Aims Community College
AQIP Systems Portfolio
November 2012

Photos: Aims Greeley Campus - Newly Renovated Campus Promenade and Outdoor Classroom

"Knowledge Is The Food Of The Soul" -Plato

Aims
Community College
The right choice at every step

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Please note: Throughout the Aims Community College 2012 Systems Portfolio we have designated those paragraphs that directly address fulfillment of the Criteria for Accreditation and the underlying Core Components/Sub-Components, using the following system:

> **(CC3D-4)** designates the fourth sub-component (bullet) under Core Component 3D. The parenthetical code will appear immediately following the paragraph(s) addressing the Core Component(s).

While we have designated a specific text to address the Criteria and Core Components, additional supporting evidence of compliance may exist in related paragraphs.

Also: Readers of Hardcopy versions of this Systems Portfolio will find "linked" documents in the appendices following the body of the portfolio, as well as a list of linked webpages.

Institutional Overview

Aims Community College is a public, local-tax supported community college based in Greeley, Colorado, with additional locations in Fort Lupton, Loveland, and Windsor. From the time of the College's inception in 1967, we have focused our mission to "*help students achieve their learning goals and objectives through effective and efficient program options and services and to develop partnerships that support economic development and global understanding.*" As a "community" college, we value "*Learning and Innovation,*" "*Building Relationships,*" and "*Community Service.*" Aims Community College is dedicated to the learning-centered college philosophy, basing all actions and decisions on how they will promote student learning.

Our fall 2011 student census revealed a student headcount of 5,290, resulting in 1,608 FTE. Slightly more than half of our student population is female, and 71% of our students are under age 30. The largely blue-collar population in our service area leads to high utilization of financial aid, with over 65% of degree-seeking students receiving some type of assistance. Recent years have seen significant shifts in community demographics, especially an increase in Hispanics and other minority groups. According to the 2010 census, the Hispanic population was 28.4% county-wide and higher in cities such as Greeley (36%) and Fort Lupton (55%). In addition, the Greeley area has seen an influx of other diverse groups, including refugees from Somalia and Burma. Still, campus diversity does not fully mirror the demographics of the general community. Overall, Hispanic enrollment across all campuses in fall 2011 totaled 26.9% of FTE.

Poor student preparedness is a critical concern at Aims, impacting many elements of the college including faculty utilization, course scheduling, and student retention and completion. The need for remedial work is so prevalent that, in the 2010-11 academic year, 1,042 of 1,360 (76.6%) new first-time, degree/certificate-seeking students, needed remediation. Over the last several years, Aims has focused increasing resources on this
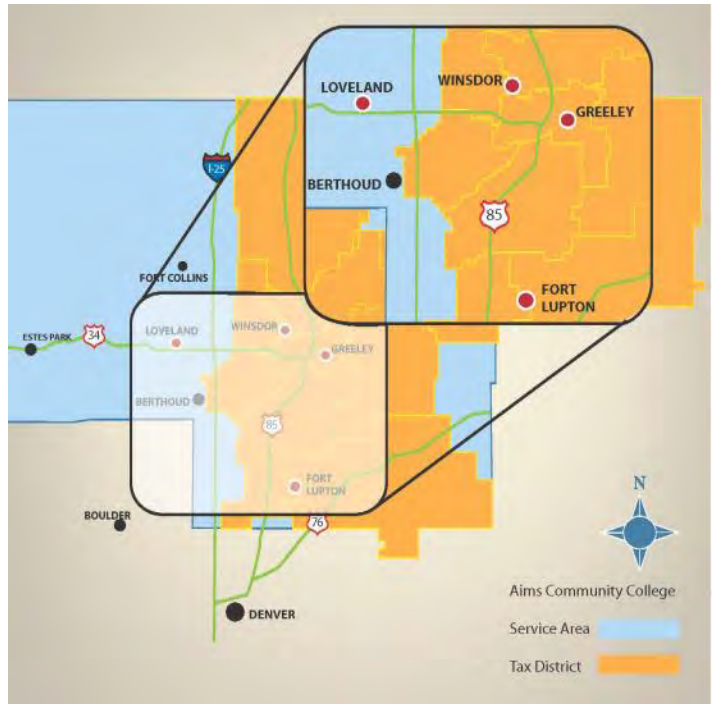
Aims Locations with Tax District and Service Area

group of students, developing advising programs such as Emerging Scholars and first-year experience/academic preparedness courses, to improve retention and completion in this population.

To support students, Aims invests in faculty, employing 97 full- and 235 part-time instructors, ensuring a low 17:1 student/faculty ratio.   Currently, we have 24 administrators and 162 full-time staff.

Aims' academic programs reflect our dual focus: liberal arts degrees (AA, AS, AGS) intended for transfer to four-year institutions and Career and Technical degrees (AAS) and certificates designed to develop employment skills. Our last Institutional Update documented 27 Associate Degree programs and 115 credit-bearing certificates.

Aims has been offering online courses/programs since 2002 and received approval to offer a fully online AA degree in 2007. We have a significant number of online programs, with more than 50% of the program available via distance learning. We have been approved by the Commission to offer up to 100% of our total degree programs through distance education.

Aims first became an AQIP institution in 2005, and we enthusiastically embraced the focus on continuous improvement. The AQIP philosophy meshes perfectly with the learning-centered college viewpoint, as it involves all employees in our mission to educate students and improve ourselves. Shortly after our first Conversation Day, we set to work on several "quick fixes" and three Action Projects. Our first three projects focused on Valuing People, Understanding Stakeholders' Needs, and, of course, Helping Students Learn.

Our first "Helping Students Learn" project was an ambitious and successful project. *Using Course-embedded Assessments to Promote Student Learning in General Education* implemented a comprehensive assessment system to measure General Education competencies in cross-curricular courses. The first competencies the project addressed were writing, math and critical thinking. We developed rubrics that could be integrated into standard assignments rather than requiring separate assessments, thus decreasing the impact on faculty and the classroom.

Another successful Action Project, started in 2007, was *Developing an Advising System to Support and Retain At-Risk Students,* which implemented the Emerging Scholars program. This program identified at-risk students, instituted intensive advising by trained staff and faculty, created more frequent interaction between students and advisors, and emphasized learning and study strategies. Emerging Scholars cohorts consistently show a fall-to-spring retention rate of more than 73%, compared to our overall fall-to-spring retention rate of 65%. The program continues to this day.

We recently completed a "Helping Students Learn" Action Project, *Closing the Loop: Evidencing Best Practices in Assessment.* This project was designed to continue the work begun in *Using Course-Embedded Assessments*. It did not, however, entirely fulfill its original goal of "closing the assessment loop" by using assessment data to revise course content and improve student learning. Not long after the program began, it

became apparent that the current culture at our college did not support an immediate shift to more learning-centered approaches of teaching, learning, and assessment within the faculty cohort. At that point, the project lead asked to change the project's focus to developing collegiality and encouraging open sharing between faculty from different academic areas. To that end, we instituted Reflective Practice Groups (RPGs) that allowed instructors to discuss classroom and student learning issues, share best practices, and become more comfortable using assessment data to improve their course content and practices. These groups have taken strides in that direction, but the change in project focus impacted the assessment system put in place in the first Action Project.

Knowing that we needed to re-start the institution-wide assessment system designed in our first Action Project, the College has assigned the work to the Learning and Organizational Development department, grounding it in a new faculty position, the Director of Academic Assessment. The new director will work with classroom faculty to incorporate course-embedded assessment of general education competencies into their curriculum and revise existing rubrics to effectively measure student learning outcomes.

We also realized that, while we had focused on measuring the effectiveness of student learning and student support services, we did not have formalized measurements of success in many of our institutional support departments, such as fiscal services and human resources. Our tenth AQIP Action Project, *Developing Systems to Measure Effectiveness,* will address this issue. The project team will work with each operational area to research current goal-setting and measurement activities, then improve and formalize existing systems, or design new systems where none exist. We believe this Action Project will have a significant impact on Continuous Improvement initiatives across our institution.

Category One: Helping Students Learn

Introduction:

Reflecting on our primary mission at Aims, we focus the greatest part of our efforts on *Helping Students Learn*. Several years ago, Aims dedicated itself to the learning-centered college philosophy, which emphasizes that all internal stakeholders are responsible for student learning, from faculty and administrators, to staff, and finally, to the students themselves. To promote broad-based decisions supporting student learning, most issues filter up to Senior Management; doing so brings all segments of the institution to the table for discussion, so academic divisions can work directly with student services and college finances to ensure all components of any student-learning initiative are supported.

While we have made significant efforts to develop systems and activities related to Helping Students Learn, we have experienced some challenges in fully developing a college-wide assessment system. One of our first Action Projects after beginning the AQIP process was *Using Course-Embedded Assessment to Promote Student Learning in General Education*. This project was intended to design and implement a comprehensive assessment system, directly measuring student achievement in five general education competencies: Writing, Critical Thinking, Mathematics, Reading, and Technology. During the three years of the project, we addressed the first three competencies only.   Assessments were designed in multiple curricular areas for students seeking any associates degree offered at Aims. For instance, rubrics for assessing Critical Thinking skills were developed for both Natural Science and Social Science curricula.

The project was considered to be very successful and by project's end, we felt we were well on the way to a complete assessment system. We instituted a related Action Project to continue the progress from the first project. Titled *Completing the Assessment Loop: Developing, Implementing and Evaluating Feedback Processes,* its original

intent was to design a process to distribute student learning assessment results to faculty and to support appropriate revision of student learning activities. As noted in the Institutional Overview, the project was modified to develop a more learning-centered culture, as a first step toward fulfilling the project's original purpose. Due to the delay in "closing the loop," some of the assessment tools developed in the first project fell into disuse, and the development of a complete institutional assessment cycle was set back.

Our newest Action Project, *Developing Systems to Measure Effectiveness*, will revive our original plan. Our Learning and Organizational Development department will guide the project's focus on academic programs and the student services that support them. A new position, Director of Academic Assessment, has recently been created.

This faculty position will focus on developing college-wide student assessments in the same competencies listed above, building on the results of the original Action Project. The successful candidate for this position will also work with other faculty members to revise and improve curriculum and teaching methods to better serve our students.

Category One Processes

1P1. Determining which common objectives for learning and development

Common objectives for learning and development are created for all degree-seeking students through standards developed by state higher education agencies, such as the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) and the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE), along with input from state level discipline groups and the institutions of higher education. In addition, CCCS must approve all new or revised degree and certificate programs in accordance with CDHE requirements before we can offer them.

To gain state approval and align with the state guaranteed transfer program, called gtPathways, programs must demonstrate that they develop students' abilities in five general educational competencies (Written Communication, Critical Thinking, Math, Reading, and Technology), along with acquiring depth of knowledge in specific areas of specialty. Our department chairs, with input from faculty, deans, and the Aims Curriculum Committee, monitor the curriculum and instruction to ensure compliance with gtPathways content and competency standards. **(CC3B-2)**

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and liberal arts transfer programs share a Common Course Numbering System (CCNS) in Colorado, which describes common objectives and expected competencies for all Colorado community college courses. Descriptions for each course include standard competencies, learning outcomes, and a topical outline. Standard competencies encompass such skills as critical thinking through research, mastery of various methods of communication, creative efforts, and appreciation of human and cultural diversity.

As an example, a portion of the standard competencies required in HIS 112: History of the World: 1500 to Present is shown below. These competencies may be achieved by a combination of in-class faculty/student interaction and independent student work. **(CC3B-3,4&5)**

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b. Understand the events covered in the course in historical context and recognize how social, cultural, gender, race, religion, nationality and other identities affect historical perspective

c. Communicate orally and in writing about the subject of the course and select and apply contemporary forms of technology to solve problems and compile information

d. Use different resources for historical research, including libraries, databases, bibliographies and archives

e. Create substantive writing samples which employ critical analysis of primary and secondary sources, and document those sources correctly

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11. Four general goals integrate history with workplace skills:
    a. Acquire information from many sources
    b. Break complex sources of information down into parts to create clearer understanding
    c. Understand the impact of time and space
    d. Develop narrative structures and arguments based on evidence
12. Throughout the course, students should be introduced to course content, practice using course content, and demonstrate they can:
    a. Describe how peoples, groups, cultures, and institutions change over time

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While Aims courses and programs are developed to comply with state requirements, our degrees and certificates allow us to fulfill our institutional mission (see Introduction) and the legislative purpose of a local district college defined by the Colorado Revised Statutes: "*The mission of the community colleges shall be to serve Colorado residents who reside in their service areas by offering a broad range of general, personal, vocational, and technical education programs…. The objects of the community and technical colleges shall be to provide educational programs to fill the occupational needs of youth and adults in technical and vocational fields, two-year transfer educational programs to qualify students for admission to the junior year at other colleges and universities, basic skills, workforce development, and a broad range of personal and vocational education for adults. (C.R.S. 23-60-201)*" **(CC3B-1)**

1P2. Determining specific learning objectives

Aims uses criteria for program objectives defined by the State of Colorado to establish specific liberal arts program learning objectives. The process of integrating and implementing these objectives is outlined in the Academic Master Plan, which describes the teaching and learning goals for key academic departments. The Academic Master Plan is prepared in accordance with

CDHE Policy and outlines process goals such as offering rigorous and relevant curriculum, timely and accurate advising services, application of best practices for assessment of learning, appropriate use of technology to enhance the learning process, and continual improvement of course and program content, delivery strategies, and alternative learning strategies. The Aims Curriculum Committee, made up of faculty and administrators, functions as a link between the Academic Master Plan and academic departments by endorsing curriculum development and revision that support learning objectives. Both the state discipline committees and the Aims Curriculum Committee are overseen by faculty to ensure establishing and implementing consistent learning outcomes.

Learning objectives in career and technical programs are further determined by national and state program accreditation guidelines and program advisory committees. For example, our ADN Nursing Program follows the recommendations and requirements of the above-mentioned state agencies, as well as the National League of Nursing Accreditation Commission and the

Colorado State Board of Nursing. We have advisory committees for each career and technical program that include industry specialists who advise on curriculum, including current procedures and skills needed in the field.

1P3. Designing new programs and courses that facilitate student learning

The academic deans, Curriculum Committee, and faculty collaborate to develop new programs and courses. They examine a host of issues and resources, including market factors, community partnerships, and existing programs in the region, to develop programs responsive to student and workforce needs. Internal factors such as how many students will be served, how many faculty will be needed, space considerations, and required program resources are evaluated to gauge our ability to establish effective learning environments and to increase student success. Aligning with and incorporating industry standards is necessary to the development of new CTE certificate programs. We use articulation agreements to coordinate efforts and facilitate effective outcomes for the students across institutions.

To ensure that all potential programs and courses are evaluated in a consistent manner, we have formalized the approval process in a series of process flow charts. As seen in Chart 1-A, on the next page, approval of a new CTE program requires completion of nine steps and input from many stakeholders, including faculty, administration and the Program Development Team, made up of industry representatives. This process was followed during recent development of two new CTE programs – Agriculture Business and Oil and Gas Technology. Process charts for the approval of new CTE or GE courses can be accessed through the links below.

New General Education Course Approval Process

New Career and Technical Education Course Approval Process

New CTE Program Approval Process

#1 - Contact CTE Dean
- Discuss your idea for a new program.
- Receive a Checklist for a Postsecondary New Program Request

#2 - Obtain letters of support

#3 - Establish Program Development Team
- Two meetings including minutes of each meeting are required by the state.

#4 - Establish and meet with Advisory Committee as recommended by CTE Dean
- Review and approve curriculum/courses.

#5 - Complete a New Program Concept Form
- Submit form to your Academic Dean
- Academic Dean will take the New Program Concept to Senior Management for approval

If approved by Senior Management, Contact Curriculum Committee Assistant and proceed to **#6**.

#6 - Take program to Curriculum Committee
- Provide the New Program Concept Form.
- Provide appropriate paperwork for courses according to the Aims Curriculum Committee Course Approval Procedure.

#7 - Upon approval by the Curriculum Committee, submit AAS Degree and Certificate program requests to CTE Office Assistant.

#8 - CTE Dean submits program approval request
- State approval process takes two to three months
- Process is not final until you receive an e-mail from CCCS stating that the program has been approved.

#9 - Submit to HLC Liaison, A & R, and Financial Aid

1-A: Approval Process for New Career and Technical Education Programs

1P4. Integrating learning goals through responsive academic programming

To confirm that our programs are current and continue to meet the needs of students and the marketplace, we evaluate all programs for effectiveness and responsiveness. Program review and evaluation standards are detailed in the "Practices and Processes" document supporting College Policy 2-900: Review of Existing Programs. This document states:

Both internal and external evaluation and benchmarking data will be used for program reviews and improvements. For Career and Technical Education programs internal program reviews as well as Annual Advisory Committee Evaluations, employer satisfaction data/surveys, and where applicable, external program accrediting agencies' reviews shall be a part of the internal program analysis. For Liberal Arts internal department/discipline reviews and national benchmarking data will be used.

Reviews are completed for both internal and external stakeholders on a schedule set by the State Board for Community College and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) and CDHE, as well as Aims administration. External program reviews for Career and Technical Education programs by SBCCOE occur every five years. AA, AS, AGS programs are reviewed every seven years per Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) policy. A significant portion of each review addresses how well Aims fulfills learning

goals for both degree and certificate programs as required by CCCS and SBCCOE and described in the Common Course Numbering System. Aims articulates learning goals for programs in our annual catalog. Internal reviews look at program quality, program need, and fiscal viability. The program quality section of the internal review includes questions about coverage of general competencies (critical thinking, problem solving, effective communication, ethics, diversity), assessment, how courses are reviewed and updated, work-based learning and business affiliations, information about advisory committees, recruitment, retention, links to K-12 and postsecondary institutions, integration with local economic development efforts, support for students from special populations, various modes of delivery, professional development, as well as equipment, resources, and facilities. The "program needs" section of the internal review addresses awareness of and responsiveness to market demands, how student learning is incorporated into the program and courses, and the program's strengths and concerns. The leads in this process are the academic deans who oversee the program evaluation. Changes to programs are determined through faculty and curriculum committee discussions, review of industry, and benchmarking with other educational institutions. Economic modeling is used to consider the employment market, including wages, regional trends, staffing patterns, and required education. We consult advisory committees and area businesses to obtain feedback about the skills needed in the field, job projections, and service-learning opportunities. **(CC4A-1) (CC3A-1&2)**

To ensure that students fulfill all required learning outcomes, the College carefully reviews transferred courses, as well as courses accepted for transcript through prior or experiential learning. Acceptance of transfer credit is addressed in Policy 2-300: Transfer Credit and more thoroughly detailed in Procedure 2-300A: Acceptable Transfer Credit, which states:

Aims Community College will accept in transfer the following credit, provided such credit is equivalent or comparable to Aims coursework and applicable to the student's program at Aims:

- *Courses completed with a grade of "C" or better from Colorado's "state guaranteed general education courses" list designated by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE),*

- *Courses completed with a "C" or better at other accredited colleges and universities,*

- *College course work completed with a "C" or better outside of the United States, provided it is evaluated first by a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES), such as the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) or World Education Services (WES),*

- *Credit for learning outside the traditional classroom that is demonstrated through standardized tests such as the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), the Advanced Placement Program (AP), the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES), the International Baccalaureate Program (IB), and Excelsior College Examinations,*

- *Courses or examinations offered by businesses, the military, and other government entities, as recommended in the American Council on Education (ACE) National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training,*

- *Credit through Course Challenge and Portfolio Assessment administered at Aims.* **(CC4A-2&3)**

In addition, to maintain the quality of our academic programs and courses, we have granted oversight and authority to several committees or departments, as shown in Table 1-B. Many of these committees are heavily staffed by faculty members. **(CC4A-4)**

Influence on Academic Quality	Oversight Group
Course Prerequisites	Prerequisite Taskforce
Academic Rigor	Curriculum Committee
Student Learning Expectations	Curriculum Committee
Faculty Qualifications	Consultation Committee and College Policy
Access to Learning Resources	Learning and Organizational Development Dept.
Dual Credit Courses	Concurrent Enrollment Department

1-B: Academic influences and Oversight Groups

Aims ensures that its program quality is consistent across all course sections and all modes of delivery by confirming that syllabi for all sections of a course align with gtPathways, CCNS, and department requirements. We also evaluate course effectiveness through student evaluation and observation of instruction, as well as close oversight of part-time faculty by department chairs. (**CC3A-3**)

1P5. Determining required student preparation

The process of determining the preparation required of students for the specific curricula, programs, courses, and learning (prerequisites) is guided by state standards, discipline-specific standards, the Aims Curriculum Committee, the Prerequisite Taskforce, faculty, and academic deans.

We have an open-door policy for all students age 16 years and older (under 16 requires parental permission). As required by College Procedure 2-

250F: College Preparatory Requirements for Degree/Certificate Seeking Students, all first-time, full-time students and any part-time student enrolling in college-level English or Mathematics courses are required to complete assessment testing, using a computerized placement test, Accuplacer, to determine reading, math, and English skills. Specific Accuplacer scores align with placement in specific courses. For example, reading levels of textbooks for a course are determined and can play a role in the cut-off score needed on the Accuplacer reading test for entry into the course. Accuplacer testing may be waived in part or in whole if the student can show proof of successful previous college experience at an accredited college within the past 10 years (C- or higher), show proof of minimum ACT or SAT scores within the past five years, or if he or she has taken the College Board's Online Accuplacer Placement test within the past five years. Some certificate programs require only the reading and English assessments. The Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) has established the base reading, English, and math skills a student must have to enter college level courses. For higher-level courses in the math and English sequences, successful completion of the lower level course becomes the skill prerequisite measure unless the student's ACT score places him or her into higher level courses.

In Colorado, the Common Course Numbering System (CCNS) outlines specific objectives for transfer courses. These state-wide standards, along with articulation agreements with specific institutions, include prerequisites and/or required sequence of classes. Some disciplines have specific criteria for placement or specific sequences of courses determined by the program dean and faculty. Many occupational courses have state, national, or discipline-specific standards.   The Aims Curriculum Committee, the Prerequisite Taskforce, and the program review process consider the requirements for specific courses.

1P6. Communicating required preparation and learning objectives

Aims offers "Get Started" sessions designed to prepare students to transition into college. We offer New Student Orientations for incoming students, describing classroom expectations and reviewing college policies. We also offer specific program orientation sessions (e.g., nursing, surgical technology) to educate students about the prerequisites, rigor, and realities of these professions as well as the competitive admissions processes. Some of these orientations are offered online. We also require first-year experience courses (AAA) for students with college-prep needs. In addition, students with two or more developmental needs are eligible for the Emerging Scholars Program, which offers intensive advising, tutoring, and a minimal financial incentive for students who complete all of the criteria in a specific term.

Expectations and learning objectives for specific courses are communicated through course syllabi, program check sheets, and faculty advisors. Also, our student support services staff assist in communicating preparation requirements and learning objectives for our courses and programs through student orientations and advising sessions, the student handbook, and our catalog.

Our College and Community Relations department ensures that program brochures and recruitment materials for various programs are current and accurate. The department also monitors our website, which is used to share information about the college with current and prospective students and to the general public. Such information includes:

- College mission and leadership structure, as well as Board of Trustees goals and information.
- Academic programs, their purpose and requirements
- Tuition, books, financial aid
- List of faculty and administrators
- Accreditation status at both college and program level (CC2B)

IP7. Helping students select programs of study

Aims Community College provides academic and career counseling services on all three campuses. These services engage students in career planning activities including the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Strong Interest Inventories to establish baseline criteria for career research. Next, we use software to help the student explore some of their top career choices. We also encourage students to conduct informational interviews with industry representatives and to meet with full-time faculty members to discuss their interests in particular fields of studies and career areas. Our goal is to motivate students to take ownership of their career path. Once they have identified a career choice, we then identify appropriate majors and begin the course planning phase.

Some online career services resources also help students select a major. Some program areas offer discipline-specific advising. Specific cohorts of students (e.g., CAMP, TRIO) may receive advising about courses and areas of study through their involvement within their program. General academic advising helps match needs and interests. For example, if a student is having trouble getting through math courses, we may suggest that they look into less math-intensive areas of study.   We offer career planning courses that include completing and interpreting interest inventories. We also offer workshops in areas of interest/emphasis/majors, etc.

1P8. Dealing with underprepared students

As detailed in 1P5, with the exception of those students seeking select certificates, all new degree/certificate/transfer seeking students are required to complete entrance assessment of reading, math, and English skills through Accuplacer tests. Accuplacer scores determine initial course placement as defined by the Colorado Remedial Education Policy. All new students are advised through the Student Success Center or TRIO Program. These advisors help

students, who need college prep courses, register for courses, following the Mandatory Course Completion Chart. This chart outlines the sequence of courses they must take, depending on the level of remediation identified. Students identified as being underprepared for academic programs may also be referred to the Emerging Scholars Program, which offers intensive advising, tutoring, and a financial incentive for students who complete all of the criteria for a specific term. Students with two or three deficiencies (in reading, English or math) are required to enroll in the first-year experience courses (Advanced Academic Achievement or AAA) to enhance study skills and develop connections with other students and faculty. Students can be referred or self-refer for tutoring services, and the Action Project, *The Writer's Community,* has made writing assistance seminars available to all students. Some classes offer supplemental instruction, and the Student Life office offers various co-curricular workshops on study skills, time management, and other topics that support underprepared students. Various measures, such as retention or speed at which students complete remedial course work, are used to monitor these programs' effectiveness.

1P9. Addressing differences in students' learning styles

There are no valid, reliable, and objective methods to identify an individual's learning style; however, subjective observations and self-reports can reveal elements of students' learning styles. We provide workshops for students that help them consider the most effective strategy to process, organize, and remember information. All full-time faculty receive training in learning styles through the required course, EDU 260: Adult Teaching and Learning. In addition, all part-time instructors are invited to take the course, and those who do so receive compensation for their time.   With this foundation in learning styles, most instructors teach using a range of methods and formats to reach students with differing learning preferences, including text, visual, auditory, tactile, structured,

and collaborative assignments. Both instructors and students benefit when instructors recognize individual learning styles and make reasonable accommodations in presenting course content.

1P10. Addressing the needs of student subgroups

The Aims Disability Access Services (DAS) department provides a variety of accommodations to meet the needs of students with disabilities. The DAS mission statement focuses on "ensuring that individuals with disabilities are provided equal access to programs, services, and facilities" and "positively impacting the climate of the college community on behalf of persons with disabilities." In addition to ensuring our facilities comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the DAS department works to facilitate communication between students and their instructors; provide note-takers, interpreters and testing accommodations; and offer access to technological accommodations, such as Brailled notes, closed-captioned films, and computers with speech input capability. Instructors must include a statement about Disability Access Services in their course syllabi.

A sound approach in addressing special needs of students is universal curriculum design, where presentation format is varied so special-needs students can effectively work with course materials. We have established priority scheduling to ensure that high demand classes are available at differing days and times, including morning, afternoon, and evening. Departments also schedule classes in a variety of formats including online, hybrid, and full in-seat classes.

Informal accommodations can support the needs of students with disabilities, along with the general student population. For example, online shells are used in classroom-based courses so students can access class materials, such as PowerPoint presentations, MediaCast videos, handouts, and worksheets at a convenient time. Tape recorders might also be approved for use in the classroom. The SmartBoards in many classes allow instructors to change the appearance of projected

material. SmartBoard capabilities allow instructors to save notes and either post them in online shells or send them directly to students. .

In addition to accommodating special-needs students, we promote an institutional culture that accepts and celebrates diversity. Aims' standing Diversity Council oversees efforts to fulfill the goals of the College Diversity Plan, such as increasing enrollment of underrepresented groups; increasing diversity in faculty, administration, and staff; and fostering a campus environment that welcomes diversity. To that end, the Diversity Committee has partnered with the Student Life and Professional Development departments to offer "Human2Human," a series of speakers and presentations designed to increase understanding of various diversity issues, including racial prejudice, religious stereotyping, disabilities, and gender/sexual preference bias. (CC1C-1&2)

1P11. Defining and documenting expectations for effective teaching and learning

Defining, communicating, and evaluating teaching and learning occurs within specific courses, from program and institutional levels. One Aims Community College value states, "Aims is a Learning-Centered College, meaning that all actions and decisions by administration, faculty, staff and trustees are based on how they will promote student learning." This value is reflected in the board goals, the Academic Master Plan and the Institutional Strategic Plan and through college-wide meetings, such as our annual Convocation. The Faculty Teaching and Learning Center consistently offers resources and workshops that develop and enhance teaching effectiveness. Faculty Reflective Practice Groups discuss effective teaching and learning. All courses solicit student input about instructional effectiveness and their own learning. Evaluation results and observation of teaching by department chairs or academic deans add to data about effective teaching methods. Program reviews also measure effective teaching and level of learning. For example,

in CTE programs, employers of Aims students comment on the effectiveness of Aims' education/training. Results of student surveys are compared to benchmark data from other institutions.

Aims faculty have few opportunities to interact with other faculty outside of their discipline. The office structure and teaching schedules present a challenge for cross-discipline interaction. However, Reflective Practice Groups (RPGs), introduced through the Action Project, *Completing the Assessment Loop*, create an avenue for collegial conversations and dialogue among faculty to promote an environment which better represents the Learning College mission and model. Through the RPGs, we hope to engage faculty who support the Learning College model, and create a core group to lay the foundation necessary for a cultural transition and progress in our teaching and learning initiatives. With a core group of Reflective Practice Group leaders, discussion about active learning, assessment, engaging students, learners versus students, safety and civility, and best practices are explored by full- and part-time faculty participants. The Reflective Practice Groups received very positive feedback and may continue past the end of the Action Project. Aims promotes the philosophy of academic freedom for both faculty and students through policy and procedure. Policy 2-100: Academic Freedom states,

> *Each faculty member shall have the freedom to report the truth as it relates to the subject or discipline in his classroom and to his area of expertise, in publications or any other academic forums. The instructor is responsible not to use the classroom as a forum for indoctrination or for his personal views. He has the duty to actively present different views and to be as objective as possible.*

In addition, faculty members are encouraged to select materials for their classrooms most appropriate to their curriculum and are permitted to use self-authored materials when published materials do not provide necessary information. (CC2D)

1P12. Building an effective course delivery system

Building effective and efficient courses that address student and organizational needs starts with a systematic consideration and review of programs. Classes are offered in a variety of formats including full online, hybrid and in-seat. Days and times when classes are offered are scheduled in as many arrangements as possible to meet student needs and institutional resources. Priority scheduling, where certain classes have to be offered at specific times and days, is used to ensure that the most needed classes are offered at times that allow students to have effective schedule options. Support from technology and maintenance staff ensures that the classrooms, equipment, etc., are functioning properly which is a tremendous help in effective and efficient course delivery.

We monitor the effectiveness of our online courses by comparing success of students enrolled in traditional or online sections of the same course. Table 1-C indicates that students in our online sections are as successful as those who take the course in traditional, in-class mode.

