters significantly exceed these standards. The MA datacenter is classified as Tier 1, with major HVAC and emergency power backup upgrades completed in fall 2024. The datacenters at BL and LH can each handle the storage, computing, and networking load for both campuses should one datacenter become inoperative. Both of those datacenters are equipped with diverse external carrier links, full battery and generator power backups, redundant HVAC, fire suppression, and robust physical security.

CU also employs the "private cloud" model for on-campus resources, running most applications fully virtualized in redundant VMware clusters. Some applications are being moved to the software-as-a-service (SaaS) model, and those workloads run in the public cloud provisioned by their respective solution provider. Some employee desktops are also virtualized and can be accessed from anywhere in the world with proper credentials.

Over the preceding two-plus years, completing priority integration-related software and infrastructure initiatives such as those highlighted previously required an all-consuming focus and effort from the IT team. With those integration-related efforts completed, IT drafted a comprehensive IT strategic plan across functions, to be finalized with CU leadership during the remainder of FY2024-25. The IT strategic plan prioritizes projects and investments based on their alignment with CU's strategic priorities, current needs, and potential impact, ensuring that critical initiatives are addressed first. The plan outlines a clear roadmap for initiative sequencing and timing and, importantly, is aligned with annual and longer-range budget and IT resource capacity. IT funding is sourced from a combination of institutional funds, grants, external partnerships, and fees with a focus on sustainability and maximizing return on investment. Continuous evaluation and flexibility in funding allocations are emphasized to adapt to emerging needs and technologies.

Related Entities

As a related entity, PASSHE provides mandatory and optional shared services with both direct provision of services and centralized contracts from which universities can procure directly. The third-party provider inventory and budget

book list all shared services, including areas related to this criterion, which are governed by the PASSHE Procedures Standard Number 2020-48 Shared Services. The budget book provides a description, the budget approved by the presidents, and links to the service level agreements.

RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY (CRITERION 5)

As defined in Figure 6.1, CU's organizational structure includes the president's office and five divisions. Functional responsibility follows the organization chart, which shows positions and reporting relationships and documents responsibility and accountability. Moreover, the job descriptions developed for each position more specifically outline duties and responsibilities, and the management evaluation process establishes individual goals and expected outcomes based upon each position and responsibilities. The planning documents also assign responsibility for supporting institutional, divisional, and unit goals. The leadership team is vital to achieving mission and goals and effective operations. The president's cabinet, including the president, chief of staff, divisional vice presidents, and functional leads of core operations, meets weekly to deliberate and make decisions on key management and operational issues.

As discussed under Standard VII, Act 188 clearly articulates the decision-making authority of the president, COT, chancellor, and BOG. The COT provides guidance to and evaluation of the president, general oversight of the university, and limited approval authority. The COT oversees strategic and fiscal planning and receives divisional reports at quarterly COT meetings on key priorities and initiatives. For example, the COT reviewed and endorsed the strategic plan in August 2023 and received a comprehensive update at the May 2024 meeting. The president is also accountable to and, per the BOG Policy 2002-03-A: Evaluating Presidents, evaluated by the system's BOG and the chancellor as the system's chief executive officer.

FACILITIES PLANNING (CRITERION 6)

Physical Assets and Infrastructure

Construction projects that are needed to sustain and improve overall physical assets fall into four general categories: large scope-capital (>$5M), medium scope-renewal (>$3M and <$5M), small scope-repair (<$3M), and operational scope-maintenance (in-house staff work). Funding for these categories is derived from multiple sources, including institutional funds, Key '93 state funds for deferred maintenance as allocated by PASSHE, the Commonwealth of PA capital funding as authorized by PASSHE and administered by the Department of General Services (DGS), state and federal grants, private grants, and donor funding. Approximately $70M in the state-funded capital project work is planned annually through the system's capital planning process in accordance with BOG Policy 2000-02-A: Capital Facilities Planning, Programming and Funding and system Procedure/Standard 2011-01-A, Capital Planning and Programming. Allocation of these capital funds is approved annually by the BOG through the system's five-year capital spending plan. For the period of FY2022-23 through FY2025-26, $73.3M has been allocated for major facility and infrastructure projects across CU.

The identification of short- and long-term physical assets improvement and construction needs is a multi-level and dynamic process originating from the CU community through (1) staff-initiated work requests for repairs; (2) repair/replacement installation of equipment and/or systems identified as end of life cycle through a preventative maintenance program; (3) a project request form for non-maintenance or large initiatives driven by programmatic changes in academic, student support, or other units' functional needs, and (4) capital construction initiatives identified by campus master plans or facility assessments. New construction, technology equipment upgrades, or building renovation projects, beyond nondiscretionary repair and replacement work, are reflected within the annual construction projects program, as summarized in the annual projects' schedules. These schedules are reviewed by executive staff for alignment with strategic priorities and discussed with the finance committee and its space and facilities subcommittee within campus governance. Emergent or immediate needs are addressed on an ad-hoc basis; a $3.5M university-wide contingency fund is maintained for unforeseen significant emergency repair responses. Specifically, in support of integration costs, PASSHE provided a $9.2M reimbursement budget for integration-related expenses (to be expended FY2020-21 through FY2025-26), within which $3.5M applies to necessary software improvements/additions and $3M to advanced technology classroom development. Integration-related expenditures are neutral, providing no impact to the CPP as the expense and revenue for payment is an exact match.

Technology

IT ensures that students, faculty, and staff have appropriate technology and access to that technology, 24 hours per day. IT is organized into and provides services through five departments: technology support services, infrastructure and data centers, enterprise applications, cybersecurity, and operations. Technology needs, mission-critical systems, and support services necessary to ensure the effective delivery of academic programs and administrative services are funded through institutional funds, grants, external partnerships, and student technology fees. Each legacy campus followed a structured process for routine technology refresh/replacement ("life-cycle" replacements), although the processes differed between campuses. Technology refresh processes comprehensively address all components of CU's computing and network infrastructure assets and equipment including servers, local and wide area network hardware devices, fiber optic cabling, wireless access points, lab and classroom computers, personal computing devices for faculty and staff, multifunction printers, scanners, and classroom AV/presentation systems. As a strategic priority, standardizing the technology life-cycle replacement process and criteria across campuses is underway, prioritizing core technology infrastructure. For example, the datacenter and its network infrastructure at MA was completely replaced during 2024.

CU's delivery of academic programs leverages advanced technology in classrooms: five weConnect rooms, 79 enhanced video conferencing rooms, and 61 standard Zoom rooms are in operation across the campuses (see Table 3.5). Those technology capabilities were established through a PASSHE-provided integration budget. The technology is deeply collaborative, real-time, and delivers an advanced tool for learning by interconnecting students in class virtually, regardless of campus or physical location, representing a physical manifestation of the "power of three" advantage of the CU campuses. With respect to the weConnect rooms specifically, they enable the delivery of education through small groups to large groups with state-of-the-art video, conferencing, sound, and analytics available only in this format.

CU uses the Slate CRM system, which enables enrollment management to seamlessly manage admissions and allows admissions staff to work collaboratively across CU. Used within the graduate school, athletics, and marketing and communications, Slate tracks enrollment, camps, events, and conferences while delivering advanced analytics.

As a member of the first transition cohort, CU successfully migrated to a new system-wide student information system (SIS), Banner OneSIS, which was fully implemented in May 2024. This effort required replacing three disparate systems with a single, integrated, uniform, and cloud-based SIS, a task unique to CU since no other PASSHE school had to replace three disparate systems with Ellucian's Banner solution. While the challenges were significant and CU engaged outside resources to help facilitate the implementation across CU's campuses, Banner OneSIS provides a robust operating platform that enhances instructional delivery and student services.

A multi-year planning process guides technology resource allocation and anticipates the end of life for current platforms, assesses vendor product support, and identifies opportunities for new capabilities. This process also considers the adoption of evolving delivery platforms, such as web-based and mobile solutions. As shown in Table 6.3, the IT strategic plan focuses on four priorities.

Table 6.3: IT Strategic Plan Priorities	
Priority Area	**Description**
Management Discipline	Enhance key IT management discipline and practices with a focus on planning, prioritization, and budgeting
Technology Infrastructure	Standardize and modernize technology infrastructure and solutions across locations to effectively deliver services to stakeholders while balancing risk and affordability
Organization	Rightsize the organizational design and complement to effectively deliver services and positive experiences to university stakeholders while balancing risk and affordability
Software Solutions	In partnership with other university functions, deliver standard solutions that enhance the student experience, enable university-wide operations and capabilities, and optimize software solution landscape and spend

INDEPENDENT AUDIT (CRITERION 7)

Each year, PASSHE commissions an independent financial statement audit of each university and the system. No concerns have been noted in the financial statements.

ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION, INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL AND AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES (CRITERIA 8 AND 9)

The institutional effectiveness plan outlines CU's key oversight structures and assessment processes at all levels, including those specific to Standard VI. Periodic assessments occur at the system, institutional, and divisional/unit levels; many take place annually, but some are scheduled at other intervals.

System-level Assessment Processes

CU assessment processes occur within the context of PASSHE's assessment processes, which include the CPP, board-affirmed metrics, the annual external financial audit, and academic program array assessment. PASSHE has a long-standing practice of monitoring university financial health and risk and reviewing the annual results with university and system leadership, including governance bodies. In 2019, this practice was enhanced and codified with the approval of BOG Policy 2019-01-A: University Financial Sustainability and the associated system Procedure/Standard 2019-40-A: University Financial Sustainability that outlines expectations for and levels of financial health. Expected performance ranges are specified on four indicators of financial sustainability including change in enrollment, operating margin, primary reserve, and minimum reserves. The results of the annual sustainability indicators and the multi-year CPP documents—which include financial, enrollment, workforce, academic program array, and key performance indicator actual data and projections—undergo an extensive bi-annual peer review process with senior leadership from all system universities and the chancellor's office. This process provides for a two-week review period of university CPPs by chief academic officers (CAOs) and chief financial officers (CFOs) before the scheduled in-person meeting. At the scheduled meeting, individual university CPP academic/financial status presentations are made, and current or proposed actions are provided by peer CAOs/CFOs as improvement recommendations. Following the discussion and questions period, a closed ballot/poll is conducted, with peer CAOs/CFOs voting "no concern," "moderate concern," or "serious concern" regarding the university's CPP under consideration, with the impacted university CAO and CFO abstaining. Vote completion places a university into one of four categories: stable, financial sustainability plan 1, financial sustainability plan 2, or financial sustainability plan 3, in descending order of financial stability. The higher the plan number the greater interaction and financial monitoring/reporting by and to PASSHE regarding the university's fiscal status.

Annual Reports and Unit Assessments

Each summer, CU's five divisions and more than 60 units conduct operational planning, aligning their goals, initiatives, measures, and targets to the strategic plan. Plans are entered into Nuventive by September 15, and results are provided by June/July for administration, educational support, and student support areas. Any data points not available by the due date are added once available (e.g., year-end audited financials). As part of the year-end assessment process, units articulate how outcomes inform change in action plans as well as what adjustments were made to next-year's goals, measures, and targets, citing planned improvements for both assessment processes and unit performance. Examples of unit assessments are included below; the evidence inventory houses the annual reports.

Information Technology

IT undertakes annual planning and assessment processes that identify initiatives and report end-of-year outcomes. Assessments include measurements of system availability of the SIS and other critical applications, networks, and CU phone systems; completion of help desk tickets; completion of IT infrastructure and data center work orders; customer satisfaction levels; and budget and schedule performance on technology upgrade and replacement projects. PASSHE commissions an IT audit that covers organization and security, access controls, change management controls, and backup and recovery and includes recommendations for improvement. A recent assessment of cybersecurity risks led to the decision to implement multiple multi-factor authentication tools and create a cybersecurity function within the IT operation. This resulted in improved protection of networks, early detection and resolution of users' compromising operations, and the distribution of instructional tools for all users.

Facilities

Through a PASSHE contract with Gordian, an annual performance and service production evaluation is conducted for facilities operations that evaluates maintenance and capital funding actions of the past year, work order and preventive maintenance completion counts and rates, utilities/energy consumption data and rates, staffing levels for the custodial workforce, building/mechanical maintenance, grounds activities, and a customer feedback survey. The completed report contrasts the collected performance data with that collected for the other PASSHE universities, and for other state university systems that Gordian has determined as peer institutions. This report creates a broad-brush overview

of operational effectiveness supported by focused performance statistics for each functional component. This data provides feedback indicating which current operations and services are performing satisfactorily, and which areas require improvement and more focused attention. For example, the reports noted challenges with energy costs at BL and MA, HVAC needs at MA, and aging/excess space across CU. Facilities proposals to reduce space and intensity and utilize space differently aim to address these areas. The multi-year span of the reports also creates a reliable trending history useful in evaluating the effectiveness of past improvement actions.

Human Resources (HR)

The HR office administers a customer service survey to evaluate user experience with the HR ticketing system. Users rate the ease of submission, speed of resolution, and satisfaction on a scale of 1=poor, 6=excellent. The team conducts monthly reviews of results and meets quarterly to develop actions, and results are aggregated into quarterly reports that gauge progress against service level agreement (SLA) targets. Reports show improved results from 2023 to 2024 in ease of submission (79% to 81% rated a 5 or 6), speed of resolution (79% to 88%), and satisfaction (84% to 87%), with higher ratings in the final report (1st quarter 2024). After reviewing the earlier quarterly reports, HR increased information and services available through HRconnect's self-service feature, increasing overall utilization, improving customer service, answering questions in real time, and saving time and costs by allowing agents and HR specialists to focus their time on more complex cases. HR also tracks time to close a case, and over the last four quarters, this approach has decreased the average business time elapsed from 2.18 days in 2023 to 1.93 days in 2024, exceeding expectations with an average lower than the three-day SLA target. Results are documented in the HR annual report.

Following the annual report submission, the IE staff uses a rubric to evaluate each section of the annual report, providing a summary evaluation of each unit's planning and assessment processes to the appropriate vice president and unit points of contact. A high-level summary report of submissions and aggregate rubric scores are also provided to the administrative, educational, and student support assessment committee and vice presidents for review. Following the first two summary reports and fall 2023 committee meeting, the committee recorded their suggestions in a brief survey, which informed the changes to the administrative assessment process for 2023-24. The changes included updating the user guide and web page, conducting additional training using an exemplar unit in Nuventive, and revising the scoring rubric to place more emphasis on plan quality and target attainment. At year end, the administrative, educational, and student support assessment committee 2023-24 annual report documented the committee's outcomes and next-year recommendations.

Committees and Oversight Bodies

Relevant oversight structures include the CU assessment council (CUAC) and its three committees, senate and its committees, the strategic planning committee (SPC), president's cabinet, and Council of Trustees (COT). The committees are supported by IE. Collectively, these bodies assess the effectiveness of planning, implementation, assessment, resource allocation, and/or financial health and sustainability.

As discussed under Criterion 2, the CUAC meets annually to review and consider assessment processes related to institutional effectiveness. The committees, charged similarly with a narrower focus, include an academic program assessment committee; administrative, educational, and student support assessment committee; and with a dotted reporting line, the GE council (GEC) that oversees GE curriculum and assessment. Council/committee members serve as conduits to divisions and unit members to share information, advance assessment concerns, and forward recommendations to the committees in annual reports. The CUAC's year-end reports are submitted to the SPC (e.g., at the May 13, 2024, meeting for 2023-24) that may impact institutional assessment and effectiveness.

Upon strategic plan endorsement, the SPC was transitioned into an oversight committee charged with ensuring the plan is implemented and evaluated through planning, monitoring, and assessment across all divisions and units. Reports from IE on strategic plan progress and from the CUAC on divisional and unit assessment are used to inform change and submitted to the president's cabinet. For example, the strategic planning committee 2023-24 annual report was presented in June 2024 to president's cabinet, which endorsed recommendations to continue the ongoing build out of the KPI and selected metrics dashboard and implement the newly defined KPIs and selected measures for mental health, student success, strategic communications, and community engagement.

Assessment and continuous improvement occur through 11 senate (sub)committees, which provide recommendations on policy revision and improvements. For example, working with the IT subcommittee, IT receives feedback and recommendations on policies that can enhance technology use across the university. Faculty, staff, and student surveys are completed each semester regarding satisfaction and performance. This data has led to an increase in training

opportunities for the newly implemented SIS, the use of weConnect technology, and a systemic technology vision for CU. The finance committee serves in an advisory capacity to the fiscal affairs VP and receives requests and reports on matters relating to the budget and budgeting procedures. Examples are forthcoming as the committee is new.

