Graduate Council
Metropolitan State University of Denver
January 28, 2016 at 11 am in SSB 324
AGENDA

Attending: John Hathorn, Marlee Kobzej, Nicole Vowles, Cindy Lindquist, Cipriana Patterson, Clay Daughtrey, Bernice Harris, Mike Kornelsen, Paula Martinez, Kim Starr, Kevin Zeiler, Nancy Sayler, Christian Itin

I. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: December 17, 2015 approved**

II. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
   A. Website—John and Marlee meeting 2/4
   B. Finalize Graduate Council Curriculum Committee members
   C. HLC MBA visit is on 03/07 and 03/08/2016 MBA and MHA, two visitors exp. in mgt, third added to cover MHA
   D. Graduate Programs will be audited by Internal Audit Projects course. John to meet with the class to see what they will be looking for.

III. **OLD BUSINESS**
   A. Policy for non-degree graduate offerings. Deadline is February 25, 2016
      Phase 0 added; suggested to make note in process that tuition rates are changed in May. Mike had feedback from dept. chairs that the process seems cumbersome and that there's duplication in some phases—proposed (very loosely) that phase 1 be detailed business stuff, phase 2 curriculum, phase 3 approval; Cipriana proposed that each college, not program, has a standard tuition (program fees could be a way to make up costs, but fees are being discouraged); John to give it another go and send out before Feb. 25
   B. Policy for bankruptcy
      John still working on
   C. Outcomes Taskforce initiative
      What is the common core across all disciplines? Different from UG outcomes. 5 is ok.
   D. Review of the Creating a Graduate Culture document
      The doc is a couple of years old; John reviewed recently and made comments, will use to help draft strategic goals
   E. Catalog wording regarding non-degree seeking admission guidelines
      John to check with Vaugh Toland to get this removed from main catalog area; Each department to come up with their wording.
   F. Graduate Studies Conference on 02/12/2016 – topics and presenters
      Cindy and Christian to gather folks from respective programs to help

G. Best practices regarding graduate teaching load
　　Tabled
H. University Program Review Committee – graduate degree programs
I. Tuition for 2016/17
　　To the BOT in May
J. Include some form of college/school financial responsibility in the graduate program approval process

IV.NEW BUSINESS

A. Graduate Program Strategic Planning Committee – report

Cipriana, Kim, John—financial master plan for grad programs; recommended to carve out $1M to loan for start-up costs, each program up to $200K (guideline not a hard line), rate of approval of 2 then 1 then 2 then 1 etc. seems sustainable. BOT looking at 26 initiatives and not approving anything but we can move forward as if this is approved.

Encourage the master's programs that weren't approved to resubmit. They can strengthen their proposals if appropriate. New proposals welcome too.

If the deans, kriedler, etc. made decisions that no programs should be resubmitted we need to know that.

B. Proposal on Profit Sharing for Graduate Programs at MSU Denver
- Determination of profit
- How is the profit to be split

C. HLC Accreditation – deadline is 02/12/2016. Please respond by 02/08/2016

Evidence of a graduate culture, grad programs are an integral part of our institution, read through the documents—where can we add grad stuff? Paragraph from each department on the assessment of student learning and how you are using the data i.e. continuous improvement. We need common LOs at graduate level—5 is ok (see outcomes taskforce initiative)

Budget Committee:
1. Overhead recovery rate—18% should work for graduate and University services overhead; 1% yearly incremental increase

REPORT OF A REQUESTED FOCUSED VISIT FOR CHANGE, Advancement Section, February 1 – 2, 2010
From page 2-3:

Because of the high likelihood that present expectations for revenue generation in the Master of Social Work may likely fall short of program expenses at the start of the program, the administration of the College and the Department have agreed to develop a plan for sustainability, which will illustrate how MSW program expenses will be met if student enrollment and retention do not start off as robustly as predicted. This alternative graduate education support plan is an important element in preparing the College to successfully launch the MSW and other graduate programs.

This institution has moved with unusual rapidity to embrace and integrate graduate education into three of its current undergraduate programs. The three new proposed master's degree programs generated considerable discussion on campus, but consensus was reached very rapidly. While the institution is commended for being nimble and responsive to the needs of its constituent groups the institution should also recognize that there is a risk that any dissent that may be present may not have had an opportunity to be heard and addressed, and that pockets of concern and non-support may remain within the institutional structure in the process of implementation. This attention to airing and valuing diverse views on graduate education is particularly important, since there were indications that the College could consider other master's level programs in the future.

In this context, the College is encouraged to give additional consideration for how it will evaluate and report on the success of the MSW, MPAcc, and MAT programs, so that its experience informs future decisions, directions and processes. Again, resource planning for graduate programs is imperative…

A revised strategic plan needs to be prepared that plans for the College achieving the Hispanic Serving Institution status, developing graduate programs, establishing evaluation and reward system for faculty teaching in graduate programs, and for the President's "urban land grant" focus and direction for the college, including continued elimination of interim positions…

The team had concern that the professional development for faculty involved in graduate education has not yet been given enough attention. Faculty in the Department of SW for instance, are largely untenured, with minimal teaching experience at the graduate level. As the institution and department plan faculty hires in the near future, strong consideration should be given to hiring faculty at the associate level, who have a Ph.D. and teaching experience at the graduate level…

Faculty and administration are encouraged to continue the discussion about best practices for graduate education in terms of faculty workload, salaries and expectations of faculty associated with graduate education and to translate their awareness into informed actions. For example, they can create some policies to shape and drive decisions about faculty associated with graduate education so that Departments can attract and retain appropriately educated and committed individuals with enough expertise and talent to guide the graduate programs through what is a challenging and unpredictable startup period.

Higher Learning Commission Progress Report on
Master's Programs Metropolitan State College of Denver
September 1, 2011, page 9

The [visit] report goes on to say that the progress report should address the following issues: As the College continues to expand its graduate programming, a more expansive viewpoint will be needed to assure that graduate programs are consistently thought of as central to the educational mission and reflected in the strategic plan. As an institution that has traditionally focused on delivering high quality undergraduate programs to its service area with a faculty focused on teaching, the leadership of the institution must consider the additional needs of faculty involved in graduate programs, especially in terms of their involvement in scholarly and professional development activities. Proper supervision of graduate students can require special consideration to reduction in teaching to accommodate the added advisement and supervision that normally accompanies graduate teaching.

Based on a document titled: **Creating a Graduate Culture at MSU Denver – DRAFT – January 2014**

BACKGROUND

Recommendations extracted from the February 2010 report include the following:
1. Determine "how to evaluate and report on the success of the MSW, MPAcc, and MAT programs…." This should include financial health and program sustainability as well as quality measures related to retention and graduation rates, career placement rates, and successful pursuit of further educational opportunities.
2. "Revised strategic plan…that plans for the [University]
   a. achieving the Hispanic Serving Institution [HSI] status,
   b. developing graduate programs,
   c. establishing evaluation and reward system for faculty teaching in graduate programs, and
   d. for the President's 'urban land grant' focus and direction for the college, including continued elimination of interim positions."
3. Ensure appropriate "professional development for faculty involved in graduate education" is made available. This includes "strong consideration should be given to hiring faculty at the associate level, who have a Ph.D. and teaching experience at the graduate level…."
4. Implement "best practices for graduate education in terms of faculty workload, salaries and expectations of faculty associated with graduate education, and to translate their awareness into informed actions. For example, they can create some policies to shape and drive decisions about faculty associated with graduate education so that Departments can attract and retain appropriately educated and committed individuals with enough expertise and talent to guide the graduate programs through what is a challenging and unpredictable startup period."

In the subsequent HLC Progress Report of September 1, 2011, reviewers also recommended the following (see Appendix 2; emphasis added):

> As the College continues to expand its graduate programming, a more expansive viewpoint will be needed to assure that graduate programs are consistently thought of as central to the educational mission and reflected in the strategic plan. As an institution that has traditionally focused on delivering high quality undergraduate programs to its service area with a faculty focused on teaching, *the leadership of the institution must consider the additional needs of faculty involved in graduate programs, especially in terms of their involvement in scholarly and professional development activities. Proper supervision of graduate students can require special consideration to reduction in teaching to accommodate the added advisement and supervision that normally accompanies graduate teaching*.

Status as of January 2014	Current status and recommendations
1. MSU Denver has done a good job of evaluating the financial health and sustainability of the three graduate programs in place. The campus still needs to develop a "program review" process that would mirror procedures in place for undergraduate academic program review, which would include retention and graduation rates, career placement rates, and successful pursuit of further educational opportunities.	• The financial health of the existing programs is monitored biannually by the Budget Office. • The Graduate Council (GC) needs to develop a bankruptcy policy. • As an interim step, when a graduate program is reviewed, there should be at least one representative on the UPRC from another graduate program. • The GC needs to develop a list of graduate criteria for the UPRC to evaluate. • Is the seven year cycle too long for graduate programs?

2. With respect to strategic planning, MSU Denver
a. Has implemented a new Strategic Plan, *A Time of Transformation: 2012-17 Strategic Plan,* which addresses achieving HSI status by 2017. Under the leadership of the Enrollment Services AVP, the campus has created a Strategic Enrollment Council, which developed a first Strategic Enrollment Plan last year (Spring 2013) and continues its work today; part of that Plan is identifying and implementing the tactics needed to achieve HSI status;
b. Developed curriculum forms for Graduate Degree Program proposals and review processes [Curriculum Guidelines, Policies, and Procedures, New Degree Program Phase One Review Process]. The campus follows normal curriculum review processes; except that the Graduate Council will also review for feasibility and alignment with the campus mission;
c. Has not yet established a unique evaluation and reward system for faculty teaching in graduate programs; and
d. Has made significant progress in achieving the President's 'urban land grant' focus and direction for the college, including the elimination of interim positions.
	• With respect to strategic planning for graduate programs, the GC has approved the following:
	   o Graduate Council Constitution
	   o Graduate Council Bylaws
	   o Graduate Program Mission Statement
	   o Graduate Program Approval Process
	   o Graduate Curriculum Guidelines, Policies and Procedures
	
	• The GC is working on a policy document for non-degree graduate offerings and a five-year graduate strategic plan.

3.	Since 2009, MSU Denver has increased the opportunities for all faculty to pursue professional development relevant and appropriate to their needs. Funds to support "regular" professional development opportunities have increased from $300 per year to $1,200 per year per tenure-line faculty. In addition, the number of sabbaticals supported have increased from seven (7) in 2009 to 17 in 2013. In terms of faculty hiring, the credentials and experience needed for faculty are defined in the Academic and Student Affairs On-Line Policy Manual; procedures for changing those qualifications are also delineated there. The Graduate Council notes, however, the "strong consideration should be given to hiring faculty at the associate level, who have a Ph.D. and teaching experience at the graduate level…."; it recommends that those Departments currently offering graduate programs – as well as those proposing new programs – heed this HLC advice.	• Existing graduate programs can use funds from their graduate program revenues and summer funds for developing this element of a graduate culture. • Implement a university-wide graduate research conference. • Introduce department research forums where faculty and graduate students can share their research. For example, each semester the MPAcc program sponsors a department research forum.

Recommendations for Developing a "Graduate Culture" at MSU Denver

What We Are Already Doing/Have In Place?

Note: Items *italicized* in the table below are things we need to work on.

What MSU Denver Is Doing	Where Information Is Found or Evidence of Action/Status	Completed/*To Be Completed*	Current status and recommendations
I. Expectations			

Communicates clear expectations for high academic achievement to prospective and current students that
• Encourages students to aspire and stretch for higher levels of cognitive development;
• Insists that students take an active role in learning and assume a large share of the responsibility for their learning;
• Expects students to explore diverse ideas and think critically about their own values and perspectives
• Focuses on research and scholarly contributions to the discipline; and
• Plans and structures
	• Graduate Catalog – http://catalog.msudenver.edu/index.php
	• Admissions Materials
	• Syllabi with clearly articulated
	  o Program-articulated Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) that emphasize critical, analytical, and creative thinking;
	  o Embed research, scholarship, and creative activity throughout the program;
	  o Includes appropriate assessments and culminating activities, e.g., Theses, Publications, Participation in Conferences, and Poster/Paper Presentations
	• Increased funding for faculty professional development and sabbaticals since 2009
		• Completed for current degree programs
		• *Need to maintain and to include in future programs*
		• *Need to*
		  o *Ensure graduate research is celebrated as well as undergraduate research*
		  o *Ensure funds are available for graduate students to attend conferences and meetings appropriate to their discipline for paper presentations and networking opportunities*
			• Ok
			
			• Are we doing this? Check with Nancy and Nicole.
			
			• See 3 above

What MSU Denver Is Doing	Where Information Is Found or Evidence of Action/Status	Completed/*To Be Completed*	Current status and recommendations
ongoing opportunities for faculty and student collaboration on research and scholarly endeavors.			
II. Curriculum			
Champions infusion of diversity experiences, cross-cultural elements, and diverse perspectives into the graduate curriculum; Displays an egalitarian, not authoritarian, approach toward instruction;	• Syllabi with clearly articulated o SLOs o Capstone Projects o Assessments o Appropriate texts, readings, and support materials • Pedagogy	• Completed for current degree programs • *Will need to maintain and to include in future programs*	• Are we doing this? Check with Nancy and Nicole. • What about graduate program assessment? Should it be separate from undergraduate assessment?

What MSU Denver Is Doing	Where Information Is Found or Evidence of Action/Status	Completed/*To Be Completed*	Current status and recommendations
III. Support for Graduate Students			
Orientation programs for new graduate students with an emphasis placed on the unique and distinct culture from that of undergraduate education.	• Departmental websites? • Admissions website? Publications? • Assign responsibility to a departmental faculty member or staff to orient new graduate students	•	• Do existing programs have orientation programs? MPAcc has a new student orientation one evening before classes start.
Opportunities provided for students to participate in professional/ disciplinary organizations.	• Need list of current relevant organizations (run through department or Student Activities?)	• *Identify and join appropriate professional/disciplinary organizations to support graduate student growth*	• We have joined the Council of Graduate Schools There is a move afoot to establish a Colorado Council of Graduate Schools. Monitor via UPRC?
Mentoring students.	• Faculty advising and collaborative research responsibilities	•	• The program coordinator does a significant amount of advising. See 3 above for collaborative research avenues. Monitor via UPRC?
Membership in appropriate scholastic honor societies	• Need list of current relevant organizations (run through department or Student Activities?)	• *Identify and join appropriate professional/disciplinary organizations to support graduate student growth*	• See above.
IV. Culture of Intellectual Engagement			
Expects intellectual passion[1] from faculty and students;	• Publications • Conference participation – Poster/Paper Presentations • Exhibits • Performances • Other….	• Need to develop measures… possibilities include level and quality of outputs, e.g., o *type of research undertaken or grants awarded (e.g., cutting*	• Monitor via UPRC?

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[1] Urban Dictionary: "Passion is when you put more energy into something than is required to do it. It is more than just enthusiasm or excitement, passion is ambition that is materialized into action to put as much heart, mind body and soul into something as is possible."

		edge versus more mundane "do-something" projects),	
		o *number of projects completed in a given time frame (considering the type of research project),*	
		o *prestige/reputation of publishers and conferences where the work appears (top-tier versus "take everyone" journals and conferences),*	
		o *contribution to the field (e.g., how much the work is cited by others, invited presentations, awards, mentoring students who achieve significant recognition).*	
		• *Perhaps this measure can be applied with some modifications for graduate students as well as graduate faculty.*	
Builds a community of scholars searching for new knowledge and quest for higher learning, in part, by engaging graduate students in strong student-to-student interactions and strong faculty-to-student	• Supports faculty and student professional development and scholarly activities, in part, through "out-of-classroom" collaborations • *List of publications/presentations and grants submitted/funded published annually*	• *Support for interdisciplinary/ collaborative/cross-institutional research projects/grants* • *partnerships and contracts with outside agencies (building upon our urban land grant*	• See 3 above

interactions – in and outside of classroom through planned group work, social activities, collaborative learning opportunities, thesis support.		*objectives),* • *active participation in professional organizations;* • *developing and sustaining active on-campus seminars, groups and chapters for graduate students and faculty to share and engage intellectually*	
Exemplifies and transmits a core value system for the responsible conduct of research – honesty, accuracy, efficiency, and objectivity.	• Office of Sponsored Research and Programs website • Graduate Catalog	• Institutional Review Board functional and effective • *Human Subjects Protections SOPs in place* • *Finalize and publish research misconduct policy* • *Roll out IRBNet; provide training for faculty, staff, and student applicants* • *Establish IACUC and Institutional Biosafety Committee* • *Ensure Conflict of Interest oversight*	

Student learning goals are established and evaluated, with emphasis on critical, analytical, and creative thinking.	• Syllabi with clearly articulated
	  o Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)
	  o Capstone Projects
	  o Assessments
	  o Pedagogy
		•	• Have developed Graduate Curriculum Guidelines, Policies and Procedures to ensure that this happens.
			• Monitor via UPRC and program assessment?

V. Recognition			
Department/School Commencement/Hooding ceremonies	• Internal announcement each semester	• Established for current degree programs • *Will need to include in*	• Each department has their own procedures. For example, the accounting department hosts an MPAcc graduation celebration.

		future programs	
Recognition at University Commencement Ceremonies	• Listed in Commencement program • Announced/introduced as each walks across the stage at Commencement	• Established for current degree programs • *Will need to include in future programs*	
VI. Institution			
Membership in appropriate graduate associations	• Council of Graduate Schools – www.cgsnet.org • Western Association of Graduate Schools – www.wagsonline.org • Association for Graduate Enrollment Management – www.nagap.org	• Need to join; Annual cost at current size ~$4,000 • Need to join; Annual cost = $300	• Joined Council of Graduate Schools

What Else Needs To Be Done __Internal__ to Academic and Student Affairs?

In addition to items identified above, MSU Denver needs to put in place a number of items as it works to establish an institutionalized graduate culture. These include the following: [==NOTE: this is a "brain dump" of ideas – largely adopted/adapted from CSU Stanislaus AND the Council of Graduate Schools publication. Might be helpful to establish realistic time frames for achieving each.==]

The most important step will be to establish an Office of Graduate Studies (OGS, or perhaps an Office of Graduate Studies and [Graduate and Undergraduate] Research). Before an OGS is created, we can continue to engage in substantial work to institutionalize a graduate culture at MSU Denver.

1. **Graduate Council**: We have discussed this already. We need to answer the question, "Who – by position – should be a member?" I have attached as Appendix 4 a very formalized set of By-Laws for CSU Stanislaus' Graduate Council for our consideration. Something the CGS points out is the ***importance to have graduate student representation on this group***.
   Current status and recommendations: The GC Constitution and Bylaws answers this question.
2. Develop and garner approval for a Graduate Program ***Mission Statement*** [CSU Stanislaus Mission Statement: "The Graduate School is committed to the development of scholarly leaders through outstanding graduate and postbaccalaureate programs that require students to demonstrate critical thinking and analysis, the ability to integrate theory and practice, and creativity in scholarly endeavors. Students emerge equipped to face real-life challenges and contribute to the body of knowledge in their fields of study. The Graduate School develops plans, assesses, improves, and administers the policies and procedures established by the Graduate Council, the chief governance body for graduate and postbaccalaureate programs."]
   Current status and recommendations: We have an approved Graduate Program Mission Statement.
3. Develop and garner approval for **Common Graduate Learning Goals** [CSU Stanislaus "Graduate learning goals":
   a. Advanced knowledge, skills, and values appropriate to their discipline.
   b. Ability to be creative, analytical, and critical thinkers.
   c. Ability to work as individual researchers/scholars as well as in collaboration with others in contributing to the scholarship of their disciplines, as appropriate.
   d. Relevant knowledge of ==our diverse community(ies) and== the global perspectives appropriate to their discipline.
   e. Knowledge of new and various methods and technologies as appropriate to their discipline.
   f. Advanced oral and written communication skills, complemented as appropriate to the discipline, by the ability to access and analyze information from a myriad of primary, print, and technological sources.]
   g. *==Add something about the application of knowledge or demonstrated practitioner expertise?==*
   Current status and recommendations: This is outstanding but I think our proposed of developing graduate learning outcomes will address a number of these issues.
4. **Responsible Conduct of Research**:
   a. Hire a research integrity/conflict of interest officer and training coordinator: Some federal grants require face-to-face responsible conduct of research training that is specific to the discipline, and will not accept just our online CITI certification. Moreover, we may unwittingly be creating a conflict of interest situation if we have OSRP work to secure grants *and* provide responsible research oversight.

> **Current status and recommendations:** This has been tabled until the graduate programs can afford to fund such a position.

5. **Graduate Student Support**
   a. Designate space for formal and informal meetings and special functions in support of graduate students and faculty
      Current status and recommendations: Outstanding.
   b. Establish practices and policies for ensuring graduate student representation on appropriate committees, e.g., Graduate Council
      Current status and recommendations: Outstanding.
   c. **Funding**
      i. Establish a pool of **graduate student research funds** and determine criteria/procedures for allocation
      ii. **Awards** for outstanding student achievement in each graduate program
      iii. **Scholarships/fellowships/graduate assistantships**
      Current status and recommendations: These should all be done at the program level.
   d. Workshop Ideas
      i. Starting your Thesis/Project/Dissertation – how to narrow a research topic, navigate the process, work with your advisor/committee, find requisite resources
      ii. Preparing for You Culminating Exam – how to study/prepare for your oral/written master's exam
      iii. Graduate Research Strategies Workshop – how to find appropriate library and other research materials; introduction to research tools; familiarity discipline-specific style manuals, e.g., APA, MLA, and Chicago.
      iv. Thesis/Project/Dissertation formatting/organization – University's guidelines
      Current status and recommendations: Items I through IV are outstanding.
      v. Research Colloquia – graduates students to share *in progress* research with fellow graduate students and faculty for feedback/critique
      Current status and recommendations: These should all be done at the program level.
      vi. Graduate Student Research Competition – showcase excellent research conducted by graduate students (join in undergraduate research celebration day?), specify awards for graduate student research
      Current status and recommendations: Expect to start in Spring 2016.
      vii. Graduate Student Community-based Research and Service Learning
      viii. Wellness – maintaining sanity and physical health during graduate work
      Current status and recommendations: Items vii and viii are outstanding
6. Explore value of some information generated by the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE) for graduate programs.
   Current status and recommendations: This needs to be done.

Office of Graduate Studies and [Undergraduate and Graduate] Research

An Office of Graduate Studies and Research and its staff would oversee a variety of activities delineated by the Council of Graduate Schools.[2] It is important to note that MSU Denver has substantial degrees of freedom for determining how these activities should be implemented and overseen. For example, 2.g. below – "maintaining academic records and degree verification" – could be overseen only by the Office *or* stay with the registrar's office as is our current practice. What is critical is that we make intentional

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[2] For more detailed descriptions of these responsibilities, see *Organization and Administration of Graduate Education* (Washington, DC: Council of Graduate Schools, 2004), pp. 17-42.

decisions about how to oversee these critical activities. [<mark>NOTE TEAM: The following list comes directly from the book we are getting for all of you. I have made some comments in *italics* next to some items</mark>.]