Effectiveness of courses is also assessed through student evaluations of each class and through surveys of student satisfaction, conducted by the Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment office. This data is reviewed by faculty and academic deans to evaluate whether Aims is consistently delivering courses in a satisfactory manner. Each department evaluates aspects of effective course delivery and constructive adjustments are made.

1P13. Ensuring that programs are effective

The Aims Community College Academic Master Plan and Policy 2-900: Program Review and Evaluation describe the process to review current programs for relevancy and efficacy.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) program leaders use information from multiple sources to ensure their programs are effective and up-to-date. Program advisory committees give input on employment trends and the training needed to conform to industry standards. Student success on licensure exams, which test student competency in these standards, measures program

	# GPA Credit Hrs	Quality Points	GPA	# Any Grades	# ABCs	% Success	# Sections	Total Credit Hours	FTE
Online Courses Compared to the Same Traditional Courses									
Summer 2010	6,285	17,733	2.82	2,334	1,705	73.05%	133	7,023	234.1
Online	3,023	8,571	2.84	1,155	824	71.34%	65	3,388	112.9
Traditional	3,262	9,162	2.81	1,179	881	74.72%	68	3,635	121.2
Fall 2010	19,480	49,761	2.55	7,449	4,858	65.22%	421	22,060	735.3
Online	4,756	12,630	2.66	1,876	1,237	65.94%	123	5,478	182.6
Traditional	14,724	37,131	2.52	5,573	3,621	64.97%	298	16,582	552.7
Spring 2011	18,972	49,268	2.60	6,892	4,787	69.46%	377	21,586	719.5
Online	5,404	15,059	2.79	2,031	1,465	72.13%	129	6,051	201.7
Traditional	13,568	34,209	2.52	4,861	3,322	68.34%	248	15,535	517.8

1-C: Comparison of Effectiveness of Online Courses Compared to Traditional Courses
Source: Aims Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Office

effectiveness.   In addition, Aims contacts career and technical program graduates and the businesses who hire them and surveys their satisfaction with Aims' training. We use these data, along with input from the Program Advisory Committee, to improve a program's content and outcomes. Many CTE programs also hold specific program accreditations from professional accrediting organizations, including the Associate Degree Nursing Program, National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission (NLNAC); the Paramedic and Surgical Technology Programs, Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP); and the Early Childhood Program, National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Program reviews required to maintain program accreditation also ensure the program meets current industry standards. **(CC4A-5&6)**

As noted in 1P1 and 1P2, liberal arts/transfer course objectives and curriculum align with state standards. The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) has responsibility for reviewing all programs within institutions of higher education and reviews AA, AS, AGS programs every seven years per CCHE policy. The Community College and Occupational Education System (CCOES) reviews each CTE program on a five-year cycle, and each year Aims selects programs or departments for an internal review.   Retention and completion rates indicate, in part, the curriculum's effectiveness.   Student course evaluations as well as general student satisfaction surveys solicit feedback on course effectiveness. We also use faculty evaluations, including observation of teaching, to ensure that programs and courses are up-to-date and effective. In addition, data on Aims graduates who transfer to a four-year school and later earn a bachelor's degree allow us to monitor how successfully we prepare general education students for university work. **(CC4A-6)**

1P14. Changing or discontinuing programs

As part of our internal program reviews, we use several tools to monitor program viability including:

- FTE Reporting: Programs and courses are measured in part by enrollment data.

- Return on Investment (ROI) Reporting: This review compares program revenues with how much it costs to fund that program. It allows Senior Management to determine the economic viability of a specific program.

- Student Program Review: Students graduating from CTE certificate or degree programs complete this review, which focuses on instructor expertise, learning support through technology and facilities, and student perceptions of curriculum relevance. Students are also asked to evaluate program strengths and identify opportunities for improvement.

Additional studies that impact decisions on program viability include:

- Comprehensive Program Review: Aims submits this report to the Colorado Community Colleges System. CCCS requires a program to generate at least 15 program completers or demonstrate highly enrolled courses over a three-year period to maintain approval.

- Allied Health Program Reviews: Certain programs, primarily those in Allied Health, are subject to reviews by discipline and or state regulatory bodies. One function of such agencies is to prescribe specific curriculum for specific programs. To maintain national accreditation for specific programs, Aims monitors and evaluates courses that might need to be changed or removed.

Using these resources, the academic deans review results and make recommendations about programs going forward. At-risk programs are subject to intervention and adjustments. Information on non-viable programs, designated for closure, is presented to the advisory committee,

after which the program will proceed through a multi-step teach-out process that allows students currently enrolled in to finish their coursework within a reasonable time. During this period new students may not enter the program.   At the state level, the program is placed on Inactive Status, then at the scheduled time for program renewal, it would be moved to Closed Status.

1P15. Addressing learning support needs

Entering students must take the Accuplacer placement exam or provide ACT/SAT scores that establish his/her level of preparation and indicate where they should matriculate into the course sequence. If necessary, we direct the student into developmental courses in math, English, and/or reading. Academic advisors identify students' needs and direct students to offices that provide the appropriate service. Students with two or more remedial coursework needs are placed into two support initiatives:

- Emerging Scholars is an intensive advising program built specifically for students with multiple remedial needs. Its goals are to help students adjust to college, provide support to successfully complete college preparation courses, and encourage students to persist to graduation. Emerging Scholars supplements the standard advising services directed to students without special advising needs. Students are required to meet with an advisor before registration to review assessment scores, select appropriate classes to fulfill goals, and identify academic resources to ensure success.

- Additionally, these students must enroll in one of two "first-year experience" courses. AAA 090 Academic Achievement Strategies is a 3-credit academic course that, beginning in Fall Semester 2012, is required for students with two or more remedial needs. The course description states, "Develops personalized approaches to learn and succeed for easier transition into college. Topics include

goal-setting, time management, textbook reading strategies, note-taking, test-taking, listening techniques, concentration and memory devices, and critical thinking for student success." Additionally, AAA 101 College 101: Student Experience is a one-credit course required for students with one remedial need, and it is optional for all other students. AAA 101 introduces students to college culture and prepares them for the challenges they will face in higher education. Through a series of interactive seminars, students discover learning in a multicultural environment and use college and community resources to attain education and career goals.

Data shows, as detailed in Chart 1-D, that if a student participated in Emerging Scholars, took AAA, or both, the Fall-to-Spring retention rate was 10% to 17% higher than students who received no intervention. Likewise, Fall-to-Fall retention rates are significantly higher for students who took the first-year experience course or participated in Emerging Scholars advising when compared to those students who participated in neither intervention (51% compared to 39% for fall 2010 to fall 2011). To date, the statistics for students who received Emerging Scholar advising and those who took only AAA are very similar. We recently expanded availability of AAA courses and now require students who have any remedial need to take a first-year experience course. We will continue to analyze data for these two programs to determine if one has greater long-term impact on our students.

Tutoring Services promotes its services to the student body through student-focused marketing venues as well as through faculty. Faculty recommend tutoring services to students who need additional support. Such students are directed into the service that will best meet their needs, such as individual tutoring, group tutoring, guided study groups, drop-in tutoring, or online tutoring. We collect feedback each time a student uses tutoring services to determine if their needs have been

Fall to Spring Retention Rates by Group
(ES, AAA or Neither)

Average Fall to Spring Retention Rate for first time ,degree seeking students is 65%

	Fall 2007 to Sp 08	Fall 2008 to Sp 09	Fall 2009 to Sp 10	Fall 2010 to Sp 11
% ES w/AAA	42.9%	76.4%	81.5%	79.5%
% No ES, No AAA	57.3%	63.9%	64.2%	64.4%
% AAA only	75.7%	79.2%	73.5%	77.9%
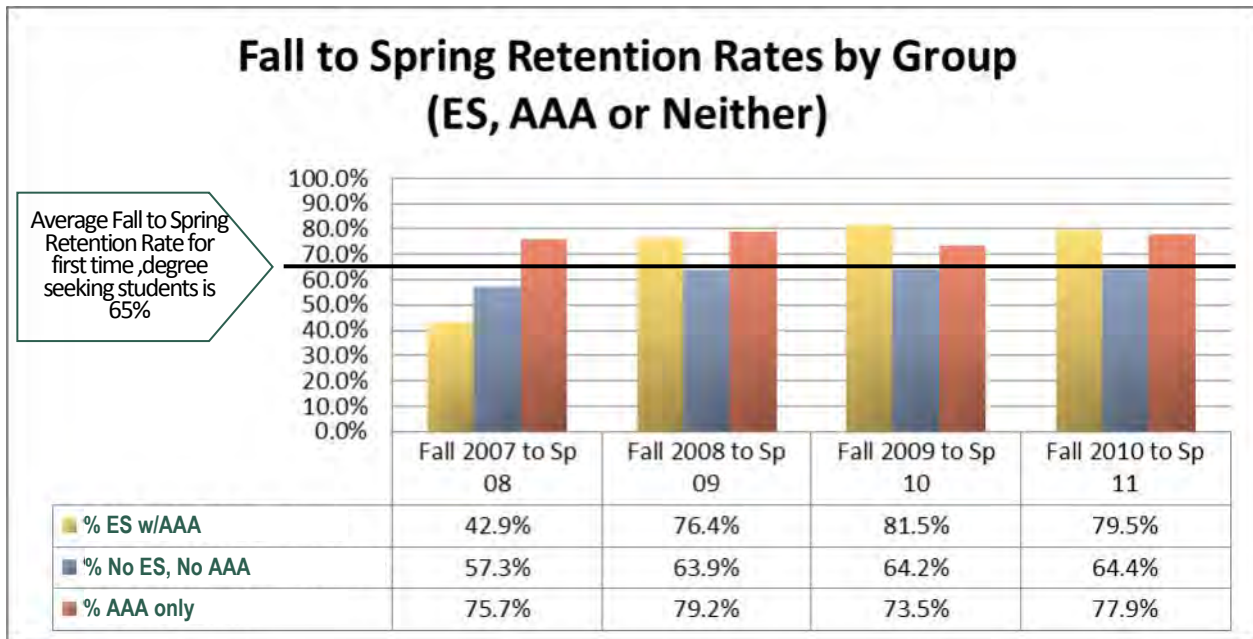
1-D: Retention Rates Comparing Student Subgroups (participation in Emerging Scholars, AAA courses, or neither)
Source: Aims Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Office

met. The College uses metrics to determine staffing levels, peak staffing times, amount of time tutors spend with students versus time spent on other task, and online tutoring use. These metrics help tutoring staff plan for the type and amount of tutoring to offer. **(CC3D-1,2&3)**

The curricula for several courses, such as ENG122: English Composition II, include the effective use of research and information resources. Library staff support this learning objective by assisting students and by ensuring current and topical materials are readily available. Librarians are each assigned a group of academic departments and work to ensure we have an adequate breadth and depth of learning resources in each field.   Library staff work with CTE Advisory Boards to inform the purchase of appropriate learning resource materials. Librarians and Learning Commons staff, with input from faculty, have created LibGuides for individual classes, general areas of the curriculum, and tutoring services. A LibGuide is an interactive research guide to help students, faculty, and staff strengthen information literacy skills. Faculty and students report that these guides have been quite

successful, so we will continue to promote these tools to aid research by grouping learning resources into topical areas, simplifying the search process. **(CC3D-5)**

Aims is also committed to providing appropriate infrastructure, resources, and facilities to our students. Following our Facilities Master Plan, we have renovated four buildings in the past six years, providing up-to-the-minute technology infrastructure and bright, effective classroom and study space. In addition, we have built two new buildings designed to serve the needs of two specialized programs – Allied Health Sciences and Automotive Technology. Plans are in place for an addition to the Fort Lupton Campus that will provide lab space for our new Oil and Gas and Agriculture Business Programs. **(CC3D-4)**

Aims uses the ACT Student Opinion Survey (SOS) to monitor satisfaction with student support services. This survey provides a comparative benchmark based on national guidelines used to evaluate our programs' effectiveness. Detailed results for the SOS related to student support services can be found in section 6R2 .

1P16. Aligning co-curricular development goals with curricular learning objectives

Aims offers a wide variety of co-curricular activities that support common student learning outcomes. Core competencies in many courses--such as effective communication, cultural awareness, social and civic responsibilities and areas such as critical thinking and reasoning--are incorporated into co-curricular activities.

Many opportunities exist for co-curricular involvement at Aims with more than half of our student clubs related directly to academic areas (e.g., Aims History Association).   Other clubs that influence student learning include Phi Theta Kappa, whose purpose is to recognize and encourage scholarship among two-year college students and involves them in scholarly investigation of the "democratization of information: power, peril, and promise" in American society (the PTK honors study topic through 2012). The PTK advisor tries to connect the study of this topic to other society initiatives of Scholarship, Leadership, and Service and manages the application process for the All-Colorado Academic team award as well as other scholarships. These activities help students become better leaders and also promote the reputation of our college. The Honors Program offers students the opportunity for deeper and more challenging exploration into subjects, smaller classes, off-campus experiences, a community of honors students, more personal contact with instructors, and transcript/graduation recognition. Honors courses typically require semester-long service-learning projects or leadership projects. Student Government offers the opportunity to gain significant leadership experience.

The Student Life team aligns activities to the general curriculum through programs that complement and parallel faculty course objectives and subject matter. Specifically, this action is accomplished through the iFocus Academic Workshop series (50+ workshops held each semester on four locations and online) and the Human2Human (H2H) Diversity Series. Topics of the workshops include how to manage online classes, financial

aid tips, how to get involved on campus, managing test anxiety, information on scholarships, tips on transferring to a four-year institution, writing support, and health and wellness. To address students unprepared to use computers and related technology, we offer non-credit workshops--Computer Skills 101 and 102.   Students can request a co-curricular transcript to document their extra-curricular workshops, club involvement, leadership experiences, and service-learning activities. **(CC3E-1)**

In response to the second item in Core Component 3E, Aims claims no special contribution by virtue of our mission to students' educational experience. In addition, our College and Community Relations office monitors all promotional materials to ensure that claims about the benefits of specific programs are true and can be documented. **(CC3E-2)**

1P17. Determining that completers have met learning expectations?

The majority of Aims students desire to gain employment or transfer to a four-year institution. Aims implements core competencies, such as effective communication, cultural awareness, social and civic responsibilities, critical thinking, and use of technology, across the curriculum to develop proficient students and employees. Through the curriculum development process and review of programs and instruction, if a student passes all classes and thus meets the learning outcomes for each course, he or she has met our expectations and earned a degree or related certificate. We track student scores on national exams in several CTE specialties, such as Emergency Medical Technician, Associate Degree Nursing, and Nurse Aid. Employer follow-up surveys look at positive placement and job skills for completers of career and technical programs. Program reviews for CTE programs include alumni tracking through surveys sent to graduates.   Additional performance measures test whether students are meeting learning and devel-

opmental expectations. These data include:

- Enrollment data for each semester
- Retention and persistence rates
- Completion rates
- Degrees conferred
- Pre- and post-tests given in select developmental education courses

1P18. Designing processes to assess learning

Aims addresses student learning at the institutional, program, and course levels. Institutionally, board goals, Academic Master Plan, and Strategic Plan all address student learning. Strategic Imperative 1: Student Learning and Success, includes the following goals and strategies for student learning:

- Continue to focus on the Learning College as a climate for enriched learning at Aims Community College
- Maintain efforts to increase and emphasize program relevance in both academic and career and technical areas
- Engage students more fully to improve their chances of success

In addition, each academic department publishes their specific Teaching/Learning Goals in the Academic Master Plan. For liberal arts or career and technical areas, these goals can be fairly broad or very specific. For instance the Social Sciences department seeks to "provide students with the opportunity to acquire a global and multi-cultural perspective on contemporary, social-cultural, political and economic issues," while the Accounting department focuses on Accounting Program Learning Outcomes, including "understanding the basic accounting concepts and the inter-relationship between balance sheet, income statement, and cash flows." **(CC4B-1)**

Many of the college's assessment practices are linked with program-level and course-level student learning outcomes. Course level assessment is designed at the department level, using learning goals and competencies included in the Common Course Numbering System as the basis for assessment design. As part of the faculty-led Action Project, *Using Course-embedded Assessment to Promote Student Learning in General Education*, the project team worked to implement a systematic approach to measuring student learning in selected general education competencies (Writing, Critical Thinking, Math, Reading, and Technology). Strategic goals for the project included development of:

- Classroom assessment of student achievement in the first three competencies
- Institutional-level approaches to analyzing and interpreting student achievement data
- Department- and program-level approaches to using student achievement data to improve student learning

This project succeeded in developing assessment rubrics used to analyze standard assignments and gauge student learning outcomes in Writing, Critical Thinking, and Math. We collected data in cross-curricular courses and analyzed it for how it could improve student learning. For example, the English department used the data to modify the curriculum for ENG 090 and ENG 121 by including multi-modal activities. In addition, assessment results indicated that students would benefit from more writing assignments in courses beyond composition. This led to the Aims Community College Composition Conference (AC4), which helped faculty incorporate writing assignments into any curricular area. Experience from the AC4 encouraged the development of our Action Project, *The Writer's Community,* designed to provide writing assistance to students and curricular assistance to faculty through brief, single-topic seminars. In its first

year, this Action Project presented writing work-shops to 248 students, 95% of whom reported that the seminars were well worth their time.

As a follow-up to the *Course-Embedded Assessments* project, we instituted a new Action Project, *Completing the Assessment Loop: Developing, Implementing and Evaluating Feedback Processes.*

In the original plan the project was to distribute student learning outcomes gathered in the first project to faculty and administrators, then to facilitate appropriate revision of student learning activities to improve the outcomes. Early in this Action Project it became apparent that the project was overly ambitious in its presumption that a culture of assessment would be eagerly embraced. Thus, the project was modified to focus on development of a climate that would help create such a culture. AQIP Action Project reviewers supported this decision, stating in the 2011 review,

> *"It was to the institution's benefit that they recognized their overly ambitious and presumptuous goals to change the culture, early in the process and adjusted accordingly. This is consistent with the principles of high performing organizations reflected in a learning orientation and being agile and responsive to change. Culture change is a long-term process, normally requiring a 5-15 year timeframe. Many such change efforts fail because change agents move too quickly to implement change, rather than spending sufficient time building awareness and a shared vision of desired outcomes, among a critical mass of the community. The College is encouraged to continue these efforts by gaining the support of the faculty and other stakeholders, continuing to focus on becoming a learning college using a fact-based information gathering and analysis approach and promoting collaboration."*

Renamed *Completing the Assessment Loop: Evidencing Best Practices in Assessment,* the project used Reflective Practice Groups (RPGs) to engage faculty in dialogue about the Learning College mission, active learning, the application of adult learning theories (andragogy), and alternative assessment approaches. The RPGs focused on three themes fundamental to moving our work with assessment forward: Teaching and Instructional Strategies, Active and Collaborative Learning, and Assessment. By project end, we had made significant progress in adopting a culture of assessment. Unfortunately, due to the shift in focus of the *Closing the Loop* project, the continued development of student learning assessments, begun in the first Action Project, lost momentum.

In recent months, we have renewed the drive to develop cross-curricular, course-embedded competency assessments. Using what we learned from both Action Projects, we will make some modifications to process and rubrics used in the first project and will continue to evolve the culture at Aims and promote assessment of student learning as a foundation of continuous improvement. The faculty-based Curriculum Committee has agreed to oversee the assessment process and will finalize the reporting structure for institutional assessment activities. As we go forward, we will incorporate technology to enhance the ease and efficiency of data collection. We have also created a new faculty position, Director of Academic Assessment, to promote assessment and mentor faculty in its implementation and analysis. The director will work closely with the IEA office to ensure the assessments align with accepted methodologies and follow the assessment process shown in Chart 1-E. A new position has also been added to the IEA staff to focus strictly on data collection and analysis for student learning assessment. **(CC4B-1,3&4)**

KEY

Dir, of Academic Assessment	Dir. of Acad. Assessment, IEA, Faculty	IEA	Monitoring Cycle
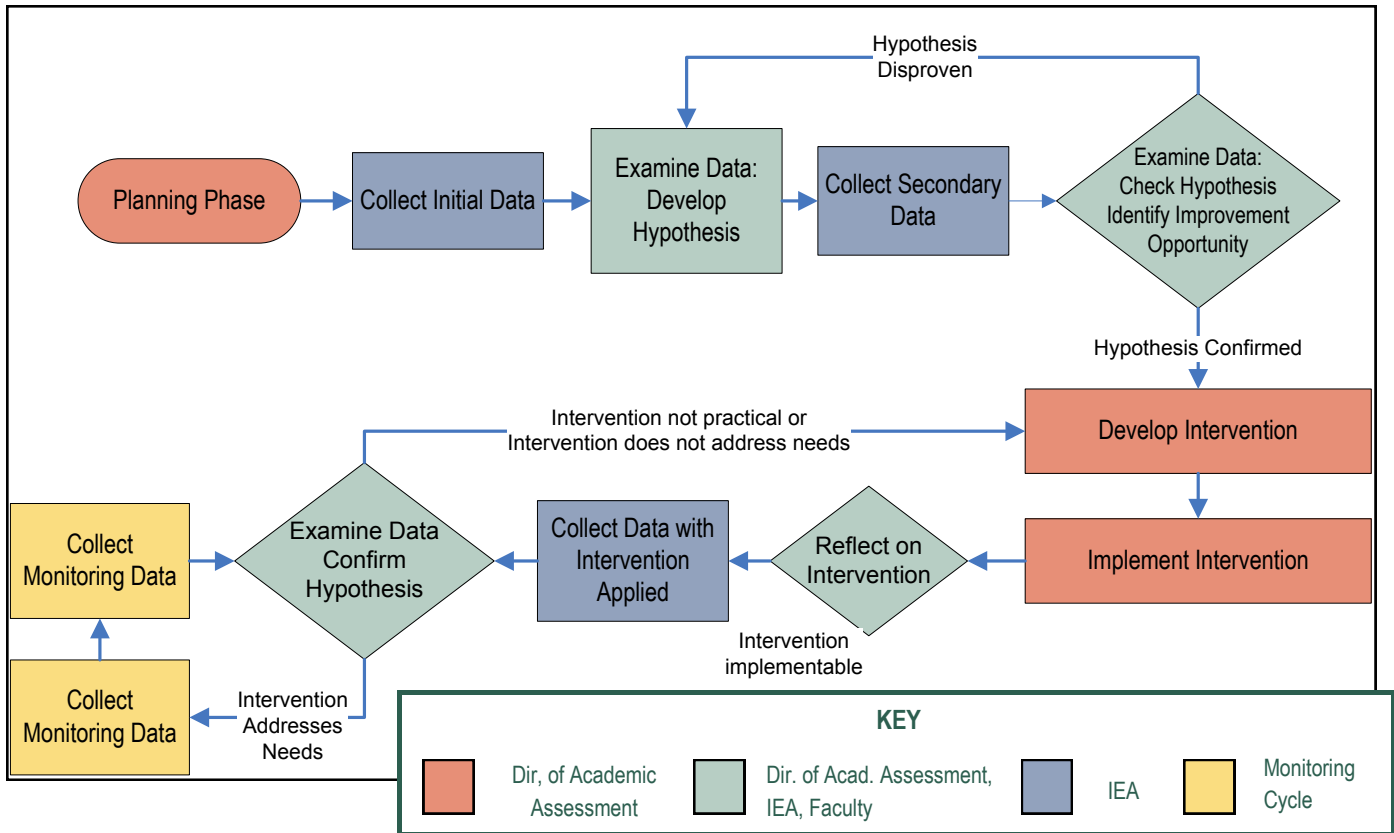
1-E: Process for Academic Assessment of General Education Competencies

As noted in sections 1P1 and 1P2, learning objectives in career and technical areas are driven by national and state accreditation guidelines and program advisory committees. Because CTE learning outcomes are specific to each program, we assess students for attainment of learning objectives through projects and tests in each course. These data are reviewed by the program advisory committee annually to ensure curricula sufficiently prepare students for their chosen career. In addition, many of our CTE programs, such as Communications Media, Criminal Justice, and Graphic Technology, include a capstone course or internship experience to integrate all program learning objectives. As discussed in 1R3, we also collect pass rate data from licensure/certification tests our graduates take. These data impact curriculum revision by the Program Advisory Committee and department faculty. Modifications to course content are monitored for their effectiveness through these same assessments, completed on an annual basis. **(CC4B-2)**

Category One Results

1R1. Measures of of student learning and development

Student development is primarily measured through regular classroom assessment, such as exams, papers, and other assignments. Fulfillment of criteria required for each course through the CCNS must be evidenced before a student successfully completes it. Departments communicate student learning goals, so each instructor, when he or she teaches a course, uses a variety of assessment methods.

We assess retention and completion in developmental reading, writing, and math, since successful completion indicates skill attainment and advancement to college-level courses. College Algebra and Composition I and II classes yield data on retention, enrollee success, and completer success. Aims also collects data on

	WRITING		CRITICAL THINKING		MATH		READING	
Fall 2012	**Hiring and Discussion Phase**							
January 2013	Planning Phase	Hiring and Discussion Phase						
Spring 2013	Planning Phase		Hiring and Discussion Phase		Planning Phase		Hiring and Discussion Phase	
Summer 2013	Planning Phase		Planning Phase		Planning Phase			
Fall 2013	Collect Data		Planning Phase		Planning Phase		Planning Phase	
January 2014	IE&A Analysis		Planning Phase		Planning Phase		Planning Phase	
Spring 2014	Examine Data - Develop Hypothesis		Collect Data		Collect Data		Planning Phase	
Summer 2014			IE&A Analysis		IE&A Analysis		Planning Phase	
Fall 2014	Collect Data		Examine Data - Develop Hypothesis		Examine Data - Develop Hypothesis		Collect Data	
January 2015	Examine Data - Develop Hypothesis	Develop Intervention					IE&A Analysis	
Spring 2015		Implement Intervention	Collect Data		Collect Data		Examine Data - Develop Hypothesis	
Summer 2015		Reflect on Intervention	Examine Data - Develop Hypothesis	Develop Intervention	Examine Data - Develop Hypothesis	Develop Intervention		
Fall 2015	Collect Data	Intervention Applied ⇨		Implement Intervention		Implement Intervention	Collect Data	
January 2016	Examine Data - Develop Hypothesis	Intervention Applied ⇨		Reflect on Intervention		Reflect on Intervention	Examine Data - Develop Hypothesis	Develop Intervention
Spring 2016	Begin Monitoring Cycle	Intervention Applied ⇨	Collect Data		Collect Data			Implement Intervention

KEY

Dir, of Academic Assessment	Dir. of Acad. Assessment, IEA, Faculty
IEA	Monitoring Cycle

1-F: Assessment Timeline for Four General Education Competencies

persistence on both full- and part-time student populations from fall to fall, as well as on students who complete or transfer within three years of matriculating.

Our CTE department collects employer satisfaction surveys for many programs to monitor satisfactory attainment of necessary skills. We calculate completion and job placement rates for all gainful employment (GE) programs, and such data is posted online in GE student disclosures. In addition, we monitor pass rates on industry recognized licensure tests, including those for nursing, surgical technology, radiation technology, and peace officer. Student success on post-completion tests demonstrates an effective academic program.

As we move fully into the restored institutional assessment process, detailed in 1P18, related activities will align with the Institutional Assessment Calendar, shown in Chart 1-F.

1R2. Performance results for common student learning objectives

The broadest evidence of student success and the fulfillment of student learning objectives is successful completion of a credential, whether degree or certificate. Table 1-G shows the data for completers in any AA, AS, or AGS program over the last four cohort years. Completers are students who completed their program within three years (150% of program length).

	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008
# New AA/AS/AGS Students (New first time – no transfer)	533	368	360	338	451
# Earned Degree within 3 years	34	47	40	50	30
% Earned Degree within 3 years	6.4%	12.8%	11.1%	14.8%	6.7%

1-G: Completers by Number and Percent of Cohort
Source: Aims Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Office

Further proof of success is retention or a student's continuing education after initial enrollment. Table 1-H details results for new, first-time, AA/AS/AGS degree-seeking students, who enrolled the following fall semester.

	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
# New AA/AS/AGS students (new first time students only)	536	504	475	628	693
# continued to following fall	216	206	201	300	308
% Retained	40.3%	40.9%	42.3%	47.8%	44.4%

1-H: Fall-to-Fall Retention by Number and Percent of Cohort
Source: Aims Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Office

As Aims gathers data about student learning, we are considering new procedures for assessing student learning in general education courses. Also, in many CTE programs, national exams assess student learning.

1R3. What are your performance results for specific program learning objectives?

Aims designs specific programs to provide students with discipline-specific knowledge or skills. We design general education programs, such as the AA or AS degrees, to prepare students to transfer to a four-year college or university to continue their studies. Table 1-I, on the next page, indicates our benchmarked data on percent of students that transfer within three years (150% of AA degree program length).

Proportion of Students That Transferred Within Three Years (Fall 2007 IPEDS GRS Cohort)				
	Aims Value	NCCBP Median %tile	NCCBP 75th %tile	Aims %tile Rank
Full-time, First-time in Fall, 2007	*35.4%*	*17.8%*	*23.6%*	*96%*
Part-time, First-time in Fall, 2007	*19.9%*	*11.3%*	*16.6%*	*86%*

1-I: Student Transfer Rates for Fall 2007 Cohorts
Source: IPEDS Data

CTE programs, on the other hand, are intended to train students to work in a specified industry or to take professional licensure examinations. The CTE department and its constituent programs monitor student pass rates to indicate program currency and quality. The most recent pass rates of Aims graduates for several licensure tests are shown in Table 1-J.

Program	Test	Pass Rate	
		2010-11	2011-12
Peace Officer Academy	POST Certification Exam	100%	100%
Surgical Technology	Certified Surgical Technologist Exam	92%	92%
Business Technology	Microsoft Office Exam	85.7%	94.1%
Associates Degree Nursing	National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX)	83% (4/10–10/10)	89% (4/11–10/11)

1-J: Licensure Test Pass Rates for Last Two Academic Years
Source: Reports to Aims Departments from Licensing Agencies

1R4. Evidence that students have acquired knowledge and skills required by stakeholders

Learning objectives and competencies are embedded in the curricula of liberal arts transfer courses, governed by articulation agreements and state disciplinary groups. Course instructors teach to the objectives and competencies and confirm that a student who passes the course has acquired the required knowledge and/or skills.

Data support that Aims students make progress after transferring to four-year institutions.