Resource Allocation

A multi-year strategic plan is the blueprint for generating revenue growth and effectively and efficiently aligning available fiscal, human, and physical resources to achieve key strategic priorities and outcomes. The strategic plan and institutional goals inform planning at all levels in the organization; they guide the development of the institutional, divisional, and unit plans and budgets. Linkage to the strategic planning process and goals at all levels are essential to the resource allocation process. CU's ongoing budget process utilizes a fully integrated strategic methodology, working within the university planning and assessment process and with the president's cabinet, to ensure resources are appropriately aligned with institutional

Figure 6.3: Allocation of E&G Funds, 2024-25

Source: CU 2024-25 Budget Summary

priorities and strategic initiatives at all levels. The budget preparation templates include identification of budget dollars with specific institutional strategic goals. Figure 6.3 shows in aggregate how divisional resources were aligned to the strategic plan in 2024-25. The greatest amount (54%) of funds is allocated to *University Success*, which represents the most diverse priority, including student, faculty, and staff recruitment; student achievement initiatives; communications; financial sustainability efforts; and fundraising.

The KPI and selected metrics dashboard and board-affirmed metrics help assess areas to determine where additional resources may be needed. As described in Criterion 3, the annual budget request process and budget meetings with points of contact, the budget office staff, and the president serve to assess each year's budget allocation.

The budget, as reflected at a summary level in the CPP, is also reviewed and approved by the COT and the BOG. The BOG authorizes the annual allocation of state funding to the universities—both for operational and capital purposes—dependent upon the general fund appropriations and capital funding provided to the system by the Commonwealth of PA. Equitable distribution to all system universities is based on the allocation formula (described earlier), the multi-year capital planning and prioritization process, and the limited availability of other one-time resources. In addition, the BOG determines tuition rates, sets the technology fee, and ratifies compensation as articulated in CBAs.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

CU maintains consultative processes for institutional, divisional, and unit planning; budgeting; resource allocation; and assessment that are aligned with the university's mission and goals and that can be replicated and refined year over year. Led by a seasoned executive team, CU's divisions are organized according to basic functional areas in higher education with communication channels that allow for collaboration across divisions. Budgeting processes align funds with strategic plan priorities and core commitments. Sufficient human resources, IT, and facilities meet, and in some cases exceed, requirements to accommodate current and planned future enrollment. Combining rightsizing with recruitment and retention initiatives will bring all resource areas into alignment with long-term enrollment projections. CU's processes for evaluating and monitoring resources, especially financial, allow CU to gauge circumstances and nimbly make interim adjustments during each budget cycle to address concerns. The KPI and selected metrics dashboard, year-end administrative reports, and other assessments document results against targets and inform next year's planning cycle. To improve results, CU should do the following:

- Continue to implement facilities and technology plans to rightsize the campuses and locations and equip them with technologies and infrastructure that facilitate efficient and effective operations
- Use PASSHE's CPP annual and multi-year planning and target setting processes to monitor financial conditions and strategize on revenue generation and cost containment measures leading to an improved net financial position

STANDARD VII: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND ADMINISTRATION

The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

[Standard VII addresses *Self-Study Institutional Priorities* for Academic Programs and Support; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Financial Sustainability; and Communication and *Requirements of Affiliation* 12, 13, and 15]

INTRODUCTION

Following studies by NCHEMS and the Rand Corporation in 2019, PASSHE verified the need for a transformational change to create long-term stability for PASSHE and its universities. At its July 2020 meeting, the Board of Governors (BOG) authorized the chancellor to pursue the financial impact of integrating six of the 14 universities into two consolidated institutions, and in July 2021, the BOG endorsed the integration plan for BL, LH, and MA universities. The integrated institution would have a single president and leadership team reporting to the BOG. The impacts on shared governance required legislative action to form a single council of trustees (COT) and occasioned the creation of a shared governance task force to formalize institutional and campus-based structures. While the new CU continued to function under Act 188, work on a shared governance system for CU continued until it was approved in March 2023.

CU's governance and management approach represents an innovative blend of a new shared governance system appropriate to the integrated CU and PASSHE's policies and procedures. CU operates within the bounds of the laws of the Commonwealth of PA. CU's new senate, along with the BL, LH, and MA local assemblies, complements the governance structure established by Act 188 and allows all voices to guide CU's growth. Exemplifying shared governance precepts, CU's structures ensure autonomy while representing all constituencies in decision making.

SHARED GOVERNANCE (CRITERION 1)

Act 188 and Governing Bodies

Act 188, the enabling legislation for PASSHE (a related entity), clearly articulates the powers and duties of key governance and leadership positions, excerpts from which are in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Key PASSHE Governance and Leadership Positions	
Position	**Description**
Board of Governors (BOG)	Reviews and approves general policies for the entire system, including operating and capital budgets; establishes academic programs; appoints and evaluates the chancellor and presidents; and represents PASSHE to the state legislature.
Chancellor	Administers PASSHE under the policies prescribed by the BOG and recommends policies for the BOG's approval; engages in coordination and system-wide planning.
Council of Trustees (COT)	Recommends appointment of the president; conducts evaluation of the president and forwards to the chancellor and BOG; reviews and approves the university's proposed operating and capital budgets; approves contracts entered by the president; adopts policy for use of local facilities; assists the president in relations between institutional and public interests.
President	Hires faculty, administrative, and other personnel and establishes policies and procedures for compensation, tenure, etc., subject to BOG policies and collective bargaining agreements (CBAs); establishes specific campus policies and programs within BOG guidelines; proposes the annual operating and capital budgets; allocates spending of available funds.

Act 188 establishes several avenues of constituency input on policy development, academic standards, and institutional programs. Consultation with such stakeholders as faculty, staff, students, and administrators is required and public hearings afforded before deciding on actions such as integration. BOG and COT meetings are open to the public and include a time for public comment, with the minutes likewise available to the public. The COT web page posts meeting schedules and minutes. This ensures that the governing bodies' actions are fully transparent.

Shared Governance

Described in the constitution and on the senate web page, the CU senate is a tripartite system as shown in Figure 7.1. The first part is the senate, a single body comprising faculty, staff, student, and management senators elected by academic departments and nonacademic divisions, including at-large campus representation. Senate provides a forum for constituencies to jointly guide and improve CU. Senate reviews policy and the strategic plan and votes to endorse policies or the plan as a recommendation to the president, who makes the final policy decisions and forwards the strategic plan for COT endorsement. Senate communicates concerns, adopts resolutions, and amends the constitution.

The second part consists of standing committees. The executive committee, which includes senate, CU, bargaining unit, and student leadership, sets the agenda for senate meetings and oversees the continuous improvement work of standing and ad-hoc senate committees per committee bylaws. The executive committee oversees its space and facilities subcommittee and elections subcommittee. Standing committees of faculty, managers, staff, and students collaborate to draft and review policy. These include the academic policy committee (including enrollment management and information technology subcommittees); advancement committee; finance committee; diversity, equity, and inclusion committee; and student affairs committee (including the first-year experience subcommittee).

The third part features BL, LH, and MA local assemblies, which include the campus administrator, local leadership, department chairs' designees, students, bargaining unit representatives, and representatives from student life, athletic coaching staff, the library, facilities, and alumni. Local assemblies, one per campus, meet to consider policy, amendments, local concerns, and unique bylaws. They meet at least once per semester, in October and March, to review policy that has had a first reading at senate. Second readings at senate occur after local assembly meetings to ensure that local concerns are addressed.