1. Program Content
   a. Review of new and revised programs – *re-assess our process for incorporating Graduate Council review with other levels of review*
      Current status and recommendations: This is being done.
   b. Development of new programs – *offer workshops/support to those developing (or thinking about developing) new programs*
      Current status and recommendations: We are offering our first workshop on 02/12/2016.
   c. Review of existing graduate programs and departments – *determine if these will be simultaneous with undergraduate program review; determine how to distinguish from undergraduate programs*
      Current status and recommendations: This needs to be done and it is on our agenda.
   d. Setting academic policies that govern graduate study – *see p. 20 of book*
      Current status and recommendations: I'm not sure what p. 20 of the book says!
2. Students
   a. Admissions
      Current status and recommendations: Current process involves the program and central admissions office. We are working on purchasing admissions software.
   b. Recruitment – *Identify roles and responsibilities of different personnel/offices – faculty, staff, centralized marketing*
      Current status and recommendations: This should be a program level responsibility.
   c. Fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid
      Current status and recommendations: Unsure.
   d. Teaching and research assistants – *Need to address if/how we want to approach these opportunities for graduate students*
      Current status and recommendations: This should be a program level responsibility.
   e. Monitoring student academic progress – *Financial Aid and departmental responsibilities clarified*
      Current status and recommendations: This is outstanding.
   f. Appointment and approval of faculty committees – *to supervise culminating projects*
      Current status and recommendations: Unsure.
   g. Maintaining academic records and degree verification – *specify roles and responsibilities of Registrar's Office and faculty*
      Current status and recommendations: Same process as for undergraduates?
   h. Thesis/Final Project/Exam approvals
      Current status and recommendations: Same process as for undergraduates?
   i. Student support services and retention programs – *see page 27 of book*
      Current status and recommendations: I'm not sure what p. 27 of the book says!
   j. Liaison with student organizations
      Current status and recommendations: Unsure.
   k. Liaison with administrative offices
      Current status and recommendations: I think that this is being done via the Masters program testing group.
   l. Student grievance procedures – *different from undergrad?*
      Current status and recommendations: Same process as for undergraduates?

m. Review of academic progress
   Current status and recommendations: This should be a program level responsibility
n. Academic dishonesty or plagiarism – *different from undergrad?*
   Current status and recommendations: Same process as for undergraduates?
3. Faculty
   a. Appointment and review of graduate faculty – *p. 30: NOTE that graduate faculty can be defined "as all faculty members who hold certain academic ranks, e.g., all tenure-track faculty with the rank of assistant professor or higher." We may want to think about how to evaluate and grant graduate faculty status to "faculty members who are not tenure-track but who have special expertise to offer graduate students…."*
      Current status and recommendations: I'm not sure. Do we need graduate faculty status?
   b. Participation in faculty appointment and promotion decisions – *any need to change?*
      Current status and recommendations: I don't think we need any changes. All departments have representation on the Faculty Senate.
   c. Faculty development – *see page 32 of book*
      Current status and recommendations: I'm not sure what p. 27 of the book says!
   d. Oversight of postdoctoral fellows and visiting scholars
      Current status and recommendations: There is a motion before the Faculty Senate for post-doctoral teaching fellows so we may have to address this issue.
4. Administrative Support
   a. Data collection and dissemination – *see page 34 of book; other issues*
   b. Liaison with legal affairs
      Current status and recommendations: I'm not sure that this is an issue.
5. University-Wide Activities
   a. Promotion of intellectual collegiality – *see page 36 of book*
   b. Participation in central university decision making
   c. Enhancement of scholarship and research
      Current status and recommendations: I think that these items are addressed by the Graduate Research Forum and Graduate Council.
6. External Relations
   a. Involvement in regional and national associations – *seeking membership in Western Association of Graduate Schools and Council of Graduate Schools*
      Current status and recommendations: We have joined the Council of Graduate Schools.
   b. Liaison with national and state legislatures and boards – *more than what we are currently doing?*
      Current status and recommendations: This will be a responsibility of the Director of Graduate Studies.
   c. Development of alumni relations –*great opportunity at the beginning of our programs and graduations to track effectively for career opportunities and fundraising*
      Current status and recommendations: This should be a joint effort between the programs and the Director of Graduate Studies.
   d. Fund-raising
      Current status and recommendations: This will be a responsibility of the Director of Graduate Studies.
7. Research Administration – *see pages 41-42 of book*
   Current status and recommendations: This will be a responsibility of the Director of Graduate Studies.

What Else Might Be Done Involving Units Currently __External__ to Academic and Student Affairs?

1. Move the MSU Denver **Office of Sponsored Research and Programs (OSRP)** to be part of the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Such a move is supported by the Council of Graduate Schools,[3] which indicates that having the OSRP as part of the OGS is important because "it makes it easier to see that institutional research funds are used as incentives to encourage the strengthening of [academic] programs." A combined OGS/OSRP ensures, as well, ensures that the following responsibilities are discharged:[4]
    a. Facilitate efforts to attract external funding in support of research
    b. Liaise with sponsors and government funding sources
    c. Develop, implement, and enforce institutional guidelines and policies for research and related activities, including compliance with Federal and other regulations governing research[5]
    d. Develop and implement procedures for grant and contract management
        Administer internal funds designed to promote research
        Current status and recommendations: The Office of Graduate Studies should also house the research integrity office.

Other items that MSU Denver is doing that are not in the document.

1. The GC has established a robust process for the evaluation of graduate programs.
2. The GC, in conjunction with the CFE, is hosting a university-wide Graduate Studies Conference. It is envisioned that this will become an annual event.
3. The School of Education has instituted a Graduate Culture committee.

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[3] CGS (2004, pp. 14-16)
[4] CGS (2004, pp. 14-15)
[5] See *Best Practices in Graduate Education for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (Washington, DC: Council of Graduate Schools, 2008)

Approval process for non-degree graduate offerings

This document details the phases for the adoption of non-degree graduate offerings. Each section in this document details the purpose, required documentation and the applicable process. The Graduate Council strongly suggests that an academic unit that is considering offering graduate courses discuss this with their academic dean and the associate vice president of curriculum and academic effectiveness (VP of curriculum).

The phases are:

Phase 0:   The concept review,
Phase I: The academic and business plans,
Phase II: The development phase,
Phase III: The approval phase, and
Phase IV: The implementation phase.

Phase 0: The Concept Review

Purpose: This phase is a request to plan. The intent is to give the appropriate academic Dean and the Provost the information needed to make a decision on whether or not the proposed offering should proceed to Phase 1.   Ratification of this phase does not guarantee that the offering will be approved in Phase 1 or subsequently.

Documentation:

a. A one page description, approved by the department, must be submitted to the academic dean.
b. The concept description should include the following:
     i. Description overview.
     ii. Capacity to run program (i.e. faculty, staff, resources). Please include information about faculty expertize and an overview of the proposed curriculum.
     iii. How program meets the University mission.
     iv. Market demand.
     v. Financial viability.

Process: The concept review must be approved by the following before proceeding to Phase I:

- The Department,
- The appropriate Dean, and
- The Provost.

Phase I: Academic and Business Plans

Purpose: The task in Phase 1 is to develop an in-depth analysis on the viability of the proposed non-degree graduate offerings. The Development Committee of the Graduate Council is available to help the faculty prepare the needed information and plans for further approval. This phase must show that the proposal is self-sustaining from its inception. The college/school will be responsible for funding any deficit that the graduate offering may incur. The decision to end the process of planning for a graduate offering can still occur after the review of the documentation required in Phase I.

Documentation:

a. A detailed proposal, approved by the department and the appropriate academic dean, must be submitted to the Graduate Council.

b. Phase 1 proposal should include at least the following:
   i. Detailed budget and break-even analysis (should include a narrative for each item, also please include all assumptions made).
   ii. Return on investment for students (i.e. placements).
   iii. ~~Independent validation~~ Overview of market trends.
   iv. Industry and competitor analysis.
   v. Program description which should include at least the following:
      1. The mission of the proposed program,
      2. The goals of the program,
      3. Key features,
      4. An overview of the proposed program assessment process,
      5. Course descriptions,
      6. Admission criteria,
      7. Graduation requirements, and
      8. The rationale for the proposed tuition.
   vi. Course scheduling and rotation plan.
   vii. Faculty/staff plan (i.e. reassigned time, program coordinator, field coordinator, administrative support).
   viii. Elaboration from Phase 0, (i.e. how program meets the University and Graduate mission).
   ix. Anticipated start date.
   x. An acknowledgement from the Dean that the college/school will be responsible for funding any deficit.

Process: The detailed proposal must be approved by the following before proceeding to phase II:

- The Department,
- The appropriate Dean,
- Graduate Council,

- The Provost, and
- The President

Phase II: Development Phase

Purpose: The development phase involves the completion of the necessary steps for approval of the curriculum for the proposed courses. This phase also entails the development of an infrastructure plan to ensure that the program operates as intended when it is launched.

Documentation:

a. The program will need to prepare a curriculum packet as per the *Curriculum Guidelines, Policies, and Procedures* manual for approval of the proposed curriculum.
b. The program will need to complete an infrastructure plan (operations) that addresses at least the following, if applicable:
    i. Admissions/Marketing,
    ii. Registrar/Financial Aid,
    iii. Transfer Services,
    iv. IT,
    v. Facilities (space needs),
    vi. Faculty/staff hiring, and
    vii. Budgeting issues.

Process:

a. The curriculum process is detailed in the *Graduate Curriculum Guidelines, Policies, and Procedures* manual.
b. The infrastructure plan is an internal document that is developed to ensure an efficient implementation of the program.

Phase III: Approval Phase (This phase can run parallel with Phase II)

Purpose: In this phase all the ~~relevant~~ applicable approvals are obtained. This includes the Board of Trustees (BOT), the Colorado Department of Higher Education, the Higher Learning Commission and any other specialized accreditation requirements.

Documentation: This is determined by the relevant accrediting body and the BOT.

Process:

a. BOT approval is to be sought ~~at the end of Phase II~~ after Phase I.
b. The process for external accreditation is determined by the applicable body.

Phase IV: Implementation Phase

Purpose: Once all the ~~necessary~~ applicable approvals have been obtained, then the academic unit can publicize and implement the courses. The objective of this phase is to complete all the necessary steps for the courses to go live and includes promoting/marketing the program, recruiting faculty if applicable, and overseeing the admission process.

Documentation: The infrastructure plan developed in Phase II should be the template for this phase.

Process: The processes necessary to complete this phase are to be determined by the academic unit. The Development Committee of Graduate Council is available to advise and assist if necessary.

A Quick Reminder to Register!

For more information on the following event visit: msudenver.edu/cfe

Please register via the MSU Denver event calendar.

Graduate Studies Conference Institute

This conference is for directors and faculty of graduate studies programs and focuses on the curricular and organizational challenges of managing graduate programs at MSU Denver. Topics of discussion address current issues in graduate education: recruitment and advising, course design, assessment, funding priorities, promoting diversity, completion and preparing students for the job market, and creating synergy between graduate programs.

Agenda – Friday, February 12

8:00-8:30 – Check in, Coffee and Breakfast Snacks

8:30-8:45 – **Welcome and Introductions**, *Dr. Vicki Golich, Provost.*

8:45-9:30 – **Graduate Advising**, – *TBA*

9:30-10:15 – **Graduate Course Design –** *TBA*

10:15-10:30 – Break

10:30-11:15 – **Course and Program Assessment Practices –** *TBA*

11:15-11:45 – **Understanding the Graduate Student Viewpoint –** *TBA*

11:45-12:45 – Lunch

12:45-1:30 – **Designing and Administering a Graduate Program,** *Dr. John Hawthorn, Prof. of Accounting.*

1:30 -2:15 – **Promoting Graduate Culture at MSU Denver,** *Dr. John Hawthorn, Prof. of Accounting, and Dr. Michael Kolb, Director for the Center of Faculty Excellence*

2:15-2:30 – Wrap-up and Evaluations

Registration Information

This institute is open to MSU Denver faculty, instructors, staff, and graduate students. Due to the expensive nature of the institute and the advance notice needed for arranging food and materials, please register by the deadline. Advance registration is required by February 2, 2016.

Non-degree-seeking Admission Guidelines

Students may be admitted to any of the graduate degree programs with a non-degree-seeking status. For detailed information, refer to the non-degree admissions policies and procedures located on the program's website and/or specific program's section of the catalog. Non-degree-seeking students are only eligible for up to a total of 9 attempted semester hours applicable to a degree program, do not qualify for financial aid, and must re-apply and pay a new application fee in order to become degree-seeking. Applicants must also meet degree-seeking requirements; however, completing coursework as a non-degree-seeking student does not guarantee admission into a degree-seeking program.

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Sections 1 and 2 second drafts – November 9

1 - Mission

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

1.A – Core Component 1.A

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

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Argument:

Role:
MSU Denver is a comprehensive baccalaureate- and master's-degree-granting urban university that offers arts and sciences, professional and business courses and programs to a diverse student population in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Excellence in teaching and learning is MSU Denver's primary objective.

Mission**:**
MSU Denver's mission is to provide a high-quality, accessible, enriching education that prepares students for successful careers, postgraduate education and lifelong learning in a multicultural, global and technological society. To fulfill its mission, MSU Denver's diverse university community engages the community at large in scholarly inquiry, creative activity and the application of knowledge.

The role and mission statements guide MSU Denver in its outreach to prospective students, its scholarly activities and research, its support services and the use of its resources for the betterment of society.

[1.A.1] -The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.

The current role and mission statements were adopted by the Board of Trustees on April 5, 2006, after seven months of institution-wide discussion and modification that included approval by recognized employee and student governance groups: Council of Administrators, Classified Staff Council, Faculty Senate and Student Government Assembly. Since that time, the only modifications have been adding the reference to master's degree programs, in the 2010-11 catalog, and the changing of the institution's name from Metropolitan State College of Denver (MSCD) to

Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver), following the granting of legislative authority to do so in April 2012.

[1.A.2] - MSU Denver's academic programs, support services and student profile reflect the University's mission.

The role and mission statements underpin and guide the workings of MSU Denver. They are broadly available and are a preface to key planning and operation documents. The statements are the preamble to the MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh. Three of the set of five core values articulated in the strategic plan — diversity, access to learning and a climate of mutual respect — are clearly stated in the role and mission statements, demonstrating their foundational application throughout MSU Denver. The other two core values — entrepreneurship and community of civic engagement — are implied in the role and mission statements.

An expanded version of the role and mission statements is found in the Operational Mission Statement of the Trustees Policy Manual (p. 3.) signifying the governing board's adherence to the statements. The statements are published verbatim in the Handbook for Professional Personnel (p. 1.), which governs faculty and staff performance.

The role and mission statements are also stated in the beginning of the 2015 Undergraduate Curriculum Manual and Graduate Curriculum Manual, both of which define curriculum guidelines, policies and procedures. This is immediately followed by the curriculum goals, which are built on the statements, demonstrating the underlying impact they have on teaching and learning.

> **Comment [L1]:** Change name on actual doc to Undergraduate
>
> **Comment [L2]:** Make link to when done

MSU Denver's statutory role of *"providing comprehensive, baccalaureate and master's degrees"* is demonstrated in the MSU Denver A to Z list of 244 degree options in majors, minors, concentrations, certificates and licensures.

MSU Denver is committed to a diverse student population as evidenced by its role and mission statements and the MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh. The University's current student demographic for students of color is 37 percent undergraduate and 21 percent graduate as listed in the 2015-16 Executive Briefing. The University has a higher head count of ethnically diverse students than any other college or university in Colorado. The May 2015 edition of Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education magazine lists MSU Denver 74th in its annual "Top 100 Issue" for colleges and universities throughout the country for graduating Hispanic students — the highest ranking of any baccalaureate institution in Colorado. Diverse Issues in Higher Education ranked MSU Denver among the nation's top 100 institutions in 2014 for awarding bachelor's degrees to students of color.

> **Comment [L3]:** Link to when ready
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> **Comment [L4]:** No access without subscription
>
> **Comment [L5]:** No 2015 figures available yet

A STEM Job-Approved™ College 2015, MSU Denver is recognized as Colorado's leader in providing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education to students of color, with more than 1,900 studying STEM subjects. Students of color and low-income students together comprise 64 percent of the University's STEM students.

> **Comment [L6]:** Need low-income student total to get percentage.

MSU Denver continues to increase its baccalaureate graduation numbers of African-American and Hispanic students. From May 2014 to May 2015, the number of African-American graduates increased 18.8 percent (64 students to 76 students), and the number of Hispanic graduates increased 13.4 percent (283 students to 381 students). Hispanic students now represent 18.1 percent of the total graduating student body, an increase that aligns with the University's Hispanic Serving Institute initiative, which is discussed in detail in section 1.C.2.

In 2013, MSU Denver's mission to "provide a high-quality, accessible, enriching education" was recognized and reinforced by the State when the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, utilizing the newly passed House Bill 12-1155, approved the University's application to become the first baccalaureate-degree-granting institution in Colorado to provide remedial education to its marginally prepared students. The University provides the support services through Supplemental Academic Instruction (SAI), the Writing Center, Tutoring Center and federally and privately funded grants to facilitate the success of these students.

Consistent with the accessibility component of its mission, the University is a modified open-enrollment institution and charges the lowest tuition of the largest baccalaureate-granting public institutions in Colorado. Tuition is the same amount between 12 and 18 credit hours in order to make it more affordable for students and to encourage them to attend full time, thereby supporting retention and graduation goals. Affordable Colleges Online lists MSU Denver 25th in its 2014-15 list of the 50 most affordable large public colleges and also among the most financially effective of all Colorado post-secondary schools.

One in five Coloradans seeking a bachelor's degree enrolls at MSU Denver. Per the University's Fall 2015 student profile, student population is composed of 32 percent first-generation students and 32 percent Pell Grant-eligible students and the average age is 26. The University's commitment to student veterans and active military, of which there are more than 1,000, is evidenced by its 2015 rankings of 32nd and 48th, respectively, in Military Times' Best Colleges for Veterans and Best for Vets: Business Schools lists.

The University's commitment to accessibility includes a robust and innovative Access Center that provides leadership, advocacy and educational support for between 1,000 and 1,200 students who qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The center promotes Universal Design for Learning curriculum (UDL) and sends out monthly UDL tips to all faculty members. Since 2011, an annual Universal Design for Learning Recognition Award has been given to faculty members who have embraced the challenge of rethinking the structure of their curricula to best serve a diverse population of learners. MSU Denver also offers an annual Zarlengo Foundation Endowed Scholarship of approximately $1,000 to a student who has a diagnosed learning disability. In addition, the Access Center is collaborating with other institutional partners to develop an Electronic and Informational Technology Accessibility Plan that provides processes to ensure equal access for all individuals.

MSU Denver's mission of providing a high-quality education is demonstrated by outcomes such as its graduates earning above the statewide median income when compared with all Colorado public university graduates (Colorado Department of Higher Education and College Measures: edpays.org). It is also demonstrated by the University's ranking as No. 646 overall and

No. 109 in the West in Forbes' 2015 America's Top College's list and No. 5 in U.S. News and World Report's 2014 list of the best public regional colleges in the West.

With a primary focus on "excellence in teaching and learning," as specified in the University's role statement, it is not surprising that faculty members garner national awards:

- French Professor Ann Williams, Ph.D., was named 2013 U.S. Professor of the Year for comprehensive baccalaureate-granting institutions by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.
- Ann Morrison, Ph.D., assistant professor of teacher education and education and outreach liaison for the Human Subjects Protections Program, was cited for her outstanding mentoring contribution (ampersand, July 2015) in Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research (PRIM & R).
- In 2014, The Wall Street Journal named MSU Denver faculty members Darrin Duber-Smith and Erick Erikson, Ph.D., among the nation's 125 most influential professors, two of only six Colorado professors recognized with this honor.

According to 2014-15 IPEDS data, terminal degrees are held by 62 percent of the University's full-time faculty and 16 percent of the part-time faculty have terminal degrees. All of our graduate courses and programs ae taught by faculty with terminal degrees or certificates approved by the program's external accrediting body.

The University's commitment to high-quality education is further evidenced by its average class size of 20 and a student/faculty ratio of 19:1.

To support the mission statement goal of preparing students for a multicultural, global and technological society, MSU Denver's General Studies program has student-learning outcomes that require students — including transfer students — to complete one each of courses designated as global and multicultural. The global diversity requirement can be met by taking one of 32 courses that range from Global Health Systems to Technology and Design: Global Perspectives. Courses that satisfy the multicultural requirement are offered in degree programs including Africana Studies, Chicana/o Studies, Native American Studies, Women's Studies and Gender and Sexual Orientation, among others.

[1.A.3] The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.

To determine its budgetary priorities, the University aligns internal budget requests with the core values expressed in the MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh, as described in the first paragraph under 1.A.2. When the proposed budget is presented to the Board of Trustees, it clearly indicates the connection each new spending request has to those values. For example, the FY16 Budget Alignment section of the State of the Budget contains the pie chart that illustrates the FY16 Alignment with the Strategic Plan:

- Student and Academic Success: 90.31 percent
- Community Engagement and Regional Stewardship: 3.69 percent

- Institutional Resources: 3.43 percent
- Budgets not aligned with the Strategic Plan: 2.57 percent

Sources:
MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh
Handbook for Professional Personnel
Trustees Policy Manual
Undergraduate Curriculum Manual
Graduate Curriculum Manual

Comment [L10]: Make link

MSU Denver A to Z list
2015-16 Executive Briefing link

Comment [L11]: Make link

Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education
Affordable Colleges Online
edpays.org
2014-25 IPEDS data link

Comment [L12]: Make link

State of the Budget

1.B. − Core Component 1.B.

The mission is articulated publicly.

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

Argument:

The role and mission statements are the fabric of MSU Denver and the goals stated in each receive the highest positive ratings in employee surveys. The overarching themes in the 2010 and 2013 "Chronicle of Higher Education Great Colleges to Work For" Campus Climate Surveys were that faculty and staff reported a strong sense of pride in the organization, a commitment to the mission, the transformative impact on students and the positive influence in the community. Pride in MSU Denver and its contributions to the community again received high ratings in the follow-up truncated 2015 Pulse Survey. The role and mission statements are stated in numerous official internal and external documents and the prominence of their use demonstrates their significance as the guideposts for the University.

[1.B.1] - The mission is clearly articulated and widely disseminated.

The role and mission are widely available as they are in the University Catalog and stated verbatim in several locations on the MSU Denver website, including the Strategic Plan and Academic and Student Affairs sections. In addition, the University's 2015-16 Executive Briefing is constructed around values articulated in the role and mission statements: accessibility, diversity, affordability, an excellent education that is relevant and transformative, and community involvement.

Because the role and mission statements are the foundation of the recently developed MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh, they have been widely available to the University's constituents as well as the public. They are also prominent backbones in major governance documents including the Trustees Policy Manual, the Handbook for Professional Personnel and the 2015 Undergraduate Curriculum Manual and Graduate Curriculum Manual.

[1.B.2] - The role and mission statements are current and explain the institution's emphases.

While approved in 2006, the current role and mission statements were updated in the 2010-11 catalog when master's degrees were added and in 2012 when the Colorado Legislature approved the institution's change from college to university status. Yet they remain in alliance with MSU Denver's statutory role.

The strong, positive response to the University's mission, per the aforementioned campus climate surveys, demonstrates employee alliance with the mission, with an 85 percent positive response rate to the question, "I understand how my job contributes to the institution's mission." According to the survey's criteria, a response rate this high gives the University an "Exceptional" rating in this category. In addition, 74 percent of respondents agreed with the statement, "I am proud to be part of this institution." And 72 percent responded that "people are supportive of their colleagues regardless of their heritage or background." Both high marks earned the institution a "Very Good" rating.

The University's alignment with the role and mission statements is manifest. They are the bedrock for the MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh, budget planning, major governance documents, the Undergraduate Curriculum Manual and the Graduate Curriculum Manual. A good example of this synergy is that 90.31 percent of the FY 2016 Budget Alignment with Strategic Plan is allocated to the Student and Academic Success core value (State of the Budget). This funding priority aligns with the following sentences in the role and mission statements: "Excellence in teaching and learning is MSU Denver's primary objective." and "MSU Denver's mission is to provide a high-quality, accessible, enriching education that prepares students for successful careers, post-graduate education and lifelong learning in a multicultural, global and technological society."

As stated in 1.A.2., MSU Denver's demographics demonstrate the University's alignment with the emphases on accessibility and diversity contained in the role and mission statements. It reinforces these objectives with activities and programs, further described in 1.C., such as:

- The annual Richard T. Castro and the Rachel B. Noel Distinguished Visiting Professorships, which recognize the contributions of local civil rights activists and combine community outreach and campus lectures to promote civil rights.
- Pre-collegiate programs, such as the Journey Through Our Heritage, a yearlong program for teams geared at introducing underserved high school students to the University and reinforcing pride in their heritage.
- Summer science camps for middle-school and high-school students sponsored by multiple entities.
- Outreach programs for at-risk K-12 students that are run by the University's Center for Visual Art off-campus gallery in the low-income neighborhood adjacent to the campus.
- The College Assistance Migrant Program, which supports college-age agricultural workers through their freshman year.
- Participation in the Colorado Alliance for Minority Participation grant, which supports students of color in STEM majors.
- Universal Design Learning courses and electronic accessibility that emphasize accessibility for all students.
- An active GLBT Student Services program.

The key role played by the faculty in fulfilling MSU Denver's role and mission is defined by University policies contained in the Handbook for Professional Personnel (p. 7) that describe the primary responsibility of the faculty as *"to provide academic services such as teaching, academic advising and curriculum development to the institution and its students."* Furthermore, the handbook states that the award of tenure "*should recognize contributions to teaching as the most significant factors in evaluating faculty for tenure, but acknowledge that outstanding teaching will not be sufficient to justify tenure."* To achieve tenure, scholarly activities and service to the University, profession and community are also required. These requirements further cement MSU Denver's commitment to "excellence in teaching and learning" as its primary objective.

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

The MSU Denver role and mission statements are in alignment with the University's statutory responsibilities. They define the institution as a "comprehensive, baccalaureate-and master's-degree-granting urban university." As described above, the University fully embraces these concepts, building the 2015 Undergraduate Curriculum Manual, the Graduate Curriculum Manual and the MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh on the role and mission statements. The budget requests and budget updates to the Board of Trustees are organized to fit the strategic plan and thus the role and mission of MSU Denver. The major governance guidelines are also in alignment with the role and mission and insure that faculty are hired by and evaluated according to the primacy of teaching. The University's student demographics and services, as well as its rankings, reflect that MSU Denver operates within its defined role and mission.

Comment [L16]: make link

Sources:
Campus Climate Surveys
University Catalog
MSU Denver website

2015-16 Executive Briefing
MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh
Trustees Policy Manual
Handbook for Professional Personnel
Undergraduate Curriculum Manual
Graduate Curriculum Manual
State of the Budget

1.C - Core Component 1.C.