According to the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP), a significant number of Aims students transfer to a four-year institution compared to peer institutions (96th and 86th percentile rank for full- and part-time respectively), indicating their preparation for continued education (as shown in 1R3). Universities regularly monitor the success of transfer students. That these universities welcome Aims graduates shows our students are appropriately prepared in their program at Aims. Table 1-K lists institutions that regularly receive our transfer students:

	06-07	07-08	08-09
Alamosa State College	0	2	2
Colorado School of Mines	1	0	1
Colorado State University	56	67	39
Colorado State - Pueblo	6	2	2
Fort Lewis College	2	0	4
Mesa State College	5	5	4
Metro	36	47	47
UC Boulder	7	10	4
UC Colorado Springs	1	4	4
UC Denver	8	3	9
University of Northern Colorado	110	125	153
Western State College	0	0	1
Total	**232**	**265**	**270**

1-K: Students who Transferred to Colorado 4-year Schools
Source: Colorado Department of Higher Education

The CTE office completes an annual report which asks employers how satisfied they are with Aims graduates. We collect employer data for all CTE programs, including Accounting, Associate Degree Nursing, Audio Production, Automotive Technology, Basic Peace Officer Academy, Business Technologies, Collision Repair Technology, Computer Information Systems, Early Childhood Certificate, Emergency Medical Services, Engineering/CAD, Fire Science Technology,

EMPLOYER SATISFACTION SURVEY (FY 2011 Completers)					
Name of Program	Completers		Employers		Overall Skills Rating:
	# Reported	# Contacted	# Reported	# Identified	(5=Highly Satisfied)
Accounting	24	11	8	7	5.0
Aviation Helicopter	4	3	3	3	5.0
Basic Peace Officer Academy	31	16	13	6	4.3
Collision Repair Technology	14	3	2	2	3.0
Early Childhood Certificate	18	8	3	2	5.0
Fire Science Technology	60	26	23	22	4.4
Marketing/Management	14	5	5	2	5.0
Nurse Aide (CNA)	320	71	34	22	4.1
Welding Technology	73	26	13	11	4.3

1-L: Comparison of Effectiveness of Online Courses Compared to Traditional Courses
Source: Colorado State VE-135 Report and Annual Employer Satisfaction Survey

Graphic Technology, Marketing/Management, Medical Office Technologies, Phlebotomy Technician, Radio Production, Radiologic Technology, Surgical Technology, TV & Video Production, and Welding Technology. Survey results guide program reviews and revisions. Table 1-L, above, shows a sample of the results from this employer survey.

We collect additional information for the Nursing Program with the Associate Degree Nursing Program Graduate Employer Survey. The survey asks employers to indicate their satisfaction with Aims Nursing Program graduates related to program competencies, such as:

- provides physical and psychosocial care
- provides safe and effective nursing care
- maintains and promotes the health of clients
- applies critical thinking and evidenced based knowledge to guide care
- demonstrates accountability for practice within the ethical, legal and regulatory framework of nursing

Chart 1-M shows the results of one question from this survey :

Question 7: As an employer/supervisor, how satisfied are you that Aims 2011 Nursing Program graduates are prepared to demonstrate the use of current technology in the coordination and provision of client care?
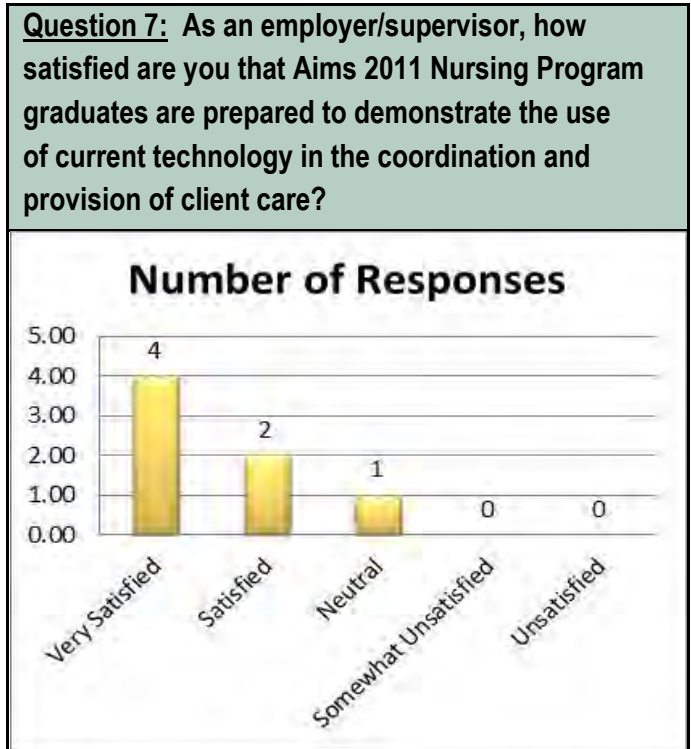
1-M: Question 7 of 2011 Satisfaction Survey for Employers of Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Graduates with Responses
Source: ADN Employer Survey

1R5. Performance results for learning support processes

Library Services

Displaced due to construction in 2009-10, Kiefer Library returned to its previous location in the College Center in July 2010, as part of the "Learning Commons," which also includes the Computer Learning Lab, Tutoring Services, the STAR office, and the Disability Access Lab. In an effort to improve information accessibility, the Kiefer Library has taken the following initiatives:

- Titles in the eBook collection are now able to be "checked out" and downloaded onto porta-ble readers or personal computers. Additional eBook titles were purchased for portable eBook readers.

- CINAHL - Full Text Database for health sci-ence research was added in January, with 3,738 hits in six months.

- Laptop computers and Nook eBook readers have been purchased for interlibrary loan checkout; we are currently running a pilot program to assess the effectiveness of these added services.

Table 1-N displays data showing significant increases in library use, attendance at information sessions and the use of eBooks and other e-learning resources. Due to the relocation of the

Kiefer Library Usage Data			
Year		**09-10**	**10-11**
Information Literacy Sessions	Sessions	43	869
	Attendance	69	1411
Checkouts		13,138	24,405
Textbook Reserves		8,841	12,138
Library Traffic Count		68,022	160,755
Hits to Electronic Databases		145,439	335,310

1-N: Library Usage Data
Source: Division II Report to Board of Trustees

Kiefer Library these numbers may be somewhat distorted. We will continue collection each year to ensure accurate longitudinal data.

Tutoring Services

Tutoring Services was re-organized in fall 2010 to hold students more accountable for learning. New services include guided study groups, group tutoring, and faculty corners that increase student-faculty communication. Faculty use tutoring request forms to indicate specific student needs. This holistic approach resulted in a decrease of individual tutoring requests from 172 in fall 2009 to 56 in 2010, while the number of students using alternative forms of academic assistance rose.

Academic Advising

In 2010-11 there were 12,603 student contacts in Advising, Career Services, and the Student Achievement and Retention (STAR) Program, a 14% increase from 2009-10 and 270% increase since 2007-08, as seen in Table 1-O. This includ-ed 9,263 general advising student contacts com-pared to 7,515 in 2009-10 (23% increase).
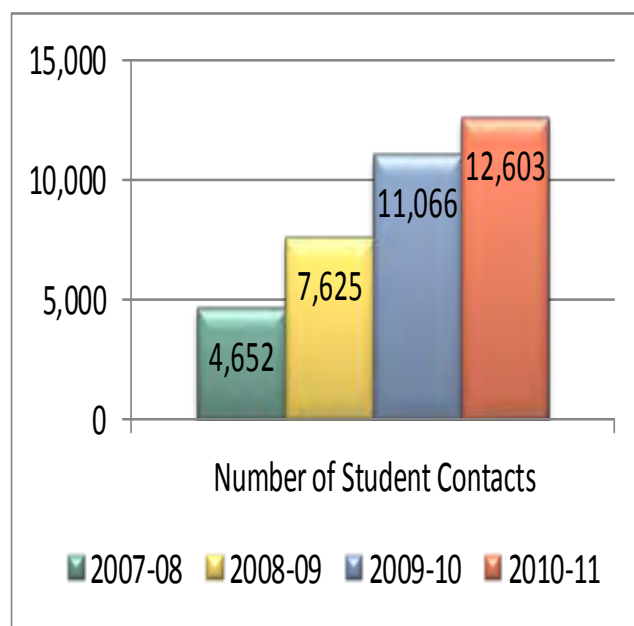
1-O: Cumulative Student Contacts in Advising, Career Services, and STAR in Last Four Academic Years
Source: Annual Student Services Report to the Board of Trustees

During peak registration, there were 5,608 walk-in contacts compared to 4,540 in 2009-10 (23.5% increase).

In addition, Academic Advising

- worked with 94 Career Academy students from eight schools. Career Academy allows high school students to enroll concurrently in Career and Technical programs at Aims

- facilitated 2,755 Allied Health student contacts (1,545 advising appointments, 115 viewed Radiologic Technology online orientation, 504 attended Nurse Aide orientation, 591 attended Nursing/Surgical Tech orientation) compared to 2,230 Allied Health student contacts in 2009-10 and 2,416 Allied Health student contacts in 2008-09 (14% increase over three years)

- responded to 1,590 emails through the generic "Ask an Advisor" account compared to 1,249 in 2009-10 (27% increase)

As shown in Table 1-P, we also monitor the success of our student services efforts though the student satisfaction survey and by benchmarking our results with those of peer institutions.

	Aims Student Satisfaction		Public Colleges' Satisfaction	
	2011	2009	2011	2009
Academic advising/ course planning services	4.02	4.03	3.83 ***	4.02
Library & learning resources center— facilities & services	4.35	4.14	4.27 *	4.27 *
Financial aid services	3.67	3.73	3.98 ***	4.23 *
Computer services	4.39	4.36	4.25 ***	4.13 ***
* significant at the .05 level; ** significant at the .01 level; *** significant at the .001 level				

1-P: Student Satisfaction Ratings for Select Student Support Services with Benchmarked Data (5= very satisfied)

Source: ACT Student Opinion Survey

1R6. Benchmarking performance results for Helping Students Learn processes

Aims participated in the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) in 2010, along with 280 other public institutions. Table 1-Q, shows NCCBP data for initiatives relating to Helping Students Learn:

	Aims Reported Value	NCCBP Median %tile	Aims %tile Rank
Completion Rate (Degree/Certificate earned within Three Years)			
Full-time, First-time in Fall, 2007	26.99%	19.80%	73%
Part-time, First-time in Fall, 2007	24.43%	6.52%	94%
Retention/Persistence Rates			
Next Term Persistence Rate	63.58%	71.80%	13%
Fall-fall Persistence Rate	40.45%	49.50%	6%

1-Q: Completion/Retention -Aims vs. NCCBP (2007 Cohort) Source: National Community College Benchmark Project

This data reflects composite data for all degree and certificate programs. Aims has a higher-than-average three-year graduation rate for both full- and part-time students than other NCCBP community college respondents. The part-time graduation rate is mostly due to the high number of Nurse Aide students. Even though we have a high number of completers and transfer students (as seen in 1R3), we are not retaining as many students as desired to the next term of enrollment or the next year (Aims ranks at the 13th percentile for next term and 6th percentile for the fall-to-fall persistence). Aims' reports use the IPEDS definition of first-time, degree seeking students; however, the College defines "degree seeking" as both degree- (associate) and certificate-seeking students. Inclusion of certificate students when calculating retention and graduation contributes to

low persistence rates and high graduation rates. In other words, certificate students may complete in one or two semesters and would not normally return the following term or year, thus lowering persistence rates by NCCBP standards, yet the student would have earned a degree/certificate, so for purposes of NCCBP reporting they are counted as completers.

Category One Improvements

1I1:   Recent improvements in Helping Students Learn

In 2008, Aims began working on a project in Assessment of Learning. The intent of this project was to collect data on student learning to measure learning in writing, math, and critical thinking. A process was developed, and data was collected in courses with writing, math or critical thinking elements. The English department faculty were given results of this process, and they have implemented some changes to courses to improve student learning. This process will be re-implemented, with some changes, during the 2012-13 academic year, with data collection beginning in fall 2013. In addition, we will assess English department changes based on the previous and current data. Because the process was not continuous, data collection has stalled in the last three years. The new process includes a change in timing to allow for collecting and analyzing in alternating cycles so that data analysis can take place before the next cycle of collection occurs.

Several changes have occurred in academic tutoring to improve multiple services and have been shown to impact student learning. Faculty from various content areas spend time in the tutoring lab, so when students need tutoring they are able to work directly with faculty. This opportunity allows students direct access to a faculty member to get additional help on assignments, which in turn should increase student learning. The Tutoring Center has recently implemented a system that allows better tracking. This system allows students to sign in and then alerts tutors that a student needs assistance. When a tutor works with a student, the time and topic are logged. This new system tracks time better, so number of tutors scheduled can be adjusted based on students' needs. This tracking system has allowed the Tutoring Center to respond to student needs, so that both students and staff can use their time more efficiently and will hopefully improve student learning.

Aims Community College possesses an Honors Program, whose mission is "to provide challenges for and reward students by encouraging them to engage in rigorous courses, leadership experiences, and community involvement." These activities contribute to student learning and allow students who welcome an additional challenge to excel. In May 2012, Aims recognized the first graduates of the Honors Program, one of whom served as valedictorian.

For the next portfolio, we will focus on creating a systematic, comprehensive process to measure the results of these programs as well as to ensure we evaluate student learning across the entire institution. We are beginning a project to help each department build processes that can be measured and documented. This project will include evaluating how we can document learning across the college.

1I2: Selecting targets for improvement

The Aims culture supports processes that enhance communicating and learning. One of these strategies is open meetings among deans and faculty. These meetings create opportunities to share what works well at the College, what needs support, and what may not work as well and needs further evaluation or redirection.   The faculty and deans meetings foster open dialog concerning issues of common interest. The meetings are "open" (i.e., they have no agenda), and faculty are invited to raise timely, relevant issues, often directly related to helping students learn (scheduling courses, classroom resources, assessment/testing, and advising). These discussions help establish priorities and agendas for more formal committees and work groups at Aims. These meetings are part of the human infrastructure and college culture that encourage dialogs for honest evaluation and review, thus helping students learn.   In addition, innovative ideas and alternatives are introduced that support the classroom environment and thereby contribute to student learning.

In working within Aims' culture and infrastructure to set targets for improvement and select processes to help students learn, Senior Management relies heavily on input from faculty and student services via the respective deans. Deans regularly schedule divisional meetings and host meetings with faculty to discuss issues about student success and student outcomes. We schedule college-wide open forums to receive broader insights about student learning habits. Such initiatives as the AAA 090/101 (the "College Experience" courses), new safety regulations and procedures, and newly established pre-requisites have developed from such meetings.   Senior Management also relies heavily on data from our Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment department to determine processes. For example, IEA conducted a recent study evaluating late starts and successful student completion, results of which will be used to determine timing for late registration and its consequences.

Category Two: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives

Introduction:

Aims Community College is an integral part of the Weld County community and fulfills many distinctive objectives beyond our academic mission. Aims is deeply involved in efforts to provide a trained workforce for local businesses and to help underprepared workers update their skills to improve their employability. Our representatives sit on the boards of the Greeley Chamber of Commerce, Weld Workforce Center, Upstate Colorado Economic Development Corporation and similar regional entities. Aims is also a vital part of attracting new or relocating business to the area. Not only does the College help to ensure an adequately prepared workforce is available, but the Continuing Education Division also works with these businesses to access state funding for specialized training for new employees and often provides the training as well.

Beyond these programs, Aims Community College also supports local communities through a variety of initiatives including High Plains Chautauqua, Community College Day, and Tax Help Colorado.

Some of our initiatives in this category lend themselves to Systematic analysis and cyclical improvement efforts. For example, the annual cycle of the Colorado First grant program includes goal development and customized training design, state application process, delivery of training, post-training surveys and assessments, and grant close-out reports. While the clients and training topics may change from year to year, analysis of training outcomes enables the Continuing Education Division to improve the customized training program over time. Other efforts are distinctly event-based and tend to be analyzed in a Reacting mode. For instance, Community College Day was a unique event with no planned follow-up. While information was collected to gauge the success of the event, no improvement efforts will be developed at this time.

We have found that developing a robust systems approach to program assessment and improvement is more difficult when it relates to the broader Aims community and external stakeholders. We have strong relationships with our community stakeholders, but our best gauge of public opinion is continued taxpayer support. Additionally, the ACT Student Opinion Survey indicates that most students learn about Aims via word of mouth, an indication that we are meeting the needs of our community. Our newest AQIP Action Project, *Developing Systems to Measure Effectiveness,* will help us formalize systems for program assessment and improvement related to "Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives."

Category Two Processes

2P1. Designing and operating key non-instructional processes

Aims Community College addresses non-instructional processes within its mission statement, identifying the creation of "partnerships that support economic development and global understanding." The college annually designs a number of key services to fulfill this mission using strategic visioning defined by the executive team, with input from various constituents. These partnerships include the Chamber of Commerce, United Way, several economic development councils, the Aims Community College Foundation, and local governmental agencies. Through these external partnerships, we have developed or contributed to a number of programs, such as a radio station, website development for the Upstate Colorado Economic Development Council, the High Plains Chautauqua, the business-supported College Promise Program for high school students, Tax Help Colorado and Colorado First Grants. Through internal efforts, we have established College for Kids, the External Reporting Oversight Committee, Community College Day, and All Access Aims.

The last systems appraisal listed the college's ability to measure institutional effectiveness through use of data and benchmarking as an outstanding opportunity. For that and other compliance reasons, we established EROC (External Reporting Oversight Committee). This group monitors all outgoing reports and checks them for both data compliance/accuracy and analyzes them against peer colleges. Data custodians, who monitor specific data sets, such as data pertaining to registration and finance, are all members of EROC and work to establish valid data for the organization, including a Data Cookbook and common data definitions.   On May 1, 2011, Aims hired a full-time compliance officer who coordinates Aims' compliance activities for the State of Colorado, Higher Learning Commission, and U.S. Department of Education. In collaboration with the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, the accountability, accuracy, and benchmarking data initiatives of the college have greatly improved, especially those identifying NCHEMS institutions as peers.

2P2. Determining major non-instructional objectives for your external stakeholders

Many if not most of these objectives are vetted through the All College Action Committee (ACAC), which meets monthly during the regular academic year to determine AQIP Action Projects or college initiatives, called CI^2 (Continuous Improvement Initiatives). Beyond ACAC, the college regularly develops a SWOT (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) analysis to determine when new initiatives would be advantageous to our external stakeholders. All new objectives are assigned to a specific department/division and must meet sustainability measures for fiscal and human resources. Feedback is provided regularly through reports, threaded online discussions, and Board of Trustees meetings. Two examples of recent objectives follow:

In 2008, led by accounting faculty member Gina Jones, Aims reached out to the Piton Foundation and agreed to be an early adopter of providing Tax Help Colorado to our largely blue-collar community. The significant number of eligible taxpayers in Weld County made our service area a primary target for establishing a no-cost tax filing assistance program. "I think it is impressive that after just three years, Aims is helping hundreds of low-income taxpayers each year file their tax returns for free through tax sites at their Greeley and Fort Lupton Campuses." says Diane Giacomo, director of Communications for the Piton Foundation. In 2011, this initiative resulted in returning $1.6 million to families and the local economy.

The Continuing Education Division is responsible for coordinating Colorado First grant applications in conjunction with the local Workforce Development Agency and the local Economic Development organization. The grants are used to secure training for employees and enable companies expanding or relocating to Colorado to develop an effective workforce. Eligibility criteria are stringent and include maximum grant award amount per employee, a sustainable wage threshold, full time positions, and a financial evaluation. As summary data indicate, Aims reported a total of $395,205 for the 2009-10 grant year, well in the top tier of community colleges in Colorado. The grants included Vestas Blades, Bach Composite, and JBS USA-LLC. Six months into the 2011-12 year, Aims recorded $288,510 in grant awards.

2P3. Communicating expectations regarding objectives?

Expectations and objectives are regularly communicated both internally and externally.   In most cases, internal communication occurs through one of more of the following avenues: the Aims *Annual Report to the Community*, which highlights the status of the College's annual objectives; *In The Loop*, a streaming video from the CEO,

produced approximately four to five times per year; and regular meetings of All College Action Committee (ACAC) that review and analyze projected results. All members of the college community can e-mail the *Ask Aims* forum and also use the online "Suggestion Box" to make suggestions for improvement. We communicate through department and division meetings and through Senior Management minutes. Faculty (ACEA) and staff (ASA) leadership meet regularly with the CEO. Also, employee input is encouraged during open meetings, thus providing a cyclical pattern of communication.

Our external reports include *Aims Magazine* and the *Annual Report*. We also broadcast all Board of Trustees meetings on our cable TV channel. We contact local media regularly. External communication also occurs with Career and Technical Education (CTE) advisory boards and with high school administration in connection with Concurrent Enrollment and High School Diploma Programs. We are also beginning to use Facebook to obtain external feedback and are looking at how to better systematize this activity.

2P4. Assessing and reviewing objectives

Many of the same venues mentioned above also provide the means to assess the value and review the appropriateness of our objectives, including both formative and summative reviews. Reports to the ACAC, to advisory boards and to the Board of Trustees highlight successes in and obstacles to completing projects in terms of fiscal resources, human resources, and timelines. Continuous Improvement input is secured from each entity, as well as from other major stakeholders.

When the Board of Trustees determined it was in the best interest of the college to pursue additional revenues from an oil well on the Greeley Campus, the College, partnering with Synergy Resources, met with company representatives and community members to discuss potential issues, such as drilling, fracking, and environmental concerns. Input gained from these meetings allowed the

partnership to address concerns and move the well to completion. Data is supplied through financial services and the Institutional Effectiveness office. There are two benchmark calendar times: the beginning of budget cycle and end of fiscal year. Most employees and community members share their thoughts through either electronic mail or social media.

2P5. Determining faculty and staff needs for objectives

Determining the faculty and staff needs is articulated in the 2P3 discussion. These groups are included in multiple communication and review processes such as the ACAC, the Think Tank (a select ad hoc group of college faculty and staff leaders who share input on executive and senior leadership initiatives), the Quality of Work Life Survey, regular meetings of the CEO with both staff and faculty leadership, and an online suggestion box open to all employees. We review and analyze the results of these interactions to find options for continuous improvement within the college. Some suggestions from this process include a college-wide wellness program and an inquiry initiative called *Ask Aims* to clarify issues and concerns.

Demonstrating our commitment to AQIP, the college continues to host a "conversation day," which provides informal, broad-based conversations as well as professional development opportunities at all levels of the institution.

2P6. Incorporating information on faculty and staff needs in readjusting these

As discussed above, faculty and staff insights are integral to decisions that affect "accomplishing other distinctive objectives." In 2010 the College, based on input from new faculty, developed Community College Day a college-wide outreach to the local community and opened the college for eight hours to allow all community members to take a free class at any of our four locations. The

event allowed us to market the College more effectively to our constituencies.

At each Board of Trustees meeting, faculty, staff, and student representatives give updates and communicate concerns affecting the respective groups. Their comments affect objectives of certain goals, programs, interventions, or courses of action.

Typically the President or a member of Senior Management meets with interested parties to discuss concerns more closely. Involved administrators then institute an appropriate follow-up to address the concerns.

Category Two Results

2R1. Measures of major non-instructional objectives

Tax Help Colorado – The college has made a commitment to continue this valuable community program and has expanded it to outlying campuses. We monitor the number of community members helped and the tax dollars saved.

Colorado First – This objective is directly related to part of the college mission to promote economic development by leveraging state grant monies to provide crucial training for existing and developing businesses within our service area. We benchmark ourselves against other state institutions for the number of grants awarded and dollars distributed, plus we survey grant recipients and trainees to gauge effectiveness.

External Reporting Oversight Committee (EROC) – Measurement of this initiative is still in its formative stage and relies heavily on qualitative factors. While this project may have the least quantitative data, it may have the most influential consequences for the college as the committee scrutinizes reports to external agencies for compliance, consistency, and validity of data. Based on input from the group, the college has begun using

a Data Cookbook and a Common Data Set (see Category 7 for more detailed information). Qualitative evidence indicates that the group missions of reviewing institutional processes and improving the flow of data are very beneficial to the College and our continuous improvement philosophy.

2R2. Performance results for other distinctive objectives?

Performance results for Tax Help Colorado at Aims are shown in Tables 2-A and 2-B.
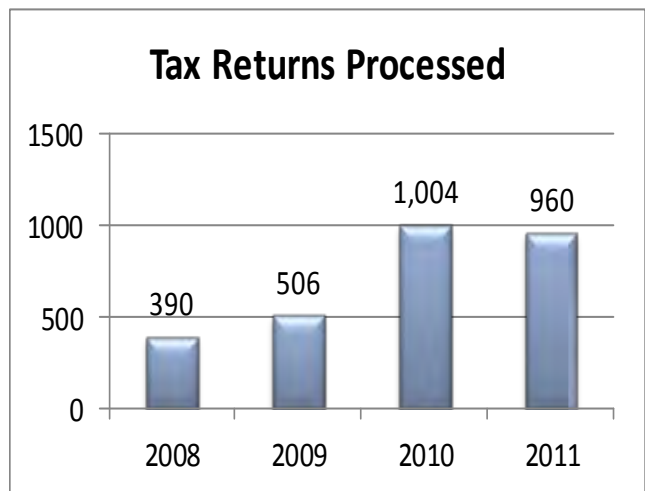
2-A: Number of Tax Returns Prepared through Tax Help Colorado at Aims Community College
Source: Tax Help Colorado and the Piton Foundation
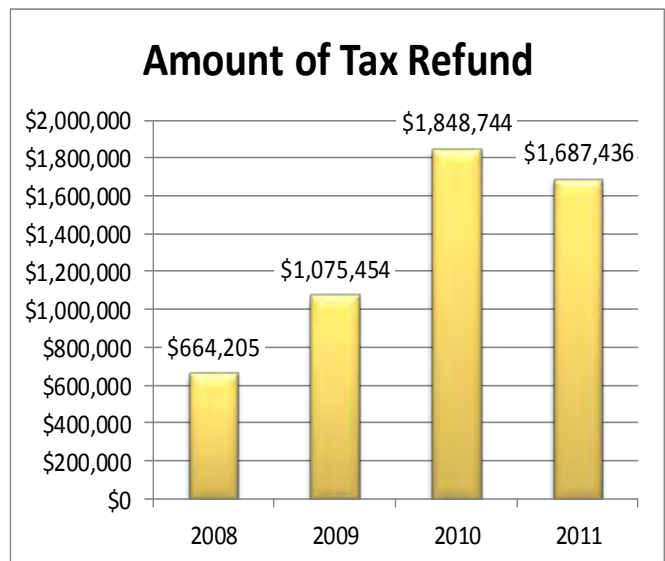
2-B: Total Refunds Returned to Taxpayers through Tax Help Colorado at Aims Community College
Source: Tax Help Colorado and the Piton Foundation

Performance results for Colorado First and Existing Industry Grants are detailed in Tables 2-C and 2-D, below

Grant Year	08-09	09-10	10-11
Colorado First Grants	2	4	5
$ Amount of Colorado First Grants	$197,128	$351,186	$542,074
Existing Industry Grants	2	1	1
$ Amount of Existing industry Grants	$105,790	$44,021	$61,878
Totals	$302,918	$395,205	$603,952

2-C: Customized Training Grants Administered by Aims in Last Three Academic Years
Source: Colorado First and Existing Industry Customized Training Grant Program

2010-11 Grant Year	Number of Grants	Dollar Totals	Aims % of State Grant Dollars
Colorado First	5	542,074	35.6%
Existing Industry	1	61,878	2.6%
Aims Totals	6	$603,952	15.6%

2-D: Proportion of State Customized Training Grants Administered by Aims
Source: Colorado First and Existing Industry Customized Training Grant Program

2R3. Comparative performance results

Comparative results for Tax Help Colorado for Tax Year 2011 are outlined in Table 2-E.

Tax Site Results for January 28 - April 17, 2012		
College/Site	Returns Prepared	Total Refunds
Community College of Aurora	1,426	$2,890,850
Emily Griffith Opportunity School	1,066	$1,906,373
Aims CC--Greeley	867	$1,505,677
Adams State College	678	$1,031,950
Community College of Denver	405	$886,173
Pikes Peak CC	313	$700,858
Front Range Community College	274	$659,073
AmeriCorps Special Events	306	$642,634
Pueblo Community College	306	$633,311
Morgan CC--Fort Morgan	329	$569,116
DeVry University–Westminster	212	$412,136
Northeastern Junior College	190	$246,076
Trinidad State JC--Alamosa	142	$220,776
Aims CC--Fort Lupton	93	$181,759
Trinidad State JC--Trinidad	108	$163,239
DeVry--Greenwood Village	61	$139,856
Lamar Community College	86	$132,372
Morgan CC--Burlington	71	$99,595
Adams State	82	$80,932
Otero Junior College	57	$78,805
TOTAL	7,072	$13,181,561

2-E: Number of Returns Prepared and Total Tax Refunds for Colleges Participating in the 2012 Tax Help Colorado Program.
Source: Tax Help Colorado and the Piton Foundation

With regard to Colorado First performance, Aims does a good job of securing grant monies to provide training despite depending on state revenue dedicated to economic development which has been sluggish in the last several years due to the national recession.

Comparative results for Colorado First for grant year 2011-12 are shown in Table 2-F.

Comparative Results for 2011-12 Grant Year		
College	Funds Awarded	Employees Trained
Front Range CC-Westminster	$1,234,240	2056
Aims CC	$603,952	1755
Front Range CC—Larimer	$480,526	546
Red Rocks CC	$372,692	457
Pikes Peak CC	$357,631	584
Pueblo CC	$283,136	320
Arapahoe CC	$232,444	275
CC of Denver	$227,916	354
Community College of Aurora	$41,874	131
Colorado Mountain College	$20,720	24
Northeastern Junior College	$6,870	0

2-F: Funds Awarded and Number of Employees Trained for Colleges Administering Colorado First Grants in 2011-12. Source: Colorado First and Existing Industry Customized Training Grant Program

While there is no direct correlation of EROC with other colleges, the institution has committed to participate in the National Community College Benchmarking Project and has made strides in how it measures institutional effectiveness.

2R4. Comparing performance results for Other Distinctive Objectives

At Aims, we are proud of our reputation as a community asset. This was reflected in the participation rate at the first Community College Day held in April 2011, with over 1,500 participants and 400 college volunteers. Aims has also received the Bravo Regional Spirit Award from the Northern Colorado Business Report and recently became a member of the Leadership Council for Upstate Colorado Economic Development Corporation. In addition, the college has focused more specifically on marketing, hiring an external consultant to help create our *Strategic Marketing Plan.*

The college will again participate in both Tax Help Colorado and Colorado First to assist individuals and businesses in our service district. EROC will help the college measure our effectiveness and efficiency with consistency and validity.

Not only do distinctive objectives such as those discussed in this category reinforce our positive image in our tax area, but successful completion of these community service projects boost student and employee morale and satisfaction.