Figure 7.1: CU Shared Governance Structure
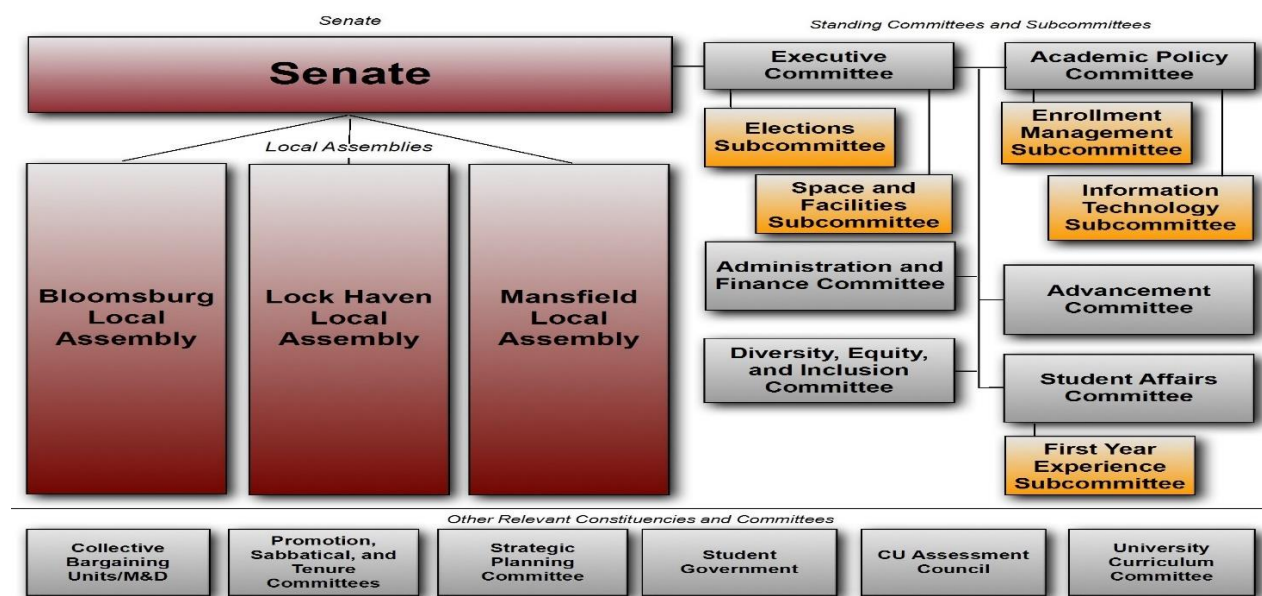
According to the constitution, the senate, its committees, and local assemblies hold key roles in the policy review and approval process, resulting in recommendations to the president. The policy process flowchart depicts how senate committees initiate draft policies that move to the senate (first reading), local assemblies, and back to the senate (second reading) for vetting. Senate acts on policies after the second reading, which results in the following outcomes: endorse, endorse with amendments, table, return with comments, or not endorse the policy. The president receives the senate's decision on policies (with or without amendments) within one week of the final senate meeting of the semester. The president can implement endorsed or not endorsed policies; however, the policy will note the senate's recommendation where the president's decision differs (e.g., endorsed by the senate without adopting amendments). The president and/or a vice president can implement interim policies due to emerging situations. At integration, CU adopted BL's policies as interim policies until those policies could undergo the review process. A policy review schedule prioritizes policy review and helps manage committee assignments and workload.

Important avenues of shared governance exist outside of the CU senate policy process. For mandatory bargaining subjects and matters addressed in CBAs, representatives of faculty, staff, and coaches unions meet regularly with administration in meet and discuss sessions. Faculty-led committees develop and assess the academic curriculum and oversee peer evaluation regarding tenure, promotion, and support for faculty research. Many of these faculty-led processes are pursuant to provisions of the APSCUF faculty CBA. CU's president commissions university-wide committees like the strategic planning committee (SPC) and MSCHE steering committee that include broad representation from key stakeholders. The same is true of task forces and ad-hoc committees convened for special initiatives.

Student Governance

CU recognizes three independent student government structures, one per legacy institution; these groups may coordinate and collaborate on projects and programs of common interest as described in Standard IV. They share the common purpose of being the official communication channel of the collective student body. All student governments maintain an elected executive board and senate charged with representing interests of students and recognized student groups. Each student government operates under a published constitution, bylaws, and memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the university. Students from each campus's organization participate in governance through their several representatives on the senate's executive committee, its standing committees, the senate itself, and the campus local assemblies. As required by Act 188, the COT includes three student members (one from each campus), and students also serve on groups such as the SPC and the MSCHE self-study steering committee and working groups.

Student representation occurs through other university and governance structures. The president's student advisory council convenes monthly during the academic year. Each campus's student trustee, student government president, and student government vice president meet with CU's president, the associate vice president for student affairs, and the president's chief of staff. Other CU representatives attend to address specific topics or student concerns. This forum affords student representatives the opportunity to receive updates, express opinions, and inform decision making that visibly impacts students. For example, student leaders suggested, in addition to creating digital communications that provide an overview of freedom of expression activities on CU campuses, that physical materials be prepared and handed out in real time when those events occur to assist in fielding questions. Also, before CU made a final determination to consolidate student emails to commonwealthu.edu addresses, the president and IT staff met with the advisory council to address student concerns and secure their endorsement.

GOVERNING BODY (CRITERION 2)

Act 188 articulates the purpose of PASSHE and its universities in serving the public interest as follows: "Its purpose shall be to provide high quality education at the lowest possible cost to the students. PASSHE's primary mission is the provision of instruction for undergraduate and graduate students to and beyond the master's degree in the liberal arts and sciences and in applied fields, including the teaching profession" (Act 188, 20-2003-A, p. 8). This statement affirms the history of PASSHE universities, founded in the nineteenth century as normal schools for training teachers to educate Pennsylvania's youth. The COT will also "assist the president in developing proper relations and understanding between the institution and its programs and the public, in order to serve the interests and needs of both" (Act 188, 20-2009-A, p. 18).

Act 188 specifies BOG and COT roles and responsibilities, also articulated in the BOG bylaws, COT bylaws, and COT (PACT) handbook. The BOG is the system-level governance body while a COT serves each of the universities as a local governing body. Act 188 states that "The Board of Governors shall have overall responsibility for planning and coordinating the development and operation of the system," and enumerates 19 powers (Act 188, 20-2006-A, pp. 13-15). The Act likewise enumerates 13 powers of the COT. Pennsylvania's governor appoints and the state senate confirms members of both governing bodies, all of whom possess deep and varied expertise and connections to regions throughout the state; trustees possess strong ties to the university and communities served. Biographies for BOG and COT members appear on the respective web pages, and both bodies include student members with voting rights.

The COT serves as the governing body that formally endorses the strategic plan. Both the COT and BOG review strategic plan implementation by looking at outcomes and budgets in relation to CU's and PASSHE's mission and goals. The BOG is ultimately responsible for and oversees at a policy level the academic quality of the institution, including the quality of teaching and learning, the approval of degree programs, and the awarding of degrees. The BOG also establishes personnel policies and procedures, along with a framework for assuring strong financial management and integrity as evidenced by the list of BOG policies, procedures, news articles, and updates linked

from the PASSHE home page. The COT oversees policy making within the BOG's framework, particularly in financial management, and conducts timely reviews of budgets and audited financial statements, including the annual review of outside auditors' reports at its November/December meeting. The BOG approves the annual operating and capital budgets and reviews the audited financial statements of PASSHE for the ten member institutions.

While integration did not impact the BOG, CU could not combine the legacy COTs into one oversized body. Act 55 of 2022 amended Act 188 and was advanced to save the individual councils' integrity while meeting the needs of the integrated universities. The Act retains the governor's nominating role and the senate's confirming role of the trustees. It also adds definitions and provisions relating to the selection, nomination, and appointment of transitional and initial COT members for the integrated institutions. The governor appointed a transitional COT of 12 members with four members selected from each integrating institution's COT. This group served from July 15 to September 22, 2022, when the senate confirmed the governor's nominees for the members of the integrated council. Guidelines for the initial COT membership and terms are listed in Figure 7.2, but future membership will be determined according to the COT bylaws which adhere to Act 188. Act 55 also specifies operating procedures for filling vacancies, selecting COT leadership, convening regular and special meetings, and aligning COT powers and duties with the original legislation.

Figure 7.2: Integrated Institutions Council of Trustees Membership and Terms

Council of Trustees Membership
- Initial members shall be equally selected from trustees serving under active terms through June 30, 2022, with four (4) members selected from each integrating institution.
- At least three (3) members of each integrated council must be alumni, one from each institution.
- Three (3) members of each integrated council, one from each institution consolidated, must be a student appointed by the BOG. A student trustee shall be in attendance at a consolidated institution and shall serve a term of four (4) years or for as long as the student is a full-time student.

Council of Trustees Terms
- Terms of non-student members begin upon confirmation by the Senate.
- Terms are staggered as follows:
    - Two (2) initial members to serve a term of six (6) years
    - One (1) initial member to serve a term of four (4) years
    - One (1) initial member to serve a term of two (2) years
- Each member appointed or reappointed to serve on an integrated council after the expiration of the term of an initial member shall serve a term of six (6) years.
- Each member shall serve until their respective successor is duly appointed and qualified.