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

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

Argument:

There can be no question of MSU's commitment to diversity when year after year it leads Colorado higher education with significantly more ethnic minority students than any other institution. The University's diverse student population mirrors that of Colorado, and its goal of attaining the federal designation of Hispanic Serving Institution is within site, with Hispanics now at 22.1 percent of the student population. MSU Denver's policies regarding equal opportunity in education and employment guarantee the fair treatment of its students and employees. Further, the University understands and addresses all segments of diversity: From its Access Center for people with Disabilities, to its services for veterans, to its GLBT Center and more, the institution's educational programs and special activities make apparent how important it is that all students, faculty and staff are respected members of the University community.

[1.C.1] - The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.

MSU Denver firmly addresses its role in a multicultural society and leads Colorado higher education in cultural inclusiveness. In 2010, the University incorporated inclusive excellence ― the practice of moving beyond numeric measurements as the only strategy to promote diversity ― in the University's diversity policies, projects and initiatives. Inclusive excellence involves embedding the practices and philosophies that encourage diversity and inclusivity in every aspect of an organization. Moreover, it encompasses institutionalizing systemic practices and philosophies, thus generating a broader outcome in regards to inclusivity, excellence, cultural competence, innovation, synergy and pride.

MSU Denver's commitment to diversity is internally recognized through its prominent role in the MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh as one of the University's core values. The University's efforts have been recognized with prestigious national Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award (HEED) Awards in 2014 and 2015. The HEED Award is a comprehensive measurement of an institution's level of achievement and intensity of commitment to broadening

diversity and inclusion on campus through initiatives, programs and outreach, student recruitment, retention and completion, and hiring practices for faculty and staff.
Additional external diversity awards and recognition include:

- Civil Rights Award (Anti-Defamation League − Mountain States Region, 2014)
- Ranked 74th out of top 100 colleges nationwide for graduating Latino students (Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education, 2015)
- Ranked 32nd in Best Colleges for Veterans and 48th in Best for Vets: Business Schools (Military Times, 2015). Military Advanced Education included MSU Denver in its Guide to Military-Friendly Colleges and Universities 2015, and in addition, G.I. Jobs has given MSU Denver "Military-Friendly Status" since 2013. U.S. Veterans Magazine listed the University in its 2014 guide of top military-friendly schools.
- Nonprofit Impact Award for championing state legislation to provide in-state tuition to undocumented students (Colorado Nonprofit Association, 2015)
- Outstanding Support of Hispanic Issues in Higher Education Award (American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education, 2014)
- Among top 100 institutions in nation for awarding bachelor's degrees to students of color (Diverse: Issues in Higher Education, 2014)
- One of four Model Emerging Hispanic Serving Institutions nationally (Excelencia in Education, 2010)
- Sol Trujillo National Lifetime Leadership Award for President Stephen Jordan (Latin American Education Foundation, 2014)
- One of the "100 Best LGBT Campuses" in the country (Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students national publication, 2006).

Comment [L19]: Bernice to ask Luis if this is correct, any other recognition by Excelencia?

Multicultural and Diversity Events:
MSU Denver hosts approximately 75 multicultural or diversity events annually. The Office of Institutional Diversity helps fund diversity programming through Diversity Grants, with additional events being supported through other avenues. Examples of funded events and programs range from An Evening with Dr. Cornel West to Outstanding Women's Awards to the Lalo Delgado Poetry Festival.

The office coordinates the dissemination of funds that are designated to support events and activities that address one or more of the following goals towards inclusive excellence:

- student recruitment and retention
- improving campus climate
- fostering social awareness of diversity issues
- promoting activities to support the president's goals related to MSU Denver's diversity
- encouraging the cultural and academic enrichment of campus community members
- increasing multicultural campus competencies

Beyond its large commencement exercises, the University holds smaller, more personalized celebrations targeted at underrepresented populations: Latina/o Graduation, Black Graduation Celebration, Veteran Graduation, GLBTQ Lavender Graduation and Native American Graduation.

MSU Denver organizes and supports a number of programs that reach out into the surrounding community as well as students. Highlighted below are four signature multicultural and diversity events:

- **Rachel B. Noel Distinguished Visiting Professorship:** Named for the first African-American woman elected to a Colorado political office and the leader of a busing program for school desegregation in Denver Public Schools, the Noel Professorship was initiated in 1981 to foster multiculturalism, diversity and academic excellence at MSU Denver and in the surrounding community. The professorship brings renowned African-American leaders, scholars and artists of distinction to the University to conduct classes, seminars, performances and lectures for students, faculty and the larger Denver community.

- **Richard T. Castro Distinguished Visiting Professorship:** The Castro Professorship was initiated in 1997 to celebrate multiculturalism, diversity and academic excellence at MSU Denver and the surrounding community. It honors the memory of a prominent local civil rights leader and legislator who was an alumnus of the University. It brings renowned Latina and Latino leaders, scholars and artists of distinction to MSU Denver to conduct classes, seminars, performances and lectures for students, faculty and the larger Denver community.

- **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Breakfast and Awards:** The MLK Jr. Peace Breakfast commemorates the philosophy, values and belief system of the late Dr. King while promoting diversity and equality within the University's campus community and the surrounding region. A key component of the breakfast is the MLK Peace Awards that celebrate individuals within the University and the Denver community who keep the spirit and dream of Dr. King alive through their actions. The breakfast is one of the most popular events at MSU Denver.

- **Higher Education Diversity Summit:** Initiated by MSU Denver, this annual summit features expert speakers, workshops, discussion forums and networking opportunities designed to increase understanding of and appreciation for multiple worldviews within the campus community. The summit typically draws between 500 and 700 attendees, including faculty, staff and students from other higher education institutions as well as members of the broader community.

Signature Pre-Collegiate Programs:

Listed below are programs targeted to underserved middle-school and high-school students with the goal being their eventual enrollment at MSU Denver.

- **Journey Through Our Heritage**: This long-running program hosts 10 underserved high-school student teams in an academic yearlong journey through learning about different cultures and the way they contribute to society. Paired with MSU Denver student mentors, each team creates multiple academic artifacts and competes for awards.

- **Excel Pre-Collegiate Program**: This collaborative effort between MSU Denver and selected high schools assists motivated underserved students, mainly first-generation-to-college and Latina/o, regardless of which higher-education institution they intend to attend. Students and their parents are guided in college applications/enrollment, financial aid, scholarship search and application, and college essay support. Informational workshops are offered in English and Spanish. Excel outreach counselors normally make weekly visits to area high schools.

- **Roadrunner Ambassador Program**: This 20-year-old program has assisted hundreds of students make a successful transition from high school to MSU Denver. A collaborative effort with selected local high schools, it assists underrepresented students with the processes of admission, enrollment and financial aid/scholarship application and provides resources for making a smooth transition to the University. Current MSU Denver student ambassadors visit their assigned high school(s) on a weekly basis.

  > **Comment [L20]:** I could not find this program on the web, so no link.

- **Summer Science Institute**: These camps are funded by a variety of small private grants and by tuition. While no students are excluded, the camps primarily target those who are underserved. They differ from most summer camps in that they are taught by full-time MSU Denver faculty.

- **TRIO High School Upward Bound** (**HSUB**): This federally funded college-preparatory program assists low-income, first-generation and college-bound high-school students by teaching them the skills and generating the motivation necessary to complete high school and then enter and succeed in a program of postsecondary education. MSU Denver has hosted the HSUB Program in Denver since 1974.

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

MSU Denver takes a proactive and balanced approach to diversity.   MSU Denver has an Office of Institutional Diversity, and its director, Associate to the President for Diversity, reports directly to the MSU Denver's president.   MSU Denver supports and values diversity in all forms in a teaching and learning community marked by mutual respect, inclusion and cooperation. Diversity is reflected in the curriculum, major undertakings such as the Hispanic Serving Institution initiative (described below) and the composition of faculty, staff and students. A testimony to the University's commitment to diversity is that its student population mirrors the ethnic demographics of the state. The student body is composed of 37 percent students of color, and 22 percent of the University's full-time faculty members are ethnic minorities.

Hispanic Serving Institution Initiative (**HSI**)**:** In 2007, with a challenge from the Board of Trustees, MSU Denver embarked on the bold goal of attaining the U.S. Department of Education Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designation by achieving 25 percent Hispanic enrollment within a decade. President Stephen Jordan charged a volunteer HSI Task Force of some 60 staff, administrators, students and faculty to deliver recommendations to double the University's Hispanic student enrollment from 13.2 percent in Fall 2007 to 25 percent in Fall 2017.

In February 2008, the task force presented President Jordan with the HSI Task Force Final Report providing 55 recommendations for MSU Denver to achieve HSI designation. Two of the recommendations, in particular, show the impact the initiative has had on the University. The first, which was to establish master's-degree programs, resulted from research that showed that HSI institutions with graduate programs had higher retention and graduation rates. Offering master's degrees required approval from both the State Legislature and the Higher Learning Commission. In Fall 2010, MSU Denver enrolled the first cohort of students into three graduate programs: Master of Professional Accountancy, Master of Arts in Teaching and Master of Social Work. As of Fall 2015, 469 master's students were enrolled, with 21 percent being ethnic minority. Master's programs in business administration and health administration are currently being developed.

The second impactful task force recommendation was to support a state-level DREAM Act legislation to allow in-state tuition for undocumented students. MSU Denver has a long history of supporting "dreamers." The Faculty Senate, in 2003, was the first body in Colorado higher education to publicly support in-state tuition for undocumented students. President Stephen Jordan was the first college or university president in Colorado to support the DREAM Act in front of the Colorado Legislature. In 2012, following the sixth failure to pass the by-then-renamed ASSET Bill, President Jordan proposed to the Board of Trustees an institutionally crafted, modified tuition rate for undocumented students (called the "Colorado High School GED rate"). The trustees approved this controversial rate on June 7, 2012. After the Colorado Attorney General issued an opinion against the new rate, the Legislature's Joint Budget Committee held a special session to question President Jordan and a Board of Trustees member about it. Despite the controversy, MSU Denver received support from many state legislators and U.S. representatives and senators as well as leaders of other higher-education institutions. In Fall 2012, 257 students enrolled under the University's new rate. This bold action demonstrates MSU Denver's commitment to serving diverse and underserved populations and distinguishes the institution from all other colleges and universities in Colorado in its willingness to take innovative steps to provide education to all students regardless of background.

The ASSET Bill, a bill to allow educational access to undocumented students who graduated from high school in Colorado), became law in 2013; Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper publicly acknowledged that MSU Denver's leadership in creating the modified tuition rate played a significant role in the bill's passage. The University enrolled 359 ASSET students in Fall 2015, nearly triple the total enrolled at Colorado's other four large public institutions. Fourteen ASSET students graduated from MSU Denver in May 2015, notable since this was accomplished only two years after the passage of the bill.

Current figures indicate the remarkable success MSU Denver has achieved toward HSI designation. Undergraduate Hispanic student enrollment (not counting undocumented students, who cannot be counted toward HSI designation) has increased from 2,880 students (13.2 percent) in Fall 2008 to 4,082 in Fall 2015 (20.5 percent); an increase of 1,202 students or 54.2 percent, in seven years.

The HSI Initiative is aimed at increasing not just Hispanic student enrollment but retention and graduation as well. As mentioned in 1.A.2, Hispanic students now represent 19.2 percent of the total Spring 2015 graduating student body and Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education magazine

lists MSU Denver 74th in its annual "Top 100 Issue" for colleges and universities throughout the country for graduating Hispanic students.

MSU Denver has recently embarked on the next phase of its HSI initiative with the development of a new HSI Task Force to analyze the current status of Hispanic students in the community and at MSU Denver and to make new recommendations to reach its goal of HSI status. The members will create a strategic action plan to increase Hispanic enrollment to 25 percent by Fall 2018 and to support these students to degree attainment.

In addition to the HSI initiative, there are numerous other examples of the institution's attention to human diversity and commitment to educating a diverse student body.

Multicultural Studies Departments: MSU Denver is unique in Colorado in that it boasts individual, degree-granting departments of Africana Studies, Chicana/o Studies and the Institute of Women's Studies and Services. Also, the Native American Studies Program, housed in the Political Science Department, offers a degree minor, and the Women's Studies Program offers a minor in Genders and Sexualities.

Multicultural and Global Diversity Course Requirements for Graduation are part of the University's General Studies program:

- **Multicultural Course:** Courses designated as multicultural increase students' awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity in the United States by examining the interactions of values, beliefs, traditions, identities and contributions of one or more of the following four groups of color in the United States: African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic-American and Native-American. They may include the characteristics of gender, sexual orientation, age or disability within these groups.

- **Global Diversity Course:** The student-learning outcomes for global diversity courses are: 1. Exhibit knowledge of one or more regions or countries outside the U.S. including aspects such as the historical, political, social, cultural, legal or business contexts of these regions or countries, and 2. Describe the implications of global interdependence including its impact on societies from a governmental, technological, institutional, organizational or individual context.

Student Engagement and Retention Programs go hand-in-hand with academic programs to insure that the University meets its "primary objective of excellence in teaching and learning" per its role statement. Examples include:

- **Veteran/Military Students:** To strengthen the University's already nationally recognized services for its more than 1,000 veterans and active military students, the 2014 Veteran/Military Students Task Force Report made recommendations for improvement, several of which were implemented in 2015: the establishment of the Veteran and Military Student Services Center, the hiring of a full-time veteran and military student services coordinator and new academic policies to support veterans, including priority registration and a Military Credit Transfer Package.

- **Brother to Brother (B2B) Program**: This initiative for urban males is designed to assist African-American and Latino students build strong study habits and organizational and test-taking skills. It develops social activities to create a sense of community and includes leadership development. Students also receive support to transition into a career or graduate school.

- **Immigrant Services:** This program provides holistic support to immigrant, refugee, undocumented ASSET and nonnative English-speaking students. Among other services, it provides assistance in academic support, degree and career planning, financial aid information/assistance and peer mentoring.

- **TRIO Student Support Services:** This longstanding federal program serves students who are first-generation, low-income and/or have disabilities. Through such direct support as tutoring, personal counseling, mentoring and financial guidance, TRIO provides access and assists in academic success and retention.

- **Fostering Success Program:** This program consists of a network of faculty and staff members that provides support to independent MSU Denver students who come from foster care, kinship care, group home or orphaned backgrounds. The program's goal is to create a community of support for emancipated foster students to help them reach their graduation and career goals.

- **College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP):** The goal of MSU Denver CAMP is to help students from migrant and seasonal farm worker backgrounds to enroll and complete their first year in college so that they continue onto their second year and eventually earn a post-secondary degree. Federally funded since 1999, the program works with 35 students on average each year. It has helped 525 students to date and boasts a freshman-to-sophomore retention rate greater than 86 percent.

- **RISE Program:** RISE is a student organization open to ASSET, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA), refugee and other undocumented students, as well as their supporters and allies. The club is a resource where students can ask questions, seek help and share opportunities.

- **Outstanding Multicultural Student Awards:** MSU Denver gives annual Outstanding Student Employee Project – Multicultural and Student Organization Multicultural Event of the Year awards as part of the Student Involvement and Leadership Awards.

Faculty and Staff Diversity Programs, such as those listed below, support the University's role and mission statement and its vision of inclusive excellence.

- **Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs):** These cross-disciplinary groups of eight to 12 faculty and sometimes staff members engage in active collaborative learning throughout the academic year around a theme and toward defined outcomes. They vary by theme or by cohort, but all have a common connection to the University's teaching mission along with

a commitment to taking scholarly approaches toward meeting that mission. Topics have included:

- understanding and engaging with linguistic diversity
- sports and diversity
- teaching for equity and effectiveness in STEM
- intersectionality in academia
- cultural inclusivity in university classrooms and student services

- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Award:** This annual award recognizes a faculty member's efforts to increase access for students with disabilities who use assistive technology and/or to expand the awareness and implementation of UDL principles to improve access and inclusion for all students. The Office of Institutional Diversity provides a $1,000 Inclusive Excellence Activity Grant to the awardee.

- **Equity in Excellence:** The objective of this exciting initiative, begun in Spring 2013, is to identify equity gaps in outcomes and then recommend how the gaps can be closed. Following the initial work of the Equity in Excellence Task Force and the publication of the 2014 Equity Scorecard, two standing groups are continuing this work to integrate the values of the Equity in Excellence project into the structure and culture of MSU Denver.

- **GLBT Student Services Office High Tea:** Held every fall, this event promotes equitable treatment and support of LGBTQ students and honors faculty and staff allies with awards that recognize their support of the campus LGBTQ community.

- **Employee Training Programs that Reinforce Diversity:** MSU Denver fosters an environment that recognizes the worth and potential of every individual and encourages respect among all members of its community. The following is a list of required trainings for new employees, with additional optional training for current employees:
  - Disability and Americans with Disabilities Act Awareness Training
  - Cultural Competence Training for University Supervisors
  - Preventing Sexual Harassment
  - Title IX Trainings for Investigators
  - Sexual Misconduct (under development)

Longer descriptions can be found on the employee training Web page.

Sources:
MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh
Hispanic Serving Institution Task Force Final Report
Guide to Military-Friendly Colleges and Universities 2015
G.I. Jobs
U.S. Veterans Magazine
Diversity Grants

Rachel B. Noel Distinguished Visiting Professorship
Richard T. Castro Distinguished Visiting Professorship
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Breakfast and Awards
Higher Education Diversity Summit
Journey Through Our Heritage

> **Comment [L24]:** Link to come from Myron

Excel Pre-Collegiate Program
Summer Science Institute
TRIO High School Upward Bound
Hispanic Serving Institution Initiative
HSI Task Force Final Report
Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education
Africana Studies
Chicana/o Studies
Institute of Women's Studies and Services
Native American Studies program
Veteran/Military Students
2014 Veteran/Military Students Task Force Report
Brother to Brother
Immigrant Services
TRIO Student Support Services
Fostering Success Program
College Assistance Migrant Program
Faculty Learning Communities
Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Award
Equity in Excellence
GLBT Student Services
employee training web page

1.D - Core Component 1.D.

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

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

Argument

MSU Denver firmly embraces its institutional mission and its contribution to the public good. The values of diversity, access, entrepreneurship, respect and community are clearly articulated in the MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh and reflect the University's commitment to the public good. Examples of contributions that benefit Colorado and the region include the University's modified open enrollment admission standards as well as the high numbers of Pell Grant recipients and first-generation college students. Per the 2015-16 Executive Briefing, both cohorts are 32 percent of the student body, or approximately 7,000 students. Beyond its enrollment of underrepresented students, the University maintains significant ties to the surrounding

Comment [L25]: link

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community through educational programs for at-risk youth, partnerships with community organizations and local school districts, resources for families and more.

[1.D.1] - Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.

MSU Denver is Colorado's leader in granting access to higher education for underserved students. At 37 percent, the University enrolls considerably more students of color as well as ASSET students (defined in 1C.2.) than any other four-year higher education institution in the state. Widely recognized for its commitment to its more than 1,000 veterans, the University is ranked 32nd in Military Times' 2015 "100 Best Colleges for Veterans" and 48th in its "Best for Vets: Business Schools."

Additionally, the University regularly receives grants for programs that benefit Colorado and the region. Examples include:

- **Teaching with Primary Sources − Western Region** (**TPS**): Funded by a Library of Congress grant, TPS promotes the use of primary sources in instruction by offering free professional development opportunities for K-12 educators across the state.

- **Equity Assistance Center**: One of only 10 regional centers nationwide, the center provides training and technical assistance on educational issues related to race, gender and national origin. The center is funded by the U.S. Department of Education under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

- **Master of Social Work students** receive stipends to work with at-risk children and youth through a $1.2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with Colorado State University.

- **Family Literacy Program** (**FLP**): The program began implementing a model intergenerational learning program for families in 1994 in partnership with agencies such as Denver Public Schools and the Denver Housing Authority. With the three-year, $175,000 grant from Toyota and the National Center for Families Learning (NCFL) it was awarded in 2014, FLP will expand its programs that meet the literacy needs of metropolitan Denver's most vulnerable lower-income families.

[1.D.2] - The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization or supporting external interests.

MSU Denver is a public university that has an independent Board of Trustees, appointed by the governor, and is approved by the State Legislature as an autonomous university. Its focus is on teaching and learning excellence and it supports only external interests that complement its educational mission. The University will continue this approach by investing its resources in its areas of strategic priority with a strong emphasis on student and academic success, the No. 1 theme in the MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh: "At MSU Denver, we believe excellence in teaching and learning and student success — supported in a collegial atmosphere of academic

freedom — must be accorded the highest priority. We evaluate our success by utilizing measures focused on the knowledge and skills students gain during their educational experience with us."

[1.D.3] - The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

MSU Denver continues to demonstrate its investment in and commitment to educating the greater community and providing a wealth of opportunities for collaboration and partnership. Some of these initiatives involve students from elementary, middle and high schools as well as individuals from companies and corporations of varying sizes, all of which contribute to enhancing the public good. Indeed, the University is a gateway of opportunity by transforming the lives of its students and serving the community as a courageous change agent. Examples of its impact on the broader community include:

- **Hotel and Hospitality Learning Center (HLC):** The HLC is an on-campus hotel and learning center for University students studying hospitality, tourism and event planning. It was one of six winners of a 2012 Downtown Denver Partnership (DDP) Award. The award recognizes businesses, organizations, events and projects that "have made significant contributions toward creating a unique, vibrant and diverse Downtown environment, and have made a lasting, positive impact on Downtown Denver." The HLC was selected "for leveraging an innovative public/private collaboration to create a dual-purpose educational facility that combines classrooms with interactive laboratories, a hotel and restaurant, providing students with hands-on learning and a dynamic curriculum," according to the DDP.

- **Center for Visual Art:** An off-campus art gallery, the award-winning center for Visual Art hosts exhibitions of distinguished national and international merit, holds public lectures by the artists and University art faculty and provides art programs to at-risk youth. It continually receives acclaim from local art critics for its leading-edge art exhibits and is frequently honored with local media "Best of" awards as voted by the metro Denver community.

- **Project Soar:** In 2015, the Department of Aviation and Aerospace Science hosted its fourth and final year of the Project SOAR program, a collaborative grant-funded effort with the Denver Housing Authority and Shades of Blue, a nonprofit organization dedicated to encouraging the study of STEM disciplines. The program offers young students from the public-housing area adjacent to the campus exposure to aviation and aerospace educational opportunities and career possibilities. Middle-school participants were treated to a special virtual appearance by NASA Astronaut Victor J. Glover via MSU Denver's Center for Advanced Visualization and Experiential Analysis (CAVEA).

- **Aerospace and Engineering Sciences Building:** By providing a cohesive space for the integrated study of aviation and aerospace science, engineering technologies, computer information systems, computer science and industrial design, MSU Denver will educate the most skilled, workforce-ready professionals available to meet the aviation, aerospace

and advanced manufacturing needs of the state of Colorado. The University broke ground on the $60 million building in October 2015, with plans for its completion in 2017.

- **Music and Theatre Departments:** These academic programs provide public performances and educational outreach to area K-12 schools. Students, faculty and guest artists create opportunities for public access to excellence in the arts, promoting the cultural life of the University and the surrounding region. For many years, the Educational Theatre Internship with Kaiser Permanente toured the metro Denver area, providing live performances with a live-healthy message to elementary school students.

- **Colorado Center for Medical Laboratory Science:** The center provides post-baccalaureate-level training for medical laboratory scientists, contributing trained professionals to meet a critical health care workforce need in the Rocky Mountain region. It is sponsored by the Colorado Health Foundation.

- **One World, One Water Center for Urban Water Education and Stewardship (OWOW):** MSU Denver established this interdisciplinary education program that addresses the growing demand for water and the need for greater public education about this vital resource. The center offers a minor in water studies and connects students with internships, service learning and volunteer opportunities. The University collaborated with leading local and national water organizations to develop the curriculum.

- **Center for Urban Education:** The center is strengthening ties between the University and Denver Public Schools to encourage grade-school students to start thinking about college, while also giving MSU Denver students valuable mentoring experience. One successful outcome is the recent launch of the 21st Century College Readiness Center, which offers after-school tutoring, enrichment activities and family support programs to improve the academic performance and college readiness of students at five high-need Denver public schools.

- **Center for Advanced Visualization and Experiential Analysis (CAVEA):** CAVEA is a unique multiroom venue designed to support meetings, events and presentations for the public as well as the campus community. Its cutting-edge technology enables users to visualize concepts and data in meaningful ways in order to shape critical decisions and collaborate to solve complex problems with the ultimate purpose of creating a better future. The CAVEA team helps clients craft and share information in an effective way that makes best use of available resources, whether that means a PowerPoint presentation, GIS mapping, stereo 3-D projected images or a teleconference. The venue includes the main CAVEA theater, two auxiliary break-out rooms connected by a walkout balcony with views of downtown Denver and a hospitality lounge. Since its inception, CAVEA has welcomed clients from education, government, nonprofit, business and manufacturing.

- **Regency Athletic Complex at MSU Denver:** In 2015, the University relocated its baseball, softball, soccer, tennis and track teams to the newly constructed complex, which is adjacent to the low-income neighborhood that surrounds the campus. A community resource, its multipurpose fitness trail is open to nearby residents and partnerships with

Denver Parks and Recreation's Citywide Tennis Program and the Colorado Youth Soccer Association offer the complex's facilities to neighborhood youth.