Category Two Improvements

2I1. Recent improvements

Aims completed its long-term strategic plan over the summer of 2011, featuring four strategic imperatives defined by the Board of Trustees in coordination with state goals: Student Learning and Success, Awareness and Access, Sustainability, and Institutional Effectiveness. The latter includes two concentrations: *Institutional Data* ("Implement systems to ensure the reliability and validity of institutional data") and ("Develop and institutionalize the use of data to support college decision-making process") and *Accountability Metrics* ("Implement a national accountability tool to demonstrate successful attainment of College Mission and Goals")

2I2. Selecting processes to improve and set targets

Aims embraces Continuous Improvement as part of its infrastructure. To that end, we use data to select projects resulting in Accomplishing Distinctive Objectives. Regular data profiles are provided at monthly meetings of ACAC to help form additional Action Projects or continuous improvement initiatives. The purpose of this process is to move the college forward as a high-performance institution.

Much of our work in this area stems from the last portfolio analysis that indicated an outstanding opportunity for developing a systems approach to improvement, including closing the feedback loop as a requisite opportunity at Aims (see Chart 2-G). The model illustrates that continuous improvement as a journey, not a sprint.
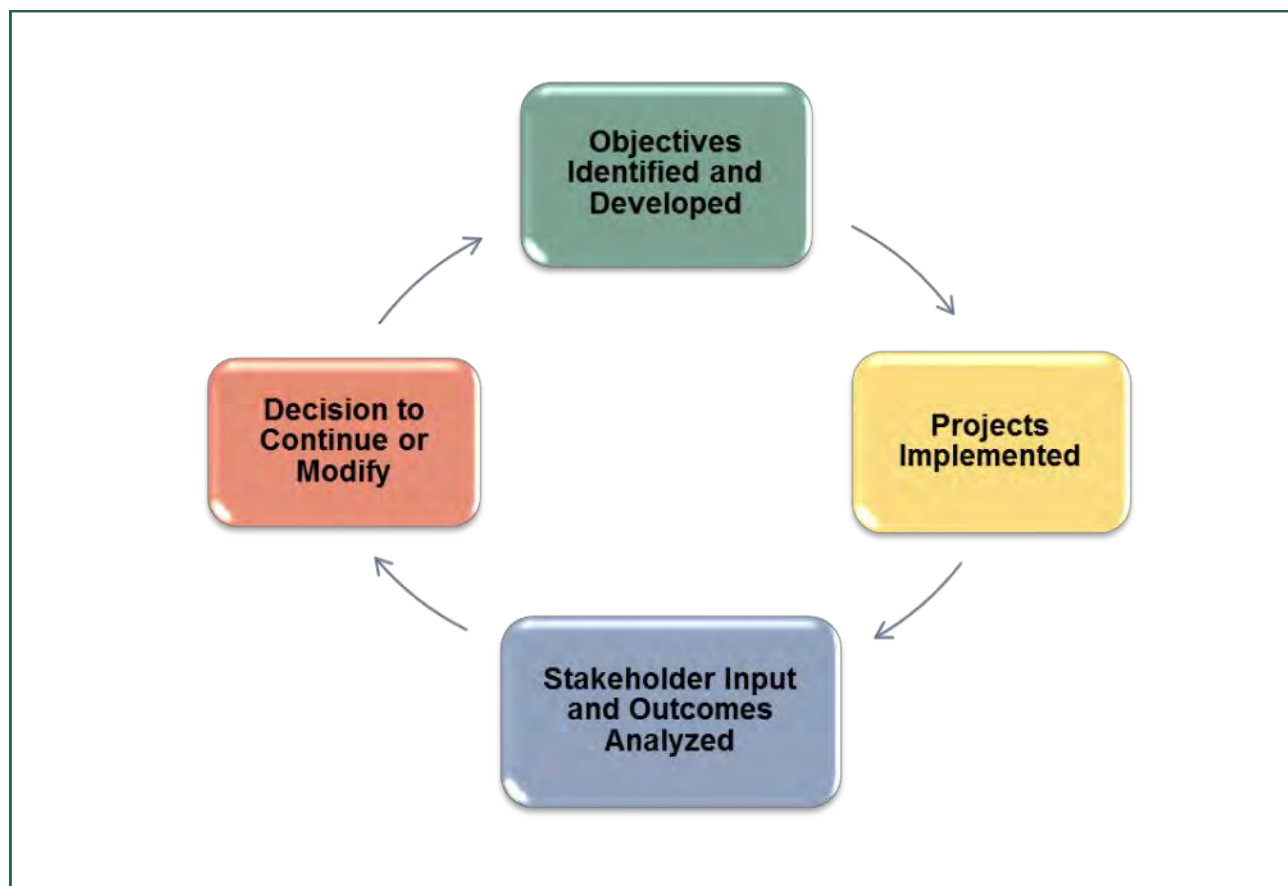
2-G: Aims Decision-Making Process

Category Three: Understanding the Needs of Students and Other Stakeholders

Introduction

As a community college with strong ties to our region, Aims must meet a wide range of expectations of our students and our community stakeholders.

Community colleges with both liberal arts transfer and career-technical education programs enroll a diverse student body, including traditional and non-traditional students, those from varied ethnic backgrounds, some just starting their degrees, and others who need to improve their academic skills. With students from so many diverse demographic groups, Aims Community College works to meet their varied needs, from customized support, advising and assistance for first generation or underprepared students, to the Honors Program for students desiring an academic challenge. Understanding the importance of a system for discerning student needs and how we are meeting them, we have refined the system for assessment of student satisfaction by instituting standardized surveys which allow for both longitudinal data analysis and benchmarking against our peer group. The development and formalization of a multi-year student satisfaction survey calendar, as described in 3I1 is evidence that as far as student needs are concerned, the College is functioning at a Systematic level. Not only are student opinions monitored through a repeatable process, but survey results alert the College to concerns before they become problems. Finally, outcomes of the various student opinion surveys encourage cooperative efforts among academic departments and between academic divisions and student services, all with the goal of meeting student needs.

In many ways our community stakeholders also expect the college to meet needs at every level and in widely varied programs. Our taxpayers expect Aims to offer programs to meet the needs of their children, friends, and neighbors. In addition, local governments, economic development organizations, and businesses expect Aims' programs to meet the training needs of new and existing industries, some of which are on the cutting edge of energy and other high-tech fields. With such widely varying needs, we find the systematic assessment of external stakeholder satisfaction is sometimes difficult to achieve. In some areas, assessment is formalized and cyclical, and process maturity is Systematic. For instance, satisfaction of local employers is monitored through annual surveys of Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Committee members and through the annual employer survey. Feedback from these surveys is then used by CTE departments as they examine programs for revision or update, ensuring the programs provide training in necessary skills. However, many of our processes for evaluating external stakeholder satisfaction are still at the Reacting level of maturity. Knowing this, we will address this need through our newest Action Project, *Developing Systems to Measure Effectiveness*. Project leads will work with various areas of the college that work directly with the broader community, with the intention of developing methods to monitor stakeholders' needs and whether we are meeting them.

Category Three Processes

3P1. Identifying the needs of student groups

Aims is committed to educational improvement through ongoing attention to our students' needs. We currently collect and analyze overall student completion/graduation (Table 3-A), persistence, and retention data (Table 3-B) annually, and utilize national benchmarking to help us make sense of the data, as evidenced by the sample of tables below. The majority of data analysis at Aims is based on IPEDS data: however, we also mine existing data to answer questions about specific subpopulations not directly addressed by IPEDS reporting numbers. For example, analysis of students with remedial needs and/or those enrolled in the Advanced Academic Achievement (AAA) courses led to changes in academic requirements for these students (see last paragraph of this section). **(CC 4C-2&4)**

Completion	Cohorts				
	Fall 2004	**Fall 2005**	**Fall 2006**	**Fall 2007**	**Fall 2008**
# New AA/AS/AGS students (new first time – no transfer)	533	368	360	338	451
# Earned a degree within 3 years AA/AS/AGS degree	34	47	40	50	30
% Earned a degree within 3 years AA/AS/AGS degree	6.4%	12.8%	11.1%	14.8%	6.7%

3-A: Completion Rate of New, First-time, Degree-seeking Students, 2004-2008 Cohorts
Source: IPEDS

Retention:	Cohorts				
	2005-06	**2006-07**	**2007-08**	**2008-09**	**2009-10**
# New AA/AS/AGS students (includes new first time students only)	536	504	475	628	693
# continued to following Fall	216	206	201	300	308
% Retained	40.3%	40.9%	42.3%	47.8%	44.4%

3-B: Retention Rate (Fall-to-Fall) of New, First-time, Degree-seeking Students, 2004-2008 Cohorts

Source: IPEDS

Benchmarking using the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) can be seen in Table 3-C. **(CC 4C-4)**

	Aims Reported Value	NCCBP 25th %tile	NCCBP Median %tile	NCCBP 75th %tile	Aims %tile Rank
Completion Rate (Degree or Certificate earned within Three Years) - Fall 2006 IPEDS GRS Cohort					
Full-time, First-time in Fall, 2006	28.92%	12.15%	18.24%	26.05%	80%
Part-time, First-time in Fall, 2006	22.01%	3.40%	5.42%	9.51%	94%
Transfer Rate (within Three Years) - Fall 2006 IPEDS GRS Cohort					
Full-time, First-time in Fall, 2006	23.53%	12.95%	18.43%	24.74%	70%
Part-time, First-time in Fall, 2006	18.87%	6.49%	11.68%	16.12%	84%
Retention/Persistence Rates - Fall 2006 IPEDS GRS Cohort					
Next Term Persistence Rate	67.91%	65.62%	70.94%	74.35%	33%
Fall-fall Persistence Rate	51.63%	45.34%	49.73%	53.02%	65%

3-C: Completion, Transfer, and Retention Rate of Aims Students, Benchmarked Against Peer Institutions
Source: National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP)

This information is further broken down into student populations whose outcomes vary based upon one or more groups to which they belong. We look at the following subpopulations:

- One remedial education need
- Two remedial education needs
- Three remedial education needs
- Certificate-seeking students
- Entering students by semester
- Degree-seeking students
- Non-degree students

We examine other student demographics regularly to see if they have impact on student success, but we find very little variance from the mean, or else the populations are small enough to become statistically insignificant. These variables include:

- Gender
- Traditional vs. non-traditional students
- Veterans
- Ethnic groups
- Full- or part-time status
- New or returning students

	2010	2011	2012
Aims Community College	83.33%	88.29%	100%
Arapahoe Community College	100%	98.18%	100%
Colorado Mountain College	88.10%	80%	100%
Colorado Northwest CC	84.21%	84.21%	*
Front Range CC—Larimer	97.73%	98.55%	98.48%
Front Range CC—Westminster	75.00%	70.83%	*
Lamar Community College	92.86%	92.31%	92.31%
Morgan Community College	100%	88.89%	100%
Otero Junior College	80.00%	78.38%	92.31%
Pikes Peak Community College	95.65%	97.22%	100%
Pueblo Community College	90.00%	86.36%	90.91%
Trinidad State Junior College	*	100%	*

3-D: Comparative Pass Rate for Registered Nurse Licensing Test
Source: State Board of Nursing Data

In addition to institution-wide data collection and analysis, we also collect and monitor some of our retention, persistence, and completion rates for specific programs. Our Associate Degree Nurse (Registered Nurse) Program is a good example of how we collect such data (see table 3-D), set high but reasonable expectations for specific programs, and benchmark our results against all Colorado colleges. **(CC 4C-2)**

Our strengths in this area are our data collection methods and our ongoing collection and analysis of meaningful data. Opportunities for growth include defining future goals for retention, persistence, and completion.

Academic departments may set specific, numeric goals to track program improvement. For instance, the Associate Degree Nursing Program has set the following goals:

- Performance on NCLEX-RN will be at or above the national average.
- Program completion rate will be at or above 65%.
- 85% of graduates who respond will report that they were satisfied with their education on the Graduate Survey.
- 85% of employers who respond will report being satisfied with our graduates performance on the Employer Survey.
- Job placement rate will be 80% for graduates actively seeking employment at one year post graduation.

Even in those areas where we have not set specific numerical goals, we always strive for higher rates of retention, completion, and persistence. As evidence of this, for Fall Semester 2012 we will require almost all students who have one or more remedial needs to take AAA 090, leaving an option for all students to take AAA 101, both of which are college success courses. Data show that students with remedial needs who take one of these courses are more likely to be retained than those who do not (see Section 1P15 and Chart 1-D). We anticipate the new requirement will raise our retention rates for this growing population of students, helping more of them to be successful. **(CC 4C-1&3)**

3P2. Building relationships with students

Our processes in this area are robust and well designed, as our last Systems Appraisal recognized. In addition to the initiatives in our prior Systems Appraisal, we have implemented a number of programs and services to ensure that we continuously improve in this area. To bolster student success and completion, we implemented the AAA 090 and 101 courses, which help students build skills and learn strategies to be successful college students. Additionally, to help students make satisfactory academic progress, we implemented an early alert system, a series of workshops entitled "Seven Habits of Successful College Students," an iFocus Academic Success Series, and seminars to improve writing, communication, and personal skills. Finally, we emphasize providing quality training for faculty and advisors, with classes such as "Classroom Conduct" and "Student Civility," as well as enhanced new student orientations to campuses and academic programs. These programs are offered to help build and maintain positive relationships with students.

3P3. Analyzing the changing needs of key stakeholder groups

The Aims' mission statement reflects our dedication to our role as a local tax district college. It is supported by two points from the statement of college values:

> "We believe in building relationships, both with students and with members of our greater community. The strength of these ties enhances the ability of the college to fulfill its mission."

> "We are a community college and we're here to serve the community. Aims is ready to meet the educational needs of our ever-changing society, through academic programs and workplace training."

As such, our key stakeholder groups include local and regional businesses, workforce development offices, Northern Colorado Chambers of Com-

merce, Public Service Organizations, area high schools, economic development organizations, and many other similar groups. **(CC 1D-1)** We use two methods to track our stakeholders' changing needs. First, we participate in the community by taking leadership roles in many of the organizations above, as detailed in 3P4. Second, we invite members of these groups to participate in our programs and offerings. Participation by the Aims President and Dean of Continuing Education in Upstate Colorado Economic Development leads to a steady flow of information between the College and the business community. This and similar relationships with workforce development entities and area chambers of commerce allow us to build and provide the training and academic programs necessary for an educated workforce. Each of the partnerships listed above helps Aims to determine whether a gap exists between our offerings and workforce needs. **(CC 1D-3)** We also learn by inviting experts from these organizations to serve on our Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Boards. For example, the advisory board for our Welding certificate programs is composed of five members from local business and industry, as well as representatives from two high schools. Membership details can be seen at this link. Advisory Boards meet twice each year to discuss program improvement, curriculum, program learning outcomes, community needs, and possible new programs. An example of how we gather feedback to improve programs is seen in the April 2010 meeting minutes for the Welding Advisory Committee (excerpted below).

VI. **Five Year Plan**

Discussion continued on the Five Year plan. Paul provided a progress report on the following goals produced at the November 2009 meeting:

1. Increase nontraditional (female) enrollments in the welding program.

2. Increase program completion rates.

Paul is working on approval of a new certificate titled "Welding for Ag Educators." This certificate will improve nontraditional enrollments as well as completion rates.

> Welding and Admissions and Records have developed a pilot program for processing graduations every semester for "mini" certificates. This should significantly improve completion rates.
>
> Ideas on how to enhance the job placement trend data were discussed. Many factors that affect job placement rates, such as economic conditions, are not controllable. The most effective method that Welding can utilize to assist good placement rates is to ensure that students are thoroughly prepared to enter the workforce. This led to the creation of a third goal:
>
> 3. Implement strategies that will assist students in obtaining welding employment.
>
> > a. Explore opportunities to provide welding certify cation testing services to students by utilizing a third party testing service.
> >
> > b. Work with Aims Career Services to provide skills training geared towards applying and interviewing for employment.
>
> Based on input from this meeting and the last, Paul will complete the five year plan for review at the next meeting.

With 19 CTE Advisory Committees, each focused on a specific CTE program and following similar improvement cycles, Aims can respond proactively to changing stakeholder needs.

3P4. Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders?

Aims Community College, as a local tax-district college, relies on the support of Northern Colorado schools, businesses, organizations, and many other stakeholders. In turn, we support these stakeholder groups by serving on their boards and committees. Each year for at least the past 10 years the College has been represented in Leadership Weld County, a Greeley Chamber of Commerce program that focuses on grooming the next generation of community leaders. This experience helps promising employees build relationships with current and future leaders in Northern Colorado. We partner annually with the United Way giving campaign, maintain membership in the local service clubs and invite the community to campus for events such as Community College Day, where over 1,500 community members attend one-hour lessons on diverse topics. Doing

so helps us keep connected with community members, and allows us to give back to the community to show thanks for their support. These initiatives are strategically implemented throughout each year so that we are in constant communication with our surrounding communities.

The Aims Foundation understands that today's donors expect to see evidence that their donation is making a difference. Each donor is unique, and thus receives customized reports pertaining to their area of interest and support. The steering committee for the College Promise Fund receives two reports per year that include financial details and demographic information about students who have received support. The Foundation Director meets with each donor to share how his or her donation is impacting students and the college and to gather suggestions for improvement and general feedback for the college. The Foundation also holds regular meetings with local businesses to communicate what Aims is doing successfully and to ask for their support so that we can continue to offer cutting-edge programs and employee training. These steps enable us to keep our relationships robust, mutually beneficial, and relevant to our stakeholders' needs. Additionally, we recognize Foundation donors for their charity through semi-annual Donor Receptions and the Scholarship Reception, which puts students, and their families, face-to-face with donors who have helped them attend college,.

3P5. Determining targets for educational offerings and services

As a local tax district college, we stake our name and reputation on serving local communities. We identify emerging markets using a multifaceted approach. Our membership in local and regional economic development organizations and our involvement with Chambers of Commerce give us insight into businesses that are being recruited to move to our service area. As part of recruitment efforts or when a business decides to move to our area, we send representatives to that business to introduce ourselves and offer to partner with them to provide employee training designed specifically

to meet their needs. In addition to meeting with new businesses, we maintain long-standing relationships with existing businesses. To stay competitive, these companies are continually updating their business to include new technologies or products, which in turn creates need for additional employee training.

As a public institution with no pressure from investors or parent organizations, Aims can focus on working with community leaders and local business to develop potential academic programs through our CTE Advisory Committees. New programs at the Fort Lupton Campus will allow

Aims to meet the area's needs in both the oil and gas and agriculture industries. Through the development of these programs, partnerships have blossomed with Weld County Commissioners and mayors of towns in the southern portion of our service area, as well as with oil and gas companies working in Weld County. The Oil and Gas Program and the first of our Agricultural Programs began in fall 2012. We expect these programs to greatly enhance our offerings in this region, as a result of our strong relationships with and dedication to serving the taxpayers of Weld County. **(CC 1D-2)**

New CTE Course/Curriculum Approval Process

#1 Check the Colorado Common Course Numbering System (CCCNS) (http://www.cccs.edu/cccns/) to determine if the course already exists

#2 All new courses must be approved by the CTE Advisory Committee before proceeding, and must be documented in the Minutes.

#3 Contact Curriculum Committee Assistant Kathy Lee AND CTE Assistant, Landon Loyd.

COURSE EXISTS IN CCCNS

#4. Prepare Aims Course Information Form (CIF).

- Obtain advisory minutes, syllabus, and advising worksheets.
- Obtain appropriate signatures (Department Chairperson, Academic Dean).

#5. Send CIF, advisory minutes, syllabus, and advising worksheets to Aims Curriculum Committee Assistant, Kathy Lee for presentation at the next committee meeting.

#6. Upon approval, Curriculum Committee Chairperson and CTE Dean will sign.

#7. Department Chairperson contact the CTE Assistant, Landon Loyd to open Program Approval. CTE change form sent to Admissions and Records and Financial Aid.

#8. CIF is then forwarded to Admissions and Records for database entry by CTE Assistant, Landon Loyd.

#9. Financial Aid and VA eligibility determined. Course may now be scheduled into Banner, Degree Works, and Catalog.

#10. The Director of the Student Success Center will determine course equivalencies with transfer institutions.

3-E: Career and Technical Education New Course Approval Process

COURSE DOES NOT EXIST IN CCCNS

#4. Prepare Aims Course Information Form (CIF).

- Submit to 2:2 Chairperson.
- Obtain advisory minutes, syllabus, and advising worksheets.
- Obtain appropriate signatures (Department Chairperson, and Academic Dean).

#5. Send CIF, Course Guide Template application page, advisory minutes, syllabus, and advising worksheets to the Aims Curriculum Committee Assistant, Kathy Lee for presentation at the next meeting.

#6. Upon approval, Curriculum Committee Chairperson and CTE Dean will sign.

#7. Curriculum Committee Assistant sends CIF information to Chief Academic Officer for posting to the CCCNS bulletin board for 30-day review.

- At the end of review, state may approve.
- if not approved by the state, their comments will be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee and changes will then need to be made and resubmitted.

#8. Department Chairperson contact the CTE Assistant, Landon Loyd to open Program Approval. CTE change form to Admissions and Records and Financial Aid.

#9. CIF is then forwarded to Admissions and Records for database entry by CTE Assistant, Landon Loyd.

#10. Course may now be scheduled into Banner, Degree Works, and Catalog. financial Aid and VA eligibility determined.

#11. The Director of the Student Success Center will determine course equivalencies with transfer institutions.

If a suggestion or request comes in for a new program or course, appropriate processes are in place to determine whether we should pursue the suggestion. If the course is a General Education course, the GE Course Approval Process provides the decision tree that determines whether the course should be offered or whether a course already exists that builds the necessary knowledge and skills. If the proposal is a new CTE course, the "New CTE Course Approval Process" (Chart 3-E) shows the decision-making process and Chart 1-A delineates the steps to approve a new CTE program. These processes ensure that Aims offers programs and courses that meet workforce, business, student, and taxpayer needs.

Additionally, local school district superintendents regularly ask Aims to participate in building pathway partnerships. As high school students determine their career pathway through their Individual Career & Academic Plan (ICAP), the high school builds a pathway and then asks Aims to provide juniors and seniors additional opportunities through articulation agreements or concurrent enrollment. We then follow the same processes above to determine the feasibility of offering these opportunities.

3P6. Collecting complaint information from students and other stakeholders

Complaint information is gathered using a variety of mechanisms, depending on the feedback source. Students can submit feedback through informal channels, such as *Ask Aims* ,which allows students to anonymously post general questions or complaints about policies, procedures, hours of service, facilities, or anything else they would like to bring to the administration's attention. The ACT Student Opinion Survey, administered every three years, also gives students the opportunity to share frustrations and complaints, both through responses to each question and in the comments section. Responsible departments are strongly encouraged to respond to each concern publicly, usually by posting responses in the *Aims Weekly*, an

electronic e-mail sent to every student. In addition, our Student Government Association (SGA) can pursue the resolution of general student complaints. SGA may take these issues to their administrative representative for follow-up, invite appropriate personnel to SGA meetings to respond to questions, or take issues to the Board of Trustees.

If a student wishes to file a formal complaint, student complaint procedures are posted in the Student Handbook as well as in Aims' Policy and Procedure Manual. The following two procedures assist students with filing complaints and guide administrators who manage this process.

Procedure 5-601C   Procedure 5-601D

These more formal complaint procedures require a communication mechanism that considers FERPA and other mandated confidentiality laws when determining how to move forward. Courses of action are usually determined by the office about which the complaint was registered; for more urgent issues, a special task force or committee may be created to address the concern. If a concern seems widespread and needs a policy or procedure to address it, the Dean for Student Services takes the pertinent information to Senior Management and College Counsel to make appropriate revisions.

External stakeholders have numerous ways to offer feedback to the College. Concerns can come to our attention through representatives on community boards. Trustees representing different areas of our county also bring issues to the administration, as do school superintendents, business partners, and members of our CTE Advisory Boards. Additionally, community members may voice concerns or support through local newspaper editorials. Our response may be to form committees or task forces, implement AQIP Action Projects, write letters to the editor of the local newspaper, or meet with the individual or group that brought the issue forward.

Category Three Results

3R1. Determining stakeholder satisfaction

Aims Community College has implemented a cycle of assessment using both local and nationally benchmarked surveys that measure student satisfaction. For further details, see section 7P5. In building this cycle, we want to gather student satisfaction on many aspects of the college, including:

- Classroom Instruction
- Support for Learning
- Student Life / Programming
- Facilities

Our Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment presents survey results to a number of bodies on campus, including the All College Action Committee, which oversees current AQIP Action Projects and makes suggestions for future projects. This group takes the information, discusses what it means, and decides what action effectively responds to the data.

Additional data on student satisfaction can be found through course evaluations. These instruments allow students to comment on course content and faculty effectiveness at the end of each course. Course evaluation results aid in course revision and also are considered during faculty evaluations.

In addition to collecting data about the student experience, we collect data from community stakeholders. Employer satisfaction surveys, transfer student success data, and data received from CTE Advisory Committees are gathered annually. Continuing Education gathers employee training program feedback from each client company. We use this information to improve each training seminar, and it accurately represents how satisfied the business is with our products and services.

Issue	Aims Student Satisfaction	ACT National Norms
Academic Calendar	4.11	3.97
General Registration Procedures	4.02	3.91
Billing and Fee Payment	3.72	3.82

3-F: Satisfaction Rating (on scale of 1-5) of Aims Students Compared to National Norms
Source: ACT Student Opinion Survey

3R2. Performance results for student satisfaction

We gather student satisfaction data using internal and nationally benchmarked surveys including Student Life surveys, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), and ACT Student Opinion Survey (SOS), as well as instructor evaluations. The ACT SOS data presented in question 7R3 shows that we are doing quite well in most student service areas, with our largest opportunity for growth being our financial aid area. Most other areas are significantly above the mean for similar schools. Additionally, in the 2009 CCSSE results, Aims students reported above the mean in nearly every category. Favorable responses included being satisfied with support for learning, lab and tutoring support, social support, positive relationships with faculty and staff, and other areas.

Our most recent ACT Student Opinion Survey reported the following benchmarked results regarding student satisfaction with registration, showing that we rate well in comparison to other institutions, except in the area of billing and fee payment, as shown in Table 3-F. Since this survey, we have made several changes to our billing/tuition payment processes to not only make it easier for students, but also to encourage a high on-time payment rate.

In addition, Student Life surveys students after each special event and each major initiative, such as Orientation. Results from 2010-2011 orientation evaluations indicated the following:

		7 = Friendly, Supportive	6	5	4	3	2	1 = Unfriendly, Unsupportive
Other Students	Aims percent	30	34	20	12	3	1	1
	2010 cohort percent	28	28	22	15	4	2	1
Instructors	Aims percent	33	36	39	7	3	2	0
	2010 cohort percent	31	32	21	11	4	2	1
Administrative Offices & Personnel	Aims percent	18	28	17	17	12	5	3
	2010 cohort percent	20	23	22	19	8	5	3

3-G: Student Ranking of Other Students, Instructors, and College Personnel with Benchmarked Data
Source: Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)

91% reported "I will use something I learned at orientation" (i.e., resources, strategies, professor expectations, etc.)

91% indicated learning something at orientation they didn't know about college/Aims

90% reported receiving valuable information at orientation

95% reported feeling more confident about coming to college as a result of attending orientation

100% reported being satisfied with the information presented at orientation

The above data points, as well as others not detailed here, reveal that our students are satisfied with Aims in most areas and make it clear to us where we need to improve.

3R3. Performance results for building relationships with students

To track our results for building relationships with students, we use CCSSE results and our AAA course pre- and post-test data, shown in Table 3-G.

These results clearly indicate that, for most students, Aims does a sound job building professional relationships with students. Additionally, these data show that we do a good job fostering relationships between students. This evidence is corroborated in part by results of a pre- and post-test in the AAA courses. At the end of recent

terms, students have rated their relationship with faculty approximately 0.7 points higher than on the pre-test, showing that we are helping students learn to build positive and purposeful relationships. Finally, Student Life is continually examining its practices and opportunities and has made changes that have increased student membership in clubs and organizations from 362 students (4.7%) in 2008-09 to 712 students (8.8%) in the 2010-11 academic year.

3R4. Performance results for stakeholder satisfaction

In specific areas, we measure stakeholder satisfaction and systematically use the data we collect to improve programs and services. This is evidenced by the discussion of the annual assessment of the Welding Program by the Welding Advisory Committee in 3P3. The committee's assessment and evaluation of the current program resulted in revisions to the program curriculum to more effectively meet employers' needs by providing students with the necessary skills and experience for entry-level positions in the industries served.

The satisfaction level of businesses that employ our graduates is also assessed annually. The CTE office coordinates the efforts to complete two linked surveys, the VE 135 Survey of Completion and Job Placement and the Employers Satisfaction Survey, which contacts employers identified in VE-135 responses. Employers contacted in our

most recent satisfaction survey gave our CTE graduates an average score of 4.4 out of 5 for overall skills. Our Allied Health and Sciences division conducts a more detailed survey of medical facilities that hired one of our nursing program graduates. In the 2011 Nursing Graduate Employer Survey, 83% of employers/supervisors said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the performance of Aims Community College graduates.

Overall, measuring external stakeholder satisfaction is an area of needed growth for Aims. On the whole, our stakeholder satisfaction results are used at an operational level as a follow-up to a specific event.

3R5. Performance results for building relationships with key stakeholders

As discussed in question 3P4, the Aims Foundation works tirelessly to build relationships with a specific group of external stakeholders, current and potential donors. To facilitate the maintenance of donor relations, the Foundation regularly produces reports including longitudinal data of each donor's history of contribution or pledge payment. This data informs not only individual meetings with donors but also personalized, end of year letters. Repeat donations and timely payments on periodic pledges serve as evidence of robust relationships that are monitored and systematically maintained. For example, in 2010 the Aims Foundation concluded a successful, five-year capital campaign surpassing the original goal of $4 million. The goal was met despite the recessionary period during which the campaign was carried out. In addition, in benchmarking itself against similar offices at other colleges, the Foundation found that while 60% of foundation offices had 2% or more in unfulfilled pledges and 11% had a 10 % unfulfilled rate, the Aims Foundation recorded that less than 1% of current pledges are uncollected.

While we have systematic assessment of effectiveness in our CTE programs and our Foundation, there are still segments of the college that work directly with external stakeholders, but have not yet developed a regularized system of measuring relationship outcomes. As noted earlier, since some of our contact with the general public is event based, assessing satisfaction and relationship is more likely to be done on a Reacting basis. Our new Action Project, *Developing Systems to Measure Effectiveness*, will help us address this opportunity.

3R6. Comparing performance results with those of other higher education organizations

As demonstrated in questions 3R2 and 3R3, our results for understanding students' needs are very favorable showing that we have comprehensive benchmarked or comparative data sources for reference (CCSSE, SENSE, ACT SOS, NCCBP). As shown in 3P1, we have adopted surveys and processes that allow us to benchmark our results against those of peer institutions. We consistently exceed the mean in many student services and, in some categories we serve as a model of excellence. In completion and transfer, NCCBP ranks us at 80th percentile for full-time, first-time completion and 70th percentile for transfers in the same cohort. Our numbers for part-time students are even higher. We are proud of our work towards benchmarking our student needs data. That said, we have not been proactive in doing the same for understanding other stakeholders' needs. This is an area for growth for Aims.