BOG Policy 1983-13-A: Process for Recommending Presidential Appointment outlines the search and selection processes by which the BOG appoints the chief executive officer, the president, on the COT's recommendation. BOG Policy 2002-03-A: Evaluating Presidents sets forth two types of performance evaluation and professional development plans followed by the COT and chancellor to evaluate the president on annual and triennial cycles. The evaluations assess the president's performance of duties and responsibilities and achievement of agreed-upon goals and objectives.

To ensure trustees understand their role and responsibilities in higher education governance, the Pennsylvania Association of Councils of Trustees (PACT) provides orientation, training, and development opportunities for COT members. The Role of the Trustee (i.e., the PACT handbook) indicates that PACT's primary purpose lies with educating trustees on trends in higher education and especially those relating to the environment in which PASSHE operates. Annually, PACT holds workshops and conferences that provide professional development to build a network of informed trustees that can express views to the BOG and chancellor. Three of CU's trustees serve as PACT board members, and the COT participates in PACT conferences; the most recent conference was held on April 4, 2024.

The PACT handbook outlines trustees' legal and ethical obligations according to the PA Public Official and Employee State Ethics Act, which applies to the BOG, COT, and CU employees. This Act prohibits activities and conduct that may appear/serve as a conflict of interest. COT members operate according to the BOG Policy 2012-01: Conflict of Interest Policy and disclose financial interests as required by state law in the annual statement of financial interests. The president's office monitors COT compliance. In delineating the president's authority, Act 188 provides a structure within which the COT supports the president in maintaining the institution's autonomy. The BOG and COT are governance bodies with high-level engagement and do not participate in the institution's day-to-day management. BOG and COT minutes, posted on their respective web pages, verify matters acted upon in fulfilling their roles.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CRITERION 3)

As stated in the <u>BOG policy for recommending presidential appointment</u>, the BOG, COT, and chancellor play key roles in appointing the president, and <u>Act 188</u> expressly precludes the president from chairing these governing bodies. Dr. Bashar Hanna, CU's inaugural president, served as <u>BL's president</u> from 2017-2021. He was then given additional appointments as interim president of LH and MA universities to facilitate integration before becoming CU's president in 2022. Documented in his <u>vita</u>, his experience includes academic leadership positions at PASSHE's Kutztown University as well as Temple University, DeVry University, Ithaca College, and most recently, Delaware Valley University as the vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty. Dr. Hanna earned his BA in biology; his master's degree in developmental biology; and his PhD in developmental neurobiology from Temple University.

Act 188 establishes the president's authority in planning, staffing, resource allocation, and policy making, including procedures for assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the university. The Act concludes the enumeration of the president's powers with a general statement indicating the position's comprehensive scope of authority and autonomy: "Consistent with the policies of the board to do and perform all of those other things necessary and required for the orderly operation of the institution" (Act 188, 20-2010-A [16], p. 20).

As noted in Criterion 2, the <u>BOG Policy 2002-03-A: Evaluating Presidents</u> provides for <u>systematic annual and triennial review by the COT and chancellor</u> of the president's leadership and administrative performance while fostering professional growth. The triennial evaluation is typically led by an outside consultant and more extensively involves constituent input.

CU has seated an experienced, collaborative leadership team that advises and supports the president on strategic issues and leads operations. The president's cabinet, consisting of the president, chief of staff, divisional vice presidents, and functional leads of core operations, meets weekly to discuss initiatives and concerns, holds a monthly retreat to establish strategic initiatives and evaluate progress on them, and convenes as needed to address emerging issues. Regular assessments occur through quarterly <u>COT reports</u> and <u>meetings</u>, the <u>CPP</u> and <u>board-affirmed metrics</u>, <u>annual administrative and academic reports</u>, <u>performance dashboards</u>, and <u>annual management performance evaluations</u>.

ADMINISTRATION (CRITERION 4)

As with each PASSHE university, the BOG, chancellor, and COT top the organizational structure and reporting relationships. The initial <u>northeast implementation plan</u> stated that CU would seat one president and a single administrative team. As stated in Criterion 3, the administrative team is experienced and skilled and supported by staff, systems, and leading technologies requisite for the work performed. CU's <u>organizational charts</u> reflect the administrative structure consisting of the president's office and five divisions. The divisional structure mirrors the core functional areas in higher education and consists of academic affairs, administration, advancement, enrollment management and student affairs, and fiscal affairs. CU finalized this structure in 2023-24, by moving from seven to five divisions to reduce inadvertent barriers, gain synergies in areas that collaborate frequently, and operate more efficiently.

The president's office is based on the BL campus, and two executive leaders serve in the campus administrator role at LH and MA. The vice president for enrollment management and student affairs holds the dual title as LH's campus administrator, while the interim vice provost and dean of undergraduate education is MA's campus administrator. The campus administrator holds responsibility for relational, ceremonial, and other day-to-day related functions at that campus. The campus administrators and vice president for advancement (at BL) provide independent oversight of that campus's athletics programs as required by the NCAA. In addition, executive leadership maintains a presence across CU with members each assigned a home campus and <u>rotating weekly schedules</u> and meeting sites (e.g., COT, cabinet retreats, town halls, president's open office hours, community/campus socials, and celebrations).

As stated in Criterion 3, the <u>president's cabinet</u> advises on key strategic and policy decisions. All cabinet members are seasoned higher education professionals with <u>appropriate educational credentials</u>, exceptional knowledge and skills in respective areas, remarkable depth of experience, and collaborative dispositions to innovate. A competitive hiring process, matching credentials and expertise with CU needs, pertains to all staff positions. Executive-level searches may use search firms (e.g., WittKeiffer for the 2024 provost search) to ensure a highly qualified, diverse candidate pool and guide the search committees. Searches commence with job postings and selection criteria, and standardized <u>search procedures</u> are contained within CU's talent management software to guide search committees.

The administration regularly engages with faculty and students to advance the mission and priorities. Forums such as senate, local assemblies, town halls, meet and discuss, student advisory meetings, and committee and council meetings (e.g., the SPC, enrollment council, and student government meetings) provide students, faculty, and staff ample opportunity to receive updates, review data, and provide input on priorities, goals, and initiatives. Regular email communications from the president and his cabinet provide updates on goals and describe avenues for offering input or asking questions. The president and campus administrators extend monthly open office hours to campus community members. The senate web page illustrates the engagement opportunities through forums and committees created to enhance operations. All divisions and units monitor program activities, collect data, report outcomes, and develop action plans as part of an annual reporting process. Outcomes and actions appear in documents submitted to the BOG (e.g., CPP), reports given at COT meetings, annual administrative and academic reports, and performance evaluations as described in Criterion 5, including an emphasis on leadership development and executive coaching.

PERIODIC ASSESSMENT (CRITERION 5)

Assessment of governance, leadership, and administration takes place at various levels using both cyclical and periodic evaluations. In fact, the proposed integrations resulted from the 2017 studies conducted by NCHEMS and the Rand Corporation that verified the need for a system redesign to produce long-term stability for PASSHE and its universities. This progressive system-level change embraced three priorities: (1) ensuring student success, (2) leveraging university strengths, and (3) transforming the governance/structure. Redesign phase 2 addressed the third priority through a "systemness" task group that advanced changes in PASSHE governance relating to the following:

- Changing the BOG onboarding process
- Revising selection processes and expectations of the COT
- Forming an executive leadership group, including the chancellor and university presidents
- Establishing a faculty shared governance commission that recommended principles for shared governance

The results of system redesign and integration initiatives have transformed CU's governance structure, organizational design, budgeting processes, and shared services. Extensive assessments informed the northeast implementation plan, which included participation of 589 students, faculty, and staff in 16 working groups and 135 subgroups. This work established priority areas used in CU's strategic planning and evident in the core commitments, priorities, and goals.