- **Career Services Center:** The center is actively involved in the Colorado Career Development Association, which provides opportunities for volunteer career assistance to the larger community. It also provides services to MSU Denver alumni who, on their own, would face challenges in accessing similar services. Additionally, the center hosts career fairs that are open to the general public.

- **Office of Student Activities:** The office coordinates numerous outreach events and programs that are open to the larger community. These include the Distinguished Lecture Series and fall and spring festivals that offer vendors and nonprofit organizations the opportunity to connect with students. Furthermore, the office works with more than 100 registered student organizations, some of which collaborate with their community parallels. Organizations such as the Golden Key National Honor Society, Psi Chi and Sigma Sigma Sigma incorporate community service components.

- **Counseling Center:** The center hosts National Awareness and Screening Days on Depression, Alcohol and Eating Disorders that are open to the larger community. These events provide an initial assessment that determines whether further evaluation is needed and, if so, assistance is provided in facilitating referrals for psychological and psychiatric care.

- **Health Center at Auraria:** The health center continues its partnership with Denver's Clinica Tepeyac, a community health clinic with a primary clientele of low-income Latina/os, including immigrants. Center doctors often volunteer at the clinic to assist with immunization initiatives to provide culturally sensitive and affordable health-care services to uninsured patients.

Sources:
MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh
2015 Executive Briefing link
Teaching with Primary Sources – Western Region
Equity Assistance Center
Family Literacy Program
Hotel and Hospitality Learning Center
Center for Visual Art
Project Soar
Aerospace and Engineering Sciences Building
Music Department
Theatre Department
Colorado Center for Medical Laboratory Science
One World, One Water Center for Urban Water Education and Stewardship
Center for Urban Education
Regency Athletic Complex at MSU Denver

Career Services Center
Office of Student Activities
Counseling Center
Health Center at Auraria

1.S – Criterion 1 – Summary

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

Summary

MSU Denver proudly publishes its role and mission statements throughout its communications so that all its constituencies understand the vital role the statements play in the University's aspirations. The principles set forth in the statements guide MSU Denver as its system of shared governance assures they are embedded in all policies, regulations, procedures and processes. But the role and mission statements do more than provide direction for the University's operations. Given MSU Denver's modified open enrollment admission standards, these statements go to the very core of what makes the University unique and why its faculty and staff are so loyal. Not only is the institution a gateway of opportunity for many who would otherwise not have the chance to earn a college degree, it is also a leader, a game changer, in finding innovative ways to transform the lives of its students, their communities and even higher education itself. From its rigorous academic programming, to its bold leadership in championing higher education for undocumented students, to its unique public/private partnerships that meet critical workforce needs, to its commitment to improving the quality of life for all Coloradans, it is evident how MSU Denver lives its role and mission.

2 – Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A – Core Component 2.A

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

Argument

Integrity is integral to MSU Denver's educational and administrative operations. The University's policies and procedures represent the highest standards for the conduct of its governing board, senior leadership, faculty and staff. The University's basic tenet of shared governance ensures that its commitment to ethical and fair processes is woven throughout its culture, programs and community.

Board of Trustees: Responsible for the governance of the University, the board consists of nine members appointed by the governor and approved by the State Legislature and three elected, non-voting members who represent the faculty, the student body and the MSU Denver Alumni Association. The Trustees Policy Manual provides the trustees with guidance on the proper governance and oversight of the rules, regulations and standards set by the institution.

Faculty and staff: The Handbook for Professional Personnel and the State Personnel System Employee Handbook for classified employees are the faculty and staff guides on MSU Denver's employment practices, including the code of conduct, policies, procedures and the process for bringing complaints and concerns forward for review by the administration. Both handbooks are accessible to University employees and the broader community on the Board of Trustees website.

The University steadfastly upholds equal opportunity of employment and educational services as outlined in the anti-discrimination policy in the Trustees Policy Manual (p. 15). Also, the Handbook for Professional Personnel (p. 3) includes policies related to equal opportunity in hiring practices. The Office of Equal Opportunity oversees institutional policies and procedures that prohibit discrimination.

Students: MSU Denver's strict rules for students' scholarly and research work emphasizes the same level of expectations for ethical academic conduct as that of the faculty and staff. Plagiarism and academic integrity are addressed in the Student Code of Conduct in the MSU Denver Student Handbook. One of the Academic Responsibilities listed in the University Catalog is that students must "maintain academic ethics and academic honesty."

Research: MSU Denver is committed to protecting the rights and welfare of subjects in Human Research. The 13-page Human Research Protection Plan, signed by the president in September 2014, describes the University's plan to comply with the legal and ethical requirements for the conduct and oversight of human research. The Human Subjects Protection Program offers guidance and resources for student and faculty researchers.

Shared Governance: MSU Denver's commitment to shared governance plays an integral role in upholding integrity and fairness in all aspects of the University's operations. The Trustees Policy Manual (p. 3) explicitly states the importance of shared governance in its interaction with the University community. Signifying its importance, the Shared Governance statement comprises the second section of the Handbook for Professional Personnel (p. 2).

To address concerns raised in campus climate surveys about the University's decision-making process, the president formed the Shared Governance Task Force in Fall 2014 to assess MSU Denver's model of shared governance and make recommendations to improve governance at the University. This group considered various models and approaches of governance and engaged in dialogue with faculty, staff and students on the topic. In June 2015, the task force presented its Shared Governance Task Force Final Report outlining key recommendations, including

- establish a discourse of trust
- prioritize communication, including revising the statement of shared governance to better reflect its meaning
- increase opportunities for people's voices to be heard
- study current governance structures
- increase access to the Board of Trustees and enhancing trustee engagement

The president has communicated to the University community his and the board's commitment to ensuring participatory dialogue throughout a transformation of the University's governance model.

Stating that the report's nuanced details will need work in order for the recommendations to be actualized, he encouraged academic departments and administrative units to discuss the report at team meetings and provide feedback. The group's work helped frame the MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh core value of respect.

Ombuds Office: The University Ombuds Office (UOO) is an employee resource that promotes understanding of University policies and procedures and is committed to finding fair and equitable outcomes to conflicts and concerns. Working outside of the normal lines of authority, the UOO is not aligned with and is functionally independent from any and all of the University's offices. The UOO makes every effort to maintain neutrality and impartiality by acting through the lens of fairness and equity. The office supports institutional integrity by giving professional and student personnel as well as external constituents who have business with the institution a place to voice their concerns in a fair, ethical, nonjudgmental atmosphere. Communication is voluntary, informal, unbiased and confidential. The UOO supports self-determination as well as collaborative conflict engagement in understanding University policies and procedures, developing suitable options and finding fair and equitable outcomes.

In 2014, the UOO handled 148 cases and offered 35 presentations about its functions and limitations to approximately 450 attendees. The UOO 2015 Annual Report is posted on the UOO website.
Sources:
Trustees Policy Manual
Handbook for Professional Personnel
State Personnel System Employee Handbook
Student Code of Conduct
MSU Denver Student Handbook
Academic Responsibilities
University Catalog
Human Research Protection Plan
Human Subjects Protection Program
Shared Governance Task Force
Shared Governance Task Force Final Report
MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh
University Ombuds Office
UOO 2015 Annual Report

2.B – Core Component 2.B

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

Argument

At MSU Denver, the administration, faculty and staff strive for preeminence and transparency in all facets of the University's work. Articulating its goals, functions and academic offerings to prospective and current students as well as to its internal community and the general public is achieved through numerous communication channels. While MSU Denver recognizes that the Web is the main communication method in this day and age, particularly for younger students, it has not lost sight of the importance of personal, one-on-one interaction. In fact, the University prides itself on its focus on each student's success through its teaching faculty, small classes (19 to 1 ratio) and support services.

The University's main communication tool is msudenver.edu, the institution's home page that presents general information on its programs and initiatives. From there, constituents can access the University Catalog, which outlines all academic programs and policies for any given academic year. The home page offers access to each departmental website with detailed program information, specific degree requirements and faculty and staff information. In addition, the home page connects to all administrative office and support services sites where constituents can find tuition-and-fee costs, general university and student policies and information on governance bodies.

Beyond clearly outlining its functions and offerings, the University provides a robust self-service student portal accessed through the Student Hub that allows all admitted students to track their individual student records, degree progression and all information pertaining to their experience at the University.

Academic Program Information: MSU Denver A to Z has an interactive table of degree options in majors, minors, concentrations, certificates and licensures that community members and prospective students can easily navigate to view the programs offered by the University.

Degree Requirements: All degree requirements and academic policies enforced for a given academic year can be accessed on the University Catalog site for current and archived catalogs. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the services offered by the Academic Advising Center and the recently hired additional new advisors that have been placed in the three colleges and the school of Education, to guide them through their college career from their first semester through graduation. The Center and the three colleges and School of Education provide information on policies and degree requirements and offers academic advising by professional advisors, faculty advisors or both.

Access to Faculty and Staff: Each college/school has established minimum expectations for full-time faculty office hours when students may visit with their instructors to discuss course content, seek advising or otherwise engage in relevant discussion. All faculty and staff members along with their phone numbers and email addresses are listed under the "Contact" tab on their respective departmental or office website. They can also be searched on the "A-Z" link on msudenver.edu.

Costs to Students: MSU Denver prides itself on providing a high-quality, affordable education. The University offers the lowest tuition out of Colorado's four other large, public universities. To retain students and help them graduate in a timely fashion, MSU Denver has a tuition window that sets one price for tuition between 12 and 18 credit hours.

Per the Trustees Policy Manual (p. 31), the Board of Trustees has the authority and responsibility to set tuition and fees in accordance with Colorado Commission on Higher Education policies and guided by the University's mission to provide high-quality, accessible education. The president annually submits a recommended tuition-and-fee schedule based on enrollment projections and other factors as part of the process of setting the operating budget for the coming fiscal year.

The University makes every effort to ensure students know upfront what costs they can expect. Prospective students and constituents can find official tuition and fee charges for the current academic year on the Office of the Bursar Tuition Dates and Deadlines page. The Important Dates and Deadlines with Payment Guide is a valuable resource for students to learn about payment options and to plan for specific payment deadlines. Further, upon registering for courses, students can at any time access their detailed tuition-and-fees statement on the self-service portal on the Student Hub.

Operating under strict guidelines for best business practices, the Office of Financial Aid works to ensure students fully understand the parameters and obligations of their financial aid package. The office's Debt Management program helps students track their student loan debt, resolve issues with default and over-borrowing, review student loan repayment options and develop an understanding of financial literacy.

Control: MSU Denver is governed by the University's Board of Trustees, whose specific role and function are discussed in detail in section 2.C. Biographies of each trustee, the schedule of meetings and associated agendas, policies and governance manuals as well as contact information are available to the internal and external public on the Board of Trustees website.

Accreditation Relationships: The University's accreditation relationships are published in the Accreditation and Approvals section of the University Catalog. A link to the Higher Learning Commission North Central Association is provided, as is contact information for the other accrediting agencies so that the public can access detailed information, including the corresponding program's accreditation status and accreditation dates.

Sources:
msudenver.edu
University Catalog
Student Hub
MSU Denver A to Z
Trustees Policy Manual
Tuition Dates and Deadlines
Important Dates and Deadlines with Payment Guide
Office of Financial Aid
Debt Management program
Board of Trustees website

2.C – Core Component 2.C

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

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

Argument

The MSU Denver Board of Trustees' autonomy is granted through the State of Colorado Legislature. As specified in Colorado Revised Statute 23-54-102, the board has full authority and responsibility for the control and governance of the University, including such areas as finance, resources, academic programs, curriculum, admissions, role and mission, personnel policies, etc. The trustees regularly establish policies designed to enable the University to perform its statutory functions in a rational and systematic manner. To assist them in meeting their responsibilities, the trustees delegate to the University president the authority to interpret and administer their policies in all areas of operations.

Each year, the board elects a chair and vice chair. In addition, a trustee serves as the board's representative on the Auraria Higher Education Center Board and the MSU Denver Foundation Board. The board has three standing committees: Academic and Student Affairs, Finance and Board Governance.

The Bylaws of the Board of Trustees are published in the Trustees Policy Manual (p. 5).

[2.C.1] - The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.

Using its substantial administrative authority, the board monitors the University to be certain that it is performing at the highest possible level and institutes changes when necessary to achieve institution-wide goals. Examples of board actions include the creation of a separate category of non-resident tuition for undocumented students who have graduated from a Colorado high school and the public/private partnership to construct the Hotel and Hospitality Learning Center as well as its recent deliberations to fill a critical workforce need in Colorado by constructing the Aerospace and Engineering Sciences Building to house the Institute for Advanced Manufacturing and an undergraduate degree that integrates the STEM disciplines.

[2.C.2] - The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interest of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

Within the Board of Trustees' operational mission, all internal constituencies — and external constituencies as appropriate — have a role and a responsibility in assisting the University to achieve excellence in its programs and activities. It is incumbent upon the trustees to operate within an environment that encourages participation from the University's constituents and to consider this input and feedback in their decisions.

Notice of meetings: To ensure constituent participation, all meetings of two or more members of the Board of Trustees at which any public business is discussed or at which any formal action may be taken are open to the public. Any meetings at which the decision or adoption of any proposed resolution, rule, regulation or other formal action occurs or at which a majority or quorum of the board is in attendance, or is expected to be in attendance, shall be held only after full and timely notice to the public in accordance with Colorado's Open Meetings law.

Prior to any regular meeting, members of the public who desire to address the board can sign up to speak, specifying the topic to be discussed. The chairman does have the right to deny any such request.

The board secretary maintains a list of persons who request notification of all meetings when certain specified policies will be discussed and provides advance notification in accordance with Colorado's Open Meetings law.

Complete and accurate minutes of each meeting constitute the official record of proceedings of the board and are made available to the public when requested.

The board has three standing committees, Academic and Student Affairs, Finance and Board Governance, each chaired by a trustee. The committees allow specific, qualified, trustees to engage with the operations of the University at a more detailed level, and subsequently report their findings, suggestions or recommendations to the full board. The dates of these meetings, which are open to the public, are published on the trustees' website.

Internal Constituents: The elected faculty, student and alumni association trustees represent their respective constituencies in board discussions. Beyond these nonvoting trustees, the board expects the participation of faculty, students and staff in its decision-making process and so encourages a broad exchange of information and ideas. To facilitate this exchange, the board looks to the University president as its primary liaison with the University constituencies. To be effective in this role, the president has established avenues for consultation and recommendation by faculty, students and staff regarding policy matters considered by the board. This includes the 22-member President's Cabinet that consists of representatives from all the internal employee groups, each vice presidential division, college, school, major student services areas and the Student Government Assembly.

In addition, constituent groups, including the Faculty Senate, Student Government Assembly and administrator/staff council representatives, may initiate and propose changes in policy to be considered by the board if they are submitted in accordance with guidelines established by the president.

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

The board's conflict-of-interest policy, as articulated in the Trustees Policy Manual (p. 9), states: "The office of trustee is a public trust, created by the confidence which the public reposes in the integrity of its appointed and elected public trustees. Each member of the Board of Trustees shall, mindful of the importance of public confidence, carry out his or her duties with self-evident due care, for the benefit of the University as a public institution, and not for personal benefit."

The policy lays out the liability for abuse of trust. Each trustee is required to inform the board of any interests that could be a conflict with their official duties and to file an annual financial report that outlines their business interests.

The board reviews the Articles of Incorporation of the MSU Denver Foundation, Inc. and approves any gift or activity funded through the foundation that requires or is likely to require, the use of state-appropriated program funds. A 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, the foundation is a separate legal entity from MSU Denver that accepts, controls and manages funds and other gifts received as donations to the University. Gifts to the foundation and expenditure of foundation funds must be consistent with the role and mission of the University and must contribute to institutional goals and objectives.

In addition, the board operates under Colorado Revised Statute 23-1-106, as amended, which states that all acquisition of real property by state-supported universities of higher education which is conditional upon or requires expenditures of state-controlled or federal funds for its utilization, whether acquisition is by purchase, gift or otherwise, shall be subject to approval by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education.

[2.C.4] - The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

The president of the University, who is responsible to the Board of Trustees, has general authority and responsibility for administering the University within the board's policies and procedures. The president is responsible for keeping the board informed of all facets of its operation in a timely and appropriate manner. The president is responsible for recommending annual operating and capital budgets (in addition to any budget formula established by the board) that reflect University priorities and other plans, financial and otherwise, for realizing the University mission. The president is to provide sound management of the approved budgets and plans and facilitate their achievement.

Comment [L27]: new copy per Nate

The board delegates to the president powers over professional personnel (faculty and administrators) as they are defined in the Handbook for Professional Personnel. This includes all personnel offered employment or employed as probationary faculty members, tenured faculty members, administrative personnel, administrative/regular personnel, classified staff and temporary personnel.

Academic Planning and Approval of Curricular Items: The president and provost/vice president for academic and student affairs develop policies for short- and long-term academic planning that are subject to board approval and must be consistent with its goals and priorities. The president and provost/vice president for academic and student affairs also develop policies and procedures for the approval of curricular items. The board, which endorses the principle of academic freedom, has the ultimate authority for approving curriculum, but it recognizes that the faculty should play a proactive role in formulating curriculum for the board's consideration. The following curricular actions must be approved by the board before becoming effective:

- New degree programs
- New minors, concentrations and certificates of completion
- Discontinuation of any program

The board delegates approval of all other curriculum changes to the president as well as the approval of internal policies and procedures for curriculum approval.

Sources:
Trustees Policy Manual
MSU Denver Foundation, Inc.
Handbook for Professional Personnel

2.D – Core Component 2.D

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

Argument

MSU Denver's commitment to academic freedom and truth in its educational enterprises is a core tenet that underpins its culture and the manner in which it performs its responsibilities.

Trustees: The University's commitment is affirmed in the Trustees Policy Manual, the board "endorses the principle of academic freedom, which means the freedom to fully discuss academic subjects; engage in research and publish the results of research; and write or speak as citizens without fear of institutional censorship or discipline, provided that individuals do not represent themselves as writing or speaking for the University."

Faculty and Staff: Academic freedom is one of the seven interrelated principles to which faculty and staff members aspire; the others are communication, valuing all employees, democratic workplace, management excellence, diversity and management innovation. The Handbook for Professional Personnel (p. 2) states the commitment to academic freedom: "The University is a teaching institution where excellence in teaching and learning is accorded the highest priority. Student success, supported in a collegial atmosphere of academic freedom is of paramount

importance, and all members of the University community seek to inspire students to strive for the highest level of achievement." While not specifically addressing academic freedom, the State Personnel System Employee Handbook for classified employees addresses integrity and honesty in its section on employee conduct.

Faculty Senate: Following is the Faculty Senate's Statement on Academic Freedom: "The Faculty Senate of Metropolitan State University of Denver strongly reaffirms its commitment to academic freedom. Such freedom is as fundamental to the principles of liberty and democracy on which this country is founded as freedom of speech and freedom of the press. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) writes that "teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and the publication of the results…" We strongly affirm the University's commitment to due process to assure the integrity of academic freedom.

Academic freedom is germane to intellectual growth because it enables the critical expression and exploration of all ideas, no matter how unpalatable some may be. Rigorous academic debate requires the discussion of both popular and unpopular perspectives, enabling the refinement of ideas and strengthening of our understandings of how the world operates. It is not the popular ideas which require the protection of academic freedom; rather, it is the unpopular ideas that are in need of safeguarding.

Education requires the open exchange of ideas that stimulate discussion and debate. Education in its best form encourages the application of critical thinking to those opinions. It is through critical thinking that we learn and become informed decision makers; indeed, this is one of the most important products of our institutions of higher learning. Through open intellectual discourse and debate, ideas are created, some are discarded, and others are refined into a solid body of knowledge."

Students: The Student Code of Conduct, published in the Student Handbook, defines the University's rules and regulations for student conduct regarding academic freedom and the disciplinary sanctions to which a student would be subject if said rules and regulations are broken. General University Policies regarding academic freedom that are stated in the Student Handbook include:

- Freedom of Speech
- IT Security Policies on Academic Freedom, Confidentiality and Privacy
- Responsible Use of Information Technology Resources

Sources:
Trustees Policy Manual
Handbook for Professional Personnel
State Personnel System Employee Handbook
Student Code of Conduct
Student Handbook

2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

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

Argument

The responsibility for honesty and integrity is the touchstone that buttresses academic freedom and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning at MSU Denver. The University has wisely employed its system of shared governance to give faculty, staff and students a voice and ownership in the review, decision-making and oversight processes that address academic responsibilities.

[2.E.1] - The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.

> **Comment [L28]:** Bernice: add conflict of interest document to ASA site

Research: The University's Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP) is the administrative unit that oversees the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure compliance with all regulations and standards. The HSPP provides resources and administrative support to MSU Denver researchers and manages the IRB website, a comprehensive compilation of all the procedures, policies and guidelines that researchers and reviewers must follow.

The cornerstone of the University's HSPP is the Human Research Protection Plan, which outlines a system that ensures the protection of the rights and the welfare of subjects in human research. The plan defines the parameters for conducting human research in compliance with ethical and legal requirements as well as the mechanisms for its oversight. Signed by the University president in September 2014, the plan sets the expectation that all members of the MSU Denver community will adhere to it.

Research Misconduct Policy and Procedures apply to all members of the University community who are engaged in any research and includes definitions of misconduct, filing complaints, the investigation process, notifications and reporting obligations, outcomes and record retention. It is published on the Academic Affairs website.

The Undergraduate Research Program (URP) brings resources together to promote and support undergraduate research activities that adhere to institutional policies for ethical research. The program's goal is to enhance students' preparedness and competitiveness for future employment and the pursuit of advanced degrees. Workshops are held throughout the year on topics such as "What is Research" and "Guidance for Writing Your Abstract." Students have the opportunity to apply for mini research grants, be mentored by MSU Denver faculty and participate in the annual Undergraduate Research Conference.

Scholarly Practice: Institutional performance measures for tenure-track faculty that are in accordance with AAUP guidelines are outlined in the Handbook for Professional Personnel (p. 10), Chapter V ‒ Policies and Procedures for Tenure-Track Faculty: Reappointment, Tenure, Tenure Promotion, Post-Tenure Review and Emeritus Status. The deputy provost is responsible for presenting workshops for tenure-track faculty on portfolio preparation that review these measures and guidelines.

The president's and provost's offices provide oversight of these policies and expectations. In addition, each academic department has a set of department guidelines for faculty that clearly define the expectations for scholarly activity within the department and University.

The Center for Faculty Excellence also provides support services for faculty including workshops, learning communities, mentoring and instructional consultation.

The academic integrity section on the dean of students' website includes both on- and off-campus academic integrity resources, definitions and examples of various forms of student academic misconduct, frequently asked questions about academic integrity and support resources for faculty and staff who are educating students about the ethical use of resources.

[2.E.2] - Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.

Students learn and practice the ethical use of information resources through the General Studies curricula, which requires student-learning outcomes, each with its own rubric. These outcomes include:

- use and document resources and evidence in an ethical manner
- demonstrate the ability to locate resources when information is needed
- evaluate the authenticity, validity and reliability of resources applied to a specific purpose
- use and document resources and evidence in an ethical manner

Individual sessions offered to students at the University's Writing Center assist them with their writing, including how to properly cite resources. The Auraria Library offers online tutorials on the use and proper citation of resources that any student can access.

[2.E.3] - The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

MSU Denver's Academic Integrity Statement applies to all members of the University community:
"As students, faculty, staff and administrators of Metropolitan State University of Denver, it is our responsibility to uphold and maintain an academic environment that furthers scholarly inquiry, creative activity and the application of knowledge. We will not tolerate academic dishonesty. We will demonstrate honesty and integrity in all activities related to the University's learning and scholarship. We will not plagiarize, fabricate information or data, cheat on tests or exams, steal academic material or submit work to more than one class without full disclosure."

Faculty members are strongly encouraged to include the statement on their syllabi and discuss it the first day of classes.

Students: One of the Academic Responsibilities listed in the University Catalog is that students must "maintain academic ethics and academic honesty."

The Student Code of Conduct specifically defines academic misconduct including cheating, plagiarism, using the same work for multiple classes and other acts of dishonesty. The code also defines other prohibited behaviors and the accountability process if a student violates these policies. The code is included in all official student email at the beginning of the semester. Anyone can report an alleged violation of the Student Code of Conduct through an online form on the website.

In cases of student academic misconduct, faculty members make the determination of responsibility as the content-matter experts and can assign a grade sanction, including a permanent "F." They are expected to also file the incident with Student Conduct in the Dean of Students Office. Student Conduct will review the case for potential institutional sanctions as this office is responsible for adjudicating any violations of the Student Code of Conduct. Student Conduct maintains student conduct files and can identify patterns of behaviors and repeat offenders.