Category Three: Understanding Students and Stakeholders Needs

Category Three Improvements

3I1. Recent improvements in this category?

 In response to feedback to our first Systems Portfolio, we created systems and processes (rather than ad hoc data collecting) that would help us continually collect data, analyze it, take action to address what we learn, and make that process cyclical. Previously, we had not systematically collected benchmarking data, so we applied ourselves to that practice, as seen by our implementing nationally standardized and benchmarking tools between 2008 and 2010, including the CCSSE (2009 and 2010), SENSE (2008 and 2009), the NCCBP (2010 and 2011), and CCFSSE (2009). After investing much time and energy on this process, we implemented a multi-year assessment calendar, shown in section 1R1, to direct an overall assessment plan that includes local, nationally standardized, and benchmarked assessments. Once data is collected, we examine how our survey results benchmark against those of similar institutions, using the nationally normed tools, such as the National Community College Benchmarking Project and the surveys mentioned above. We look for substantial deviations from the mean and ask why our results are significantly better or worse than those of our peer institutions. Positive results may evidence best practices, while results below the statistical mean might lead to an Action Project or Continuous Improvement Initiative (CI^2). Most of the above assessments address student satisfaction and engagement with different programs, services and people on campus, but they do not address student needs regarding the content and delivery of their courses, we have begun to examine student course evaluation tools, with a goal of developing tools that will give an even fuller perspective of student needs.

3I2. Selecting processes and to setting targets for improvement

Aims Community College's structure allows people and processes to be flexible and ready to adapt to needs of students, businesses, and organizations across Northern Colorado and Weld County. The Aims culture of continuous improvement encourages flexibility in the institution and our employees. When we decided to invest in being a Learning College, we emphasized creating a culture of learning, including all students, employees, and affiliated members. This value has created a staff and faculty that both accept and expect change, especially if it leads to improved learning outcomes for students. In addition, the All College Action Committee was designed to address needs uncovered through all of the avenues written about in this category. The group may address an area of concern through an Action Project or a CI^2. For example, through responses on the 2009 CCSSE, students voiced dissatisfaction with financial aid services. The college created a task force to research processes in the Financial Aid office. As possible long-term solutions were analyzed, a quick-fix was implemented as we hired an outside agency to help us process student paperwork. This change significantly decreased wait times for students.

Our Career and Technical Education Advisory Committees give us regular input on the changing workforce and business needs across Northern Colorado. Feedback collected through bi-annual meetings and end-of-year surveys allows our CTE office, department chairs and academic deans to make changes appropriate for each program. This is a strong feedback loop, as can be seen in examples provided previously in this chapter.

All of the above methods, working together, provide a strong, continuous feedback model that works for our institutional culture and mission. This model helps us manage student and other stakeholder feedback in a meaningful, flexible, and concerted effort.

Category Four: Valuing People

Introduction

At Aims Community College, we consider human resources to be one of our greatest assets. As in most institutions, employee salaries and benefits make up the largest portion of the annual budget. Thus, especially with recent cuts to state funding and other budget constraints, we must continually analyze staffing levels and work to employ the right people and the right number of people, while maintaining sufficient full- and part-time faculty to ensure educational quality for our students.

The College organization is broken into seven divisions, each of which is directed by a member of Senior Management. These divisions include four Academic Divisions, each made up of related program areas, the Student Services and Administrative Services Divisions, as well as the President's Office and related staff. This structure is somewhat flexible, and it is not unusual for Senior Management to shift projects and departments between divisions to take advantage of synergies of effort and purpose. Senior Management is also responsible for maintaining an open, two-way communication with employees in their respective division, by both sharing information on Senior Management decisions and by relaying employee concerns and suggestions that influence those decisions.

In the Valuing People category, our institution addresses systems from an Aligned approach. While personnel issues, from hiring to evaluation, are managed through the Human Resources department, Senior Management is responsible for full oversight of all personnel decisions. This group examines each hiring request, for either new or refill positions, in light of the staffing needs of our whole institution, balancing the cost against the need in each area. Using a "big picture" viewpoint, limited human resources can be allocated to the division or department most in need of additional help. Staffing analysis takes place annually through our budgeting process, but also occurs at other times, as needed. In addition, Senior Management makes the final decision on the staff and faculty evaluation process. Currently, the method for evaluating staff is being improved in response to supervisor input and comments in our employee satisfaction survey.

We are currently in the final phase of an Action Project in the Valuing People category, *Aligning Part-time Personnel Practices with Those of Full-time Employees*. Relying as strongly as we do on part-time faculty and staff, the project was designed to ensure that part-time employees receive the resources and support they need to succeed and that they never feel they are treated as "second-class citizens" at our institution. Early phases of the project have strongly positive outcomes, and work will be completed by the end of the academic year with institutionalization of some portions of the project.

Category Four Processes

4P1. Identifying credentials, skills, and values required for faculty, staff, and administrators

The college has created specific job descriptions for each position, which define technical skills, soft skills, and credentials required. Human Resources, in conjunction with department heads, deans and administrators, developed these job descriptions using institutional experience and data from higher education job surveys including Mountain States Employer's Council and Colleges and Universities Professional Association-Human Resources.

All faculty members are required to have credentials described in college policy and aligned with Higher Learning Commission assumed practices. Specific credentials depend on the faculty member's teaching assignment. Faculty qualifications are based on coursework completed at institutions of higher education accredited by one of the regional accrediting associations, and in the case of career and technical education faculty, on documented industry experience. According to College Procedure 4-700A,: Faculty Credentials,

full-time faculty members who teach in transfer programs are required to have a master's degree with a minimum of 18 graduate credits in a content area relevant to their teaching assignment. Faculty members teaching in developmental education are required to hold a bachelor's degree in a relevant discipline and must meet one of three additional criteria. All faculty members teaching in career and technical education programs are required to hold a current vocational teaching credential issued by the State of Colorado and a bachelor's degree or equivalent, while those in specific CTE disciplines may be required to hold additional licenses or certifications required by program accreditation or the State of Colorado.

The credentials, skills, and values required for staff and administrative positions are identified by a Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) completed for such positions at the college. The PDQ is a comprehensive description of the position, as well as an analysis of the credentials and skills required of an employee holding that position.

4P2. Hiring people possessing required credentials, skills, and values

The college has a multi-step internal hiring process to ensure that employees possess the necessary credentials, skills, and values required for each position.

Step 1 Job Announcement and Advertisement: Human Resources generates a job announcement with input from hiring authorities and advertises through various media and markets. The job announcement outlines duties, roles, and responsibilities; minimum/preferred qualifications; the screening and selection process; and instructions for application.

Step 2 Establish Search Committee: Search committees are usually chaired by the hiring authority from the department with a vacancy and typically include individuals from other departments with which the incumbent will interact. The HR Officer and Diversity Officer review and approve search committee composition to ensure diversity and broad representation. An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity representative is present at each session.

Step 3 Minimum Qualifications Screening: Human Resources (HR) conducts initial screening of all applicants to ensure each meets the minimum qualifications described in the job description and has provided all required documentation.

Step 4 Search Committee Applicant Review: Assisted by HR personnel the search committee establishes evaluation criteria, typically based on education, experience, and specific technical skills relevant to the job function and department needs. Each member of the search committee then reviews the application of each candidate.

Step 5 Search Committee Deliberations and Interviewee Selection: After applications are reviewed, the committee meets to determine which applicants to interview. During this meeting, the team develops interview questions crafted to identify how each candidate's skills and experience match the duties, roles, and responsibilities of the position.

Step 6 Interviews: After completing the last interview, the search committee reviews all candidate information (resume, cover letter, application, and transcripts), notes from independent screening (Step 4), and candidate responses to interview questions. For faculty positions, the department chair and division dean review credentials. The chairperson notifies HR of the search committee's recommendation for hire.

As an institution of higher learning, instructional personnel are key to helping students achieve their learning goals. Aims ensures that a sufficient number of faculty are hired, as evidenced by our low student-to-faculty ratio (the 2010 IPEDS ratio was 17, compared to 21 nationally and 20 for other Colorado schools). This ratio facilitates greater interaction between instructors and students. Contracts require instructors to hold 10 office hours each week for student advising and consultation. In addition, faculty have sufficient

time outside of the classroom to fulfill non-classroom roles.   Aims has vibrant faculty committees which oversee curriculum development, expected student learning outcomes, and the assessment of student learning. Through the consultation process, faculty review compliance with credentialing standards and Aims Procedure 4-700A: Faculty Credentials. **(CC3C-1, 2 & 5)**

Also vital to student success are the staff members who provide student support services. These dedicated professionals serve as tutors or academic and financial aid advisors, as well as fulfilling many other roles. Through consultation with the Dean for Student Services and the Academic Deans, our Human Resources department has formalized strict minimum requirements for each position. Not only must new hires meet these requirements, but all are obliged to update their skills and knowledge through department meetings, training, mentoring, and other professional development activities. **(CC3C-6)**

4P3. Recruiting, hiring, and retaining employees

Recruitment: As mentioned in 4P2, we advertise open positions via various media, including area newspapers and social media, as well as industry, trade, professional association, and higher education media and web sites. We employ an academic search consultant to facilitate a national search for certain hard-to-hire and senior-level positions.

Hiring: Our hiring process is outlined in 4P2.

Retention: Many college programs, benefits, and incentives support employee retention. The purpose and scope of various programs, benefits and/or incentives we offer are described below. Data from the Quality of Work Life (QoWL) survey indicates the importance of each item to employees and, thus, how much this item contributes to retention.

1.   Medical premiums: the college pays between 80% and 90% of the monthly premiums for full-time employees depending on whether they cover dependents. *Seventy-two percent of employees cite this as important. In 2006, 33% were satisfied with their health care benefits while in 2008, 54% were satisfied ,and in 2012, 48% were satisfied (QoWL).*

2.   Dental premiums: the college pays between 71% and 80% of the monthly premium for full-time employees, depending on which dental option they choose.

3.   Wellness Program: includes annual Health Fair, various health workshops and webinars, and a summer Walk-for-Fitness program. An added benefit is access to the gymnasium and exercise facility. *Sixty-eight percent of Aims employees consider physical wellness programs to be important (QoWL).*

4.   Personal days: full-time employees are eligible for three personal days per year.

5.   Annual leave: full-time employees earn between 10 and 13.33 hours of leave per month, based on years employed at the College.

6.   Paid holidays: full-time employees receive 13 paid holidays.

7.   Local/community volunteer leave: full-time employees are eligible for up to five hours per month of paid leave for volunteer work with 501(c)(3) organizations.

8.   K-12 Parental Leave: full-time employees are eligible for up to five hours per month of paid leave for activities in their children's schools.

9.   Employee tuition waiver/reimbursement: full- and part-time employees (along with dependents of full-time employees) are eligible for tuition reimbursement for Aims courses. In addition, full-time employees are eligible for tuition reimbursement for courses taken at regionally accredited institutions, up to a maximum of $4,000 per year.

10. Institutional award and recognition program: the annual President's Reception provides a venue for Years of Service awards to all full- and part-time employees. The Ripples in Recognition Program, developed in 2005 as part of an AQIP Action Project, provides timely recognition of employees, as well as monthly Distinguished Colleague and quarterly Team awards.

4P4. Orienting employees

We are committed to continuous improvement and orient new employees to our mission, history, and values:

- New employees meet with Human Resources to learn about benefits and college policies and procedures.

- EDU260 is required for all new faculty. This course examines the philosophy of community colleges and introduces basic instructional theories and applications, emphasizing adult learners. The course covers learning outcomes, lesson planning, classroom management, assessment, and instructional technology

- Part-time faculty complete a comprehensive online orientation. College policies and procedures, as well as risk management, are explained.

- General professional and personal development opportunities are offered to all employees. New employees are encouraged to take part in activities to better acclimate to the college. Programs such as Supervisory Training give new supervisors the skills needed to supervise within our systems.

- In-person pre-semester information sessions are offered to part-time instructors to share student services, safety, and organizational development initiatives.

In addition, we continually reinforce mission and values to all employees through articles in the *Aims Daily, In the Loop* videocasts from our CEO, and all-college meetings such as Convocation and Conversation Day.

4P5. Planning for personnel changes

Succession planning occurs within some departments on a local level and we have explored a college-wide succession structure as a part of continuous improvement, but to date we have elected not to implement. This topic remains an agenda item for continuous improvement. The succession plan for the College President is detailed in 5P10.

4P6. Designing work processes and activities

As mentioned in 4P3, we introduced the Quality of Work Life Survey in spring 2006 as part of the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP). The employee survey was given in 2006, 2007, 2008, and, after a four-year hiatus, in 2012. The survey's purpose is to assess employee satisfaction with work life at Aims, to identify sources of stress, and to gather suggestions for improvement.

These surveys address performance planning, work processes, and work load. They have served to inform and improve the performance planning process, as well as to assess employee satisfaction. Presently, we are revising the employee evaluation process in response to these surveys. Senior Management and the Board of Trustees work directly with the Aims College Education Association and the Aims Staff Association to address concerns, as well as policy issues. In addition, leadership retreats, planning meetings, and college-wide Conversation Days align work processes with employee satisfaction.

We also leverage technology to enable employees to work together with shared drives and use course shells to "meet" electronically. Through the use of technology, we have streamlined processes to place work orders with facilities and the IT department.

4P7. Ensuring ethical practices of all employees

A bedrock principle of the college is transparency and accountability. Therefore, we teach and model ethical practices to all employees. Ethics and conflict of interest guidelines are formalized in several college policies, including:

0-300: Board Powers

0-600: Board Officer Responsibilities

0-650: Conflict of Interest for Trustees

1-100: College President Duties

1-105: Code of Ethics

2-150: Scholarly Ethics

Individual supervisors, as well as the Human Resources and Legal Affairs departments, share the duty of ensuring that college employees follow institutional ethics requirements. We offer regular professional development sessions covering diversity and ethics issues. Furthermore, our intranet includes a fraud and ethics hotline link for employees to report issues related to ethical practices. Additionally, we engage external auditors annually (as required by Policy 3-110: Hiring of External Auditors) and regularly earn an "unqualified" opinion - the best possible report. We also retain an internal auditor to ensure all college functions comply with state and federal regulations, as well as college policy. **(CC2A)**

An important consideration of any institution of higher education is appropriate research and use of knowledge, both in and out of the classroom. To demonstrate the importance of ethical practice

in our college, Policy 2-150: Scholarly Ethics states that "faculty have a responsibility to promote moral integrity and behavior; abide by ethical principles regarding academic freedom and intellectual integrity; avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of impropriety; and abide by the fair and respectful treatment of others." Likewise, students are required to meet ethical standards in their conduct, academic work and use of college equipment as demonstrated by policies 3-850: Copyright and Intellectual Property; 3-875: Peer-to-Peer File Sharing; and 3-905: Computing and Communications Resources Appropriate Use. The Learning Commons staff reinforce these standards by assisting students in research, as well as through college-wide use of TurnItIn software to check student writing for proper documentation of resources.   The curriculum of some classes (such as ENG 122—English Composition II) includes instruction on the appropriate use of electronic media for research. **(CC2E-1&2)**

The Student Code of Conduct (Procedure 5-601A) is included in the annual Student Handbook. The code describes inappropriate conduct, such as dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism, complicity in academic dishonesty, falsifying grade reports, and lying. The code, as well as Procedure 5-601B: Disciplinary Process, describe sanctions for acts of academic dishonesty, including probation, loss of privileges, withdrawal from class, suspension or expulsion. **(CC2E-3)**

4P8. Determining training needs

All professional development activities are monitored and evaluated to assess their impact on and value to participants. Furthermore, the Center for Professional Development reviews theory and best practices from the industry and other colleges to provide relevant, timely training. This data helps identify both long-term and short-term training needs. Various surveys and meetings also inform professional development planning:

- General Needs Assessment

- Faculty Teaching and Learning Center Survey
- Faculty and Deans' Meetings
- Chair Training Programs
- Performance Management Plans
- Overall College Strategic Planning Initiatives
- Quality of Work Life Survey
- Training/Evaluation Feedback Forms

Faculty and staff organizations are also surveyed to help determine training needs for long- and short-term projects. Long-term projects are tied to institutional and Board of Trustee goals. Short-term goals are sometimes tied to performance management plans.

4P9. Developing faculty, staff, and administrators

Employee development is critical to our goals of continuous improvement and helping students learn and is accomplished in various ways. We have a professional development travel fund to enable staff and faculty to attend special topic conferences. In addition, a strong internal professional development program allows employees to receive in-house training on topics related to student services, teaching and learning, supervision and leadership, risk-management, safety, and other key issues critical to successful college operations. Further, we invest in 24/7 training with the Skillsoft Company, giving employees "just-in-time" access to over 1,500 titles ranging from wellness, desktop skills, technical skills, soft skills, and leadership.

We are committed to bring high profile speakers to campus during major events, such as the Fall Convocation, so that our employees can take part in high quality programming closely tied to institutional objectives. We are atypical because we invite speakers who usually speak at national conferences to our campus. Doing so allows us to develop not only the few employees who might attend conferences but extends the opportunity to the majority of our employees. We are then able to reinforce content presented by any given

speaker since employees learn a common language tied to institutional goals. Recent speakers of note include Patricia Stanley, Rob Sherfield, Vincent Tinto, and John Gardner.

The college reinforces training in two ways. We ask employees attending a training session to evaluate its effectiveness, their opinion of the program, and how they will use what they learned or barriers to application. We then address perceived barriers to improve the institution. We also reinforce training via our performance management programs for faculty, staff, and administrators. Each of these plans emphasizes professional development as a goal, and performance evaluations are tied to successfully reaching these goals.

4P10. Designing a personnel evaluation system

The college's administrator/staff evaluation system is managed through three meetings each year to plan employee work activities for the coming year, to set job performance goals and, finally, to review outcomes. Specifically, the staff evaluation system incorporates core competencies, job duties, and goals. The administrator evaluation system incorporates core values and competencies along with primary job duties. This system can also be used to remediate under-performing personnel by using evaluation and improvement tools incorporated into the evaluation system.

Faculty evaluation follows a plan designed to address specific responsibilities and individual status at Aims. Probationary full-time faculty members are evaluated annually, and the evaluation includes review of student course evaluations, observation of instruction, and completion of specific requirements to move toward non-probationary status. Full-time faculty who have reached due process status are evaluated every three years unless a concern, raised through student evaluation or complaint, requires earlier intervention. Part-time faculty are evaluated using student evaluations and observation of instruction.

We are currently instituting a fully online course evaluation system that will help compile and analyze student course evaluations and ensure that potential concerns are addressed quickly. **(CC3C-3)**

The faculty evaluation process includes requirements for scholarly activities, such as acquiring or maintaining special certification or attending conferences related to the instructor's area of specialty, as well as publishing in or editing of a scholarly journal. New faculty, many of whom are new to the classroom, are required to complete EDU260 – Adult Teaching and Learning, which introduces basic instructional theories, syllabus development, learning goals and outcomes, and lesson planning (see 4P4). **(CC3C-4)**

4P11. Designing an employee recognition, reward, compensation, and benefit systems

Our recognition, compensation, and benefits systems are designed to be straightforward and easily understood. Recognition and rewards are focused on emphasizing employee efforts to further our mission and vision. As described below, these programs establish clear criteria for an award; all employees (based on benefits type and classification) are eligible for awards or forms of recognition.

- **Ripples in Recognition Program:** This program began as an AQIP project. It is currently in its sixth year, and nearly 2,000 "Ripples" have been submitted. Monthly Distinguished Colleague and quarterly Team awards are chosen within this program and are tied closely to college mission and vision. The program provides timely and meaningful support of learning college initiatives.

- **Recognition Committee:** This committee meets regularly to review Ripples nominations and select the monthly Distinguished Colleague. The committee places emphasis on nominations that show support for student learning and institutional success.

- **Faculty Awards:** Not only can faculty members receive a "Ripple" from students or employees, but they can also receive one of three distinct faculty awards. The faculty association, Aims College Education Association, presents a "Faculty of the Year" award. The recipient represents the college at the state-wide ceremony sponsored by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education. The Associated Students of Aims Community College and the academic deans also recognize one faculty member each year.

- **President's Reception**: This reception showcases our monthly Distinguished Colleagues along with recognizing both full- and part-time employees who have reached specific years-of-service milestones. Recently, we recognized a Distinguished Colleague of the Year for the first time. This individual was chosen from the pool of Distinguished Colleagues because of the direct impact this individual had on promoting student learning and contributing to the positive reputation of the college within our service areas.

- **Non-Compensatory Benefits Webpage:** Benefited and non-benefited employees have recently been made eligible to take part in discounted insurance programs and other discount programs available to all part-time and full-time employees.

4P12. Determining key issues related to faculty, staff, and administrator motivation

Not only do we give employees the opportunity to share concerns at Conversation Day and open forums, we also use the Quality of Work Life (QoWL) survey and, more recently, the benchmarked Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey to inform and advise the College concerning motivating faculty, staff, and administrators. Questions are designed to gather data on the following factors:

- Impressions of Work Unit / College

- Home-Life Stress

- Workplace Stress

- Campus Culture and Policies

- Institutional Goals

- Involvement in Planning and Decision-Making

- Work Environment

- Job Satisfaction

- Demographic Data

- Open-ended questions regarding improvements

These surveys help us assess the general impression of the college environment and determine which programs to offer to increase employee satisfaction and motivation.

Various committees analyze key issues and develop plans to increase employee motivation. These include the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center Steering Team, All College Action Committee, Aims Staff Association, the Aims College Education Association, Faculty Consultation Team, and Senior Management. In addition, each employee group has a representative body that brings its concerns to college leadership. Such issues are analyzed depending on the scope and significance of the issue/initiative. College-wide initiatives are addressed via:

- Board of Trustee goals

- AQIP Action Projects

- Policies and Procedures

- Orientation materials and faculty mentoring programs

- Wellness programs

4P13. Evaluating employee satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being

Our commitment to employee health and safety is demonstrated by a formal safety and health policy. Our Threat and Violence Assessment Team regularly assesses needs and implements practices, such as the recent addition of an emergency text/phone messaging system for all employees and in all classrooms, to create a safe work environment. They also oversee safety drills and provide numerous safety-related workshops, including suspicious package, workplace violence, personal safety, ID theft, robbery/shoplifting, active shooter, stress in the workplace, and fire extinguisher use.

We encourage our employees to take part in wellness initiatives that address mind, body, and spirit so they may function better in their jobs and balance work and personal life. The Board, the President, and Senior Management heartily support wellness efforts at the college by promoting, endorsing, and taking part in wellness initiatives on campus. This commitment is also evidenced in the college budget, which supports annual health and wellness activities (health fair, etc.). Complementing the wide array of program offerings, the Campus Bistro and Campus Grind offer healthy menu and drink options.

Additionally, the college offers generous annual, sick, and personal leave, as well as comprehensive health benefits for full-time employees. Senior Management supports wellness by encouraging employees to use annual leave and promoting the college's Employee Assistance Program. We also examine facilities audits that analyze lighting and ergonomics to ensure that we provide employees healthy working environments.

In addition to analyzing the data from the QoWL and Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey, Human Resources personnel and members of Senior Management use data provided by the Employee Assistance Program to determine our employees' satisfaction, health, safety, and well-being.

Category Four Results

4R1. Analyzing measures of valuing people

As detailed in 4P12, we have recently conducted institutional comparisons using the 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2012 Quality of Work Life survey data. In the spring of 2012, the Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey was administered simultaneously with the QoWL to allow for both longitudinal and benchmarking studies. We are systematizing these surveys to regularly benchmark with peer institutions.

As described in 4P9, the Center for Professional Development surveys employees after each training activity to determine training quality and applicability. Also, as part of the AQIP Action Project, *Aligning Part-time Personnel Practices with Those of Full-time Employees*, we conduct Survey Monkey assessments after any "valuing people" initiative or program. In addition, the Action Project team regularly solicits and reviews qualitative feedback about employee satisfaction gathered from department chairs and supervisors.

4R2. Performance results for valuing people

Evidence that Aims values people is revealed in several ways. In addition to employee surveys, we have improved training by customizing it to meet an employee's specific needs. Using the results of satisfaction and learning outcomes surveys, we have developed better programs for training new employees and have begun emphasizing cross-training in several work areas. Not only have we established employee wellness programs, but in 2011 we initiated a program to extend years-of-service awards to part-time employees for the first time. For example, in April 2011, 38 part-time employees received the following service awards:

- 5 years = 22 recipients
- 10 years = 11 recipients
- 15 years = 1 recipient
- 20 years = 1 recipient
- 25 years = 1 recipient
- 30 years = 2 recipients

As a result of implementing part-time service awards, 91% of part-time employees who responded to a follow-up survey felt "valued" or "very valued" after their recognition for service at the annual President's Reception. More evidence that we value people is gleaned from the QoWL survey:

- 85% of employees in 2012 indicated the quality of their work life was good. Agreement with this statement seems to be trending upward, as 78% answered the same in 2006 and 81% in 2008.

- 83% of employees in 2012 indicated it was important that both their work unit and the College were timely in their communications. Respondents in 2012 agreed that the college (85%) and the work unit (87%) are timely in their communications as compared to 68% in 2006 and 76% in 2008.

- Since the first QoWL was given to employees in 2006, the number of employees who believe that Aims values their opinions has increased substantially. In 2006, the number was 39%, while this number increased to 48% in 2008 and 84% in 2012.

This is also the case with the question regarding a strong sense of belonging to the college, with 50% agreeing with this in 2006, 69% in 2008, and 72% in 2012.

4R3. Evidencing productivity and effectiveness of faculty, staff, and administrators

The budgeting process is tied to board goals. During the budgeting process, all administrators consider board goals when drafting budgets for a new fiscal year. For fiscal year 2011-12, the Board designated the following goals and the budget for the same year shows a commitment to these goals:

1. Develop a budget representing the current economic situation, while maintaining the quality of academic programs to help students learn.

2. Engage employees in continuous improvement initiatives and activities to support learning.

3. Measure institutional effectiveness and impact of student engagement and outcomes.

Budgetary processes are tied to goals and help us improve student learning and college-wide continuous improvement.   Distribution of funds by board goal is shown in Chart 4-A.
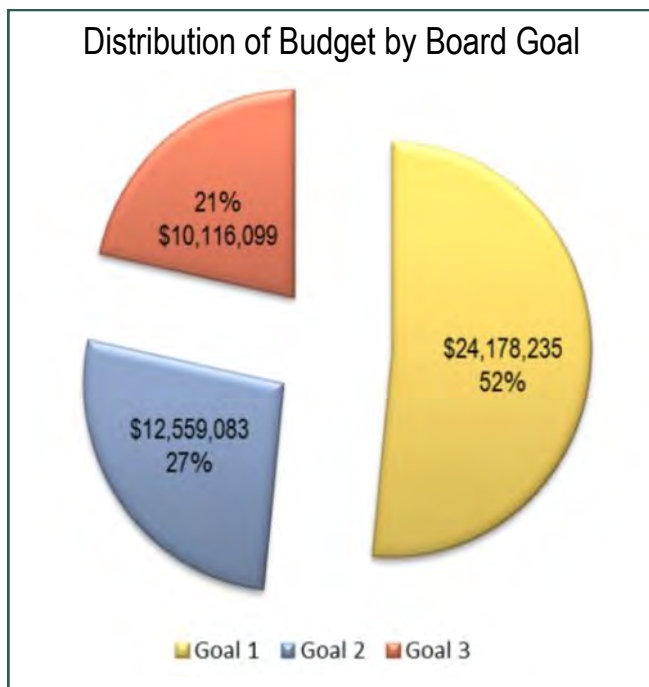
4-A: Distribution of General Fund by Board Goal
Source: Aims Financial Services Department

Aims measures our effectiveness and fulfillment of our mission through several key tools, including student satisfaction surveys, recruitment and funding statistics, and data from our career and technical education department. These data indicate our graduates' satisfaction with their Aims experience, as well as job placement and employers' satisfaction with our graduates.

ACT Survey Data 2011

Aims measures well against other two-year colleges regarding student satisfaction, showing that we are reaching goals in the areas of library/learning resources and other learning services. While other public colleges had a satisfaction rating of 4.27 (on a scale from 1-5) in 2011, Aims' satisfaction rating was 4.34, a significant difference at the .05 level .   Regarding computer services, ACT SOS results indicated that Aims students rated these services at 4.35 while the public colleges mean was 4.27.

College Promise Scholarship Program Data

We have gathered significant community support as we developed the College Promise Program to help local students attend college. Led by local business and the Aims Foundation, with support from the Financial Aid and Recruitment departments, funds were gathered to bridge the cost of tuition, fees and books and available federal/state financial assistance, allowing any local high school graduate the opportunity to attend one year at Aims for little or no cost. After the first program year, data showed positive results:

- 81% of students persisted both spring and fall semesters, surpassing the national average by a wide margin

- $65,000 in gifts received between January and April 2009 indicated community support of performance and service provided to students

- 40% of students came to the program classified as underserved

This is evidence that the community recognizes our efforts to support at-risk students.

Transfer Student Rates

Data showing successful college performance is found in the National Community College Benchmark Project data. This data shows that 35.4% of students enrolled in transfer programs actually transfer to a four-year institution. This figure places Aims within the 96th percentile in comparison to all community colleges in the nation and is a significant indicator of meeting the board goals for institutional performance.

CTE Student/Employer Satisfaction Data

- Of 2010-11 CTE program completers who responded to the Colorado VE-135 survey, 97.4% reported positive placement (employment in related field, transfer to another IHE, or entering military service)

  ◊ Aims has the highest rate of contacting program completers in Colorado.

- Average employer satisfaction rate for skills is 4.4, on a scale of one to five.

Data for transfer and CTE students is also positive. It is worth noting that these measures and results can be coupled to board goals. We hope to align and systematize our process to show direct correlations between our goals and our performance results in the near future.

4R4. Comparing performance results for Valuing People compare with the those of other higher education organizations

The Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey was introduced at Aims Community College in the spring of 2012 as a part of the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP). The survey's purpose was to assess employee satisfaction with various aspects of work life at Aims, to monitor AQIP Action Projects, and to identify areas for further improvement at Aims.

We asked Aims employees to participate in either the Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey or the QoWL survey, by random assignment. Of the 346 employees given the Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey, 99, or approximately 29%, chose to participate. The survey consisted of 93 items and was benchmarked with other two-year schools of similar size and scope.