Organizational Review

During integration, exhaustive analyses occurred with extensive research and data-informed decision making. CU established functional implementation team (FIT) groups to extensively review each functional area, benchmark best practices, review relevant data, and implement unified structures and processes. This work influenced the way in which divisions and units organized leadership, unit teams, and workflows. A consulting firm, Baker Tilly, facilitated regular FIT lead meetings to gauge progress on developing workflows and reaching milestones. Currently, CU is deploying the BOG program review policy and procedures, revised in 2024, by implementing review schedules, templates, and processes for review of units and academic programs, starting in 2024-25 with programs scheduled for accreditation reviews and 2026-27 for unaccredited programs and administrative units. This schedule allows time to implement plans and strategies developed during integration and adjust through annual planning and assessment.
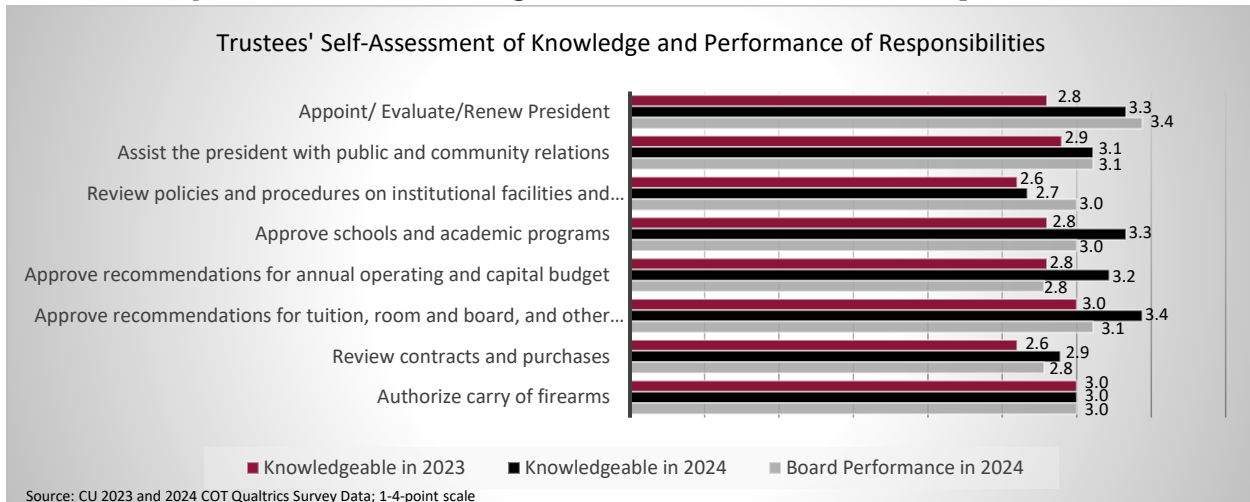
Board Member Development

To supplement trustee professional development through PACT, local forums provide opportunities for board member development. In August 2023, CU held its first COT retreat with a segment dedicated to trustee responsibilities as designated by Act 188 and MSCHE standards and criteria. The MSCHE segment reviewed all standards, with emphasis on common themes threaded throughout the MSCHE standards and related to boards, such as anchoring board action to the mission and goals, seeking to assess and improve board performance, and embedding diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in all aspects of the institution, including the board. To address all three themes and help inform future agenda items, the trustees took three assessments, viewed real-time results, and offered questions and comments. The first assessment was a board member inventory, which profiled the COT demographic makeup and revealed that either none or only one trustee marked institutional advancement/fundraising, student learning, and enrollment management as an area of expertise. While trustee recruitment considers demographics and areas of expertise, COT agendas have included topics that sufficiently inform trustees in areas with lower representation.

Other assessments and discussion revealed that the trustees felt knowledgeable about the duties and responsibilities outlined in Act 188 and the MSCHE standards and criteria. Most trustees were already familiar with Act 188, which

encompasses MSCHE expectations and addresses the duties of care, loyalty, and obedience, espoused by the Association of Governing Boards as principles of good practice. This assessment prompted CU to formalize a student trustee onboarding process, and ratings suggested the COT agendas include topics that inform trustees about reviewing policies on institutional facilities and property, reviewing contracts and purchases, and including accountability topics like mission and goals, finance, student learning, and student achievement. Figure 7.3 shows that trustees felt they increased their knowledge of nearly all responsibilities from 2023 to 2024 and perform most duties in the good-to-excellent range, with greatest opportunities for improvement in approving budgets and reviewing contracts.

Figure 7.3: Trustees' Knowledge and Evaluation of Their Act 188 Responsibilities

Trustees' Self-Assessment of Knowledge and Performance of Responsibilities

Source: CU 2023 and 2024 COT Qualtrics Survey Data; 1-4-point scale

Leadership Evaluation and Development

BOG policies and procedures play a key role in regular assessment of leadership and administration. As noted under the chief executive officer section, annual and triennial presidential evaluations are conducted in accordance with BOG Policy 2002-03-A: Evaluating Presidents, which includes input from key constituencies and evaluates progress toward goals as agreed upon with the COT, chancellor, and BOG.

The chancellor's office established procedures for the annual evaluation of non-represented managers, including executive managers, on such standard performance elements as communication skills, diversity, decision making, leadership, managing people, outcomes assessment, planning, and work processes and results. Managers are evaluated on achievement of goals defined at the beginning of the planning cycle; the planning documents require managers to indicate how their goals relate to the strategic priorities. This layered process for completing management evaluations occurs from August to October, followed by an October due date for planning goals and expected results. This timeline provides ample opportunity for divisions and units to analyze last year's performance and set goals to which managers can align their individual plans. With the approval of the strategic plan, the HR staff revised the evaluation forms and assured the planning portion requires alignment to CU's strategic priorities and core commitments.

CU has focused also on developing a high-performance leadership team and individual development plans for executive-level leaders, prior to integration. During 2021-22, the leadership team engaged in DiSC personality assessments and 360 feedback exercises on 16 competencies categorized into leading the organization, leading others, and leading yourself. Leaders created individual development plans accompanied by individual and team executive coaching. The assessments led to unifying the executive leadership around strategic priorities, establishing a common platform and language for operating across divisions, clarifying interdependencies, and providing information about leading across and downward. The value from executive-level DiSC workshops led to offerings across divisions engaging 239 participants in the DiSC process to discuss results and effective strategies within and across divisions.

During 2022-23, President Hanna underwent a second 360 feedback exercise from his leadership team, onboarded a new chief of staff to provide next-level support, and advocated for a comprehensive 360 process for the executive team. A consultant facilitated 124 oral interviews (i.e., 13 interviewees per each of the nine executive leaders) to pulse leadership and team effectiveness as members of the senior team and their respective functional teams. With respect to the chief of staff's presence, the consultant's executive summary documented the "major progress in stabilizing the president's office [and] bringing discipline, routine, and a spirit of continuous improvement to the effectiveness of

president's cabinet." The consultant also commented that "the final output of the leadership plans was impressive… [and leaders] submitted robust, genuinely self-reflective leadership plans that, in turn, yielded transparent, productive dialogue with their boss." All leaders engaged in coaching sessions to digest the feedback and create those detailed leadership plans, with leadership-focused and development goals tied to the management performance evaluation. The president periodically gauged progress on the leadership development plans and devoted segments of cabinet retreats to discuss expectations. Examples of actions included leaders conducting talent inventories and succession planning within divisions, empowering next-level leaders to plan retreat agendas and expand their leadership development, and appointing a chief of staff within the provost's office to manage operations and align priorities with unit planning. Beyond the DiSC training, leadership development extended to the next-level leaders, including divisional retreats with internal and external facilitators. For example, the academic affairs leadership team engaged in 360 reviews, the Gallup Clifton Strengths assessment, and group and professional coaching sessions. Leaders used this feedback to develop action plans to improve cross-functional collaborations, communication, and productivity.

Change Management

Intentional leadership development initiatives were planned to facilitate change management at the executive level; however, the strategic planning research and assessment that coincided with CU's first year readily revealed the need for change management sessions in the ranks of administrative units. Conducted by Blue Beyond Consulting, focus groups and interviews made clear that staff and administrators were struggling with the workload, rapid change, and ambiguity brought on by integration. The climate survey supported these findings. Blue Beyond presented this feedback to the president's cabinet, who responded swiftly to collaborate with Blue Beyond in delivering in-person, navigating change workshops. The three half-day sessions aided individuals and teams in handling ambiguity, strengthening resilience, and rallying teams around change. Other forums like senate and local assembly meetings, town halls, divisional retreats, and CU celebrations were intended also to address change management and concerns.