Faculty: Chapter XV of the Handbook for Professional Personnel (p. 100) outlines the policies and procedures for termination of faculty and includes the following section: Professional Conduct, Ethics and Responsibilities of Faculty:

"Lists of specific unprofessional or unethical acts that would subject a faculty member to dismissal are inevitably incomplete or susceptible to overly broad or narrow interpretations. Therefore, faculty shall be guided by a common-sense interpretation and application of the general standards of professional conduct summarized in this section relating to academic responsibilities and responsibilities to students, colleagues, staff and the University as well as responsibilities as citizens. The University hereby adopts and incorporates by reference the AAUP's 1987 Statement on Professional Ethics as the standard against which faculty conduct will be measured."

Academic dishonesty or fraud is listed as one of the reasons for dismissal of faculty. The process for removal is outlined in chapter XV of the handbook. The president and provost have oversight of any faculty dismissal process.

Research: All members of the University community engaged in research must adhere to the Research Misconduct Policy and Procedures published on the Academic Affairs website. This policy includes definitions of misconduct, filing complaints, the investigation process, notifications and reporting obligations, outcomes and record retention.

Information Technology: The University's IT security policies include the Responsible Use of Information Technology Resources Policy and IT Security Policies on Academic Freedom, Confidentiality and Privacy. These documents outline the ethical use of MSU Denver technology, including data sharing, piracy, confidential information and private communication.

Sources:

Human Subjects Protection Program
IRB website
Human Research Protection Plan
Research Misconduct Policy and Procedures
Undergraduate Research Program
Workshops
Handbook for Professional Personnel
department guidelines
Center for Faculty Excellence
academic integrity
General Studies
General Studies rubric
Writing Center
Academic Integrity Statement
Academic Responsibilities
University Catalog
Student Code of Conduct
Research Misconduct Policy and Procedures
Responsible Use of Information Technology Resources Policy
IT Security Policies on Academic Freedom, Confidentiality and Privacy

2.S Criterion 2 − Summary

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

Comment [L29]: This statement is the same as the one for Illinois State University.

Summary

MSU Denver's adherence to the principle of shared governance has proven to be the foundation that confirms the University is honorable and accountable in its conduct. Through shared governance, the University has in place all the necessary components for assuring the integrity of its operations, the ethical and fair treatment of all members of the University community, compliance with laws and regulations and abidance of the precept of academic freedom. Shared governance drives the University's culture of communication, mutual respect and commitment to its role and mission — from its faculty and staff, through to its senior leadership and ultimately its governing board. MSU Denver students are given the knowledge, tools and mentorship they need to pursue their education successfully within this culture that so values its integrity.

3 – Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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

3.A – Core Component 3.A

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

Argument:

MSU Denver is a comprehensive university offering bachelor's and master's degrees in 70 majors with 87 minors, 130 concentrations, 30 certifications and 20 licensure programs through its of College of Business, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, College of Professional Studies and the School of Education. Founded in 1965, the University has grown to more than 20,000 students and educates more undergraduate Coloradans than any other four-year institution in the state.

> **Comment [L1]:** (67 undergrad and 3 grad) All these numbers come from the lists in the Academic Programs section of the 2015 catalog. It lists only 2 concentrations, which I don't understand. Also, none of the figures match the A to Z listing of programs on the website: msudenver.edu/a_to_z/majors

At the undergraduate level, MSU Denver awards bachelor of science, bachelor of arts, bachelor of fine arts, bachelor of music, and bachelor of music education degrees. Its programs range from the traditional disciplines, such as history and biology, to contemporary fields of study, such as biochemistry, athletic training and communication design. MSU Denver offers several bachelor's degree programs unique in Colorado, including aviation management, health care management, land use, meteorology and integrative healthcare. Students may also design their own degree through the Individualized Degree Program.

Master's Degrees: MSU Denver offers professionally oriented advanced degrees in three graduate programs: master of professional accountancy, master of social work and master of art in teaching with concentrations in elementary education and special education. In 2017, the University will add master of business administration and a master of health administration degrees.

As stated in the University's mission, excellence in teaching and learning is MSU Denver's primary objective. To accomplish this mission, the University reviews and assesses its General Studies program and all curricula to ensure that it is rigorous, topical and meets the institution's goals for student-learning outcomes.

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

> **Comment [L2]:** Need input from Steering Committee for addressing this statement.

MSU Denver has comprehensive review and approval processes to ensure the currency and appropriateness of courses, minors, certificates, concentrations and majors at the undergraduate and graduate level. The processes are both internal and external.

The Undergraduate Curriculum Manual and the Graduate Curriculum Manual document the governing policies and procedures for creating, modifying and discontinuing courses,

certificates, degree programs and degree concentrations at MSU Denver. All submitted curriculum proposals are reviewed for their merit to ensure that they are pedagogically, in line with current scholarship and of benefit to students and the community.

Curriculum originates in academic departments. In the case of interdisciplinary courses or programs, the department with primary responsibility for the course or program is considered the originating department. Administrative units, such as the Applied Learning Center, Athletics, Extended Campus, and OWOW, must work through the appropriate academic department(s) to submit curriculum through the approval process.

Besides the regular curriculum review, a program review is scheduled by the university every seven years for each academic program which includes an external academic review in the form of a report by an invited consultant in the field.

Also, there is an annual program assessment requirement for every program at MSU Denver. These assessments, based on learning outcomes, allow programs to update their programs regularly based on the findings, to support continuous improvement.

One requirement for each undergraduate academic program is to include a capstone course in their curriculum. The Senior Experience course provides a culmination of the undergraduate experience, allowing students the opportunity to synthesize acquired knowledge and skills and to demonstrate critical analysis and logical thinking. This requirement further ensures the currency and relevance of their degree.

Many academic programs at MSU Denver hold a specialized accreditation, such ABET, for Engineering Technology (Civil, Electrical, and Mechanical), and ACEN for Nursing. This ensures the currency of these programs.

Several programs have an Industry Advisory Board with the roles to review the overall health and status of the programs, to advise the faculty on the general direction of the program, to critically review the program strategic plans, to advise the program on new faculty hires, to identify potential sources of supplemental funding, and last but not least, to help to develop, maintain and innovate the curriculum.

The new Aerospace Engineering Sciences (AES) building is a good example of keeping current with industry needs. This facility (scheduled opening in 2017) will revolutionize aviation, aerospace and advanced manufacturing education in Colorado by integrating the study of aviation and aerospace science, industrial design, civil, mechanical and electrical engineering technology, computer information system and computer science. These disciplines will collaborate in a state-of-the-art building, providing students with the curriculum, advanced technologies and the labs necessary to give them a highly experiential and relevant education.

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

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

MSU Denver's primary objective of excellence in teaching and learning, as articulated in its role statement, remains consistent among all the University's academic programs and delivery methods. All courses offered by MSU Denver for transcripted credit fall under the purview of department chairs, regardless of mode or location of delivery. Department chairs are responsible for hiring appropriately qualified faculty and maintaining consistent content and rigor across all modes of delivery.

In addition to traditional classroom learning options, MSU Denver offers approximately 1400 online and hybrid course sections, encompassing 250 unique online and 80 unique courses. Since launching online courses in the fall of 1996, MSU Denver has responded to increasing demand for online and hybrid delivery options. Online and hybrid delivery methods are well-suited at MSU Denver based on the student populations that often has competing work and family obligations. The University has launched several initiatives to promote continuous quality improvement for all online courses, these initiatives include an institutional course template developed in alignment with the Quality Matters rubric (link to 2014 Institutional Course Template Document), the development of a second three-person instructional design team, the launch of an Online Faculty Commons virtual community of practice, updated instructional design and support processes, and new training and professional development options, including a new course development cohort process as well as an advanced certification program (link to http://msudenver.edu/media/content/etc/ELITE_Certification_Framework_V4.pdf. These initiatives arose through regular collection and analysis of feedback using surveys of all faculty and all students, and work concurrently to support our continuous course improvement process.

While the University has over 20 years of experience delivering online course sections, offering online programs are a relatively new initiative launched after substantial planning and discussions through various committees consisting of campus-wide representation. Specifically, the University charged a campus-wide task force with exploring the feasibility and need of online programs, as well as charged a council to develop a pilot plan to launch online programs. Based on the findings of these two groups (link to 2014 Online Task Force Report & 2015 Council for Online Programs Strategic Plan), the University is currently conducting a pilot of two online programs, Social Work and Healthcare Management. To support this initiative a new position, the Director of Online Programs position (link to job description) was created and will report to the new Assistant Vice President of Curriculum and Academic Effectiveness (link to job description). The Director of Online Programs will oversee the launch of online academic programs, conduct marketing and planning activities as well as develop strategies to ensure the success of online program.

3

The University's Extended Campus Program (of which Metro South is a part) also houses Degree-Completion Programs, Self-Paced Distance Learning, the Alternative Teacher Licensure Program, the Colorado Center for Medical Laboratory Science post-baccalaureate program, the Baccalaureate Registered Nurse Completion Option and Professional Development Courses for Continuing Education Units. The Center for Individualized Learning helps students design their own degree through its Individualized Degree Program and/or integrate their prior experience with their current education through the Prior Learning Assessment Program, among others. However, all decisions regarding faculty qualifications and selection, content and rigor are the purview of the department chair for each course prefix.

Alternative Credit Options/Prior Learning Assessment: The University may grant credit for prior learning, depending on the academic program, as verified by the following assessment methods:

- National standardized tests, including: Advanced Placement Examinations (AP), College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), DSST/DANTES and International Baccalaureate (IB)
- Departmental credit by examination
- portfolio assessment
- military training and military occupational specialties (MOS) evaluated by the American Council on Education (ACE)
- Other training programs evaluated by the American Council on Education (ACE)

With the assistance of the Colorado Department of Higher Education staff, and approved by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, faculty across the public higher education institutions in Colorado have identified accepted CLEP scores and IB scores for general studies credits, but all other decisions regarding credit for prior learning at MSU Denver are made at the department level.

Sources:

Curriculum Manual
College of Business
College of Letters, Arts and Sciences
College of Professional Studies
School of Education
Individualized Degree Program
MSU Denver A to Z
Academic Programs
300 academic programs
Alternative Credit Options/Prior Learning Assessment
Auraria Higher Education Center

3.B – Core Component 3.B [Matt Makley, would you carefully review and revise this section as needed?]

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

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

Argument:

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

Given that teaching and learning, particularly at the undergraduate level, is MSU Denver's primary focus, general education plays a paramount role at the institution. The University revised and restructured its General Studies program in 2010 to meet the needs of 21st-century learners.

5

The General Studies program mission statement is: *"The General Studies program will encourage the habits of mind of an educated person that promote life-long learning. Students will acquire the essential knowledge and develop the critical skills that are of fundamental significance in a free society."*

As stated in the University Catalog, a baccalaureate degree must include a broad-based education that prepares students for the more focused study of the academic major. The general education component of the degree teaches crucial intellectual skills in analysis, research and communication, in addition to foundational skills and introduces a broad range of studies in the natural sciences, the human condition, aesthetic experience, and global and cultural diversity. The program encourages intellectual habits that promote lifelong learning.

MSU Denver's General Studies program is structured around three goals:

1. Develop intellectual and practical skills.
2. Explore essential knowledge, perspectives and methods in arts and humanities, history, social and behavioral sciences, and natural and physical sciences.
3. Understand the global interconnectedness of diverse individuals, communities and societies.

[3.B.2] - The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess. [Matt, this doesn't really address the question; can you help? How do we articulate....? How is it grounded in a philosophy or framework…?]

Each of the three goals of the General Studies program is supported by the approved courses that students must complete in nine general studies categories, each with a set of student-learning outcomes. The nine categories are:

- Written Communications, 6 credit hours
- Oral Communication, 3 credit hours
- Quantitative Literacy, 2 credit hours
- Arts and Humanities, 6 credit hours
- Historical, 3 credit hours
- Social and Behavioral Sciences I, 3 credit hours
- Social and Behavioral Sciences II, 3 credit hours
- Natural and Physical Sciences, 6 credit hours
- Global Diversity, 3 credit hours

Students must also complete a 3-credit-hour multicultural course and a 3-credit-hour senior experience course, or selection of courses, to be awarded a bachelor's degree.

Program specifics are described in the University Catalog and in the General Studies section of

msudenver.edu.

[3.B.3] - Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments. **[We need to show how this is done within our General Education program, too. Do our transfer students do the First Year Success program? I am not sure that references to the Applied Learning Center and the Service Learning Program really address the question; not all degree programs require an internship or service learning.]**

Students at MSU Denver engage in a variety of practical and theoretical skills and modes of inquiry. Consistent with University policies, program faculty determine the manner in which students obtain these skills. MSU Denver emphasizes collaboration between students and faculty in scholarship and creative work, and there are numerous opportunities for students to present these efforts (see 3.B.5).

The First Year Success program is the entry point for all first-time college students beginning their academic career at MSU Denver. The program provides opportunities for students to maximize success in their freshman year of college through community-based learning, linked courses, peer support, active learning, access to enhanced resources and a wide range of meaningful co-curricular activities. By the end of the program students will have developed foundational college-level skills while making connections with faculty, other students and the campus as a whole.

MSU Denver also supports the high-impact learning activities of internships, service learning and community-based research at the Applied Learning Center. The 38-year-old Internship Program manages more than 600 internships each year to give students meaningful work experiences related to their academic major or minor. The staff works closely with students and employers to match students' skills and theoretical training with positions in businesses, governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations. The program administers the academic credit interns earn for many academic departments and also works directly with faculty to ensure that internships meet the educational needs of the students. The Service Learning Program mentors and supports faculty who would like to integrate service learning into their courses, providing seminars and grants assistance. The Community-Based Research Fellows Program brings together faculty, staff, students, and community partners to engage in collaborative research to solve urgent community problems.

[3.B.4] - The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work. **[The majority of the content here should be about our General Studies program….]**

As part of its General Studies program, the University offers 32 courses in 18 disciplines that can be taken to fulfill the 3-credit-hour global diversity requirement. Students must also complete 3 multicultural course credit hours; the University offers more than 80 courses in 29 disciplines for this requirement. See 1.C.2 for more detailed information about the global diversity and

multicultural requirements and the University's multicultural academic departments and programs.

Diversity programs:

- The Institute for Women's Studies and Services offers a major and minor in Women's Studies as well as a minor in Genders and Sexualities. The institute serves as a feminist hub for transformative education, programming and advocacy on issues of gender inclusion and social equity.

- Chicano Studies [some text is needed here].

- Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Student Services is a tri-institutional office that provides support services and growth opportunities for GLBT students so they may realize their fullest potential. The office works to improve the campus climate by fostering acceptance and understanding of GLBT students through education and programming that unites diverse communities of people.

- MSU Denver offers globally oriented customized degrees such as Far East Asian Language and Culture, International Studies and Community Development, Latin American Studies and Middle Eastern Studies. The Office of International Student Services assists students from more than 60 countries transition into the University's diverse community.

Diversity events: MSU Denver holds numerous events that relate to diversity each year, including two visiting professorships, the Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Breakfast and the Higher Education Diversity Summit. See Core Component 1.C for a more complete listing of events and programs.

[3.B.5] - The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission. Scholarship and creative work are done by faculty and students.

In line with MSU Denver's primary objective of excellence in teaching and learning as written in its role statement, collaboration between professors and their students is a hallmark of the academic experience at MSU Denver. Faculty model rigorous scholarship in academic programs that include elements designed to help students learn and practice scholarship appropriate to the discipline.

The University's emphasis on work that combines creativity with scholarship has proven to be an effective academic experience for students. The Office of Student Media houses several programs where students can hone their creative and technical skills ― and often find great success and recognition for their endeavors. For instance, Metrosphere, the student literary magazine, received a 2011 Pacemaker Award – Literary Category, a top national honor likened to a Pulitzer Prize for student publications. The award-winning edition, inspired by graphic

novels, split the literary content and art into separate, but cohesive books. The Metropolitan newspaper regularly wins regional and national awards for its content and photography, as does the online newscast, The Met Report.

The Department of Theatre, the first National Association of Schools of Theatre-accredited institutional member in Colorado, sponsors several theatrical productions each year. The department's founder and chair was recognized with a 2014 Meritorious Achievement Award. The Department of Art is the only public higher education art program in Colorado to maintain accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Art and Design. The department houses the award-winning Center for Visual Art, an off-campus art gallery where students can attend lectures and workshops by the exhibiting artists. The English Department maintains a vigorous creative writing program. Its Undergraduate English Conference features a variety of writing and scholarship that is created by undergraduate students working in areas of English studies. The department's Writes of Spring competition awards first, second and third place to students for their works in the categories of Academic Essay, Creative Nonfiction, Drama, Fiction and Poetry. Through public performances and educational outreach, The Department of Music creates access to excellence in the arts for the campus and broader community, promoting the cultural life of the University and the surrounding region. The department offers a wide variety of instrumental and choral ensembles designed to provide diverse performing experiences for talented students from all areas of the college, regardless of their major.

While primarily a teaching institution, the University has a robust Undergraduate Research Program that promotes and supports student and faculty engagement in research activities. Throughout the academic year, workshops and informational sessions are held to help students prepare for the annual Undergraduate Research Conference. Grants of up to $500 are available for students who need funding for their research. Instituted in 2011, the conference has grown in reputation and is now a significant contributor to student scholarship and creative activities. The 2014 conference drew more than 500 attendees and showcased over 175 student poster and oral presentations. In addition to the knowledge they gain through their projects, students learn and practice the ethical and legal obligations of research through the Human Subjects Protection Program.

In addition, MSU Denver faculty are active in producing scholarly works, as evidenced by the following chart:

Activity	2005-7	2008-9	2010-11	2012-13	2014-15	Grand Total
Articles	671	796	947	927	820	4,161
Book Reviews	46	50	42	54	47	239
Books	18	22	32	59	35	166
Grants	475	432	371	362	311	1,951
Musical Compositions	1	7	2	6	9	25
Presentations/Exhibits	1,313	1,741	1,851	1,904	1,756	8,565
Grand Total	**2,524**	**3,048**	**3,245**	**3,312**	**2,978**	**15,107**

The [Office of Sponsored Research and Programs](#) assists with faculty with their research endeavors. OSRP services include:

- Locate funding opportunities
- Interdisciplinary collaboration and community outreach
- Proposal development, technical support, including research, budget development and writing assistance
- Training and professional development

MSU Denver currently has more than 30 continuing grants totaling more than $25 million from state and federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of State, National Institutes of Health, Library of Congress, National Science Foundation and others.

Sources:
[General Studies](#)
[nine general studies categories](#)
[University Catalog](#)
[First Year Success](#)
[Applied Learning Center](#)
[Internship Program](#)
[Service Learning Program](#)
[Center for Faculty Excellence](#)
[MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh](#)
[multicultural course](#) requirement
[Office of Institutional Diversity](#)
[Target of Opportunity Program and Faculty Recruitment Incentive Program](#)
[Hispanic Serving Institution](#)
[HSI Task Force Final Report](#)
[Equity in Excellence](#)
[Equity Scorecard](#)
[Institute for Women's Studies and Services](#)
[Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Student Services](#)
[Undergraduate Research Program](#)
[Human Subjects Protection Program](#)
[Office of Sponsored Research and Programs](#)
[Office of Student Media](#)
[Department of Theatre](#)
[Department of Art](#)
[Center for Visual Art](#)
[English Department](#)
[Department of Music](#)

3.C – Core Component 3.C

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

Argument:

As articulated in the institutional mission, *"excellence in teaching and learning is MSU Denver's primary objective."* To attain this goal, the University recruits, hires and supports faculty and staff who have the knowledge, skills and belief in its role and mission to provide effective, high-quality academic programs and student services. The University has significant search and screening policies for the hiring of faculty and staff to ensure candidates meet the required qualifications. In addition, the University's substantial professional development program maintains faculty and staff currency in their field and grows their skills while serving as incentive for improvement and a retention tool.

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

As of September 2014 the University employed 556 full-time faculty members and 891 affiliate faculty members. Despite decreased enrollment in recent years, these figures represent an overall increase from five years prior when the number of full-time and affiliates was 517 and 865, respectively.

> **Comment [L6]:** 2015 figures available late Nov. at the earliest

In his 10 years at the helm, President Stephen Jordan has continually emphasized the importance of increasing the ratio of full-time faculty to affiliate faculty. This is illustrated in the MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh, where a metric under Goal 2 of the Student and Academic Success Strategic Theme is to: *"Achieve a 60 percent /40 percent full-time to affiliate faculty ratio across campus. Based on current credit-hour production the University would need to increase full time faculty by 21.5 positions—and decrease the amount of adjuncts accordingly— to achieve 60 percent."*

The baseline for FY13 is 57.63 percent full-time and 42.32 percent part-time.

> **Comment [L7]:** Update these figures

The 2015 Undergraduate Curriculum Manual documents the governing policies and procedures for creating, modifying and discontinuing degree programs and courses at MSU Denver. These guidelines should not be interpreted in any way that would supersede state or federal guidelines. All submitted curriculum proposals are reviewed for their merit to ensure that they are pedagogically sound, in line with current scholarship and of benefit to students and the community.

Curriculum originates in academic departments. In the case of interdisciplinary courses or programs, the department with primary responsibility for the course or program is considered the

originating department. Administrative units such as the Applied Learning Center, Athletics, Extended Campus and the One World One Water (OWOW) Center for Urban Water Education and Stewardship must work through the appropriate academic unit(s) to submit curriculum through the approval process.

The following are the different types of curriculum changes at MSU Denver:

- **Substantive Curriculum Changes – University Level** such as creating a new degree, major, minor, concentration, certificate, teacher preparation or other academic programs. These changes require department, college/school and Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee review.

- **Substantive Curriculum Changes – College/School Level** such as revise a major, minor, concentration, certificate, teacher preparation or other academic program, including program requirements and program electives (e.g., change in hours required, disciplines required and/or list of courses. These changes require department and college/school curriculum committee review.

- **Non-substantive Curriculum Changes – Department Level** such as adding or modifying a course-delivery method or schedule type, a course grade mode and either archiving (temporarily remove) or deleting (permanently remove) a course from the curriculum. These changes require department curriculum committee review.

In Fall 2015, the University began piloting a simultaneous curriculum-review process and is researching software options for launching electronic and simultaneous curriculum review.

[3.C.2] - All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual-credit, contractual and consortial programs.

MSU Denver has three categories of faculty with established qualifications for each category used in recruitment and hiring practices. All faculty, including those teaching dual or concurrent enrollment courses as well as those teaching in contractual and consortial programs, are held to the established qualifications (which differ by rank/field). The ASA Policy Manual, a compilation of Guidelines and Policy documents, includes the Protocols for Searching/Hiring Faculty. This official University document is used for faculty recruitment and hiring and also defines the process for making changes to the minimum requirements for rank upon appointment.

The ASA Policy manual also includes the Minimum Requirements for Rank Upon Appointment document, which identifies the minimum credentials (minimum degree level) and experience required for hiring faculty at each rank (instructor, assistant professor, associate professor and professor).

The required qualifications in the position announcement for the hiring of new faculty are the minimum requirements for rank upon hiring. The faculty search process for Category I

(tenure/tenure track) and for Category II (full-time temporary) faculty includes a number of provisions to ensure that candidates who progress in the search, and those who are ultimately hired, do indeed meet the established qualifications. For example, the search committee must develop a rubric to determine, prioritize and document search criteria to use be used for screening application materials. The initial screening of applicants must determine whether or not candidates meet the required qualifications.

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

> Comment [L10]: Luis to review this section

Policies pertaining to faculty evaluation are articulated in the Handbook for Professional Personnel, with discipline-specific guidelines for each department that clearly describe performance expectations for tenure-line faculty seeking reappointment, tenure, promotion, a successful post-tenure review and/or emeritus status.

The basis of faculty evaluation is the professional portfolio, which enables faculty to provide evidence of their competence and professional achievement. The University uses an online portfolio management tool to aid in the facilitation of reviews and to document information on faculty teaching, scholarly activities and service.

The Handbook for Professional Personnel specifies that department guidelines for affiliate faculty "must establish expectations that fit their disciplinary or departmental needs." Department guidelines specify the protocols to follow for peer observations of affiliate faculty. A written record of observations is kept on file in the department. Student Ratings of Instruction (SRIs) for courses taught by affiliate faculty are administered consistent with the practice for tenure-line faculty.

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

The Center for Faculty Excellence plays a prominent role in supporting the professional development of MSU Denver faculty. The center is staffed with a full-time director, an instructional/ePortfolio designer, faculty associates in writing practice and peer observation and a support staff member. The center provides professional learning resources and activities designed to help all faculty flourish as teachers, scholars and colleagues. The center:

- Strives to facilitate an academic climate where faculty partner with faculty so that all may reach their full professional potential.
- Strengthens MSU Denver's academic climate by raising awareness of current developments in teaching and learning, research, scholarly publishing, leadership and service.
- Fosters inclusive cross-disciplinary collaboration by facilitating the sharing of resources, skills and knowledge across programs and partnering with other professional units.

- Promotes, sustains and supports state-of-the-art teaching and learning initiatives at the institutional level.

The center accomplishes its mission through a variety of initiatives that include faculty learning communities, peer instructional coaching, workshops on teaching and learning, and faculty institutes.