	Aims Employee Satisfaction Rating	Comparison Group Satisfaction Rating
The institution involves its employees in planning for the future.	2.84	3.07
The institution does a good job of meeting the needs of faculty.	3.21	3.29
The institution does a good job of meeting the needs of staff.	3.16	3.14
The institution does a good job of meeting the needs of administrators.	3.58	3.67
The institution makes sufficient budgetary resources available to achieve important objectives.	3.26	3.20
The institution makes significant staff resources available to achieve important objectives.	3.10	3.10
Efforts to improve quality are paying off at this institution.	3.47	3.39
Employee suggestions are used to improve quality at this institution.	2.98	2.98

4-B: Comparison of Aims Employee Satisfaction Rating with Benchmarked Data
Source: Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey

Our results were similar to that of other two-year schools, as demonstrated by the examples in Table 4-B.   Aims employees and the comparison group rated the importance of the sample statements four or higher, on a scale of one to five.

Category Four Improvements

4I1. Recent improvements in this category

We continually analyze our programs and adjust them to improve their relevance to employees and the institution. For example, we instituted the Action Project, *Aligning Part-time Personnel Practices with Those of Full-time Employees,* in fall 2010. Several new initiatives and activities resulted from this project. Part-time employees are now included in the online directory, and their e-mail addresses have been changed to mirror those of full-time employees. As well, there is a new focus on non-compensatory benefit negotiation. These new practices may seem small at first glance; however, initial data indicate that whenever we can create equity between full- and part-time employees, there are great gains in motivation and perceived institutional value for employees. Results in the valuing people areas of the Quality of Work Life survey showed marked improvements in this category. More than twice as many employees believe Aims values their opinions in 2012, when compared to 2006, and 50% more employees feel a strong sense of belonging to the college.

Reflective practice groups now provide a forum for instructors to share best practices and gain feedback and peer support. Implemented in August 2011, the iTeach Kit is distributed the week before each semester begins. The purpose of the Kit is threefold: to create a feeling of added value for both part- and full-time faculty, to welcome faculty to the semester, and to provide resource and student activity information to all faculty.

4I2. Selecting specific processes and setting targets improvement

The college wants to demonstrate that people are valued, and we are making significant and sustainable improvements in this area. Since the last Portfolio submission, we have begun an Action Project focused on valuing people and the Board of Trustees have included valuing people initiatives in their annual goals. The college now works to collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data that addresses the goal of valuing people. Our leadership carefully reviews employee and student survey results and considers the input of other college stakeholders. Student satisfaction is regularly assessed through the ACT Student Opinion Survey (SOS) and Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). On the employee side, there is now an established schedule for administration of the Quality of Work Life and Noel-Levitz surveys to measure employee satisfaction.

Finally, the Aims Board of Trustees' annual goals frequently focus on valuing people, including the current goal to "engage employees in continuous improvement initiatives and activities to support learning."

Category Five: Leading and Communicating

Introduction

Aims Community College aligns all planning, programs, initiatives, and Action Projects with the College's guiding documents, including college mission and policies, federal and state regulations, accreditor agency requirements, as well as overarching responsibilities to our stakeholders.

Our main strategy is to align budget and decision-making with the Board of Trustees annual goals. The governing board develops these goals to advance the college mission and align with college policies. Each year, budget requests are justified by how each allocation supports these goals. In addition, employee evaluations, especially those of college administrators, are based on contribution to annual goals.

We have also developed a decision-making process that supports board goals, continuous improvement through AQIP categories, and the College's responsibilities to our stakeholders. The main agent in this process is the All College Action Committee (ACAC). This group is charged with analyzing employee feedback; developing Action Projects, Continuous Improvement Initiatives, and Quick Fixes to address problems; as well as overseeing progress and reviewing data and results from these ventures. ACAC sends recommendations for changes beyond the improvement initiatives to Senior Management for further consideration.

In the category of Leading and Communicating, we are developing systematic methods to track improvements. We are farther along in systems development for "communicating" since we have been querying employees about their satisfaction with college communication for six years, using the Quality of Work Life (QoWL) survey. In addition to the longitudinal data we have collected with the QoWL, we conducted the Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey in spring 2012 to allow us to benchmark ourselves against peer institutions. We can use the same surveys to examine employee-supervisor relations, which touch on the

question of leadership, but more complete measures of our leadership efficacy will require development of additional instruments.

Our newest Action Project, *Designing Systems to Measure Effectiveness,* will help us refine the data we collect and eventually use it to improve communication and develop leadership at Aims.

Category Five Processes

5P1. Defining mission and values

The mission statement for Aims Community College is:

> "Aims Community College is established to help students achieve their learning goals and objectives through effective and efficient program options and services, and to develop partnerships that support economic development and global understanding."

Our college values are:

- Focus on supporting learning and innovation
- Belief in building relationships
- Sense of community

The Board maintained the same goals for three consecutive years to establish continuity and maintain intensity of effort, especially in serious economic times. The board goals are as follows:

1. Develop a budget representing the current economic situation while maintaining the quality of academic programs to help students learn.

- Maintain a General Fund balance sufficient to cover the projected downturn.

2. Engage employees in continuous improvement initiatives and activities to support learning.

3. Measure institutional effectiveness and impact of student engagement and outcomes.

The mission statement and college value statements were crafted with input from trustees, Senior Management and other college constituents. After formal adoption by the Board of Trustees, these documents impact all our programs and planning. The Board analyzes the state of the college annually, to confirm or adjust the mission statement as the guiding principle for the institution. At this time the Board also refines or redefines values for the college. Likewise, they draft or renew goals in light of state higher education goals, community needs, and reports from all academic divisions, student services, and administration regarding the state of the college. **(CC1A-1)**

We focus on fulfilling our mission and vision by developing and designing academic programs as well as institutional and student support programs. Our broader mission includes all students in our community. Likewise, our academic programs are diverse, spanning career and technical skills to liberal arts transfer programs, allowing students with varying needs and interests to benefit from our programs. In parallel, our student support services are designed to meet the needs of our average student.   Studies show that many Aims students are first-generation college students who need remedial courses and significant active support to help them succeed. The Emerging Scholars Program, designed for these students, improved retention significantly. Data at project close out showed a 75% retention to next semester for this group compared to 64% for remedial students with 2+ remedial/college prep who did not receive this special service. **(CC1A-2)**

5P2. Setting directions in alignment with mission, vision and values

Our leaders set directions to align with the college's mission, vision, values, and commitment to high performance in a number of ways. The Board approves the college's mission, vision, and values, proposed by the President and Senior Management after discussion with and agreement by faculty and staff representatives. The Board recently reaffirmed our mission statement and will continue to review it annually. While the five-member board carefully follows all state statutes and parliamentary procedure in making decisions, their status as an elected board of a junior college district allows them to remain independent from outside influence and make decisions based on the best outcome for our students, community, and the college as a whole. **(CC2C-3)** A financial report is presented at each board meeting, and open work sessions are held when a topic requires in-depth study to determine actions in the institution's best interest. Representatives from faculty, staff, and student leadership address the Board at each meeting to report important issues. Every board meeting includes an opportunity for public comment from community members. Board members themselves are active community and business leaders who are deeply committed to the community and to their stewardship of the college as elected officials. (http://www.aims.edu/about/board/) **(CC2C-1&2)**

The Board delegates day-to-day college administration to the President, as documented by Policies 0-300: Board Powers and 1-100: President's Duties. The President relies heavily on Senior Management for input and shared decision making. This group, which consists of the four academic deans, the Dean for Student Services and the Chief Administrative Officer, meets weekly and regularly invites employees to comment on pending decisions or to report on current projects. Individually, members of Senior Management administer academic programs, student services, and fiscal and budgetary matters. The academic deans are also charged with conducting internal

program reviews, during which they evaluate enrollment, student performance, and industry demand, as well as program costs and efficiencies. Senior Management, as a group, evaluates the program reviews in light of our mission, values and goals. Similarly, Senior Management has a broad overview of all issues that affect the college at the institutional level. This overview allows the group to identify viable programs and to ensure there are available resources to maintain the quality of those programs deemed relevant and valuable for our students. **(CC2C-4 and 5C-2)**

The academic deans delegate oversight of academic programs to faculty through department or program chairs and the Curriculum Committee. Department chairs monitor program curriculum and supervise adjunct faculty. They work with CTE program advisory committees and serve on state-wide specialty committees which manage

approved course and program content. The Curriculum Committee reviews and approves all new or revised programs, seeking input from advisory committees, program chairs, and support personnel before the program application can be sent to the state for final approval. **(CC2C-4)**

The President keeps board members informed of key institutional projects and proposals, which the Board then judges for merit against the college's mission, vision, and goals. Also, as seen in Table 5-A, all annual budget requests are identified as supporting one or more of the board goals, reinforcing the focus on achieving these goals and of the mission in general. All budget requests must document how they support and align with board goals, which are directly tied to the mission of the college. **(CC1A-3 and 5C-1&2)**

			Board Goals	
	2012-2013 EXAMPLE BUDGET		0%	Goal 1-Develop budget representing current economics
			50%	Goal 2-Engage employees in CI initiatives
			50%	Goal 3-Measure institutional effectiveness
		Enter budget request for the account for 2012-13.	100%	Total to be 100%

Fund	Acct	Account Title	2011-12 Ytd on 1/1/2012	2012-13 Bdgt Request	A justification is required. Enter response to the right.
11000	61420	Staff Salaries - PT	2,000.00		
11000	61510	Employee Supplemental Agreemnts FT		1,500.00	ESSA for faculty to edit Systems Portfolio
11000	73000	Supply Expenditures	2,300.00		
11000	73215	Operating Supplies	500.00	150.00	
11000	73410	Storeroom Supplies	-		
11000	73415	Reprographics	-	500.00	Design and printing of Systems Portfolio
11000	73420	Postage	50.00		
11000	73445	Auditron	-	250.00	Copy printing costs - no auditron budget in 11-12
11000	74000	Other Operating Expenses	450.00		
11000	74110	Rental - Equipment			
11000	74225	Legal Notices			
11000	74415	Contracted Services-Noncredit Instr	500.00		
11000	74710	Dues and Fees	5,500.00	12,000.00	Minimum $4400 for HLC Dues + $800 Annual Updates + $6600 Systems Appraisal
11000	74810	Official Functions	-		
11000	74815	Business Meetings	-		
11000	74825	Awards for Recognition	500.00		
11000	74990	Miscellaneous Expenses		100.00	
11000	75000	Travel Expenditures	3,000.00		
11000	75010	Travel - In State	2,000.00		
11000	75020	Travel - Out of State	5,000.00	4,000.00	cost for two attendees at HLC conference '13
11000	75030	Travel - Registration & Conf Fees			
			21,800.00	18,500.00	

5-A: Example of Department Budget Request Form, Showing how Budget Items Support Board of Trustees Goals
Source: Aims Financial Services Office

Additionally, supervisors are charged to implement the college goals and visions in each employee's annual performance review. Individuals work with their supervisors to align personal performance goals with the college's mission, values, and goals.

Planning at Aims takes place on multiple levels. Institutional support departments develop specialized plans to improve processes and function more effectively. Academic departments review their programs and plan for improvement, using input from external stakeholders through program advisory committees and from internal constituencies of students and employees.   Recently, while drafting the strategic planning document, Senior Management authorized the "Think Tank," a group of employee representatives from across the college, charged with reviewing and reacting to concerns, complaints, and ideas, guiding the development of the strategic plan later formalized by Senior Management and adopted by the Board. Additional input to strategic planning is derived from a five- to ten-year projection of revenues and expenses, demographic and enrollment trend data, the Economic Modeling Systems market report, economic impact studies, and input from local workforce and business development organizations. **(CC5C-3,4&5)**

5P3. Accounting for needs and expectations of students and other stakeholders

The college is committed to continuous improvement in student success and community partnerships and exemplifies its commitment by regularly assessing program and project success based on results supported by data collection and analysis.

As stated in our *Academic Master Plan*:

> "Aims conducts ongoing reviews of its Liberal Arts and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in accordance with the policies of the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE). The

College also conducts internal program reviews on several programs each year. As a result of these and other processes, ideas for new academic and career and technical programs are generated and programs that are identified as no longer serving community needs are discontinued."

Additionally, the Career and Technical Education programs maintain advisory boards comprised of professionals who work in those fields. CTE faculty and administrators seek input from those committee members to update curriculum and align it with the needs of each specific industry.

5P4. Seeking future opportunities and enhancing focus on learning

Aims uses several approaches to building and sustaining a strong learning environment for both students and employees. The college has created a master academic plan, a master information technology plan, a master facilities plan, an overall strategic college plan, and a strategic marketing plan, all of which we use to guide decisions and to develop opportunities for the college.

We identify new academic offerings through thoughtful, strategic analysis based on input from community resources: school district leadership; CTE Advisory Committee members; political trending on the federal, state, and local level; regional and state economic development; workforce development; board and foundation board members—in short, our decisions are data based. A current project with the local economic development corporation will provide the opportunity for Aims students to help define economic development imperatives for the community.

Enrollment growth is trended and anticipated, evidenced through the Information Technology and Facilities Master Plans. These plans include remodeling aging structures and constructing an attractive walkway that will link the 170-acre main campus buildings and allow students and

employees to move more easily across campus, thereby creating a more aesthetic and accessible learning environment.

The recent acquisition of a $2 million federal grant to develop a degree in Energy/Oil and Gas is an exemplary representation of the college's commitment to seek future opportunities while strengthening the focus on students and learning. This program will provide training for community members to fill positions in the burgeoning local oil and gas industry. Additionally, the college will implement two agricultural programs at the Fort Lupton Campus to bring opportunities to the specific demographics of Southern Weld County.

5P5. Making decisions in the college

At Aims Community College decisions are made through collaboration among a number of people, departments, and stakeholders depending on the nature of the decision. For example, decisions regarding tuition and fees are led by the Chief Administrative Officer, with significant input from the Student Services and Academic divisions about how changes will affect students. Facilities and Operations makes decisions about maintenance, first consulting internal stakeholders affected by the decision. The President and the Board of Trustees, with input from Senior Management, make capital construction choices. Deans, chairs, and faculty consider input from community stakeholders and students to make academic program decisions– all subject to state approval.

This broad level of decision making is exemplified by several new task forces. The Prerequisite Task Force and the Student Code of Conduct Task Force were formed to develop recommendations for specific topics. After polling employees, Facilities and Operations developed a "hard close on weekends" policy, saving the college an estimated $75,000 annually. Working four ten-hour days with a hard close Friday through Sunday during the summer semester saves the college even more money.

Additionally, before policies and procedures are modified, Senior Management reviews them with faculty and staff representatives, who can ask questions and receive clarification. Senior Management then posts revised policies for employee comment and presents them to the Board for first and second readings. Increasing employee participation in developing policies has increased awareness and compliance.

Finally, the All College Action Committee serves as a planning and continuous improvement task force as detailed in the 2011-12 Academic Master Plan:

> "Based on strategic planning initiatives at the state level, as well as federal implications for higher education, planning at Aims is accomplished on a broad base, using the Higher Education Strategic Plan as a conceptual foundation. Additional input is received from the tactical planning entity at Aims, the All College Action Committee (ACAC), as well as from a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis generated by Senior Management and with input from a college-wide Think Tank. The All College Action Committee is facilitated by faculty and staff representatives of the College. The committee includes personnel representing the Board of Trustees, administration, full-time and part-time faculty, staff, and students. The committee convenes regularly to review and address the annual goals set forth by the Board of Trustees and to develop objectives, strategies, and tactics to achieve those goals.   This committee integrates the AQIP accreditation criteria and the Board of Trustees' goals to assure planning focus, as well as evidence-based planning and assessment. ACAC's guiding principle for all strategic planning is: *To encourage ideas and cultivate tactics that fulfill college goals."*

The SWOT analysis mentioned above focused on areas with clear strengths and weaknesses.

Based on this analysis, along with our mission and values, senior managers, with input from the Think Tank, crafted a strategic plan that identified the following four pillars:

1. *Student Learning and Success*
2. *Access and Awareness*
3. *Sustainability*
4. *Institutional Effectiveness*

5P6. Using data, information, and performance results in decision-making

Aims makes most decisions collaboratively. The Board of Trustees, which makes all governing decisions for Aims, is comprised of elected officials with a fiduciary duty to benefit the college's stakeholders, i.e., taxpayers in the local district. Facts and circumstances informing a decision are presented to the Board along with appropriate recommendations. Prior to most board meetings, the trustees hold a work session, open to the public and designed to obtain significant data and impact information regarding upcoming issues. board action is required on policy, capital construction, issues with fiscal impact, hiring of the CEO, and faculty sabbaticals. The President and/or Senior Management may make recommendations on actionable items. The process shown in Chart 5-B is used to consider major, new initiatives.
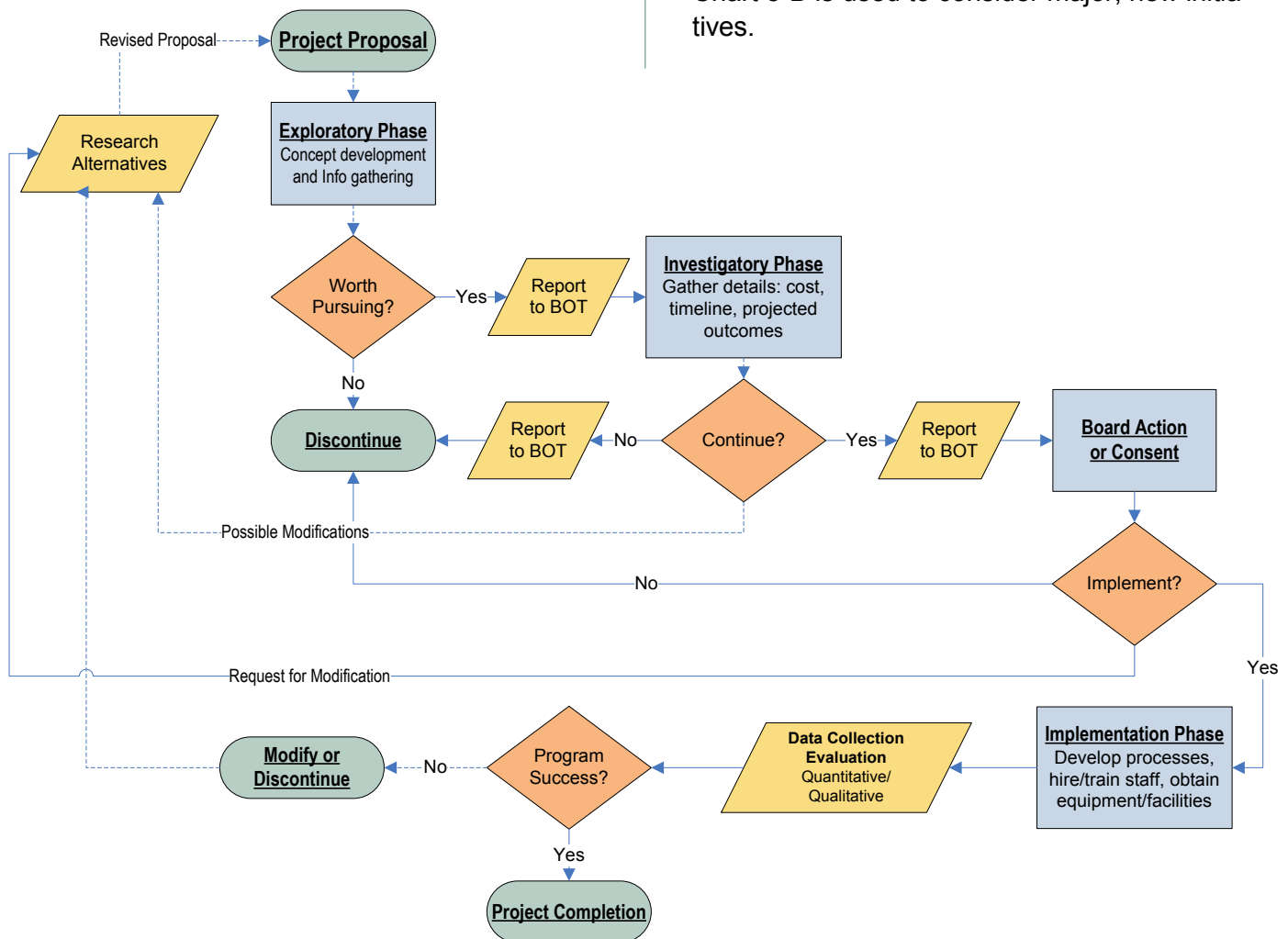
5-B: Aims New Project Development Process

The Board of Trustees vests ultimate operational decision-making power in the President, who collaborates and works toward consensus with Senior Management. The President can also delegate actions and convene committees and task forces to research facts and circumstances supporting a decision, as well as to make recommendations. Delegated tasks are evaluated to ensure institutional risk or exposure to liability are limited. Staff employees provide advice, opinion, and information to facilitate decision making, and these same resources, including external legal counsel, are also available to the Board of Trustees.

The All College Action Committee is chaired by both faculty and staff, and this committee is charged with developing Action Projects related to the AQIP initiatives noted in 5P5. Collaborative decision making with faculty is accomplished through a faculty consultation procedure to identify and resolve specific issues.

5P7. Communicating between and among institutional levels and units

Communication at Aims Community College is multifaceted. All college meetings occur three times a year - at Convocation, prior to each fall semester; Conversation Day, at the beginning of the spring semester; and the President's Reception, at the close of the spring semester. In addition, the President and Senior Management occasionally hold open forums to discuss issues, concerns, and directions for the college, for example on budget, staff organizational issues, and college planning, such as capital construction projects and strategic marketing plans. Each division holds regular meetings to discuss college-wide concerns as well as those pertaining to their departments.

We use electronic communication extensively. The *Aims Daily* is a digital news bulletin informing all employees about college activities. The President regularly issues brief informational videos called *In The Loop* when she communicates

important information to college employees. We post board meeting notifications and minutes on the Internet, and Aims cable television stations broadcast the meetings. Students receive news through a weekly digital news bulletin, *Aims Weekly*. Employees can submit questions and comments to *Ask Aims*, *Ask HR*, and *Tell IT How It Is*. ACAC maintains a suggestion box on the *Aims Daily* homepage and the committee's homepage as well. Doing so complements the college's open-door policies across all levels and units. Additionally, we place committee meeting minutes online, including Board of Trustees, ACAC, and Senior Management minutes. Senior Management minutes are described with timelines, indicating each person involved in implementing, assessing, and analyzing decisions and their impacts.

Student government and student groups work actively on communication with students and the college community. They make good use of posters and flyers to advertise special events and communicate upcoming deadlines. Similar to the *Aims Daily*, the *Aims Weekly* is an electronic student magazine, distributed to all students via e-mail. Another weekly student newsletter, the *Toilet Paper*, is placed at every bathroom stall on every campus. Doing so has proved to be an exceptionally effective way to communicate with students. Finally, student government representatives sit on nearly every standing college committee to contribute a student's point of view.

5P8. Communicating shared mission, vision, and values

To reinforce shared vision and best practices, the college often brings renowned experts in higher education to speak at all-college meetings. Sharing and reinforcing best practices of high performance organizations with the entire pool of employees at the same time, and encouraging them to discuss and apply their ideas has stimulated a vibrant learning culture. In the recent Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey, respondents

indicated that the mission and values of the College are well understood and supported by employees.

To further reinforce high performance characteristics, we recently launched a "Redefining Our Culture" project, asking all employees to define what they believe should be the guiding principles of a learning-centered college. This project exemplifies the college's commitment to high performance through assessment and analysis. The project resulted from input in recent and past surveys and dialogues addressing the need to re-emphasize fundamental institutional values to internal and external stakeholders.

As a public institution, Aims seeks to make all operations transparent to all stakeholders. The college strives to share as much information as is legally appropriate whether to a student, a student's parent, an employee, the media, or a community member. We communicate our purpose and mission through many venues, including our *Annual Report*, but most specifically through our website. There, stakeholders will find our mission statement, diversity statement, annual Board of Trustees goals, information on our Learning-Centered College philosophy, and our Strategic Plan. The documents are updated regularly and supported by additional information on academic and continuing education programs, as well as news and minutes of Board of Trustees meetings. As a community college, we focus on providing benefits to the entire community, thus our mission is broad and requires little explanation. **(CC1B-1,2&3)**

5P9. Developing leadership abilities in faculty, staff, and administrators

Aims places high value on developing employees. Each year select faculty are sent to the Chair Academy or local leadership opportunities. The Center for Professional Development and the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center continuously offer workshops, webinars, and individual

training for all employees.

We provide all full-time employees with tuition reimbursement to further their education, and employees' immediate family members receive tuition reimbursement while attending Aims. Faculty members are required to perform college and community service. Many serve as advisors for the college's 30+ student groups, such as Student Helping Hands, Gay and Straight Alliance, the Aims United Way Club, Campus Cru, and Creative Students Ink. Many Aims employees serve on academic and community boards and leadership committees. The college supports and promotes employees attending leadership development programs such as Leadership Weld County, Leadership Northern Colorado and the Chair Academy, and we encourage employees to publish in their academic field and to attend conferences related to their expertise. Additionally, we encourage employees to share their experiences with colleagues upon returning from a conference. Similarly, faculty returning from sabbaticals are asked to share their experiences and knowledge gained with their colleagues and to present a report to the Board of Trustees.

Our trustees also engage in professional development activities to ensure they are knowledgeable about the college and have the depth of understanding to make considered decisions. New trustees participate in a board orientation session, often held in conjunction with the Board's annual retreat. In addition, the Board is given in-depth information on upcoming issues at board work sessions, as mentioned in sections 5P2 and 5P6. Finally, board members generally travel once a year to attend the Association of Community College Trustees conference, and they share the best practices and knowledge gained with the college upon their return**. (CC5B-2)**

We also encourage leadership development by engaging employees in governance and other decision-making. This strategy has been formalized through Policy 0-1000: Representatives to the Board of Trustees, which specifies that faculty,

staff, and student organizations will provide a representative to the Board to share input on college issues, and [Policy 1-200: Shared Governance](#), which ensures that all constituencies of the college community are fully engaged in decision making. As noted in section 5P5, new or revised policies and procedures are open for review to all employees and Senior Management and the Board consider employee comments when deliberating a policy change. Faculty design and revise curriculum, which receives internal review and approval by the faculty-based Curriculum Committee, as detailed in 5P2. In recent years, the Curriculum Committee has been encouraged to take on critical projects, such as the formal review of the AA/AS/AGS program for the state board. **(CC5B-1&3)**

5P10. Maintaining and preserving mission, values, and commitment to high performance

Contained within the Policies and Procedures Manual is a structure for leadership succession of the Chief Executive Officer. It stipulates chain-of-command procedures if the President were unable to attend to duties. It provides for the following leadership succession: first, the Chief Academic Officer; second, the Chief Administrative Officer; and third, a board designated representative as temporary acting CEO. If the President's absence is anticipated to be greater than one month, the Board shall appoint or hire an Interim President.

Board members retiring under term limits or for other reasons are encouraged to find a suitable replacement. Other board vacancies may be filled by appointment. The college also has a Business Continuity Plan that details operations and leadership succession for each department in the case of an emergency or significant disruption of business. Additionally, extensive cross-training occurs especially among academic deans.

Category Five Results

5R1. Performance measures for Leading and Communicating

The college measures leadership and communication efficacy a number of ways. Anecdotal data is provided to Senior Management through deans and directors, who gather information from their employees. The Quality of Work Life survey and the Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey, yield more structured data, referenced in sections 4P12, 4R1, and 4R4. Both surveys measure employee satisfaction with communication in the institution and with their supervisors (leadership). The QoWL survey has been administered three times in the last six years. This year, in parallel with the QoWL survey, the Noel-Levitz survey was also distributed to enable the college to benchmark itself against peer institutions.

A performance evaluation is conducted annually for all employees. For administrators and senior managers, leadership and communication skills are scrutinized. The Board of Trustees evaluates these traits in the President. If these important leadership and communication skills are lacking, a performance plan may be implemented. Human Resources monitors performance gaps and develops systematic methods to close those gaps. Additionally, the department is currently refining the orientation of new employees, along with training and professional development for new supervisors and new department chairs.

5R2. What are your results for leading and communicating processes and systems?

Achieving board goals demonstrates effective leading and communicating processes. For example, the following is a chart of the 2009-10 board goals and their results:

GOAL #1: Increase access and opportunity for students.

- Enrollment increased 20% since 2008, and a large spike in online enrollment demonstrates expanded access

GOAL #2: Improve demonstrated student success.

- Retention figures, e.g., AAA as cited in section 5P1 of this document.

GOAL #3: Improve Internal and External Communication.

- Daily, Weekly, TP, *In The Loop*, Ramp-up Social Media e.g., Facebook, You Tube
- Hiring of marketing consultants

GOAL #4: Develop opportunities to support energy industries.

- $2 million TAACCCT Grant for Energy/Oil & Gas to develop new degree program.

This was an area of outstanding opportunity for the college in the last systems portfolio. Since then, the college prioritized establishing systems and procedures. As detailed in 1P18 and 6I2, two new AQIP projects have been identified to develop and implement a process to measure effectiveness across the college at all levels.   In addition, ACAC is undertaking a campaign to increase employee feedback through this committee. An ACAC suggestion box has been placed on the *Aims Daily* homepage, and ACAC members regularly submit articles about their mission and progress in the *Aims Daily*.

5R3. Comparing Leading and Communicating performance results with those of other higher education organizations

Since the last Systems Portfolio, Aims has focused efforts on collecting data that is comparable to other organizations of higher learning. Our Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment department recently identified a group of 26 peer institutions through an extensive filtering process implemented through IPEDS.

The twin employee satisfaction surveys (QoWL and Noel-Levitz) give us data to analyze our communication and leadership efforts.   The Noel-Levitz survey allows us to compare ourselves to other like institutions.

The area of communication received high ratings for importance and some disparity in the mean of employee satisfaction, resulting in a significant variance in the gap between importance and satisfaction. The smallest gap was 0.35 in the response to "I learn about important campus events in a timely manner," while the largest gap was 1.51 in response to "There are effective lines of communication between departments." Obviously, interdepartmental communication deserves additional effort. Nonetheless, in all communication categories, Aims' gap was less than our comparison group. A sample of the Noel-Levitz survey results on communication is shown in Table 5-C.