President's Cabinet, Leadership, and Cross-Functional Meetings

As part of its operating model, the leadership team has established regular meetings to ensure sufficient channels exist to share information on strategic and operational issues, solve problems, and make recommendations. Over the last two years, the president's cabinet meetings and retreats sustained multiple changes in format, attendees, frequency of meetings/retreats, length of time, and strategies for agenda setting and follow up. Following the January 2024 cabinet retreat, all attendees received a survey that asked attendees what was useful, what was missing, and what other comments would lead to improvement. Attendees felt that discussion of all agenda items, which were strategically focused, was beneficial and the in-person, social aspect helps in building team cohesion. Feedback pointed to opportunities for improvement regarding perceived engagement of participants for the duration, too many agenda items and not enough time, and concerns about follow up occurring for the numerous action items, among a few other areas. Results were shared and discussion resulted in decisions to extend the retreat meeting times, provide conservative time estimates for each agenda item, be present for the entirety and give leadership thought to each agenda item, be more selective about what goes on the retreat versus weekly meeting agendas, and review the meeting tracker and prepare to address follow up by timelines established. Similar assessments were conducted for other forums, leading to improvements. For example, the LH leadership team, established to share and address campus-specific concerns, includes additional members from facilities and student success as a result of assessments.

Institutional Data and Studies

To facilitate the sharing of institutional data and survey results, IE's website houses over 30 dashboards (e.g., in student success data, enrollment, and program/course data) on the IR web page and links to the IE's surveys web page with results to increase ease and access to institution-wide data for use in planning and continuous improvement. As stated in Standard II, IR launched and refined additional public and secure dashboards with institutional and program-specific data in response to user feedback and ensured dashboards/reports for the climate, NSSE, and first destination surveys remain readily available. Blue Beyond and the SPC used these resources in the development of the current strategic plan. President's cabinet monitors established performance indicators and assessments to ensure that the data are used for future planning and decision making. Such reporting on initiatives and outcomes takes place in town hall meetings, web updates on planning and integration sites, and in governance structures, such as at senate. For example, a slide deck on strategic plan implementation, including key links, was presented at the April 2024 senate meeting.

Shared Governance Task Force

Nearly a two-year process, the development of a new CU senate and constitution provided a framework for ongoing, two-way communication and data-informed continuous improvement across the institution as described in the

chapter's introduction. President Hanna invited leadership of the previous BL, LH, and MA shared governance systems to form a shared governance task force charged with developing a new constitution and structure. In January 2022, the task force completed its first draft, and over the next year, it solicited feedback from CBA units, cabinet, PASSHE legal, labor relations, and existing campus shared governance systems. Forums and information sessions were held on each campus, and the task force revised the constitution 15 times. Table 7.2 provides the activity log of steps taken by the shared governance task force to lead to and continuously improve CU's shared governance process.

Table 7.2: Improvement Process Leading to the new Senate and Constitution		
Key Milestone	Date(s)	Action
NE Integration shared governance task force charge to develop and recommend a campus governance process and structure.	12/3/21 - 02/22	Task force created 12/3/21. Draft senate structure developed by reviewing all legacy structures and benchmarking against other structures.
DRAFT PROPOSALS 1, 2 & 3 CU Senate Overview	02/22 - 05/22	Drafts socialized at legacy campus forums, town hall, and president's cabinet. Feedback solicited on each draft proposal through online surveys and feedback submitted to authors and used to make improvements.
Final task force recommendation	5/26/22	Approved by president's cabinet and the president; task force charged with writing the CU senate constitution.
Draft university constitution*	6/22 – 8/22	Task force faculty met and developed draft constitution.
Draft constitution reviews and revisions*	9/22 - 1/23	Draft shared across the campuses through legacy campus forums and at leadership retreat. Feedback solicited via electronic survey, from president's cabinet and SCUPA and APSCUF union leadership. Feedback provided through PASSHE legal, labor relations, and presidential reviews.
Second reading of draft constitution and final approval	2/22/23	Constitution presented at legacy forums, and a call issued for initial nominations for new senate, local assemblies, and committees.
Constitution published revised final draft	2/27/23	Revised final draft submitted to President Hanna and **approved 3/2/23.**
Non-substantive revision	4/24/23	Revision to Article III.B.1.b.iv to correct a drafting error.
First university senate meeting	9/14/23	At the first senate meeting, CU reviewed the policy review/revision process, committees, and CU branding, and endorsed the strategic plan.

*Changes documented in evidence inventory

The current 28-page constitution includes a preamble and nine articles covering definitions, university support, key governing bodies, senate committees, elections, university policies, resolutions, strategic plans, and amendment procedures. Bylaws describe senator removal, constitution review, minutes, and parliamentary procedure. Appendices include bylaws of standing committees and subcommittees, which were developed in 2023-24 and outline committee membership and scope of duties. Bylaws are reviewed at least once every three years. New bylaws must be approved by the executive committee and senate, and appendices will be updated accordingly.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Initiatives

CU continuously engages with faculty and students to advance CU's goals and elevated DEIB as a strategic plan core commitment. CU involves the CU community in studying and creating data-informed strategies and decisions to address campus climate and an inclusive learning environment. Discussion under Standards II and IV provide several examples regarding responses to the transformation accelerator cohort and climate surveys, which provide visible actions of how leadership listens to feedback and studies data in order to develop and implement actionable plans.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Though a newly formed institution, CU draws upon a proven governance structure as articulated in legislation, the CBAs, and shared governance arrangements. Provisions assign responsibilities, maintain institutional autonomy, and afford appropriate communication and input channels. CU has formalized a senate with committees and subcommittees which enables representative participation. While skilled governance, leadership, and administration facilitate mission and goal attainment, ongoing investment in executive, next-level leader, and staff development moves CU forward ensuring attentiveness to CU's talent, operational effectiveness, and data-informed decision making. In the short-to-medium term, opportunities for improvement involve actions for the following:

- Adapt and refine shared governance structures and processes; facilitate training sessions and communication about governance roles, responsibilities, and outcomes; and continue implementation of the policy review schedule
- Continue analyzing results and implementing recommendations from studies, surveys, and assessments

GLOSSARY

A&PE: Alumni & Professional Engagement

A-10: Atlantic 10 Conference

AA: Academic Affairs (Division of)

AAC&U: American Association of Colleges and Universities

AACSB: Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business

AAS: Associate of Applied Science

AASCU: American Association of State Colleges and Universities

ABET: Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology

ACEN: Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing

ACEND: Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics

ACPA: American College Personnel Association

ACRL: Association of College & Research Libraries

ACS: American Chemical Society

ACT: American College Testing (standardized test for college admissions)

ACUE: Association of College and University Educators

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act

ADM: Administration (Division of)

ADV: Advancement (Division of)

AFSCME: American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees

AI: Artificial Intelligence

ALO: Accreditation Liaison Officer

AMA: American Marketing Association

AMLE: Association for Middle Level Education

AOD: Alcohol and Other Drugs

AP: Advanced Placement

API: Academic Program Inventory

APSCUF: Association of Pennsylvania State College and University Faculties

ARC-PA: Accreditation Review Commission of Education for the Physician Assistant

AS: Associate of Science

ASBMB: American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

ASP: Academic Success Program

AVP: Associate Vice President

AWA: Alternative Workload Assignment

AY: Academic Year

BA: Bachelor of Arts

BAM: Board-Affirmed Metric

BBC: Blue Beyond Consulting

BI: Business Intelligence

BL: Bloomsburg Campus

Blended Instruction: traditional F2F class where 30-79% of instruction is replaced with online instruction

BOG: Board of Governors

Brightspace: Desire2Learn's Learning Management System

BS: Bachelor of Science

BSN: Bachelor of Science in Nursing

BUF: Bloomsburg University Foundation

CAA: Council on Academic Accreditation

CAAHEP: Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs

CAATE: Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training

CACREP: Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs

CAEP: Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

CAO: Chief Academic Officer

CARE Team: Campus Assessment, Response and Evaluation Team

CASE: Council for Advancement and Support of Education

CASSH: College of Social Sciences and Humanities

CATS: Commonwealthu Academic Technology Services

CBA: Collective Bargaining Agreement

CCIE: Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education

CCN: Commission on Collegiate Nursing

CDEIBO: Chief Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Officer

CDI: Campus Dining, Inc.