Additionally, the University's three colleges and school have professional development funds available to support the professional development of faculty. For example, the School of Education has $1,500 each year available to each faculty member who is presenting at a conference or other scholarly venue, or who are involved in governance of a national organization or are receiving an award. Faculty receiving the funds must provide justification for this professional development funding by demonstrating how the funding expenditure aligns with the School of Education mission, and, in some cases, agree to present to faculty in-house. A similar model is used within the colleges to further support faculty professional development.

[3.C.5] - Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

Instructors at MSU Denver are committed to their students and understand that students may seek information and guidance from them through a variety of communication channels. Many students communicate with their instructors through the online courses management system, Blackboard, or via email. Additionally, each college/school has established minimum expectations for full-time faculty office hours, when students may visit with their instructors to discuss course content, seek advising or otherwise engage in relevant discussion.

Although each college/school has the authority to set expectations pertaining to office hours, there is uniformity across the University that full-time faculty keep a minimum of five weekly office hours during each academic term of the regular academic year, adding additional hours as needed to respond to student needs.

Comment [L11]: Faculty need to post their office hours on the website

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

MSU Denver invests in student support services as a strategy to help enhance student learning and success. As such, the institution takes care to recruit, retain and support staff members in a variety of student service functional areas. Given the broad array of services needed to meet the needs of the University's diverse student body, each functional unit has its own specific qualifications, training and support. For example, the staff working to attend to students' academic and personal needs have different qualifications and requisite support than those working within the nuanced financial aid system to assist students with navigating their financial options.

Most staff providing direct student services are housed within three primary areas at the institution: Student Engagement and Wellness, Undergraduate Studies, Financial Aid and Enrollment Management. Associate vice presidents in these areas work to ensure that the staff are appropriately qualified to carry out their assigned duties, and address training and support

needs through resource allocation and the budgeting process. Select examples of staff requirements and training are highlighted below.

Additionally, as part of its commitment to staff development, the University offers a variety of programs designed to help staff achieve professional growth, including the annual Professional Development Conference, university-wide workshops and seminars and a tuition-aid program that allows employees to take MSU Denver courses to improve or enhance job skills at no cost. There is also a professional development fund through which employees may apply for reimbursement for educational activities relevant to their work at the University. Details on these offerings as well as the official policy and guidelines for staff development are available on the Human Resources training page.

Examples of student support services staff qualifications, training and support include:

- The Writing Center employs two full-time staff, including a director who holds a Ph.D. in English with an emphasis in Composition. In the 2014-15 academic year, eight professional writing advisers, each holding a graduate degree in English, Writing or a related field, provided services. Nine peer writing advisers, current students who have successfully completed Composition Theory or Writing Center Theory and Practice, completed the staff team. All writing advisers undergo initial training, outlined in the Writing Center Training Manual, and shadow a seasoned adviser before assisting students. Ongoing training and development is provided through regular workshops on topics such as working with English Language Learners, helping students with sentence-level concerns and tutoring to engage different learning styles. All advisers are required to attend two, two-hour workshops every semester and also receive regular feedback from peers and supervisors.

- The Financial Aid team is comprised of 25 professional staff members with a variety of skills and expertise whose work is supported by a team of 20 to 30 competent student staff members. Professional staff qualifications vary, with many veteran staff members bringing years of financial-aid experience to their role supporting MSU Denver students. To ensure that staff members are current on state and federal financial-aid policies, the institution maintains memberships in the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA), the Colorado Association of Financial Aid Administrators (CAFAA) and the Rocky Mountain Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (RMASFAA). Currently, MSU Denver's associate director of financial aid operations serves as the president of CAFAA, and several other staff members hold leadership positions within the organization. The staff regularly participates in workshops hosted by the above-listed organizations, as well as the Federal Student Aid (FSA) Training Conference and on-site trainings related to a variety of topics, including responding to the needs of undocumented students.

- To better serve the needs of the students, academic advisors work in a variety of administrative and academic units across the University. However, the University maintains common minimum qualifications that include a completed bachelor's degree, experience delivering developmental advising and experience with student information systems. Most professional advisors have master's degrees in Higher Education, College

Personnel, Counseling or the discipline related to students they advise. Two advising administrators hold Ph.D.s. Training is provided both centrally at the [Academic Advising Center](#) (AAC) and at the unit level. The ACC provides initial training on general degree requirements, academic policies and procedures, and basic counseling skills. Further training on the curriculum and policies and procedures specific to a program is handled at the unit level. Similarly, ongoing professional development available to all advisors is coordinated through the AAC, while professional development specific to a program, department or college is provided by that unit. Examples of professional development opportunities include working with particular groups of students (e.g. military/veteran students, students with disabilities and ASSET/DACA students), expanding skill sets (career advising and financial aid information) and managing an advising caseload. The University makes use of best practices developed by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and provides NACADA memberships for all professional advisors. The University also supports an advising council, both to guide the direction of academic advising and to provide support for advisors.

Sources:
[MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh](#)
[ASA Policy Manual](#)
[Protocols for Searching/Hiring Faculty](#)
[Handbook for Professional Personnel](#)
[Center for Faculty Excellence](#)
[Human Resources training page](#)
[Writing Center](#)
[Financial Aid](#)
[Academic Advising Center](#)

3.D – Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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

Argument:

MSU Denver offers a supportive environment that places all students at the center of teaching and scholarship through thoughtful interaction with faculty and staff as the well as a variety of programs and services that provide individualized attention. The University offers a holistic set of support services that are responsive to student needs. These include learning support, academic advising, career placement and personal development. To help ensure that its students are academically prepared for General Studies courses in English and math, the University requires students who have ACT or SAT scores below certain levels take Accuplacer computer-based placement tests. The University strives to hire and retain high-quality faculty and staff in order to assure it meets its primary objective of excellence in teaching and learning, as stated in its role statement.

[3.D.1] - MSU Denver provides support services responsive to student needs.

Understanding student needs is critical to designing effective support services. The Office of Institutional Research annually publishes data regarding student demographics and performance in its University Undergraduate Census. Most MSU Denver undergraduates are traditional students, i.e., in Fall 2015 the average age was 23 and 60 percent attended full time. All students receive academic support through programs of the Office of the Associate Vice President of Undergraduate Studies (3.D.2.) as the well as individual academic units. Out-of-classroom support comes primarily through the Dean of Students Office, Health Center at Auraria, Counseling Center and other units within the Division of Academic and Student Affairs. Graduate student support services are provided primarily by academic units.

MSU Denver has extensive orientation programs for new students to inform them about available support services. New undergraduate students and their families attend New Student Orientation in the summer prior to the fall semester. Graduate students are oriented to their academic program and support services through their department/school. MSU Denver also provides specialized services to groups of students with unique needs and concerns. Services for several such groups are described below.

First Year Success (FYS): The FYS program is the entry point for all beginning MSU Denver students. Incoming first-year students averaged 25 percent of total enrollment between 2011 and 2014, and a total of 1,638 students participated in First Year Success in 2014-15 (this number varies annually based upon enrollment).

Comment [L12]: Update figures

FYS is a retention program focused on building academic and college readiness, knowledge and skills to increase student persistence and foster a passion for lifelong learning in a nurturing, scholarly community. It prepares first-year students to succeed in their second year and beyond, with the ultimate goal of shorter time-to-degree and persistence to graduation. The program serves the needs of students through collaborative, engaging methods that promote on- and off-campus relationships, connect learning to compelling issues and are culturally relevant. It accomplishes this through linked courses, active learning and access to enhanced resources. Suitable both for traditional students and those whose time constraints might not enable them to otherwise immerse themselves in college life, FYS provides students with many

benefits designed to enrich their time at MSU Denver, such as a collegial environment, supplemental programming and enhanced support services designed to promote academic and personal success. Programs include:

- General Studies curriculum offerings that help students begin the path to degree completion in an effective manner.

- Linked courses that share curricular components and help students to create a community of learners.

- Yearlong learning communities that provide consistency throughout the students' first year at MSU Denver.

- Collaboration with the Supplemental Instruction program to provide immediate academic support in the classroom environment.

- Collaboration with the Tutoring Center and other centers that offer academic support.

- Recognizing scholars and outstanding leaders at the Annual FYS Scholars Recognition Program to encourage a culture of success.

TRiO Student Support Services: This federal grant-funded program serves students who are first-generation to college, low-income and/or students with learning/physical disabilities. Participants receive comprehensive support through advising, mentoring, tutoring, informational workshops and financial literacy information. MSU Denver has been awarded the U.S. Department of Education TRiO grant for almost 40 years and was recently refunded for an additional five years. TRiO services include:

- individual academic, career and personal counseling
- involvement with student organizations
- academic recognition
- group workshops
- mentoring and career courses
- leadership development

For the 200 students who participated TRiO SSS in 2014-15, 90 percent persisted into Fall 2015. Ninety-one percent of the Fall 2015 participants were in good academic standing with the University.

Immigrant Services Program: This program serves MSU Denver's refugee and immigrant students (including ASSET and DACA) and any student whose first or home language is not English. The coordinator, specialist and trained peer mentors provide personalized academic guidance and academic support services for these often underprivileged and underserved college learners, beginning with the admissions process and lasting throughout graduation.

The program supports students through:

- information on scholarships that specifically target immigrant and undocumented students
- help with financial aid applications and application essays
- review of degree plans and academic progress towards graduation
- English language and college composition support from the coordinator and specialist
- ESL-focused workshops that aim to address the reading, writing and proofreading needs of non-native English speakers enrolled in any MSU Denver course
- assistance and consultation for faculty and staff and assistance in training student staff in other University offices to raise awareness about the unique challenges that non-native language learners and undocumented students face
- partnerships with community organizations such as the Denver College Attainment Network or La Familia Vota to educate the community about the support systems that are in place for non-native English speakers or young students without a secure immigration status

Through Banner, our student data and tracking system, we recorded 593 points of contact from June 1 − August 17, 2015 by the professional and student staff, 150 of which consisted of face-to-face meetings.

Brother to Brother (B2B): An Urban Male Initiative, B2B assists students in building strong study habits, organizational skills and test-taking skills. B2B social activities create a sense of community for male students, including the development of friendships with peers and students. B2B leadership development provides opportunities for students to learn about leadership and how to become a leader on campus. Students receive planning support to prepare to transition into a career or graduate school after graduation. Student leaders monitor participants and offer assistance/mentorship throughout the academic year. B2B offers assistance to a total of 40 students per academic year focusing on:

- leadership development
- social enrichment
- academic support
- career, advisor and diversity nights
- student-led events
- peer mentoring

College Completion Program: This program helps students resolve specific issues, attain academic success and graduate from MSU Denver. The program consists of three parts: college completion, transition and re-engagement. Services include:

- research-based, best-practices degree-completion strategies
- catalog-specific academic advising
- student advocacy

- access to campus and community resources
- finding alternative paths to fulfill graduation requirements (e.g. CAPP Adjustments or credit reductions)

For students who are contemplating leaving or withdrawing from MSU Denver, the program offers:

- counseling on the potential consequences of completing a university withdrawal
- catalog-specific academic advising/counseling
- information on alternative institutional resources
- advice on developing a specific timeline for re-entry back into MSU Denver

Re-engagement services include outreach to students who left MSU Denver with at least 90 credits completed, developing comprehensive graduation plans and advocacy.

Access Center: The center's goal is to create an accessible, inclusive, sustainable learning environment, where disability is recognized as an aspect of diversity that is integral to the campus community and to society. The center currently has 1,100 students registered for services. Among its programs are:

- Academic accommodations as mandated under the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Since each disability and the particular circumstances surrounding each request for accommodations is unique, it is impossible to predict which accommodations will be provided to any given student. The following is a list of potential accommodations which may be granted based on the students' disability and how it impacts them in a postsecondary educational environment: extra time on exams, peer note-taker, assistive technology, sign language interpreters and print material in alternative formats.

- Student Ambassador Program - selected ambassadors participate in various volunteer positions throughout each semester. The role of the ambassador is to promote awareness of the services provided through the Access Center and support other individuals with disabilities as they pursue higher educational goals. There were 15 active ambassadors in Fall 2015.

- The most sophisticated and up-to-date adaptive technologies available, from Screen Reading software to controlling the entire computer by voice, to ensure students have the opportunities every student should have.

- Academic success videos

Transfer students: The percentage of new undergraduate transfer students since 2010 has hovered around 11 percent; the Fall 2015 total is 12.1 percent or 2,433 students. More transfer students chose MSU Denver than any other four-year institution in Colorado. According to the

Colorado Community College System, MSU Denver has been ~~Colorado's~~ the No. 1 destination for CCCS system transfer students for seven years in a row.

Over the past 10 years, tens of thousands of students have transferred to MSU Denver because:

- MSU Denver offers the lowest tuition of the state's five-largest universities
- Forbes magazine lists the University among the nation's top four-year colleges for return on investment
- class-size averages 20 students
- MSU Denver is the leader in diversity and inclusion: 37 percent of the student population are students of color and 33 percent are the first in their families to attend college

Transfer Student Success and Persistence Program: The program connects transfer students with the appropriate advisors, departments and resources and provides individualized assistance to help them acclimate to college life at MSU Denver and persist through graduation. Its primary goal is to increase retention of transfer students from approximately 75 percent to 85 percent. Services include:

- registration events
- Transfer Affinity Groups (TAG's) for student populations such as veterans and parents
- referrals to departments
- assistance with requests for transfer-credit approval
- specially designed open houses and orientation sessions
- learning communities designed specifically for transfer students
- personalized assistance by admissions professionals in the Academic Advising Center (see 3.D.3 below)

Diverse students: Approximately 37 percent of MSU Denver students self-identified with one or more historically underrepresented groups (see 3.B.4 for details). Between the fall 2010 and fall 2015, the number of students Hispanic (any race) ethnicity increased from 16 percent to 22 percent. Female students constitute slightly more than 50 percent of the student population. The Office of Institutional Diversity funds diversity initiatives that are designated to support events and activities that address one or more of the following goals:

- student recruitment and retention
- improving the campus climate
- fostering social awareness of diversity issues
- promoting activities to support the University president's goals related to institutional diversity
- encouraging the cultural and academic enrichment of campus community members
- increasing multicultural campus competencies

Units that service students of color, GLBT students and women include:

- Africana Studies Department

- [Chicana and Chicano Studies Department](#)
- [Office of Institutional Diversity](#)
- [Native American Studies](#) (Political Science Department)
- [Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Student Services](#) (GLBTSS)
- [Institute for Women's Studies and Services](#).

Metro State and University of Colorado Denver have been recognized as two of the 100 Best Campuses for LGBT students and is included in [The Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students.](#)

Hispanic Serving Institution Initiative: Because one-in-five Coloradans is Latino and they are the fastest-growing segment of the state's population, it is imperative to increase the educational attainment of Latinos and all Coloradans for Colorado to remain economically and culturally vibrant. With the largest resident undergraduate student population in Colorado and the highest number of students of color, MSU Denver already enrolls a quarter of the state's baccalaureate-seeking Latino students.

In April 2007 MSU Denver began striving to achieve the federal designation of Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), increasing its Latino student enrollment from 13.2 percent in Fall 2007 to 25 percent by 2018. The University is quickly making progress toward this goal. Ahead of projections, in Fall 2015 MSU Denver reached 22.1 percent full-time equivalent (FTE) Latino enrollment, or 4,441 headcount, toward achieving the 25 percent necessary to earn HSI status.

> **Comment [L14]:** Luis to verify, 2017 or 2018?

The HSI designation brings benefits to all students and all faculty, with funding available for projects that range from student support programs to classroom technology.

The University is working to implement the recommendations contained in the [2008 HSI Task Force Recommendations](#) report. New initiatives — including a Latino-specific student recruitment effort, [Collaborative Teacher Education Research with Excelencia in Education](#), a grant to improve the nutrition of Latinos and the addition of [Master's Programs](#) to the University's academic offerings — and newly reinvigorated programs, such as [Journey Through Our Heritage](#) and the [Excel Program](#), are examples. These efforts, among others, led the University to a key interim step toward its HSI goal: In 2010, MSU Denver was named one of four "Emerging HSIs" in the country (among 176 emerging HSIs) by Excelencia in Education for its successful efforts to effectively serve its Latino students.

Veteran and Military Student Services: MSU Denver works to create the best support possible for the approximately 1,000 students per semester who have served or are serving in the nation's armed forces. Military Times ranked the University 49th in the nation in its [Best for Vets: Colleges 2016](#) annual ranking. Military Advanced Education included MSU Denver in its [Guide to Military-Friendly Colleges and Universities 2015](#), and in addition, [G.I. Jobs](#) has given MSU Denver "Military-Friendly Status" since 2013 and in 2014 [U.S. Veterans Magazine](#) listed the University in its guide of top military friendly schools.

A 2014 task force made recommendations for ways to strengthen the University's already nationally recognized veterans' services. Top among them was the establishment of the Veteran and Military Student Services Center and the hiring of a full-time veteran and military student services coordinator. (The majority of office staffers are veterans, military or military family members.) The center is a point of access to many of the support services at MSU Denver that help students persist to graduation, such as the Tutoring Center, the Access Center, the Counseling Center, Career Services and Academic Advising. It offers student veterans a space to gather and connect with each other for camaraderie and support. The coordinator helps students craft a plan to overcome the challenges that may present themselves, academic or otherwise, and ensures that veteran and military-affiliated students are aware of and connected to applicable resources across campus and in the greater Denver community.

Another key task force recommendation that has been implemented is the addition of academic policies that support veterans, including priority registration and a Military Credit Transfer Package.

Other veteran-specific programs include:

- **Veterans Education Benefits Office**: This office tracks veterans and other military-connected students receiving federal education benefits, serving as their liaison with the departments of Veterans Affairs and Defense. It assists veterans in obtaining their education benefits and works with their dependents. The office serves approximately 850 students per semester using military benefits to finance their education.

- **Veterans Upward Bound Program:** Operating since 1973, this program provides eligible military veterans with academic skills refresher training through a core curriculum of subjects that prepares them to succeed at the postsecondary educational level. It also provides participants with a unique pre-collegiate experience that is designed to remove apprehensions that many veterans, as nontraditional students, may have about entering college.

- **Student Veterans at MSU Denver:** The mission of this student-run organization is to provide a supportive community for student veterans as they transition into college life, graduate and begin their civilian careers. Bringing student veterans together to provide opportunities to address shared needs, the group offers leadership opportunities, social interactions and resources for its members.

[3.D.2] - MSU Denver offers course placement services and extensive academic support programs.

Course placement services: Before students can register, they must take assessment tests in English, mathematics and reading unless their scores on the ACT or SAT exams exempt them from the tests. Transfer students must take the tests unless they have successfully completed a college preparatory or equivalent course. In addition to taking the assessment tests, first-time students must see an advisor in the Academic Advising Center (see 3.D.3) before being allowed to register. The center's advisors have a list of courses recommended for first-time students

interested in particular majors; in some cases students interested are referred directly to the major department. Placing first-time students in Level I General Studies courses is given the highest priority, and additional sections are added if there is a need. Students who do not score high enough on the assessment tests are required to take a developmental course or courses at a community college. Colorado policy requires that students address their remediation needs within the first 30 credit hours.

In 2013, MSU Denver's mission to *"provide a high-quality, accessible, enriching education"* was recognized and reinforced by the State when the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, utilizing the newly passed House Bill 12-1155, approved the University's application to become the first baccalaureate-degree-granting institution in Colorado to provide remedial education to its marginally prepared students. The University provides the support services through Supplemental Academic Instruction (SAI), the Writing Center, Tutoring Center and federally and privately funded grants to facilitate the success of these students.

The Banner Student Information System feature that checks prerequisites is used to prevent transfer students from registering for Level I General Studies courses if they do not have sufficiently high scores on the assessment tests and have not taken the required developmental courses. Faculty in most academic programs try to ensure that students have the knowledge and skills required for success in a course by enforcing prerequisites. Some enforcement is done at the time of advising; some is done the first day of class. Faculty have the opportunity to review the prerequisites to their courses in the Banner System. Some faculty are reluctant to do so because many MSU Denver students are transfer students, and Banner may not recognize transfer course work that is equivalent to a prerequisite and consequently prevent students from registering. Students enrolled in a prerequisite course are allowed to register for the subsequent course before completing the prerequisite course, but they are not automatically removed from the class roster if they do not successfully complete the prerequisite course, which occasionally causes a problem if it is not noticed. With Banner, faculty are able to obtain information about students' satisfaction of the prerequisites.

Comment [L15]: Need to have Banner enforce prerequisites.

Academic support programs: Class Policy provides for out-of-class support for students from their instructors through regular office hours and consultations by appointment. Students desiring additional support may participate in programs and services of one or more specialized campus units depending on their circumstances (see 3.D.3 and 3.D.4).

Most academic support programs services at MSU Denver have been consolidated in the Dean of Students Office, which houses Student Conduct, Student Conflict Resolution Services and Behavioral Intervention, and the various programs of Undergraduate Studies: First Year Success, Student Academic Success Center, Applied Learning Center, Center for Individualized Learning, Honors Program, International Studies, Academic Advising, Career Services, Access Center and the Center for Urban Education. Students access most University programs and services through the Academic Advising Center (see 3.D.3). Undergraduate students on academic probation are required to consult with a Student Intervention Services advisor who will assist them in setting academic goals, accessing campus services, understanding probationary policies and ultimately returning to good academic standing.

Honors Program: The Honors Program promotes exceptional learning for highly motivated, academically successful students with broad academic interests. The program was substantially restructured in 2012 to incorporate General Studies courses, courses required for a student's degree and elective courses. The honors curriculum allows academically successful, engaged students the opportunity to go into more depth than they would in non-honors courses. Since the restructuring, enrollment in the program has increased from 70 to approximately 135 in 2015.

[3.D.3] Academic advising at MSU Denver is appropriate to its programs and student needs. [It is too easy to get lost with the acronyms; could one be called the AA Program and the other one the AA Center?   Or…?]

MSU Denver supports a centralized/decentralized Academic Advising Program (AAP) where students obtain assistance at various levels and at multiple locations. The Academic Advising Center (AAC) consists of a centralized unit of trained academic advisors who specifically address the needs of undeclared/exploratory students and students changing majors. Professional (staff) advisors and faculty advisors in the University's colleges, school and departments provide specialized advising services for incoming (first-time-to-college and transfer) students and continuing students.

> **Comment [L16]:** Need to add the org chart.

Since 2009, the University has approached the organization of advising services in a more thoughtful, intentional way. Previously, the AAP consisted of a small, centralized advising office (the AAC, but with a much broader mission) and faculty advisors in academic units. Since that time, the colleges, schools and departments have developed advising systems more consistent with the needs of students and of the academic units. Due in large part to this shift, professional and faculty advisors have been more effective in providing opportunities for students to engage in meaningful advising experiences.

The University is nearing the end of a five-year U.S. Department of Education Title III Strengthening Institutions grant that focused on improving academic advising services and preparing for a School of Education. Much of the infrastructure improvements for advising have come from grant funding.

AAC/AAP mission: The AAC has an appropriate mission statement, which was developed in 2010 and reviewed in 2012. The lack of a common mission for the AAP as a whole has been noted as a deficit, and a task force is addressing that in Fall 2015. The AAC and college, school and department advising programs will then use the AAP mission to define and align unit mission statements.

> **Comment [L17]:** Has a mission been written and approved?

AAP organization and leadership: In addition to the AAC, students are served by advising offices in the three colleges and the one school. Each college and school has professional advising and support services to provide students with accurate information on academic programs, policies, procedures and deadlines. Professional academic advisors assist new and transfer students in their transition to the University and define an appropriate academic path in the student's chosen discipline. Advising services in the colleges and schools report to the relevant dean. AAC reports up through the associate vice president of undergraduate studies. All advising services are part of the Division of Academic and Student Affairs, headed by the provost/ vice president.

Each department within the colleges and school also has faculty advisors for more in-depth discipline-specific advising. Faculty advisors provide information on academic programs, graduate programs and discipline-related career paths. A student's transition from professional academic advisors to faculty advisors varies by discipline.

On the graduate level, advising services are provided by faculty members serving as graduate program coordinators in their units.

An ongoing challenge related to decentralization of advising services is assurance of high-quality and consistent services across all advising units. For advising on the undergraduate level, this issue is addressed through the Advising Council, which reports to the Division of Academic and Student Affairs. The council provides leadership and direction and furnishes support and information for the MSU Denver advising community. Consisting of members from all units responsible for advising, the council serves an advisory role to University administration in matters of advising policy and procedures and serves to recognize and promote the role of advising to accomplish the University's strategic goals and mission.

AAP human resources: Professional advisors are selected and trained following the University's guidelines for professional personnel. Faculty advisors are hired following relevant University guidelines for tenure/tenure-track faculty and instructors.

In the last several years, developing consistent training and development protocols and materials has been identified as a need. In response to that need, the AAC website has current advising policies and is continually updated with the latest information on tools and resources to advise students in a timely and accurate manner. Faculty advisors can access an Advising Handbook, Banner CAPP directions, video demonstrations on how to run a CAPP report and perform a CAPP adjustment. The site also lists training opportunities on essential topics such as maintaining confidentiality of student records, policies and procedures pertaining to advising and curriculum knowledge.