RATE IMPORTANCE AND SATISFACTION (on a 5-point scale)	Aims			Comparison Group		
	Importance Mean	Satisfaction Mean	Gap	Importance Mean	Satisfaction Mean	Gap
There are effective lines of communication between departments	4.33	2.81	1.51	4.40	2.80	1.60
Administrators share information regularly with faculty and staff	4.34	3.05	1.29	4.43	3.11	1.32
It is easy for me to get information at this institution	4.39	3.49	0.90	4.44	3.29	1.15
I learn about important campus events in a timely manner	4.01	3.66	0.35	4.16	3.52	0.64
I have the information I need to do my job well	4.53	3.69	0.83	4.61	3.64	0.97

5-C: Employee Satisfaction Rating of Communication Issues at Aims with Benchmarked Data
Source: Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey

RATE IMPORTANCE AND SATISFACTION (on a 5-point scale)	Aims			Comparison Group		
	Importance Mean	Satisfaction Mean	Gap	Importance Mean	Satisfaction Mean	Gap
My supervisor pays attention to what I have to say	4.56	3.98	0.58	4.57	3.87	0.70
My supervisor helps me improve my job performance	4.41	3.83	0.58	4.38	3.71	0.66
The work I do is appreciated by my supervisor	4.43	3.96	0.48	4.36	3.84	0.52

5-D: Employee Satisfaction Rating of Supervision/Leadership at Aims with Benchmarked Data
Source: Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey

Similarly, our gap was slightly lower than the comparison group when we asked about Employee Measures of Relationship with Supervisor, but better news was that our gap between importance and satisfaction was quite low in all questions in this category. (See Table 5-D)

Category Five Improvements

5I1. Recent improvements in Leading and Communicating

Results from recent QoWL surveys, compared to earlier surveys, indicate that college-wide communications have improved. Most respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that both the college (85%) and the work unit (87%) are timely in their communications. (In 2006, 68% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the College communicated in a timely manner, while this number was 76% in 2008.) Also, these numbers increased for individual work units: 78% in 2006 to 81% in 2008. Most respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that both the college (86%) and the work unit (87%) communicate effectively.

Employee satisfaction with leadership has also improved. In 2006, 72% of employees indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their relationship with their supervisor, while in 2012 85% indicated satisfaction in this area.

As noted in 5R3, the college has established a peer group to better allow benchmarking, identifying, and implementing best practices. We have begun a comprehensive project to create a repository for data collection. Senior Management has taken the initiative to regularly include staff and

faculty leadership in discussions about college policies and procedures. Additionally, the All College Action Committee has added a standing agenda item to include an update from the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment department on data collection and analysis.

However, research into current systems for the portfolio development shows that the college has only a few formal "systems" processes for continuous improvement in Leading and Communicating. In response, the college has already designated a new Action Project, *Designing Systems to Measure Effectiveness,* to formalize and strengthen current systems and develop new systems where they are lacking.

5I2. Selecting processes and to setting targets for improved performance

The college embraces open-door policies to encourage a robust learning culture. The opportunity for students, community members, and employees to provide input is omnipresent. The academic deans hold all-faculy, open-agenda meetings with faculty to discuss initiatives or areas of concern. Committees and task forces drive implementation of the best ideas, which are approved by Senior Management, the President, and/or the Board of Trustees. The All College Action Committee is charged to analyze ideas to incorporate into Action Projects or college initiatives. The Redefining Our Culture project is a systematic approach to best energize the organization into a high-performance team, building intrinsic values into tactics easily measured for continuous improvement.

Category Six: Supporting Institutional Operations

Introduction

Aims uses annual Board of Trustees goals and the budgeting process to align all departments, including student and administrative support, with the institutional mission. The process begins when the Board meets to set goals for the year. The Board develops these goals to support the college mission and take into consideration division reports and institutional data presented to the Board during the previous year. When the Board has finalized goals, Senior Management analyzes them and develops strategies to accomplish them. Then, as the College begins the budgeting process for the next fiscal year, the Board goals and the Senior Management strategies are used to justify budget requests. Each department, using last year's budget as a base and considering any budgetary constraints, develops a new budget, justifying each entry by how it supports one or more of the Board goals. Compiled division budgets are then presented at a Senior Management budget meeting, where they are reviewed and approved or revised. Any request for a significant increase in budget will initiate more in-depth analysis of need, based on data. When the final budget, composed of all division plans, is presented to the Board for approval, documentation will include justification based on the original board goals and thus the college mission.

Student Services focuses strongly on student satisfaction, reported through student surveys. Our student population demands specialized services to promote success, including intensive advising, first-year experience courses, and peer mentoring. We monitor these programs' effectiveness using retention and completion data, as well as student opinion and engagement surveys.

The Student Services division functions at a Systematic maturity level, with regularly scheduled surveys that are thoroughly analyzed. Departments in this division act quickly to correct any issue, knowing that obstacles in student services can be detrimental to student academic success.

We measure improvement with successive surveys. Our institutional support services departments, including Fiscal Services and Facilities and Operations, function on a Reacting level, with no repeatable data collection or analysis other than what can be gleaned from student or employee surveys.

Through our newest Action Project, *Designing Systems to Measure Effectiveness,* we will help our institutional support services departments to develop goals and methods to measure their attainment. In this area we intend to cultivate a system of continuous improvement that touches on all college stakeholders

Category Six Processes

6P1. Identifying the support service needs of students and other stakeholders

Student support service needs at Aims are communicated through various means. We recently formalized the schedule for future student feedback data collection (see 7P5). The instruments used are: ACT Student Opinion Survey (SOS), Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE.) At this point, appropriate parties within the college can review comments from students, who communicate changes they desire. We have developed a system to categorize comments by major topic or concern, by which administrators, directors, and staff can identify their area of responsibility and make informed decisions regarding student needs.

We solicit input from other stakeholders in a variety of ways. For example, an agenda item at each Board of Trustees meeting allows community members to address the Board. Furthermore, the Board dedicates a portion of the agenda to comments from faculty, staff, and students.

Representatives from each of these groups are responsible for sharing information and issues with the Board, which interacts informally with speakers to gather further feedback.

The Aims Foundation's Board of Directors has close ties to the College and community. This organization communicates with donors and members through newsletters and events, such as Donors Receptions. The Foundation Director also contacts contributors regularly to solicit input on college projects funded through contributions.

6P2. Identifying the administrative support service needs of faculty, staff and administrators

We use several methods to identify administrative and support service needs. Among college employees, one of the most recognized means of communicating wants and providing solutions is the weekly Senior Management meeting. The college publishes both agendas and minutes of these meetings through the *Aims Daily*. We also post proposed revisions to policies and procedures for comment and feedback.

	Aims Community		Community		Difference Aims
Revenues:					
Net State Proceeds (1)	$ 4,224,314		$ 3,444,955		
ARRA	$ 4,920,360		$ 4,776,983		$ 143,377
Tuition Resident	$ 7,275,142		$ 11,921,893		$ (4,646,751)
Tuition Non-Resident	$ 1,010,294		$ 2,665,885		$ (1,655,591)
	$ -		$ -		$ -
Other Non State Revenue (Adjustments)	$ 35,686,290		$ 2,494,750		
Total E & G Revenues	**$ 53,116,400**		**$ 25,304,466**		**$ (6,158,965)**
Expenditures:					
Instruction	$ 15,720,594		$ 12,445,642		$ 3,274,952
Public Service	$ 110,604		$ 67,752		$ 42,853
Academic Support	$ 4,064,428		$ 2,241,107		$ 1,823,322
Student Services	$ 2,589,947		$ 2,656,539		$ (66,592)
Institutional Support (2) & (3)	$ 5,769,055		$ 4,415,884		$ 1,353,171
Operation & Maintenance of Plant	$ 3,601,538		$ 2,897,726		$ 703,812
Scholarships & Fellowships	$ 855,230		$ 505,343		$ 349,887
Total E & G Expenditures (Does not include Transfers)	**$ 32,711,396**		**$ 25,229,991**		**$ 12,491,426**
FY 2010 Total Student FTE (SFTE)	3,581		5,182		-1,601
FY 2010 Cost Per SFTE (4)	**$ 9,135**		**$ 4,868**		**$ 4,266**
FY 2010 Student Cr.Hr. Production	107,430		128,938		(21,508)
FY 2010 Student Faculty Ratio	14.98		23.74		-8.76
Full-time Faculty FTE	97	41%	81	29%	16
Part-time Faculty FTE	142	59%	195	71%	(53)
Total	239	100%	276	100%	(37)
Full-time Faculty Ave. Compensation	$ 68,071		$62,363		$ 5,708
Part-time Faculty Ave. Compensation	$ 25,888		$17,481		$ 8,407

6-A: Example of Budget Data Book, Comparing Aims to Colorado State System Community Colleges
Source: Colorado Department of Higher Education

College employees convey their concerns through their Senior Management representative, who presents them to the larger group. By reading the minutes, employees can see how their needs have been addressed. Additionally, department and staff meetings provide information to the senior managers for further discussion and decisions at their weekly meeting. Twice a year, or as needed, Senior Management also hosts open meetings to convey information and obtain feedback. Such feedback is analyzed before action is taken.

Senior Management approves every position to be filled, whether replacement or new. Each request for a new position must be justified, and Senior Management will decide to support or reject a hiring request based on this information and budgetary impacts.

To inform decisions on resource management and staffing, we often turn to the Budget Data Book, a compilation of responses to a Colorado Department of Higher Education survey that all Colorado public colleges complete. It provides a relatively uniform way to compare staffing levels, employee salaries, student enrollment, and budgetary data among all the colleges in the state. For example, in the 2009-10 fiscal year, when compared to the other Colorado community colleges, Aims employed 97 full-time faculty, compared to an average of 81 at other colleges. Yet, during the same period, Aims employed 142 part-time faculty compared to an average of 195 at other colleges. Senior Management uses such data to inform decisions about course load, curriculum, compensation, and student-faculty ratios.

We also use this report to understand how our expenditures compare to other colleges' in the major National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) classifications. For example, as shown in Table 6-A, prepared for the 2009-10 year, Aims showed higher expenditures for Academic Support, Institutional Support, and Operation & Maintenance of Plant compared to other Colorado community colleges.   Such comparisons can help determine if Aims is dedicating comparable resources to these functions.

6P3. Designing, maintaining, and communicating key support processes

The College employs a Safety and Security Coordinator, who reports to the Facilities and Operations Department. In addition, we contract with the county sheriff's department to provide daytime security and with a private security firm for nighttime hours. The Safety and Security Coordinator works with both entities to ensure that we meet all security requirements and that law enforcement is available to respond quickly to emergencies. Also, in conjunction with local law enforcement, we offer classes that address personal as well as public safety for Aims staff members. A recent event illustrates the benefits of this arrangement. A very disruptive student was identified on campus, and on-site security quickly alleviated the disturbance. We now offer classes to train employees how to react when confronted with a potentially violent situation. This situation, as well as similar ones, led us to create a new position, the Judicial Affairs Officer, to help faculty and staff address unruly and disrespectful students.

The College has also formed the Campus Safety Committee, with at least one safety coordinator from each building. Meetings are held monthly to discuss safety issues and emergency planning, and the committee serves as support during regular emergency drills.

Since our last portfolio, we have instituted an emergency notification system, the Rave Alert System, which sends emergency announcements to student and staff cell phones, desk phones, and e-mail. For example, during fall of 2010, the Rave system alerted staff to a bank robber in the vicinity, and building coordinators were instructed to go to lockdown. In winter 2010, the Rave system alerted staff and students to a school closure due to a blizzard and poor road conditions. The switchboard collects comments and suggestions about the Rave system. We review these comments and may implement changes to improve the system.

As with most colleges, the Aims campuses are active after administrative offices close at 5:00 PM. To provide additional support and leadership, an administrator is assigned to stay on campus until 9:00 PM each evening that classes are in session and is readily available to respond to emergencies. Approximately 20 individuals rotate evening duties.

6P4. Managing key student, administrative, and organizational support service processes

Generally, all support service departments hold regular meetings. Department function is monitored daily, and these meetings address minor concerns. In addition, directors of the various student services departments meet regularly to monitor cooperative efforts and synergies.

While the results of student or employee surveys often stimulate long-term improvements, we monitor our day-to-day effectiveness based on the collegial, learning-centered philosophy that focuses our efforts on student learning. Employees frequently share observations or concerns with the appropriate department.

Because we encourage open communication among departments, we share responsibility for effective support services. For example, in Spring Semester 2012 it became evident that students who contacted Financial Aid using a published phone number were not reaching department staff, nor were their calls returned. Our call center received numerous complaints, and they shared those with Financial Aid. Financial Aid discovered that the phone tree was not properly configured, and phone calls to the published number were disappearing, thus going unanswered. The situation was quickly remedied, and the director was thankful for being notified by the call center. Had this problem persisted, many more students would have been inconvenienced.

At other times, information may be shared with the Senior Management team, comprised of the

President, the Chief Administrative Officer, the Dean for Student Services and the four Academic Deans. If the issue affects a specific area, it may be addressed by the respective senior manager. However, if the issue is cross-divisional or impacts the whole college, it will become a topic for discussion at the weekly Senior Management meeting. Practically all matters related to the functioning of the college are addressed here first, and then forwarded to divisions or departments that are impacted.

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6P5. Documenting support processes to encourage knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment

Multiple means of conveying information and documenting processes are in place. As mentioned earlier, the *Aims Daily*, shared through e-mail each business day, is a prime tool for distributing information. In it, employees can be reminded of correct practices and new processes can be explained. While it is generally brief with five to ten short articles each day, the electronic media allows for links to items that are too lengthy or detailed to include in the body of the newsletter.

As part of the employee intranet site, MyAims, the College has collected and posted a "Virtual Reference Manual." Shared in this manual are many resources to facilitate the work of administrative staff, including organizational charts, academic division tables showing corresponding programs and departments, academic calendars, building floor plans and room equipment, and links to security information and reports/surveys. Also available through MyAims are the Policy and Procedure Manual and links to all forms used in college business. To facilitate college-wide communication, all major committees post meeting minutes in these pages as well.

The All College Action Committee (ACAC) facilitates sharing information about Action Projects and Continuous Improvement Initiatives (CI[2]), with broad representation of faculty, staff, and

administrators from all divisions. This group collects concerns and suggestions through Conversation Day discussions or contributions to the online "Suggestion Box" and brainstorms solutions, establishing Action Projects or CI[2] to direct the tasks. ACAC also hosts a webpage on My-Aims to share updates on AQIP projects and collect ideas from the college community.

Category Six Results

6R1. Measursing student, administrative, and organizational support service processes

As mentioned previously, we administer survey instruments throughout the College. We monitor student satisfaction with student services through ACT SOS, SENSE, and CCSSE. Employee satisfaction with administrative services is assessed through the Quality of Work Life Survey and the Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey, both of which address administrative services through inter-departmental communication, budget, and facilities.

We scrutinize budget data, not only globally through budget monitoring efforts of the Budget Director and the Chief Administrative Officer, but also through senior managers who have staff monitor the budget for their respective areas. Through these mechanisms, the College identifies spending for all support activities, and such spending data facilitates open discussion about what has been and still needs to be accomplished.

6R2. Performance results for student support service processes

Data collected in the 2009 ACT Student Opinion Survey indicate that Aims students are generally satisfied with academic advising. Results show that 72.76% of students use these services. Aims registered a 4.03 satisfaction score compared to a

Public College Satisfaction Score of 4.02, showing that Aims students are as satisfied with our advising program as students at other institutions are with their respective advising programs. In addition, Emerging Scholars, the intensive advising program for students with remedial needs, and AAA, first-year experience courses have proven very effective at supporting student retention and success, increasing Fall-to-Spring retention by 10% to 17%. Additional data on these programs can be found in section 1P15.

Though fewer students, 36.59%, participated in new student orientation programs, Aims received a 4.16 satisfaction score as compared to 3.93 for the national norm. In this case, data show significantly higher student approval of Aims' orientation program than that of other students rating their colleges' orientation programs.

Unfortunately, students ranked Aims' financial aid operations significantly lower than other students ranked their respective colleges' financial aid operations. 2009 ACT Student Opinion Survey results show a 3.73 score for Aims compared to a 4.13 Public College Satisfaction Score. Since this survey, we have increased staffing levels in the Financial Aid department and, during peak periods, hired an outside agency to help with the timely processing of applications (see section 6R4 for more details).

6R3. Performance results for administrative support service processes

While we do not currently collect data reflecting administrative support services, some questions on our recent QoWL and Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction surveys relate to administrative support services. Table 6-B, on the following page, shows results from Noel-Levitz.

RATE IMPORTANCE AND SATISFACTION (on a 5-point scale)	Aims			Comparison Group		
	Importance Mean	Satisfaction Mean	Gap	Importance Mean	Satisfaction Mean	Gap
This institution does a good job of meeting the needs of staff	4.34	3.16	1.17	4.38	3.14	1.23
This institution makes sufficient staff resources available to achieve important objectives	4.15	3.10	1.04	4.36	3.10	1.27
This institution makes sufficient budgetary resources available to achieve important objectives	4.25	3.16	0.99	4.44	3.20	1.24

6-B: Employee Satisfaction Rating for Administrative Support Issues, Compared with Benchmarked Data
Source: Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey

6R4. Using information to improve student, administrative, and organizational support

Data are used at the departmental and institutional levels. Concerns and problems are discovered through direct feedback or survey results. Our department meetings are often the first step toward solving a problem related to specific operations. If the department can't correct the issue, it may be addressed at the division level, but Senior Management often addresses the problem through cross-divisional collaboration.

For example, the Financial Aid department adjusted the schedule for front desk coverage to better serve student needs. Senior Management contributed to the solution by creating two new Assistant Financial Aid Director positions as well as a student specialist position.

Sometimes, qualitative information carries more weight than quantitative data. For instance, a significant number of students voiced complaints about parking facilities on the Greeley Campus. Even though our score of 3.78 on student satisfaction surveys was better than the national norm of 3.63, the issue was deemed important enough for Senior Management to address. Consequently, we added a much-needed lot near a high-use building. Furthermore, we added even more parking in conjunction with a recent campus beautification project.

6R5. Comparing performance results for Supporting Organizations Operations with other higher education organizations

Students rank Aims processes relatively equal to the processes of other schools in the survey. As shown in the Table 6-C, the most favorable comparison between Aims and the norm is in "College-sponsored tutorial services," where Aims is 0.22 above the norm. On the other hand, Aims is lower than the norm by 0.4 in "Financial aid services." When looking at the table as a whole, Aims ranks significantly higher in four categories and significantly lower in two categories. These scores indicate that Aims compares favorably to other institutions, with some significant strengths and a few areas of challenge.

Category Six Improvements

6I1. Recent improvements in Supporting Organizational Operations

We have begun a concerted effort to collect more and better data, using standardized instruments. Furthermore, since other institutions use those tools, benchmark data can be established, and comparisons between institutions can be made. The Student Services division and the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment department have scheduled student surveys to best meet our needs. Our new membership in the National Community College Benchmark Project allows us to compare ourselves to peer institutions.

Service	% Use	Local Rank of Satisfaction Score	Local Satisfaction Score	Public College Satisfaction Score	Significant difference between local and public
Parking facilities and services	81.30%	16	3.78	3.63	**
Academic advising/course planning services	72.76%	9	4.03	4.02	
Computer services	67.48%	2	4.36	4.27	*
Library/learning resources center facilities & services	62.80%	6	4.14	4.23	*
Financial aid services	61.79%	18	3.73	4.13	***
College orientation program	36.59%	4	4.16	3.93	***
College-sponsored tutorial services	27.64%	1	4.41	4.19	**
Vocational guidance/career planning services	25.61%	8	4.12	4.08	
Cafeteria/food services	22.76%	20	3.65	3.71	
College-sponsored social activities	18.70%	10	4.01	4.09	
*significant at the .05 level; ** significant at the .01 level; *** significant at the .001 level					

6-C: Student Satisfaction Rating of Common Support Services, Compared to Other Public Colleges
Source: ACT Student Opinion Survey

Recently, our All College Action Committee (ACAC) designated a new Action Project, *Designing Systems to Measure Effectiveness.* As part of this project, our Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment office will work with various departments, including student and administrative services, to develop and systematize data collection, analysis, and use for continuous improvement.

6I2. Selecting processes to improve and setting targets for improved results in Supporting Organizations Operations

The campus' relatively small size lends itself to an infrastructure allowing staff, faculty, and administrators to mingle and become familiar with each other, the benefits of which are detailed in 6P4. Such communication is enhanced through the *Aims Daily*. In addition, we host several college-wide gatherings where professional activities and personal interaction take place, thus facilitating communication. In the fall, just before the start of school, the College has Convocation. Near the start of spring semester, the College hosts Con-

versation Day. Near the end of spring semester is the President's Reception, at which faculty and staff are recognized for outstanding achievement and longevity with the College. Prior to the start of the summer session, the college staff organization hosts a breakfast and a professional development exercise.

These events nurture a culture of caring and camaraderie among employees. Also, each event has a portion devoted to announcements and information sharing.

The College is committed to improvement. This is evidenced in part by the commitment to the All College Action Committee and the projects emanating from that committee. Furthermore, various college-wide activities address AQIP and related action items. For example, Conversation Day 2011 focused on school improvement as its major theme.

Additionally, Senior Management meetings and retreats, as well as faculty and staff input, inform the Board's annual retreat to develop or affirm goals for the College.

Category Seven: Measuring Effectiveness

Introduction

As with most colleges, much of the data we collect, analyze, and distribute is derived from reports required by state and federal agencies, as well as the Higher Learning Commission, our accrediting body. These reports form the basis for analyzing and benchmarking standardized data, allowing us to determine trends in enrollment, retention, remediation, and completion, as well as staffing and budgetary issues. Additional data is collected as part of the normal business process or in response to division and department requests for specific information to complete specialized reports or inform planning functions.

Our Measuring Effectiveness Action Project, *Scrubbing the Data - Creating a Data Inventory*, began by conducting an inventory of common data needs, as well as specific needs of academic and support departments. The resulting inventory has allowed the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment (IEA) office to develop a timeline of reporting needs and to designate which needs can be met through the common data set and which needs require specialized data. To ensure data is available, valid, and consistent, the team, partnering with the Institutional Resource Management department, recommended using a data user interface program and a data warehouse system. To that end, we recently purchased the Data Cookbook, intended to improve the accessibility of existing reports and provide clear, agreed-upon definitions of institutional terms for creating additional reports, thus facilitating consistency of reporting between divisions. In conjunction with the Data Cookbook, the College has also installed an enterprise data warehouse to coordinate with the Banner system, which will allow us to maintain data history and improve data quality and consistency. These two tools will improve security, control, and accuracy of data.

In addition, a recently formed committee – the External Reporting Oversight Committee (EROC) – reviews each data report the college submits to an outside agency. The committee is made up of representatives from all divisions. To better understand reported data, the committee includes the data custodian of each data set. This person is responsible for oversight of the data in one of the four Banner modules. For instance our Registrar is the Data Custodian for student record data.

While our IEA office works with many departments to design, administer, and analyze data collection tools for continuous improvement initiatives, we have not developed similar systems to examine the effectiveness of the IEA office. Thus, in this area, we function on a Reacting level. For example, recent surveys and data collection efforts have centered on the Measuring Effectiveness Action Project, *Scrubbing the Data - Creating a Data Inventory.* Once this project is completed and a close-out survey reveals its final effectiveness, it is doubtful that follow-up surveys will be taken. Our newest Action Project, *Designing Systems to Measure Effectiveness,* will also impact the IEA office by giving us the opportunity to develop and implement a data analysis tool to measure whether IEA efforts are meeting the College's needs.

Category Seven Processes

7P1. Selecting, managing, and distributing data to support your instructional and non-instructional programs and services

Aims Community College uses the SunGard HE Banner suite of administrative software to collect, store, and present information about students, employees, and finances. Entities across campus can select and manage information and distribute it to internal and external stakeholders. For example, students can directly access their personal contact information, financial aid, bills, course schedules, grades, and degree and certificate awards. Advisors can see student records and

notes from previous advising sessions to better assist students in the next registration cycle. Through the Luminis portal, faculty members can retrieve their class schedules, rosters, and grades, allowing them to easily report student information for other users. All employees can quickly view pay stubs, W-4 information, leave balances, contact information, and job descriptions, allowing employees to correct any problems in a timely fashion. Cost center managers and their delegates can view current budget and expenditure information, which helps offices to stay within their allotted budget and plan for emergencies.

Some offices, like the tutoring center, maintain decentralized information. Tutoring center personnel recently assessed their ability to collect reliable, accurate data and, based on their findings, have implemented a new process. The previous system did not allow for accurate recording of time spent in the center or the type of assistance requested. In the new system, students check in through a queuing system. Each tutor has an iPad or tablet and knows who is next in line. When the tutor meets with the student, he or she records time spent as well as the topic covered. This new system allows the tutoring center to provide better customer service and track time spent with students. It also allows the tutoring center to analyze wait times, average time spent with tutor, and frequency of use by students to make adjustments to schedules, staffing levels, and training before issues arise.

7P2. Selecting, managing and distributing data to support your planning and improvement efforts

We contain and manage most college data through the Banner suite of administrative software. The system includes all student data (enrollment, degrees awarded, admissions, major, advisors, etc.), financial aid, human resources, payroll, finance, and accounts receivable. Data collected in the Banner system is regularly evaluated by various offices and monitored by our data custodians.

Recently, we instituted a new method of sharing information with students. Advisors needed a software program that could help build students' schedules or show them how close they were to finishing a degree or certificate. In some cases, students would ask about the impact from changing their major. The long standing advising software couldn't meet these needs, so Student Services invested in Degree Works, which has not only improved student advising, but may lead to improved retention and graduation rates. Eventually, the college would like to use this software to plan course offerings based on the courses and schedules students need.

The school has begun a process to collect survey data for benchmarking purposes. We use this data to determine planning and improvement efforts. Aims has been collecting survey data for several years, but until five years ago the data was derived from in-house surveys. While it seems we have been collecting data for a significant amount of time, it takes several cycles to establish trends and build plans and improvements based on the survey data. In fall 2011, the college administered a second cycle of the ACT Student Opinion Survey (SOS). This data has been summarized to reveal longitudinal data for Aims and how we compare to other community colleges who participated in the survey. We share this data through various campus groups including academic divisions and departments, Enrollment Management, Senior Management, the External Reporting Oversight Committee (EROC), the All College Action Committee (ACAC), and the Board of Trustees. We are currently posting data to the intranet and will be including data summaries from the ACT Student Opinion Survey in student publications. We will continue to monitor survey data to observe trends and make improvements.

As discussed in 6P2 and 6P4, we used the most recent ACT SOS to confirm that we need to improve financial aid services. A committee had been formed to review financial aid processes, and the survey data confirmed that we need to continue this committee's work. This committee

has built efficient processes into the Financial Aid department that are designed to improve students' feelings about the services they receive from financial aid. We will continue to monitor this area the next time we administer the ACT SOS.

7P3. Determining the needs of departments and units related to the collection, storage, and accessibility of data

During the *Data Inventory* Action Project, each department/unit was interviewed to begin cataloguing systematic data needs. Results showed that needs among academic departments were closely related. For instance, each department needs reports detailing faculty load and program costs. The academic deans then use these reports to decide which classes the college will offer the following term and how many faculty members are needed.

In administrative offices, data needs are specific to the department concerned. For example, Financial Services uses its reports to ensure that the college is following revenue and expense policies and procedures, and Information Resources Management uses Banner security reports to monitor employees' access to Banner.

7P4. Analyzing and sharing data at the organizational level

The college submits data on various elements, both by semester and by year, to the Colorado Department of Higher Education as well as to IPEDS. The college uses data about enrollment, admissions, financial aid, human resources, remedial education, and finance to determine trends. Data that seem to be counter to historical trends are reviewed for accuracy, and if the information is correct, the college researches causes for the change. Data is shared with various committees on campus, including Senior Management, EROC, and ACAC. A summary of the data is posted to the college's intranet for internal stakeholders' review.

In addition to analyzing and distributing mandated reports, Aims uses data from the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) to compare our institution with state and national peers. Finally, we compare Aims data with that of peer institutions pulled from IPEDS. We analyze IPEDS data, such as retention and graduation rates, the number of degrees/certificates awarded, revenue and expense information, and enrollment. We use this data in discussions and negotiations about metrics to be used in the performance contract Aims will enter into with the Department of Higher Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education.

Throughout this category and portfolio, we have described the wide variety of evidence collected and analyzed as part of Aims' operations. Not only do we collect and report data required by state and federal agencies, our accrediting agency, and other organizations, but our EROC committee reviews and analyzes these reports, paying specific attention to trend and longitudinal data that demonstrate institutional progress. We distribute multiple student and employee satisfaction surveys. In addition, many other studies are completed annually, including reviews of liberal arts and career and technical programs. These program reviews document enrollment, student success, employer satisfaction, emerging industry trends, and a cost/benefit analysis. Faculty then use this data to direct program improvements. As discussed in 3P3, the Welding faculty and program advisory committee used data including enrollment and employment outlook to develop plans for the program. Minutes from these meetings document short-term plans to continue summer classes for certificate and degree students, as well as long-term plans to increase non-traditional enrollment, increase program completion, and develop a new agricultural welding certificate program. **(CC5D-1&2)**

Senior Management, departments, and divisions analyze and use survey results. Concerns are addressed by the group that "owns" them, or they may be resolved by cross-divisional cooperation

through Senior Management. If we find negative trends, we analyze the cause of the change, considering past corrections and their effects. Our primary focus is improving academic programs, services for students, and services supporting our mission. The Board of Trustees bases annual goals and month-to-month decisions on improvement and sustainability. For instance, from 2009 to 2011, one Board of Trustees goal was to "Develop a budget representing the current economic situation, while maintaining the quality of academic programs to help students learn." The focus was on sustaining the College, while ensuring students receive top-level education. Additionally, the Board asked us to maintain a general fund balance to cover a projected two-year downturn. We first analyzed past revenue and expenditure data, along with their effect on academics. Using what we had learned in past budget cycles, we looked for areas to reduce department budgets, thereby increasing the general fund balance. At the same time, however, using our experience in developing new programs related to the green energy movement, we began to collect data to inform a decision to offer an Oil and Gas Technology program. By accessing necessary data and using past experience, we were able to develop an appropriate budget, which allowed us to grow and sustain the general fund balance while developing an exciting new program to serve our students and the oil and gas industry, which is so important in our region. **(CC5D-3)**

7P5. Determine the needs and priorities for comparative data and information

Various campus groups help determine how Aims will benchmark itself. The Senior Management team, ACAC, Enrollment Management, and EROC provide feedback on how Aims will compare data to other schools. Discussions within these groups revealed that Aims needed to participate in surveys that benchmark Aims against other community colleges. We have established a regular cycle of student surveys, as shown in Chart 7-A. These surveys focus on some portion
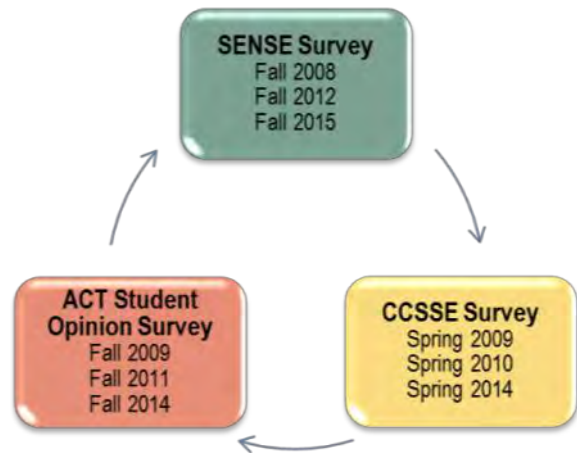
7-A: Aims Community College Student Survey Cycle
Source: Aims Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Office

of the student population (e.g., ACT SOS – all students, SENSE – new students).