CEC: Council for Exceptional Children

CED: Council on Education of the Deaf

CEHS: College of Education and Human Studies

CFO: Chief Financial Officer

CGE: Center for Global Engagement

CH: Credit Hours

CHEA: Council on Higher Education Accreditation

CHP: College of Health Professions

CIP: Classification of Instructional Programs

CL or CLFD: Clearfield

CLEP: College Level Examination Program

CLIMB: Commitment to Learning, Inclusion, Mentoring, and Belonging

CMHC: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

COA: Council on Accreditation

COAHESS: College of Arts, Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences

CoARC: Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care

COHST: College of Health, Science, and Technology

COST: College of Science and Technology

COT: Council of Trustees

COVID-19: Coronavirus Disease 2019

CPL: Credit for Prior Learning

CPP: Comprehensive Planning Process
CRM: Customer Relationship Management
CSC: Complex Substantive Change
CSFL: Collegiate Sprint Football League
CSFRF: Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds
CSWE: Council on Social Work Education
CTC: Career and Technology Center
CTL: Center for Teaching and Learning
CU: Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania
CUAC: Commonwealth University Assessment Council
D2L: Desire2Learn Learning Management System
DE: Distance Education
DEI: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
DEIB: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging
DGS: Department of General Services
DNP: Doctor of Nursing Practice
DSST: DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (credit-by-examination tests)
DWDM: Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing
E&G: Educational and General Expenses
EAS: Early Alert System
EEO: Equal Opportunity Employer
EET: Electronic Engineering Technology
EFC: Expected Family Contribution
EITC: Educational Improvement Tax Credit (Program)
Ellucian Banner OneSIS: Student Information System (referred to as Banner)
EM: Enrollment Management
EMSA: Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (Division of)
EOP: Educational Opportunity Program
ESS: Employee Self-Service
ETS: Educational Testing System
F&A: Finance and Administration
F2F: Face to Face
FA: Fiscal Affairs (Division of)
FAAO: Faculty Affairs and Academic Operations
FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions
FDC: Faculty Development Center
FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency
FERPA: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
FFCRA: Families First Coronavirus Response Act
FICM: Facilities Inventory and Classification Manual
FIT: Functional Implementation Team
FPDC: Faculty Professional Development Committee
FTE: Full-Time Equivalency
FY: Fiscal Year
FYE: First-Year Experience
FYIGs: First-Year Interest Groups
FYS: First-Year Seminar
GE: General Education
GEAC: General Education Advisory Committee
GEC: General Education Council

GED: General Education Development (test)
GPA: Grade Point Average
GRE: Graduate Record Examination for ETS
GSR: Graduation Success Rates
HC: Headcount
HDMO: Help Desk Maintenance Order
HEOA: Higher Education Opportunity Act
HERC: Higher Education Recruitment Consortium
HIP: High Impact Practice
HIPAA: Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HR: Human Resources
HVAC: Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
ICC: Interim Curriculum Committee
IDP: Individual Development Plan
IE: Institutional Effectiveness
IFC: Interfraternity Council
IL: Information Literacy
ILLiad: InterLibrary Loan internet accessible database
Interactive TV: uses videoconferencing technology to teach a class onsite at one location and remotely to students at another
IPEDS: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
IR: Institutional Research
IRB: Institutional Review Board
IT: Information Technology
IU: Intermediate Unit
IUP: Indiana University of Pennsylvania
IUP-RI: Indiana University of Pennsylvania - Research Institute
JobX: Student Employment Platform
JRCERT: Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology
KPI: Key Performance Indicator
LC: Learning Community
LEAP: Liberal Education & America's Promise
LED: Light-Emitting Diode
LGBTQA: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer-Questioning, Asexual-Ally (Straight)
LH: Lock Haven Campus
LHU SAS, Inc.: Lock Haven University Student Auxiliary Services, Inc.
LHUF: Lock Haven University Foundation
LibQUAL+: Tool libraries use to analyze users' opinions of service quality
LMS: Learning Management System
LO: Lock Haven Campus
LOI: Letter of Intent
M or MM: Millions
MA: Mansfield Campus
MAC: Mid-American Conference
MFA: Multi-Factor Authentication
MHS: Master of Health Science
MOA: Memorandum of Agreement

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding
MRC: Multicultural Resource Center
MS: Master of Science
MSCHE: Middle States Commission on Higher Education
MSN: Master of Science in Nursing
Multi-modal Instruction: F2F instruction in addition to online instruction
MUMF: Mansfield University Mountaineer Foundation
NACAC: National Association for College Admissions Counseling
NACE: National Association of Colleges and Employers
NAEYC: National Association for the Education of Young Children
NASAD: National Association of Schools of Art and Design
NASFAA: National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
NASH: National Association of System Heads
NASM: National Association of Schools of Music
NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
NAST: National Association of Schools of Theatre
NCAA: National Collegiate Athletic Association
NCATE: National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
NCES: National Center for Education Statistics
NCHC: National Collegiate Honors Council
NCHEMS: National Center for Higher Education Management System
NCLEX: National Council Licensure Examination
NC-SARA: National Council on State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements
NCTA: National College Testing Association
NCTE: National Council of Teachers of English
NCTM: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
NEIP: Northeast Implementation Plan
NGO: Nongovernmental Organizations
NIH: National Institutes of Health
NRPA: Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and other Related Fields
NSF: National Science Foundation
NSSE: National Survey of Student Engagement
NSTA: National Science Teachers Association
Nuventive Solutions Premier: Software system for reporting and tracking academic program assessment (formerly called TracDat)
OHRL: Office of Housing and Residence Life
OIE: Office of Institutional Effectiveness
OOC: Office of the Chancellor
OPEIU: Office and Professional Employees International Union
OPM: Online Program Management

P2P: Program to Program
PA: Pennsylvania
PA TRAC: Pennsylvania Transfer Articulation Center
PACT: Pennsylvania Association of Council of Trustees
PAR: Program Assessment Review
PASS: Partnership in Achieving Student Success
PASSHE: Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education
PBM: Personnel Budgeting Model
PDE: Pennsylvania Department of Education
PEG: Professional Experience Grant
PEMA: Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency
PeopleAdmin: Talent management software
PHEAA: Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency
PIMA: Principal Investigator Mentorship Academy
POA: PASSHE Officers Association
PoC: Point of Contact
PRAXIS: Exam that measures academic skills and subject-specific content knowledge for teaching, ETS
PRP: Policies, Rules, and Procedures
PSAC: Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference
PSECU: Pennsylvania State Employees Credit Union
PSLO: Program Student Learning Outcome or Objective
QM: Quality Matters, nonprofit organization that defines and maintains quality assurance in online learning
R1: Research 1
RA: Resident Assistant
RACP: Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program
RAD: Rape Aggression Defense
RFP: Request for Proposals
RHD: Residence Hall Director
RNL: Ruffalo Noel-Levitz
ROA: Requirements of Affiliation
ROTC: Reserve Officer Training Corps, Army
SA: Student Affairs
Saas: Subscription as a Service
SAP: Systems Applications and Products (enterprise resource planning software)
SAS: Statement of Accreditation Status
SAT: Scholastic Assessment Test
SC: Steering Committee
SCP ESI: Second Chance Pell Experimental Sites Initiatives
SCUPA: State College & University Professional Association
SGB: Student Government Board
SH: Semester Hours
SIR: Supplemental Information Report
SIS: Student Information System

SLA: Service Level Agreement

SLATE: Enrollment Management Customer Relation Management platform

SLO: Student Learning Outcome or Objective

SP: Strategic Plan

SPC: Strategic Planning Committee

SPFPA: International Union, Security, Police and Fire Professionals of America

SREB: Southern Regional Education Board

SSCL: Student Success and Campus Life

STEAM: Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics

STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

SUNY: State University of New York

SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

TAC: Transformation Accelerator Cohort

TAOC: Transfer and Articulation Oversight Committee

TEAS: Test of Essential Academic Skills (test preparedness to enter health science fields)

The Commonwealth: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

The State System: Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education

TLEC: Teaching and Learning Enhancement Center

TracDat: Software system for reporting and tracking academic program assessment (now called Nuventive Solutions Premier)

TRIO SSS: Federal Outreach and Student Services Program

UCC: University Curriculum Committee

UDS: University Disability Services

UPMC: University of Pittsburgh Medical Center

URM: Underrepresented Minority

VM: Virtual Machine

VMware: Cloud infrastructure & digital workspace technology

WEDnet: Workforce and Economic Development Network

WFD: Workforce Development

WG: Working Group

ZCOB: Zeigler College of Business

ZIPD: Zeigler Institute for Professional Development

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