Recognizing the need for a position dedicated to training and development for professional and faculty advisors, the University conducted a search in Fall 2015; the position was filled in ???. Training and development practices are modeled on recommendations from the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and all professional advisors are members of NACADA.

> **Comment [L18]:** Has this position been filled?

AAP ethics, law, policy and governance: Professional advisors are trained on the relevant ethical standards and practices related to advising, including maintaining confidentiality of student records, institutional policies, conflicts of interest, nondiscrimination policies and requirements to disclose information to appropriate authorities. Students have means to seek redress if they feel an advisor has misadvised them or treated them inequitably.

AAC diversity, equity and access: As part of its mission statement, AAC has adopted inclusive excellence as a key principle. Advisors receive training from University and non-University resources to develop cultural competency in areas such as (but not limited to) students with

disabilities, students with mental health issues, GLBTQ issues and working with military/veteran students.

The need for assessment data to be disaggregated by gender, race and ethnicity, and first-generation is being addressed for the 2015-16 data-collection cycle.

AAC internal and external relations: The AAC seeks collaborations with internal constituents that provide allied student services, including career counseling, internships and service learning, Honors Program, tutoring and specialized support services (TRiO, athletics, etc.). The University is now more proactive in its outreach to students and the coordination of outreach efforts is being addressed through organizational and technical means.

AAP financial resources, facilities and equipment: The University added has 26 professional advising positions since 2010, including 15 added for 2015-16. Consistent with University policy, the salary for the positions are funded at 87 percent or more of salaries at comparable positions at comparable institutions. Sufficient resources have been provided for supplies, training and development. Advisors have the necessary office space and equipment to conduct appropriate meetings with students.

AAP technology: MSU Denver provides appropriate technology tools to support advising. Advisors and students currently use Ellucian's Curriculum, Advising and Program Planning (CAPP) degree-audit tool. The vendor has noted that the University's Office of the Registrar, Information Technology and academic units have developed these audits to the extent few other institutions have managed. Because CAPP is at the end of its lifecycle and Ellucian is discontinuing development, the University is moving to Ellucian's next-generation, degree-audit package, DegreeWorks, in 2015-16. Given its history of the efficient implementation of degree audits, the University anticipates that having a better tool will improve advising services. Once the audits are fully functional, the University will implement more advanced DegreeWorks features that do not have equivalents in CAPP: Student Educational Planner (for long-term planning) and Transfer Equivalency Self Service (planning for prospective students).

Professional advisors and some faculty advisors have long used a centralized notes system. As part of the shift to the more decentralized advising model, the University adopted Ellucian's Banner Relationship Management (BRM) platform to improve communication to students through the recruitment/admission cycle to graduation. Advising notes are currently kept in BRM.

Unfortunately, shortly after launching BRM, Ellucian stopped its development to move in a different direction. In its current state, BRM does not meet the University's advising needs, so the institution is moving to a software platform more specifically designed to support its advising model, EAB's Student Success Collaborative Campus (SSC Campus). This software will allow students to make online appointments with advisors, tutors and other support services. It will also allow advisors to efficiently manage a caseload of students, which will alleviate some of the issues the University has had with coordination of outreach efforts. The current version of SSC Campus is in pilot phase and will be implemented in early 2016.

AAP assessment: Until the Academic Advising Task Force recommends an AAP mission and it is approved, appropriate student-learning outcomes for the AAP will remain inadequately defined. Data collected has primarily consisted of student satisfaction and utilization. A random sample of students is surveyed each year, asking them about their experiences with the advisor they met with most recently and the advising system as a whole.

Students have consistently reported high levels of satisfaction with their advisor. However, they have had higher levels of satisfaction with faculty advisors than with professional advisors, including in areas such as general education requirements. They have also reported slightly higher levels of satisfaction with decentralized (college/school) professional advisors than with centralized (AAC) advisors.

Students have also consistently reported higher levels of dissatisfaction with the advising system as a whole. In particular, they report having difficulty finding which advisor is appropriate for them, especially if they have multiple questions. They also report dissatisfaction with advisor availability.

The University also recently surveyed 13,000 students who have left the University and received an approximate 10 percent response rate. Of those who responded, 35 percent indicated that dissatisfaction with the overall quality of the advising system was a minor or major reason for discontinuing enrollment.

The University has responded to the survey data by adding professional advising positions, moving advising services closer to the academic units and improving the technological infrastructure for advising, as noted above.

[3.D.4] MSU Denver provides infrastructure necessary to support effective teaching and learning. [Michael Erskine, would you check and make sure we got this right? Do make changes as needed.]

Facilities: The 215 smart classrooms on the Auraria Campus are under the direct control of Auraria Higher Education Center. Most are shared by MSU Denver, University Colorado Denver and the Community College of Denver. In each of these classrooms there is a sound system, video/data projection system, SVHS VCR and a microphone mixer. There is also an interconnect panel that allows faculty to connect portable playback devices and computers to the projection and sound systems. All rooms have Ethernet connections. Microphones, slide-to-video converters, film-to-video converters and document cameras are available for use in these rooms by reservation from Media Equipment Services.

In each lecture hall there is also a laser video disc player, document camera audio CD player and audio cassette deck. All lecture halls also have 35 MM slide projectors; some have 16 MM motion picture projection capability. The lecture hall podiums have the interconnect panel mentioned above.

Wireless microphones and wireless hearing-assisted systems are installed in some classrooms. A user's guide is available for faculty to learn how to use the equipment. In addition, there is a faculty-training facility in the Auraria Media Center where faculty can practice operating the equipment and test their computer's compatibility. Help is also available from media center staff. Wireless microphones and hearing assistance systems are available for checkout from the MSU Denver Educational Technology Center and the AHEC Auraria Media Center.

MSU Denver manages and maintains 274 learning spaces, including classrooms, computer labs, departmental labs and lecture halls. During the spring 2015 MSU Denver developed a comprehensive set of minimum classroom technology guidelines and established a goal of updating all learning spaces on a seven-year cycle. The standard was developed with the following four goals: 1) provide spaces that support optimal teaching and learning experiences through a consistent and functional set of technologies, 2) initially upgrade rooms that have non-functioning or significantly out-of-date equipment to better meet faculty and student needs, 3) when possible, upgrade all rooms assigned to a single department at the same time to provide a consistent teaching and learning experience within that department, 4) provide proactive classroom maintenance, management and support to significantly reduce technological problems. This new learning spaces standard recommend contemporary digital technologies while allowing analog and digital device inputs, incorporates an optical media player, and includes a faculty workstation, all while meetings specific departmental needs as applicable. Additionally, these upgraded learning spaces allow for remote and proactive monitoring of services. To date, 45 classrooms have been upgraded to meet this standard. New construction projects, such as a remodel of art learning spaces and the development of the new AES Building, were informed by the new standard and will meet these standards when competed. Each semester, Information Technology Services conducts a survey regarding learning spaces to determine to impacts of classroom upgrades and to aid in the prioritization of learning space technology upgrades.

In addition to the MSU Denver learning spaces, the Auraria Higher Education Center manages an addition 40 classrooms that are shared by MSU Denver, University of Colorado Denver and the Community College of Denver. Five of these classrooms have been upgraded since 2012.

MSU Denver shares the King Performing Arts Center with its sister institutions. The center houses six performing spaces, four available to MSU Denver: a production studio permanently assigned to MSU Denver, 200-seat Recital Hall; 520-seat Concert Hall and 275-seat Courtyard Theatre. There are dressing rooms, a green room, recording studio, lighting and music electronics labs, classroom space, box office, scene, paint and costume shops and dance studio. All spaces are fully equipped with state-of-the-art equipment.

Technology: Information Technology Services at MSU Denver is committed to providing the highest quality and most responsive service possible to the MSU Denver community with the resources available.

The ITS Educational Technology Center collaborates with faculty and staff exists to enhance teaching and learning through the innovative and effective use of educational technology. The

Center designs, develops, implements and supports systems, services and products which are essential to teaching and learning both online and in the classroom. The Center also supports instructional technologies that can contribute to MSU Denver's academic excellence by increasing student engagement with course materials, supporting active learning strategies, fostering communication and collaboration, streamlining course administration and assisting students in developing their skills for future learning and work.

The University also provides 21 computer labs, eight of which are available to students as 'open' labs. Combined, the 21 computer labs provide access to over 900 Mac or PC workstations to the over 13,000 MSU Denver students who take advantage of this service each semester. All labs are equipped with contemporary technology and a wide range of specialized applications supporting engineering, art and music curricula in addition to more general applications and Internet access. All labs are ADA accessible and open from 7a.m. until 10p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8am -5pm Friday and Saturday. A smaller number of labs with limited hours are open on Sundays and during semester breaks. Between semesters, most labs are closed for maintenance. In addition, several department-specific computer labs and computer carts exist. In early 2015, the University surveyed students who take advantage of these labs to determine needs. As a follow-up, in late 2015, the University deployed the Labstats monitoring software to better analyze the use of these labs.

Nine IT Student Labs with more than 700 computers (PC and Mac) are equipped with the newest technology available and multiple software packages for student and faculty academic use. The software varies from specialized engineering, art and music programs to the more general and popular software. Serving more than 13,000 students per semester, all nine labs are ADA accessible and open during the semester from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday. A smaller number of labs are open limited hours on Sundays and during semester breaks. The labs generally close between semesters for equipment and software maintenance.

Information Technology Application Services supports and enhances the administrative enterprise and departmental business applications used at MSU Denver. Among these are: Ellucian Banner Student, Financial Aid, Student Accounts, Finance, Human Resources, Banner Document Management System (BDMS), Banner Relationship Management and the Luminis student portal accessed through the Student Hub on msudenver.edu. A partial list of the non-Ellucian applications of focus includes Enterprise Content Management, the UC4 Job Scheduler, CASHNet Cashiering, data integration and feeds to third-party departmental systems, Account Management, and departmental database support.

Infrastructure Services provides the skeletal system that supports the applications running on the network. This includes servers, storage, email, backups, datacenter hosting, visualization, applications and more. Three teams manage the system: 1) datacenter and storage operations, 2) the Windows environment which includes email and authentication, and 3) the Linux environment supporting the student portal, the web and Banner services.

[Aerospace and Engineering Sciences (AES) Building](#): In October 2015, MSU Denver broke ground on the AES Building, an innovative project that will integrate the study of advanced manufacturing disciplines. This 142,000 square-foot facility will revolutionize aviation, aerospace and advanced manufacturing education in Colorado by integrating the study of:

- aviation and aerospace science
- industrial design
- civil, mechanical and electrical engineering technology
- computer information systems
- computer science

The $60 million state-of-the-art building will provide students with the curriculum, advanced technologies and the labs necessary to give them a highly experiential, relevant education.

Library services and resources: The [Auraria Library](#) supports the diverse and evolving teaching, curricular learning, research needs and intellectual curiosity of the students, faculty and staff of MSU Denver. The library offers print and digital resources, expert guidance in information-gathering and research techniques, partnerships in instructional development and technology geared to discovery, learning, discussion and knowledge creation.

The library also serves the University of Colorado Denver and the Community College of Denver. The presence of three schools on one campus enhances the library's holdings by promoting a collection that is more diverse, both in subject areas and academic level, than the traditional college library. All three campus schools contribute to the Library's budget.

In 2013 and 2014 the library was awarded a total of $26.8 million by the State of Colorado for space and infrastructure improvements. This financial support as well as donor contributions funded cutting-edge technology enhancements and comfortable learning spaces that promote active, collaborative learning.

[3.D.5] MSU Denver guides students in the effective use of research and information resources.

As noted in Core Component 2, Ethical and Responsible Conduct, the integrity of research and the fair use of copyrighted material are core values at MSU Denver. The [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) section of the University Catalog includes the following statement under Academic Integrity: *As students, faculty, staff and administrators of Metropolitan State University of Denver, it is our responsibility to uphold and maintain an academic environment that furthers scholarly inquiry, creative activity and the application of knowledge. We will not tolerate academic dishonesty. We will demonstrate honesty and integrity in all activities related to our learning and scholarship. We will not plagiarize, fabricate information or data, cheat on*

*tests or exams, steal academic material, or submit work to more than one class without full
disclosure.*

The Center for Faculty Excellence promotes effective research and teaching with publicly
available online tutorials for faculty and staff. These include two tutorials on academic integrity
specifically designed for students and faculty, and one on effective writing practices.

Many faculty also use the SafeAssign paper submission tool in Blackboard, ensuring academic
integrity while helping students identify how to participate in responsible academic discourse. In
addition to the University Catalog section on Students Rights and Responsibilities regarding
academic integrity, a number of academic units—the Writing Center, Social Work Department
and Hospitality, Tourism and Events Department, for example— also make available plagiarism
statements and resources. The Student Code of Conduct in the MSU Denver Student Handbook
defines proscribed conduct and sanctions for academic misconduct including plagiarism and
cheating.

Students, who are encouraged from their first year of undergraduate study to participate in
research, are subject to the same code as faculty and staff for the ethical conduct of research as
defined in the Human Subjects Protection Program, which guides Institutional Review Board
(IRB) oversight of human research. The University's Human Research Protection Plan and all of
the University's policies and procedures are available on the IRB website. HSPP policies and
procedures are federally compliant and meet the requirements of the University's agreement
(called a federal-wide assurance) with the federal government.

The University's IRB requires that student-driven research has a designated faculty or staff
advisor who serves as the principal investigator. Prior to IRB approval, all investigators on a
study (students included) are required to complete a basic ethics course in human subjects
research through an online program (www.citiprogram.org). The HSPP manager provides online
guidance, answers questions via phone and email and frequently consults with faculty and
student researchers about IRB submissions and requirements.

The University's Research Misconduct Policy defines fabrication, falsification and plagiarism
and outlines the process for investigating allegations of misconduct. The Undergraduate
Research Program provides some resources for students pursuing grants or intending to present
at the annual Undergraduate Research Conference. A number of the undergraduate research
initiatives are discussed in Core Component 3.B.

Auraria Library **research resources:** The library houses databases, online collections, digital
and printed books and periodicals, DVDs, CDs and streaming music and videos. These resources
span the sciences, humanities, social sciences and professional study areas to address learning
and research needs at MSU Denver, University of Colorado Denver and Community College of
Denver. Acquisitions encompass materials that support similar courses at all three institutions as
well as those that support programs unique to MSU Denver, including the departments of Social

Work, Chicano Studies, Africana Studies and Hospitality, Tourism and Events and the Institute for Women's Studies and Services. The library holds classes on using its resources; in FY 2014, more than 4,100 MSU Denver students attended 160 classes

Acquisitions for the collection are primarily determined by course content, department/program/college goals, research initiatives and faculty recommendations. Many MSU Denver faculty members are proactive in utilizing library services through requests for materials and feedback on collection trials.

The Auraria Library offers the following research materials:

- 298 databases and collections spanning multiple subjects, time periods and formats
- Summon, Serials Solutions "discovery" software, represented by the "Start my Research" box on the Library's home page, for easy location of relevant online journals, streaming videos and ebooks through the Library's catalog and databases
- More than 3,000 journal, magazine and newspaper titles in print format and more than 101,000 full-text periodicals in digital format
- Books/E-Books, including specialized collections of scholarly e-books
- More than 35,000 documentary, educational and performance videos, including some special streaming collections, such as the CyberCinema collection that specifically supports MSU Denver's Hospitality, Tourism and Events program.

The Auraria Library is funded by the three institutions based on FTEs, thus MSU Denver is the major financial supporter. In FY 2014, the University contributed $4,081,075 (44 percent) of the total Auraria Library budget of $9,256,950.

Comment [L22]: Update figures

Sources:
Accuplacer computer-based placement tests
Undergraduate Census
Dean of Students
Health Center at Auraria
Counseling Center
Division of Academic and Student Affairs
New Student Orientation
First Year Success
TRiO Student Support Services
Immigrant Services Program
Brother to Brother
College Completion Program
Access Center
new undergraduate transfer students since 2010
Transfer Student Success and Persistence Program
learning communities
Academic Advising Center

Office of Institutional Diversity
Africana Studies Department
Chicana and Chicano Studies Department
Native American Studies
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Student Services
Institute for Women's Studies and Services
The Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students
Hispanic Serving Institution Initiative
2008 HSI Task Force Recommendations
Collaborative Teacher Education Research with Excelencia in Education
Master's Programs
Journey Through Our Heritage
Excel Program
Veteran and Military Student Services
Best for Vets: Colleges 2016
Guide to Military-Friendly Colleges and Universities 2015
G.I. Jobs
U.S. Veterans Magazine
Veterans Education Benefits Office
Veterans Upward Bound Program
Student Veterans at MSU Denver
Class Policy
Honors Program
Auraria Media Center
King Performing Arts Center
Information Technology Services
Educational Technology Center
I.T. Student Labs
Information Technology Application Services
Aerospace and Engineering Sciences (AES) Building
Auraria Library
Student Rights and Responsibilities
Center for Faculty Excellence
University Catalog
Student Code of Conduct
Institutional Review Board
www.citiprogram.org
Research Misconduct Policy
Undergraduate Research Program

3.E – Core Component 3.E

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

Argument:

MSU Denver achieves the goal of its mission statement *"to provide a high-quality, accessible, enriching education that prepares students for successful careers, postgraduate education and lifelong learning in a multicultural, global and technological society"* by every department and unit adhering to the principles behind the University's Strategic Themes (Diversity, Access, Entrepreneurship, Respect and Community) and the five Strategic Pillars (Student and Academic Success, Community Engagement and Regional Stewardship, University Culture, University Resources and Telling the MSU Denver Story) that are the foundation of the MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh.

[3.E.1] - Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.

MSU Denver utilizes educational programming that spans multiple disciplines to provide co-curricular experiences for the University's students. This enriches the educational environment by promoting diverse, multicultural and cross-disciplinary opportunities for learning. Further, MSU Denver accommodates many skills students bring with them into this educational environment to include, but not limited to, military training, prior work experience, previous educational experiences and international experiences. In addition to providing enhanced co-curricular programs at its main location on the Auraria Campus, MSU Denver's Extended Campus option allows for educational experiences ranging from self-paced (correspondence/online) to study abroad. For co-curricular programs, Extended Campus offers learning opportunities in its Alternative Teacher Licensure Program, Colorado Center for Medical Laboratory Science, Perioperative Nursing Program, Learn On noncredit program, and the Hispanic Leadership Development Program.

MSU Denver has an abundance of explicit co-curricular programs. The School of Education offers K-12 Teacher Licensure programs that maintain co-curricular programs with Human Development (Psychology), Modern Languages and Speech, Language, Hearing Sciences. There are many courses that cross-list between departments. For example, the Department of Chicana/o Studies cross-lists courses with the departments of Teacher Education, Social Work, English, Spanish and Criminal Justice, among others. Almost all academic programs are engaged in discipline-specific scholarly activity, but many programs at MSU Denver also focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning, which is often interdisciplinary and co-curricular in nature. Improving teaching methodology naturally enhances and enriches the educational environment.

The First Year Success program and Honors Program require curricula in addition to the discipline-required curriculum. Further, the Center for Individualized Learning specializes in providing a structure for students who identify an interdisciplinary track that would not be covered by a specific major/minor (e.g., Environmental Crime). The center also identifies

previously earned credits, such as military/veteran and other prior learning credits, and finds suitable tracks for students to achieve an enriched educational experience without having to start over. Each of these co-curricular opportunities allows students to expand their major/minor requirements into additional realms of learning. This also shows the cohesiveness that can exist between disciplines.

In addition to these academic programs, MSU Denver's robust Office of Student Activities offers an abundance of co-curricular opportunities for students to engage and explore ways in which they can transform their lives and that of the community. There are almost 150 student organizations with a range of interests from nonprofit and political to service and the performing arts. Students are encouraged not only to join but to found a student group around their passion and/or educational goals. The office also houses the student fee-funded Student Travel Program that provides funds for students to attend regional and national professional conferences or conventions. The office also sponsors special leadership programs and a variety of events including annual festivals in the fall and spring where departments and organizations can showcase themselves to students.

Finally, the University's NCAA Division II Roadrunner Athletics program is a competitive powerhouse in men's and women's basketball, soccer, tennis, and track and field; baseball, softball, men's cross country and women's golf. The Roadrunners boast several national championships, including two in men's basketball and two in women's soccer. The program also houses 14 club sports ranging from ice hockey to women's lacrosse to rugby.

The recently opened $24 million Regency Athletic Complex at MSU Denver is home to Roadrunners baseball, softball, soccer and tennis. In addition to the sports facilities, a 20,000-square foot building houses locker rooms for each sports team, along with a state-of-the-art weight room and athletic training room. The building also features a student-athlete lounge and meeting rooms. The University will host the 2016 NCAA Division II Spring Sports Festival national championships in softball, tennis, lacrosse and golf at the facility at the new complex.

[3.E.2] - The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

MSU Denver actively engages in the community at-large in a variety of ways, including scholarly and creative activities, and applying the knowledge gained from the institution. The Applied Learning Center houses the Internship Program, Service Learning Program, Center for Urban Connections and the Undergraduate Research Program. Each of these programs is committed to providing the platforms on which students can apply what they are learning through traditional curricular activities.

The Internship Program places student in work experiences connected with their major or minor. MSU Denver has worked at establishing a strong network of employers in a variety of

disciplines to accommodate the diversity of student career interests. The Service Learning Program provides support for faculty mentors to directly connect curricular programming with community partners to enrich the educational experience. The Center for Urban Connections helps students find volunteer opportunities such as Americorps and the Roadrunners Give Back program in the Office of Student Activities offers a variety of prospects for volunteers throughout the year. The Undergraduate Research Program provides support for students conducting research under the mentorship of faculty. Spring 2016 will mark the 5th Annual Undergraduate Research Conference hosted at MSU Denver.

MSU Denver's Family Literacy Program offers comprehensive school-based literacy programs which enhances relationships between parents and children and has contributed to breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty. The Office of Institutional Diversity focuses on inclusive excellence to promote the broader outcomes of inclusivity, excellence, cultural competence, innovation, synergy and pride. Related to this, MSU Denver began an Equity in Excellence initiative in 2013 to help identify and close equity gaps, with a particular commitment to equity for all of the University's students. MSU Denver has been steadily moving toward its goal of achieving the federal designation of Hispanic Serving Institution, which indicates at least a 25 percent enrollment of Latino students. To achieve this goal, MSU Denver has launched several recruitment efforts and programs specifically targeting Latinos that are enriching educational opportunities within the entire academic community. For example, the institution now offers master's programs, teacher certification programs and such innovative offerings as Journey Through Our Heritage, which embraces cultural diversity by helping students engage in public school systems curriculum in the areas of African American, Native American, Chicano/a, Mexicana/o, Mexican American and Latina/o Studies.

Sources
MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh
Extended Campus
School of Education
First Year Success
Honors Program
Center for Individualized Learning
Internship Program
Service Learning Program
Center for Urban Connections
Undergraduate Research Program
Roadrunners Give Back
Family Literacy Program
Office of Institutional Diversity
Equity in Excellence
Hispanic Serving Institution
Journey Through Our Heritage

3.S − Criterion 3 − Summary

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

Summary

The Strategic Themes and Strategic Pillars of the MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh exemplify an enriched educational environment through the use of research-based, best-practice, degree-completion strategies that include challenging classroom environments and experiences, engaging curricula and academic standards that both address unique and varied student needs while maintaining rigorous, academic integrity. Further, an enriched educational environment certainly includes civility, clarity, transparency, accountability and inclusivity all taking place in an atmosphere of mutual respect. MSU Denver embodies an enriched educational environment through the sheer diversity of offerings and programs for students, ranging from cultural affiliations, to rigorous academic competitions to co-curricular programs that harness the expertise of the faculty and the intelligence and energy of MSU Denver students to address quality-of-life issues for Colorado communities.

4 – Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

4.A – Core Component 4.A

Argument:

MSU Denver demonstrates a clear responsibility toward maintaining and enhancing the quality of its educational programs, student support services and learning environments. The University continuously evaluates quality through clearly defined and measurable goals that are evaluated at all organizational levels and practices continuous improvement through these processes.

[4.A.1] - MSU Denver maintains a practice of regular program reviews.

MSU Denver manages and maintains a rigorous seven-year cycle of program reviews of academic programs facilitated by the University Program Review Committee (UPRC) and of non-academic units by the Academic and Student Affairs Unit Review Committee (ASAURC). The UPRC is composed primarily of faculty members and supported by the associate vice president for curriculum and academic effectiveness and the program manager. Composed mainly of administrators from units overseen by the Division of Academic and Student Affairs, the ASAURC is also supported by the associate vice president for curriculum and academic effectiveness. Each committee facilitates a review process that includes a self-study, an external consultant report and in-depth discussion of findings. The UPRC Guidelines for Department

Chairs and Program Directors and the ASAURC Unit Review Guidelines are distributed to departments undergoing review to assist them in preparing a self-study narrative and supporting materials.

MSU Denver maintains and enhances the academic quality, efficiency and accountability of academic programs through consistent and thorough evaluation. The department's self-study and and materials are shared in advance with an external consultant who is identified by the department and approved by the appropriate dean's office. Following the consultant's site visit and report submission, the UPRC prepares a set of faculty interview questions to gather departmental feedback about the consultant's recommendations. The UPRC uses this feedback and the consultant report to prepare an overall committee report that is shared with the department and the dean. The next stage of the process involves a meeting of the department chair, dean, provost and associate vice president for curriculum and academic effectiveness to discuss the issues raised through the program-review process and to determine next steps. All of the materials produced are used to prepare the executive summary that is submitted to the Board of Trustees. Ultimately, the results of the reviews are communicated to the appropriate administrators and the trustees to facilitate the making of decisions regarding program expansion, re-structuring, contraction, consolidation or discontinuance and the possible reallocation of resources.

The program-review process for non-academic units is designed specifically for the consistent and thorough evaluation of these types of programs. Subsequently an external consultant is engaged to assess the unit using the materials generated during the self-study. The unit's self-study, supporting materials and consultant report inform the preparation of an overall ASAURC report that is shared with the department, appropriate leadership and the provost. The next stage of the process involves a meeting of the unit director, the associate vice president over the unit, the provost and the associate vice president for curriculum and academic effectiveness to discuss the issues raised through the program-review process and to determine subsequent steps. As with the academic program-review process, an executive summary of the results is submitted to the Board of Trustees and to the appropriate administrators who are responsible for decisions regarding program expansion, re-structuring, contraction, consolidation or discontinuance and the possible reallocation of resources.

In addition to the academic and non-academic reviews conducted by the UPRC and ASAURC, respectively, several state-mandated program reviews are conducted. For instance the teacher education curriculum in the School of Education must be approved by the Colorado State Board of Education, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation to assure that each teacher candidate has demonstrated a thorough understanding of and ability to apply the teaching strategies, classroom management/school discipline methods and the measurement and evaluation tools necessary for success as a first-year licensed teacher.

Furthermore, certain individual programs maintain additional program reviews through either self-study or specialized accreditations such as:

- All engineering and technology programs are accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology.
- The College of Business is currently under review for Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation. AACSB is the longest-standing specialized accreditation of business programs.
- The Recreation Professions program is accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions.
- The Art Program and the Industrial Design Program are accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design.
- The Theatre Program is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre.

[4.A.2] – MSU Denver carefully evaluates all credit that it transcripts. [Janet Ludwig, can you help here with this one? There should be more here to explain *how* we evaluate transfer credit.]

MSU Denver accepts transfer credits from regionally accredited institutions of higher learning.

MSU Denver has developed strategic policies and procedures to evaluate all transcribed credit offered to students, including conducting degree and certificate audits for every graduating student. Furthermore, robust evaluation procedures have been developed to ensure that credit for prior learning is provided only when quality thresholds have been met.

MSU Denver values students' prior learning and has a Prior Learning Assessment Program through the Center for Individualized Learning. The University has six primary forms of credit for prior learning that is not reflected on an academic transcript from another accredited institution. (The assessment of prior learning from accredited institutions is discussed in detail in (4.A.3). The six forms are: [What about IB? The state-wide changes will be in effect in 16-17.]

- **College Level Examination Program (CLEP):** MSU Denver faculty have reviewed test information and identified acceptable cut scores to award credit for a number of the College Board's College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests. Not all CLEP tests are accepted at MSU Denver and in some cases the required scores have been set higher than the scores recommended by the American Council on Education.   [We need to revise this to include the state-wide changes—that we'll accept scores of 3 for three general education credits, etc.; these will be in place for 16-17.]

- **DSST Standardized Examinations:** MSU Denver accepts the ACE-recommended cut scores for the nationally recognized DSST (formerly known as the DANTES Subject Standardized Test) and accepts elective credit for successful completion of such exams on a case-by-case basis. Only upon approval by the appropriate academic department chair may such credits be used toward non-elective (departmental) degree requirements.

- **Credit by Departmental Examination:** When a student indicates having prior learning for an existing MSU Denver course the appropriate academic department chair may employ a departmental exam to assess such learning. Such examinations must use the student-learning outcomes as indicated in the approved curriculum in the course syllabus.

A faculty member, department chair and the appropriate dean must approve participation in such departmental exams. Students may be examined in any appropriate format for the course (written, oral, etc.). Students must achieve at least an 80 percent score to earn course credit. An assessment fee (currently $103.60 per credit, due to change next year) is charged prior to the examination. Upon successful completion of the examination it is indicated on the student's transcript for the semester in which the exam is taken, with a grade notation of EX. This grade does not count in the student GPA and is not considered resident credit.

- **Prior Learning Portfolio Assessment:** When appropriate, prior learning may be assessed through a portfolio process designed to demonstrate the learning achieved. Existing courses at MSU Denver must be identified, and students include a variety of documents including written essays and artifacts to demonstrate their learning. Students must complete the 1-credit EDS 2680 Portfolio Development Workshop that guides them in the process of developing their portfolio. As with the Credit by Departmental Examination, the student pays an assessment fee. Appropriate faculty members, the department chair, the dean and the director of the Applied Learning Center then review the portfolio for Individualized Learning. When approved, the credit is reflected on the student's transcript for that semester, with a PL in lieu of a grade. This grade does not count in the student's GPA and is not considered resident credit.

- **Military Training:** Based on evidence presented to MSU Denver on military training and preparation for deployment overseas, the University now grants a package of credit to all students with military service:

    - 6 credit hours of lower-division elective credit (MILR 8000) for all students who have served one enlistment of four years
    - 6 additional credit hours of upper-division elective credit (MILR 9000) for students who have either served two enlistments of four years each or attained the rank of E5 or above
    - 3 credit hours of SPE 1010 for all students who served at least one enlistment and achieved the rank of E5
    - waiver of the Global Diversity course requirement for all students who deployed abroad in the armed services for at least six months.

    Students must submit their DD-214 (discharge document) or other record of service (if still active or reserve) for this credit to be awarded.

- **American Council on Education-Approved Credit:** When a student has completed a professional training or study program that has been evaluated and recommended for university-level credit by the American Council on Education, it may be granted as general elective credit. If appropriate, the relevant department chair may allow the credit to count toward departmental requirements. This includes credit for specific military training and occupational specialties (beyond the standard package described above).

In addition to the six methods to approve prior learning from nonaccredited academic institutions, two options for credit awarded for experiential learning are offered:

- **Internship credit:** Academic departments may elect to award internship credit using a variety of upper-division course numbers. The credit itself is awarded by the department and the faculty advisor assigns the appropriate grade. Most departments work with the centralized Internship Program that administers and monitors the internship placements. The internship program develops a customized learning agreement among the student, faculty supervisor and the internship supervisor that includes learning outcomes and academic assignments. Quality control is managed through site visits and evaluations conducted both by faculty and by internship program staff. Accreditation or the certification of some disciplines requires direct faculty supervision of internship experience, thus promoting quality control over student learning in these fields.

- **Service-learning credit:** Some courses, after having undergone a substantive curriculum review to ensure that they meet specific criteria related to best practices for service learning, have achieved the University's official "service-learning designation." These classes appear in the class schedule as such. Requests for new service-learning course designations must be approved through the University's curriculum change review process. In addition to designated courses, the Service Learning Program in the Applied Learning Center provides mentoring and support to faculty who would like to integrate service learning into their courses.

[4.A.3] – Credits transferred to the institution are carefully evaluated.

MSU Denver strives to ensure that incoming credits meet quality standards. The University's strict guidelines for the acceptance of transfer credits include:

- MSU Denver only accepts credit from institutions of higher education holding full regional accreditation by one of the following agencies: Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, New England Association of Colleges and Schools, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Southern Association of Colleges of Schools or Western Association of Colleges and Schools. Course work from regionally accredited institutions is still evaluated on a course-by-course basis.

- The University limits the amount of transferrable credit from two-year institutions to up to 64 semester hours and up to 90 semester hours from four-year institutions or from a combination of two-year and four-year institutions.

- Transfer credit is accepted only for those classes in which a grade of "C-" or better is earned and in which class content is similar to that of course work offered at MSU Denver.

- Students who transfer in a previous bachelor's degree will receive a block of 90 credit hours and be granted senior standing at the University.

- A professional course-by-course evaluation of international transcripts is required using a professional transcript evaluation service such as World Education Services or Education Credential Evaluators.

Transfer students who have attended any Colorado two-year community college or junior college may be eligible for transfer credit through several transfer policies that guarantee transfer of credit, e.g. 60 + 60 major programs, gtPathways or articulation agreements. Students do not need to have completed their associate's degree to earn transfer credits.

[4.A.4] – The institution's faculty maintains oversight of academic standards and faculty qualifications.

[Sheila Rucki and Elizabeth Ribble, what about academic standards and faculty qualifications? Can you help?]

The broad participation of faculty in the oversight of academic standards is ensured through five Faculty Senate committees that review and make recommendations to the full senate regarding curriculum and standards. These committees are:

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee: This committee has jurisdiction over all curriculum proposals and makes recommendations to the senate concerning the curriculum programs of the University, including:

- degree programs
- certificates of completion
- General Studies, Multicultural and Senior Experience requirements
- outreach, off-campus and community instructional programs, and programs granting credit for experiential learning
- courses granting college credit, including omnibus courses

The Graduate Council Curriculum Committee is not on the senate website, so it needs to be added there and copy written for this section.

Academic Policies Committee: This committee makes recommendations to the senate on all matters related to academic standards, including, but not limited to:

- academic evaluation policies, standards, and procedures
- academic calendar
- admission suspensionhttp://www.msudenver.edu/facultysenate/committees/fs-mc.html
- transfer credits
- re-admission qualifications

Comment [L26]: – deans and dept. chairs will need to contribute to this section

Comment [L27]: no information on faculty overseeing faculty qualifications.

Comment [L28]: Added multicultural review committee – is this correct?

Comment [L29]: Missing committee

General Studies Committee: This committee is tasked with making recommendations to the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee regarding:

- courses submitted for designation as General Studies courses, using program guidelines appropriate to the catalog year for which determination is being made
- continued General Studies designation of General Studies courses it reviewes on a rotating basis of a maximum of seven years
- proposed changes in the criteria for conferring General Studies designation

Multicultural Curriculum Review Committee: This committee evaluates each new or existing course proposed to receive special academic designation, such as the multicultural and service learning designations, and reviews any changes to the criteria for conferring these designations. Any recommendations made by the committee are forwarded to the senate's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee.

> **Comment [L30]:** Referred to with and without curriculum in the title.

[4.A.5] – Academic units and programs at the institution are recognized by specialized accrediting bodies.

> **Comment [L31]:** Deans/chairs should write an explanation of each accrediting body's assessment process/data.

Fifteen academic programs have earned specialized accreditation and another ten have approval and/or endorsement from accrediting bodies: [Chairs, if your accrediting body is not named here, please add it.]

- Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology
- Council on Social Work
- National Association of Schools of Music
- National League for Nursing
- National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
- Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism, and Related Professions
- Association of University Programs in Health Administration
- Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (under review)

Examples of non-academic program accreditations/memberships include

- American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
- International Association of Counseling Services
- Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care

[4.A.6] – The institution uses multiple methods to evaluate success of University graduates.

Information about the success of MSU Denver graduates is gathered in numerous ways.

> **Comment [L32]:** Need to have up-to-date information about surveys and reports on the OIR website.

Outcomes Survey: This alumni survey is administered by CSO Research for every graduating term (Summer, Fall and Spring). It is administered at graduation and then at three, six and 12 months thereafter. The survey includes questions about employment rates, future plans, enrollment in additional education, experiences while earning their degree at MSU Denver (including internships, student teaching, study abroad, etc.) and satisfaction with post-graduate

employment. Department-level reports are generated upon request for use in program planning and accreditation.

Post-Graduate Achievement Report: Every two years data are collected from the National Student Clearinghouse on graduate school completions for 10 years of MSU Denver graduates. The most recent report, completed in 2015, includes MSU graduates from FY 2000-01 through FY 2009-10. The report details rates of graduate school achievement, time to first graduate school completion and highest postgraduate degree for each major and college in the University. This report is used for Board of Trustee meetings, department planning and program review.

Department-level evaluations: Departments also collect information on their graduates through surveys. For instance, since the School of Education just completed its national accreditation and state reauthorization processes, the University has readily available data from its student teaching exit surveys, which it uses for internal program evaluation. Another example is the Nutrition Department which conducts senior and postgraduate surveys as well as a survey that asks post-baccalaureate internship directors to evaluate MSU Denver graduates.

| **Comment [L33]:** Need more examples from other departments. YES! |

Another way departments evaluate the success of their graduates is by tracking pass rates for licensing or certification exams. For instance, national licensing exam pass rates are tracked for nursing graduates. Undergraduate and post-baccalaureate teacher education students must receive a passing score on the state-required PLACE and PRAXIS II examinations in order to qualify for student teaching. .

Sources:
University Program Review Committee
Academic and Student Affairs Unit Review Committee
UPRC Guidelines for Department Chairs and Program Directors
ASAURC Unit Review Guidelines

| **Comment [L34]:** This doc is on the ASAURC web page, but it's not a link like it is for the UPRC |

Prior Learning Assessment Program
Center for Individualized Learning
Internship Program
Service Learning Program
Applied Learning Center
guidelines for the acceptance of transfer credits
Curriculum Committee
Academic Policies Committee
General Studies Committee
Multicultural Curriculum Review Committee
Outcomes Survey
Post-Graduate Achievement Report

4.B – Core Component 4.B

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

Argument:

The University's commitment to educational achievement of its students is evidenced by the recent updating of MSU Denver's undergraduate student learning outcomes. Once the five proposed outcomes are finalized, the process for assessing them will be determined. A broad University-wide discussion that was collaborative and transparent ensured that diverse voices were heard in developing these learning outcomes.

[4.B.1] – Creating and modifying assessment plans is an ongoing initiative at the institution. [Much work is needed here.]

Assessment of student learning outcomes: [This needs work; we will have our new Director of Student Learning Outcomes help us in writing this one.]

Following five years of work by the General Studies Task Force and the Outcomes Work Group to integrate the undergraduate curriculum, the Undergraduate Outcomes Task Force (UOTF) was formed in Fall 2015. The results of a public survey that included 539 participants led the UOTF to develop five undergraduate student learning outcomes that are integrally tied to the University's mission and to the MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh. Currently, the UOTF is gathering additional feedback and once the five outcomes are finalized, the UOTF will develop the appropriate measures to assess their efficacy.

General Studies program: [Alex Padilla, we will have you work with the new Director of Student Learning Outcomes on this one.]   The three goals of the General Studies program – 1) develop intellectual and practical skills, 2) explore essential knowledge, perspectives, and methods in arts and humanities, history, social and behavioral sciences, and natural and physical sciences 3) understand the global interconnectedness of diverse individuals, communities and societies – are supported by a set of student learning outcomes and measurements developed by the General Studies Task Force. These outcomes are addressed by courses in one or more of nine distinct categories (See 3.B.2), each with a draft rubric.

Specialized Accreditations: Fifteen of the University's academic programs are accredited by specialized accreditation bodies (see 4.A.5). These programs have specific student learning outcomes and must demonstrate how well students achieve these outcomes.

Student Engagement and Wellness: Student services units are assessing student learning within the major programs of the departments during the 2015-16 academic year. Although co- and extra-curricular programs have been assessed in various ways in the past, including some measures of student learning outcomes, there will be a renewed focus for all units and staff.

[4.B.2] – Assessment plans are routinely implemented at the institution.

Comment [L35]: I see where the HLC was concerned about the lack of progress on the GS program and was to do a site visit in 2010. Should the outcome of that visit be addressed? There's a 2014 HLC progress report listed in their source list. Something could be written using it.

Comment [L36]: What is the process for them to be finalized? Maybe they will be by the time this report is final, so will need updating.

Comment [L37]: There are drafts, need final when updated.

Comment [L38]: update

In Fall 2015, the Undergraduate Outcomes Task Force (UOTF) proposed five outcomes that are currently under review. Once the outcomes are finalized, the UOTF will develop assessment tools for the outcomes (see 4.B.1).

> **Comment [L39]:** Needs to be updated.

General Studies learning outcomes are assessed on a four-year rotating cycle whereby a random sample of artifacts is collected from each General Studies course and rated by trained faculty raters using specially designed rubrics. Courses in three of the nine General Studies categories (see 3.B.2) are assessed in each of the first three years of the four-year cycle. In the fourth year, the assessment process is reviewed and revisions are made as needed. The all-faculty General Studies Program Assessment Committee oversees the assessment process, reports the assessment results to individual departments and makes improvements to the assessment process as needed.

Enrollment management

> **Comment [L40]:** Add text from new AVP

[4.B.3] – The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning. [We have a lot more work to do for this one. This is an area where we must demonstrate that we do this well!]

Improvement of student learning through ongoing assessment is a priority for the University. The Office of Academic Assessment [do we have such an office?] facilitates development of assessment plans for academic and other programs and assists faculty and staff with articulating desired student learning and development objectives and deciding the most appropriate ways to measure student achievement of the objectives. The office encourages intentional use of the findings generated from these measures to improve student learning and development.

There are robust review processes at the program level, particularly for those programs with specialized accreditation. For example, revision of the student learning outcomes in the Recreation Professions Program was identified by the Council on Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions as a top priority for reaccreditation during the self-study in Spring 2015. In light of this, a consultant was engaged and, in conjunction with work done by department faculty, the program's student learning outcomes were totally revised based on the council's newly adopted standard. These new student learning outcomes were mapped specifically to courses, assignments and assessments. New collection procedures for measurement of the outcomes were devised and implemented in the 2015-16 academic year. Based on this assessment work, the program received re-accreditation for the next seven years.

Sources:
undergraduate outcomes
MSU Denver Strategic Plan 2020 Refresh
General Studies program
Office of Academic Assessment

4.C – Core Component 4.C

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

Argument:

MSU Denver is committed to improving the educational experience through the continued assessment and improvement in regard to retention, persistence and completion rates of all degree and certificate programs. The University's goal is to increase year-to-year retention across all levels by 2.4 percent.

Comment [L41]: Levels of what?

[4.C.1] – The institution has ambitious yet attainable goals for retention, persistence and completion.

Comment [L42]: New AVP for Enrollment Management should help with this section.

In 2013, the University developed its Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan as one of the goals of the Student and Academic Success strategic theme in its 2012-17 strategic plan. The plan, formulated by the SEM Task Force, included the following goals, of which retention, persistence and graduation are key components:
1. develop the infrastructure to support the delivery of quality academics in a mission-driven, student-centric environment;
2. recruit: Attract a diverse pool of applicants, admits and enrolled students from the seven-county metro area and beyond;
3. increase the success of our students as defined by increased first-year student retention, with these specific outcomes:
    a. increase first-time full time freshmen retention rate to 75 percent (from 66 percent);
    b. increase full time transfer student retention rate to 85 percent (from 74 percent);
    c. increase first-time part time freshmen retention rate to 70 percent (from 51 percent); and
    d. decrease the gap in first-year retention and performance between students placing in remedial courses and those who do not require remedial work.
4. Increase the success of our students as defined by increased student graduation rates and absolute numbers, and preparation for their post-graduate goals, specifically:
    a. increase the retention rates of students from their sophomore year through graduation to ultimately increase 6-year graduation rate of first-time fulltime students to 44 percent (from 21 percent).

In 2015, the University established priorities for undergraduate student retention with the goal of increasing year-to-year retention across all levels by 2.4. percent. The priorities, most of which align with the First Year Success program or the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) initiative (see 1.C.2), are broken into short-term and long-term initiatives, each with two to five action items, including:

Comment [L43]: Link to report or include as printed source.

Comment [L44]: Define levels

Short-term:
- align supplemental instruction and tutoring with high-risk courses
- align tutoring with gateway courses for man with high Latino enrollment
- develop and implement exit interviews with student who attempt all-session withdrawals

- establish parameters for Pacesetters Scholarship Fund and begin to award these scholarships to students with balance-due holds
- develop and implement transfer student programming
- align the early alert program with the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) initiative

Long-term (retention effects felt in one to two years):
- re-invent the First Year Initiative
- implement NACADA recommendations
- develop Pathways for Success and meta-majors
- implement "beyond financial aid" institutional self-assessment
- align Career Services to meet bookend needs of first-year students and student nearing graduation
- ensure online and/or after-hours availability of student success programs

[4.C.2] – Retention, persistence, and completion data are collected and analyzed.

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) collects information pertaining to student retention and graduation rates and includes it in the annual MSU Denver Data Book. This information is distributed University-wide and to outside agencies. It is available to the general public as well. The data book is a comprehensive compilation of information concerning the University's faculty, students, degrees, credit-hour production, majors and more. Faculty and administration analyze and interpret the data, with OIR providing insight as needed.

[4.C.3] – Units at the institution use retention and completion data to make improvements.

Beginning in 2010, the University instituted a number of practices to better collect data related to academic advising services, and to use the data to improve services. The University was awarded a Title III Strengthening Institutions grant, which allowed for much improved data collection. Data collected through the grant and independent of it included:

- Regular, periodic surveys of students
- Regular surveys of faculty advisors and professional advisors
- A survey of former students, asking them about factors that led to their not returning
  - Respondents reported that academic reasons, including satisfaction with the overall quality of advising, were significant reasons for discontinuing enrollment [provide copies of the surveys?] [follow up survey?]

Based on the data we collected, we made significant changes to the ways in which we provide academic advising services:

- Attached professional advising positions mainly to colleges and schools, rather than centrally
- Moved toward a caseload model to give students a clear point of contact
- Added 15 new professional academic advisor positions
- Adopted proactive advising techniques to identify barriers to retention much earlier

Comment [L45]: There is no reference to these recommendations in the academic advising section, 3.D.

The University will continue to collect data to track how well these new approaches are working, and adjust accordingly.

Also, data is collected and utilized to guide and improve units/programs specializing in retention and persistence for the University. Data is analyzed at the larger University level, then disaggregated and analyzed at the unit and program levels to ensure services and initiatives are meeting the needs of the students while also achieving the goals of the University. Programs that reach large groups of students and use the data include, but are not limited to, New Student Orientation, Transfer Student Success and Persistence, Tutoring, Early Alert, Supplemental Instruction, College Completion and First Year Success. Programs that serve smaller groups of students, but have significant impact, also use data to guide and improve their services and have the same overall goal of student retention and completion. Those programs include, but are not limited to, Immigrant Services, Fostering Success (Emancipated Foster Youth), Brother to Brother (Urban Male Initiative), Honors Program, TRiO Student Support Services and MSU Denver Scholars.

A program review conducted in the summer of 2014 used data to determine appropriate services and resources needed to help retain and graduate students. The findings from the review allowed for better alignment of services, growth of services and new services to assist students. Programs that the University created or modified include the majority of the programs listed above. One example of expansion of services is evidenced through the creation of the Transfer Student Success and Persistence Program. This program has the ultimate goal of increasing retention and persistence among transfer students, who represent 60 percent of the student population at MSU Denver.

[4.C.4] – The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

MSU Denver actively engages in collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs. Currently, the University utilizes several tools, including the NSSE data and the EAB Student Success Collaborative to collect and analyze such information. The NSSE reports indicate the extent to which students engage in ways that we presume make a difference to their learning and success, thus MSU Denver utilizes these survey results to improve student success (no evidence). Another project currently underway is designed to determine what student engagement behaviors align with success in specific gateway courses (no evidence). The EAB Student Success Collaborative will allow MSU Denver to advise students throughout their academic careers and provide guidance on what should make their likelihood of graduation the greatest (Evidence of Reports #1, Evidence of Reports #2 as attached). Additionally, MSU Denver colleges, schools and departments also have access to Cognos reporting tools to analyze retention rates and intervene as appropriate. While several powerful data collection, analysis and reporting tools exist, MSU Denver is currently determining appropriate processes regarding the use of these tools to ensure that the reports lead to effective interventions (no evidence).

Comment [L46]: Would this be online anywhere so we could list it as a source?

Sources:
Guidelines for Department Chairs and Program Directors
Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan
Retention Priorities 2015-16 report
MSU Denver Data Book
Transfer Student Success and Persistence Program

Evidence: UPRC Program Review Guidelines 2015-16, ASAURC Program Review Guidelines 2015-16, List of Specialized Accreditations, ABET Accreditation Letter, AACSB Accreditation Submission, AUPHA Program Certification and CAPRTRP Accreditation Letter
Evidence: University Catalog (p. ??), AACRO Report
Evidence: Limited Information Received… Lou, any updates?
Accreditation Status, http://tcp.aacrao.org/search/ibro_info.php?code=1360,
Evidence Documents: Braelin Memo and Assessment Documents, General Studies Plan?
Evidence documents: General Studies Plan, 2014 HLC Progress Report
Sources: 2014 General Studies Procedures,
Evidence: UOTF, GS Plan, Specialized Accreditation reports

4. S – Criterion 4 – Summary

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

Summary

MSU Denver has in place a rigorous and continual process for program review for both its academic programs and student services. Over the past five years, the University has embarked on a comprehensive endeavor to update its undergraduate student learning outcomes based on national trends and subsequently to put in place revised processes to ensure timely and meticulous assessment of these outcomes.