In 2011, Aims used IPEDS data to develop a 26-school national peer group for benchmarking purposes. These peers are public two-year schools funded by local taxes. Additionally, the peer schools have open enrollment, a student headcount between 2,500 and 5,500, no housing, and both academic and vocational programs. Fifty schools' websites were checked for nursing, welding, and aviation programs. The 26 schools that offer all three programs became our national peer group. We use these peers to benchmark the college on the NCCBP, which provides a wealth of data on various criteria. After this year, Aims will have three years of data allowing us to look for large changes over time.

The Human Resources department uses the Mountain States Employer's Council survey and the salary tables and job descriptions from the State of Colorado to compare Aims to other higher education institutions, as well as regional industries. This data is vital to ensure Aims can be competitive when searching for new employees and retaining current ones.

In addition to the surveys mentioned above, the college administered two surveys for employees: the Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey and the in-house Quality of Work Life Survey (QoWL). We used the surveys to rate ourselves nationally

through the Noel-Levitz survey but also to gather trend information through the QoWL survey. Employees were randomly assigned to one survey or the other making sure the groups were comparable in gender, employee class, time at the institution, and full-time/part-time status, thus allowing us to make comparisons between the surveys. A summary of survey results was recently distributed to the college through the *Aims Daily.*

7P6. Ensuring department analysis of data and information aligns with your organizational goals

Two initiatives have recently been implemented to ensure data consistency and alignment with organizational goals.

First, in 2011, as a result of the *Data Inventory* Action Project, Aims purchased and is implementing a tool called the Data Cookbook - a data dictionary, report description repository, and report request tool. This tool allows departments to review existing reports, reducing the requests for new or customized reports and increasing report consistency. The Data Cookbook contains report descriptions and definitions of component data elements, allowing the user to understand specifically what the report contains.

Second, the college has invested in an operational data store and enterprise data warehouse. These tools will provide one consistent source of data, ensuring that departments can access reliable information and definitions that align with institutional goals and priorities.

7P7. Ensuring the timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security of information systems

In regards to timeliness, snapshots of the required data are taken at established points in time and stored in an Access database.

- The established target dates for student data:
  ◊ Day 15 (census)
  ◊ Last day of the semester
  ◊ Weekly freezes starting at the beginning of the registration cycle
  ◊ Daily freezes during the 2 weeks before classes begin through day 15
- The established census date for Human Resources data is October 1
- The established collection date for financial aid data is September 1, once the financial aid year is complete
- Degrees awarded data is collected July 1 for the previous school year (summer, fall, and spring)
- The established collection date for Financial Services is taken on July 1 for business through June 30

To ensure accuracy and reliability, IEA staff compare current data to trend data. If there is a large change in any one data element, based on the professional judgment of the IEA staff members, actual record-level data is mined to see why the change occurred. The IEA department examines the data regularly during the semester.

Our information systems follow best practices with respect to data security. External security is confirmed through an annual audit by an independent company. Using audit data, improvements are made to the firewalls and other systems as needed. Banner security tables control internal security of the administrative databases. Employees must change passwords for both Windows and Banner systems every 90 days. We strictly enforce FERPA regulations, and each employee is required to take an online FERPA training course. In addition, each employee is required to read and sign the Computing and Telecommunications Appropriate Use Policy, which stipulates permissible activity on the college's computing systems. Encrypted flash drives are mandatory, and all college-owned laptops are encrypted as well.

Category Seven Results

7R1. Performance measures for the information and knowledge management system

Each October, we prepare the Banner database for updates to the latest software and patches. System users collaborate to make sure any changes in the system will not impact their ability to complete day-to-day duties. Banner upgrades are verified in a test database to eliminate problems with operational functions before applying the upgrade to the live database. Problems found during this upgrade cycle are documented and evaluated to determine how much the issue will impact work. If a particular issue will impact any portion of the system, immediate action is taken to resolve the issue. Because most business information is collected through the Banner database, this process is carefully monitored and analyzed to make sure the information collected will not be impacted by the updates.

The Data Cookbook is a repository of information about data and reports. As data are defined, the college followed a process to verify the accuracy of the definitions. This process is still being analyzed and modified so that definitions and report specifications can be accurately and efficiently documented in the Cookbook. As part of this process, data custodians are tasked to approve or reject definitions and report specifications pertaining to their data set. The Data Cookbook also provides task lists for users so they can effectively complete the process. The Data Cookbook is a new tool, not yet used by the entire campus. Our goal is to provide training this year so employees can use it to better measure the effectiveness of our institution.

Aims uses Argos as its data reporting tool. In Argos, reports are generated from data sets called data blocks. We are working on a process to verify the logic used to create the data blocks, so that information generated from the data block is correct. For example, a data block was created in

Argos that combined enrolled students with the student's degree and major. Through an Open Database Connectivity (ODBC) link to the database, a similar report was generated using a different data view. When the two data sets were compared, they did not match, so differences were checked against the Banner system to reveal which data were correct. Modifications were made to the data block, and the process was repeated until it contained the correct data. Based on this process, other data blocks were modified so the correct information is being used in reports. This process allows us to measure the reporting system's effectiveness and will be monitored regularly so that the data produced is accurate.

7R2. Meeting the organization's needs with the system for Measuring Effectiveness

We are working to establish a system to better evaluate our Measuring Effectiveness processes and how they impact accomplishment of our mission and goals. Three major tasks are in some phase of implementation.

First, we are building a repository of survey data from students and employees that can be used to measure Aims against other colleges. Aims has a rich collection of data from these surveys and the college will continue to build systems to show how our processes for measuring effectiveness meet our needs. Table 7-B, on the next page, describes when surveys have been given and the plan for moving forward.

Second, Aims participates in the National Community College Benchmarking Project. This project allows community colleges to compare various data to other community colleges who participate in the project. Aims has submitted data to the project for the last two years and will again submit data in 2012. Doing so will provide us with three years of baseline data so we can begin to see trends. This data helps us analyze areas where we may not be meeting our goals.

Survey administered	Population measured	Years administered	Years scheduled
Aims Student Satisfaction Survey	Students	2004, 2005, 2007, 2008	Fall 2013, 2016, 2019...
SENSE – Survey of Entering Student Engagement	New Students	2008, 2012	Fall 2015, 2018, 2021...
CCSSE – Community College Survey of Student Engagement	Students and Faculty	2009, 2010	Spring 2014, 2017, 2020...
ACT SOS – Student Opinion Survey	Students	2009, 2011	Fall 2014, 2017, 2020...
Aims Quality of Work-Life Survey*	Employees	2006, 2007, 2008, 2012	Spring 2016, 2019, 2022
Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey*	Employees	2012	Spring 2015, 2018, 2021

7-B: History of Student Survey Administration with Projected Years for Future Administration
Source: Aims Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Office

Finally, the college is focusing on creating a regular cycle of assessment across the institution. Our intention is to develop a method to track the effectiveness of division/department initiatives in meeting their improvement goals. Our newest Action Project will address departmental assessment and also reinvigorate an earlier academic assessment of general education competencies. As more fully discussed in section 1P18, an earlier Action Project designed a course-embedded assessment of student learning. This process was well developed, and the college collected much information, but a successive Action Project was not able to "close the loop." The new project team will resurrect the process with some changes to better establish it and continue collecting data. In non-academic departments, we will work to implement methods for measuring effectiveness and accomplishment of goals.

7R3. Comparing performance results processes for Measuring Effectiveness with those of other higher education organizations

Aims has collected student opinion data through the ACT Student Opinion Survey. Table 7-C compares how Aims students ranked the top five

	ACT Student Opinion Survey Summary Results on Top Five Most Used Services 2011 and 2009					
	Aims Responses to ACT Student Opinion Survey				Public Colleges Average Satisfaction	
	2009 Percent Use	2009 Average Satisfaction	2011 Percent Use	2011 Average Satisfaction	2011	2009
Parking facilities and services	81.30%	3.78	75.26%	3.83	3.31 ***	3.63 **
Academic advising/course planning services	72.76%	4.03	65.40%	4.02	3.83 ***	4.02
Library/learning resources center facilities & services	62.80%	4.14	64.71%	4.35	4.27 *	4.27 *
Financial aid services	61.79%	3.73	59.52%	3.67	3.98 ***	4.23 *
Computer services	67.48%	4.36	54.67%	4.39	4.25 ***	4.13 ***
*difference significant at the .05 level; **difference significant at the .01 level; ***difference significant at the .001 level						

7-C: Survey Summary Results on Top Five Most Used Services 2011 and 2009
Source: ACT Student Opinion Survey

used services in 2011 and in 2009 as well has how Aims compared to the other public colleges on the 2011 survey. Aims students have ranked the top services consistently over time except for library/learning resources, which students ranked much higher in 2011. The library was ranked higher in 2011 because in 2009 the College Center, where the library is housed, was being remodeled causing students to go to three different locations to use the library services. In 2011, the library was housed in one location, so the rating improved significantly.

The rating of financial aid services decreased slightly from 2009 to 2011, but the change was not statistically significant. When compared to the other public colleges that participated in the survey, Aims ranks higher in every category except financial aid. Not only do we rank higher in student satisfaction in these four areas, but we do so at a significantly higher rate than other schools. Financial aid is ranked significantly lower than at other schools. An Enrollment Management subcommittee has been created and is working on improving services in financial aid, as detailed in 6R2 and 6R4.

For the last two years, Aims has participated in the National Community College Benchmark project. Participating in this project allows us to compare data to other community colleges that also participate in the NCCBP. In addition, Aims is able to select peer groups and compare data to these more targeted groups. Aims used the summer 2011 peer group to compare with the NCCBP as well as Colorado community colleges that submitted data to the NCCBP. Table 7-D summarizes only a portion of the measures examined using this data. Because data needs to be reported from final IPEDS data, the most recent report uses data from 2009-10. In 2012, Aims will be submitting data for 2010-11 and will have three years of data to compare.

The per-credit-hour cost to the college is high compared both nationally and locally, perhaps due to the very low average class size and the low student-to-faculty ratio. Another trend we examined is the comparison of credit hours taught by full- and part-time instructors. At first, we compared data only with the national group, and Aims was in the 29th percentile for full-time faculty positions compared to the 44th percentile the year before. When compared to Colorado peer

National Community College Benchmark Project Comparison									
						Aims percentile when compared to:			
	Aims 2009 Data	Aims 2008 Data	2009 National Median	2009 State Median	2009 Peer Median	2009 National Colleges	2008 National Colleges	2009 State Colleges	2009 Peer Colleges
Cost Per Credit Hour	167	198	126	108	159	75	87	85	61
Average Class Size	15.63	15.39	19.68	17.95	19.09	8	12	25	7
Student/Faculty Ratio	12.55	11.11	18.34	13.5	18.48	12	6	35	13
% Credit hours Taught by Full-time Faculty	44.45%	51.29%	51.77%	40%	51.7	29	44	64	35
% Credit hours Taught by Part-time Faculty	55.55%	48.71%	48.23%	59%	48.2	71	57	42	78
Persistence: Fall to Fall	40.45%	51.63%	49.5%	42%	47.92	6	65	37	7
Persistence: Next Term	63.58%	67.91%	71.8%	64.39%	71	13	33	37	14
Completed/Transferred in 3 Years: FT Students	62.39%	52.45%	37.77%	44.04%	35.32	96	87	99	99

7-D: Benchmarked Data Comparing Aims and Peer Group
Source: National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP)

institutions, Aims ranked in the 64th percentile, meaning we have a smaller proportion of full-time faculty compared to part-time faculty. The decrease in the percentage of credit hours taught by full-time faculty is likely caused by double-digit enrollment growths experienced by Colorado community colleges from 2008 to 2009, which increased the need for part-time instructors.

Regarding persistence and success, common wisdom says that if a school has low retention, it should have low degree/transfer rates. However, Aims had low retention yet high completion/ transfer rates. We have analyzed Aims and its peer groups using retention and completion data. When Aims submits retention information, IPEDS generates the percentage based on the number of first-time in fall, full-time, degree/certificate seeking students who returned the following fall. However, this number does not consider students seeking a certificate that is one year or less in length. These students would not intend to return the following fall. Aims serves a large number of students earning one-year or less certificates, thus decreasing the retention rate while increasing the graduation rate. We focus on producing students with credentials so they can earn their certificate and enter the workforce.

Last, Aims does compare employee salaries with those in other industries. In particular, the HR office compares staff salaries to salaries of other northern Colorado businesses using the Mountain States Employer's Council survey. This survey allows HR to determine whether salaries at Aims are comparable to other companies in the area and whether the college is competitive in recruiting and retaining employees.

Category Seven Improvements

7I1. Recent improvements in Measuring Effectiveness

We have made many improvements in the last four years. Measuring Effectiveness received substantial attention through The *Data Inventory* Action Project. Another reason we directed attention to this topic was that Colorado has begun instituting performance contracts on which to base state funding.

Aims' advances in surveys and benchmarking activities are described in sections 7R2 and 7R3. The IEA Director has established peer groups with similar national and state institutions, and we are benchmarking against these two groups, deriving conclusions and taking action on them.

The *Data Inventory* Action Project clarifies definitions. College data miners and report writers have a fresh understanding of data term definitions ("term" means a data type being mined, e.g., "registered student").   Implementing the Data Cookbook clarifies a term's precise meaning. The Data Cookbook has earned credibility because the data custodians, who control data in each of Banner's four modules, must approve each term's definition. When the report consumers need data, the Data Cookbook's glossary of terms clarifies it.

Data reporting was previously somewhat fragmented, as documented by the *Data Inventory* Action Project, because there were multiple places to request reports. This problem was, in part, due to research staff being located in separate departments and using disparate term definitions. All of the research staff are now located in the same department, allowing report requests to be treated systematically through the Data Cookbook. There is less confusion because term definitions are catalogued and available for review. Report readers, in most cases decision-makers, have a better understanding of the data.

We are transforming our processes for measuring effectiveness. We are implementing systematic processes to assist college decision-making. Performance results will show college stakeholders where they are excelling and where they need to improve.

7I2. Selecting processes and setting targets for improvement

The college culture has shifted to become more accepting of change. A concrete example of this is the process to update the method of course survey collection. Previously, in-seat class paper surveys were conducted during faculty course evaluation periods. This process took approximately 1,000 staff hours and reams of paper each semester.

A "green" committee of staff and faculty researched methods to reduce the college's use of paper and recommended using online surveys. The Instructional Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC) examined the recommendation for its feasibility. The Information Resources Management department and ITAC worked together to select an online tool that most resembled the paper survey. During spring and fall semesters of 2011, we piloted the online survey in select classes. In the spring, the Behavioral and Social Sciences department piloted the survey in 45 sections, involving 21 faculty members. In fall, two departments participated, Behavioral and Social Sciences and Business Technology. Seventy-nine sections and 34 faculty members were involved. The chairs of these departments worked closely with the IRM and IEA departments. ITAC members voted to take the idea forward as an institutional initiative based on the results of the pilot and recommended that the institution fully deploy the survey in the fall of 2012-13 school year.

Not only does this initiative help the college's "green" efforts, but it gives department chairs and deans a timely way to measure faculty effectiveness. This is one example of a changing culture.

With respect to infrastructure, two items assist the college to prepare for future planning. The IEA department staff are centrally located. The college is committed to measuring effectiveness, and to that end, staff and systems are being developed to understand and measure data elements that have an effect on future plans.
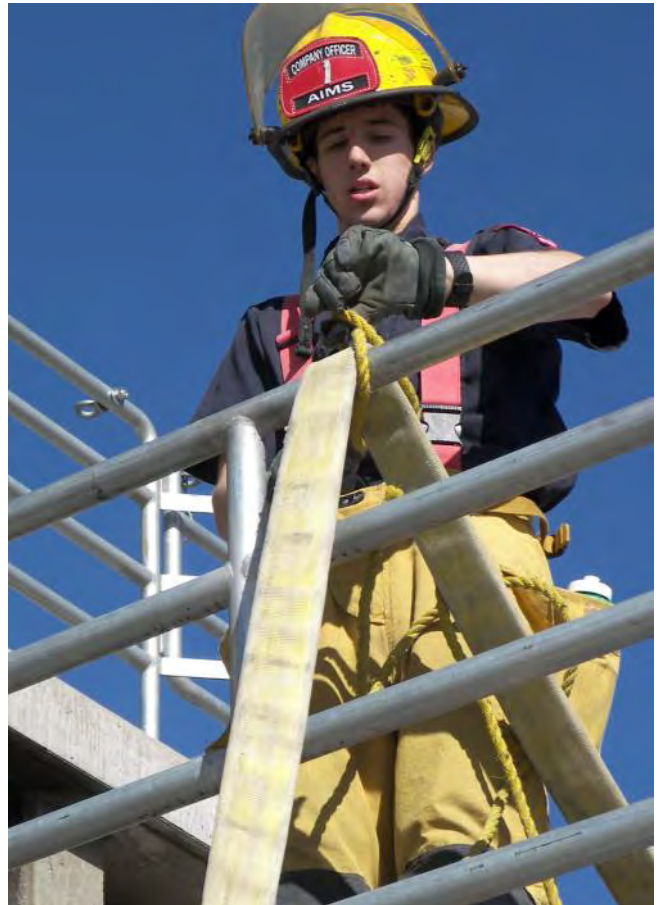
Category Eight: Planning Continuous Improvement

Introduction

As a local district college, we ensure that each cycle of goal setting, strategic planning, and budget development at Aims Community College focuses on our most important stakeholders – our students and our local taxpayers. Aims has a strong commitment to the AQIP process; thus, we always consider continuous improvement in both short- and long-term planning. Since adopting the AQIP model, we have developed Action Projects in five of the nine AQIP categories. As we worked through these projects, we learned how to measure outcomes to monitor the success and effectiveness of the project. With this experience and the sharper focus of our restructured institutional research department, our oversight and outcomes continue to improve. In addition to our formalized AQIP Action Projects, we have also completed myriad "quick fix" and "College Improvement Initiatives (CI^2)" to meet smaller, more immediate improvement needs.

In the broad, college-wide strategic plans and the formal AQIP Action Plans, Aims functions at a Systematic maturity level. Processes are repeatable and measured with cyclic review and evaluation of effectiveness measures. The smaller quick fix and CI^2 projects are managed on a Reacting level. Since many of these represent one-time improvements, this level of maturity may be appropriate to the longevity of the projects.

While we are proud of the progress we have made through our current and completed Action Projects, we are enthusiastic about our newest Action Project, *Developing Systems to Measure Effectiveness*. This project is designed to develop new evaluation systems in areas of the college that have not yet begun this process. Doing so will help develop a system of goal setting, improvement initiatives, measurement of outcomes, and goal revision in departments and standing committees across our college. We look forward to significant growth in measuring effectiveness as a result of this project.

Beyond Action Projects, the College has several pending initiatives that will offer improved access and opportunities for our students. Recently approved new programs in Oil and Gas Technology and Agriculture will allow us to address needs in our community, which has strong roots in the farming and energy industries.   As the economy improves, Aims plans to build another campus, 25 miles southwest of the main campus and along an arterial, interstate highway. This location was planned in response to the needs of college stakeholders who want a campus convenient to major commuter routes and easily accessible by students from all of our service area. We will continue to look for ways to meet the needs of our current and future students.

Category Eight Processes

8P1. Key planning processes

Aims Community College is in the process of a cultural shift that embraces the recommendations received based on our former portfolio submission. We are integrating assessment into all areas of the college and developing a college-wide system for planning for continuous improvement (CI).

Our planning process integrates annual Board of Trustees (BOT) goals, related to the college mission, with ongoing institutional strategic planning; planning related to reaccreditation; academic planning; and facilities, technology, and business continuity planning. The BOT goals are usually broad so that they cover all operations of the college, for example, BOT Goal #1 for 2011-12: "Develop a budget representing the current economic situation, while maintaining the quality of academic programs to help students learn."

Using BOT goals, Senior Management develops a three- to five-year strategic plan, with input from the Director of Human Resources, the Director of
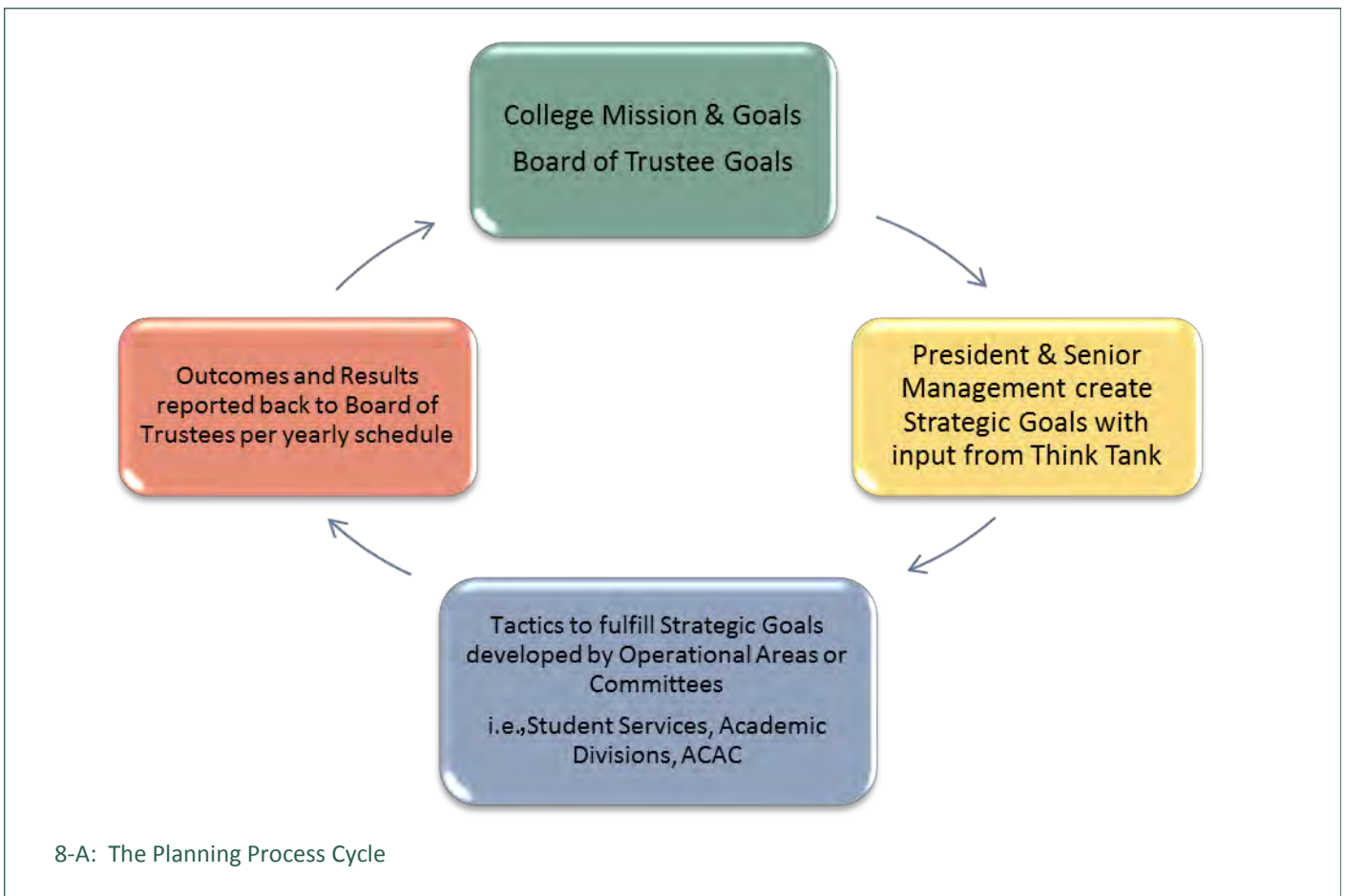
Facilities, and the Think Tank. The Think Tank is an *ad hoc* committee, with broad constituency and strong faculty representation, brought together to reflect on college challenges and to brainstorm possible solutions.

This strategic plan is then analyzed by the All College Action Committee (ACAC), whose charge is "to encourage ideas and cultivate strategies that fulfill college goals." As a group, ACAC reviews relevant data and develops tactics to support the strategic plan. ACAC is also the forum from which AQIP projects are generated, monitored, and evaluated. These data-enriched discussions help address the expectations (sometimes conflicting) of key stakeholders.

The planning process is cyclical, as seen in Chart 8-A, with results, measures, and feedback from stakeholders influencing development of BOT goals. Central to the planning process is Senior Management, as they play a role in all college planning.

8P2. Selecting short- and long-term strategies

The college selects long- and short-term strategies to support goals through a collaborative effort, with the All College Action Committee (ACAC) and Senior Management at the center of the process, as noted in 8P1. Additionally, division leaders distribute BOT goals to the departments and then allow each department in their division to develop its own goals, considering board goals and other influences, such as the learning-centered college philosophy and Career and Technical Education advisory committee input. Once the departments develop their goals, they formalize and publish them in the Academic Master Plan (AMP), an annual report required by Colorado Department of Higher Education. Each division, ACAC, and other strategic development bodies review data and benchmarks to compare our progress to other institutions or to the college's past performance.

College Mission & Goals
Board of Trustee Goals

President & Senior Management create Strategic Goals with input from Think Tank

Tactics to fulfill Strategic Goals developed by Operational Areas or Committees

i.e., Student Services, Academic Divisions, ACAC

Outcomes and Results reported back to Board of Trustees per yearly schedule

8-A: The Planning Process Cycle

The excerpt below from the Academic Master Plan illustrates our process of strategy design:

Technology Planning at Aims Community College follows a collaborative process beginning with input from the Academic Master Plan. The Information Resources Management (IRM) division develops a Technology Master Plan that integrates the Academic Master Plan as well as institution-wide strategic plans to ensure the balance of academic needs, accreditation requirements, and institutional resources. The development and implementation of such a master plan provides the rigor and communications essential to a continual re-assessment of goals and the linking of current institutional priorities. The Technology Master Plan encompasses a three-year period and is reviewed and revised annually to determine short and long-term strategies.

The IRM division works closely with the institution's Instructional Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC). This committee is an interface between faculty and technology. The group reviews proposals for technology implementations or changes and provides approvals of network down days, coordination with the timing of software upgrades, and support or assistance with questions and issues. At the time of this writing, current ITAC initiatives include the investigation of the full deployment of online course evaluations for both online and in-seat classes, of the feasibility of online syllabi, and discussions continue surrounding providing student file storage.

Similar planning processes are followed throughout the college, at institutional, division and department levels.

8P3. Developing key action plans to support organizational strategies

8P1 and 8P2 address developing strategies and describe our planning process. We use the same process to develop action plans for the college. Broad, college-wide action plans are supplemented by focused AQIP Action Projects. Both plans and projects seek to address institutional priorities and promote continuous improvement. Examples of action plans at the college include:

- Academic Master Plan
- Technology Plan (IRM)
- Facilities Plan
- Professional Development Plan
- Emerging Scholars Plan (addresses first-year students/developmental education needs)

Our current AQIP Action Projects are:

- *Planning for Data-Driven Decision-Making: Scrubbing the Data*
- *Aligning Part-Time Personnel Practices with Those of Full-Time Employees*
- *The Writers' Community*
- *Developing Systems to Measure Effectiveness*

8P4. Coordinating and aligning planning processes, organizational strategies, and action plans

To coordinate and align plans and strategies, the college emphasizes the following:

1. Aligning all levels of planning with the BOT annual goals.

2. Communicating the BOT annual goals, the college mission, Learning-Centered College philosophy, and stakeholders' needs to all college personnel and community members through our College and Community Relations office.

3. Sharing information among deans, directors, and Senior Management to align the planning process, goals, and strategies.

4. Assessing and gathering feedback for continuous improvement, using such mechanisms as the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunity, Threats (SWOT) analysis and benchmark reports from NCCBP surveys or in-house surveys. Committees that review assessment and feedback include ACAC, Enrollment Management, Advisory Committees, ASACC (student government), and Emerging Scholars.

5. Distributing the Aims' strategic plan college-wide and making it available on the intranet. We disseminate and discuss in ACAC at the beginning of the academic year.

6. Conducting periodic Senior Management open forums to dialogue with employees.

7. Holding Convocation and Conversation Day (all-college gatherings) where our mission, goals, and philosophy are discussed and communicated. We collect notes from these meetings and use them in ACAC, division, and department meetings.

8P5. Defining objectives, selecting measures, and setting performance targets

After the feedback from our last AQIP evaluation, we have focused our efforts to define measures and set performance targets for our college strategies, initiatives, and action plans. As noted in sections 8P1 and 8P2, we look at comparative internal and external data and assessments to set performance projections for departments.

In the last four years, we have focused most strongly on measuring and benchmarking student data, especially addressing retention, completion, and job placement. We use IPEDS data for peer group comparisons; Colorado Community College System and the Colorado Department of Higher Education data as a comparator among other external data sources; Perkins data for Career and Technical Education programs; and internal data on student success in individual courses.

In addition, we use NCCBP surveys to benchmark a variety of data, such as staffing levels, and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) for cost analysis. In these areas, as described in the Academic Master Plan, we determine what we want to measure and the overall results that will indicate success.

While we focus on measurement in all our AQIP Action Projects and plan how we will monitor progress and success, operational departments of the college not directly related to student success have been much less likely to set goals and devise assessments to monitor progress. With the new Action Project, *Developing Systems to Measure Effectiveness*, the college is moving toward each department developing goals and assessment mechanisms to measure outcomes.

8P6. Linking strategy selection and action plans with current resources and future needs?

Challenges influencing our future include increasing student enrollment and reducing the risk of decreased revenue from district property taxes and from state appropriations. Each of these challenges is affected by fluctuations of the local and state economies. Other factors include the ability of the college to meet educational needs of the community - including underprepared students - and attracting and retaining qualified faculty and staff.

The above issues, along with the mission statement and reports such as the SWOT analysis and the strategic plan, inform Board of Trustees decisions as they draft goals. In turn, the Board of Trustees goals guide decision making, budget development, and the future direction of the institution. **(5A3)**

The budget serves as the link between planning and resource allocation, a mechanism for setting priorities, and a plan of action. For example:

Board Goal #1

1. Develop a budget representing the current economic situation, while maintaining the quality of academic programs to help students learn.

   a. Maintain a general fund balance sufficient to cover the projected two-year downturn.

To achieve this goal, Aims Community College has implemented a number of fiscally responsible budgetary practices:

- Establishing adequate reserves
- Making conservative enrollment estimates
- Allocating resources to operating mandates and college priorities

At the end of fiscal year 2011, unrestricted net assets included $27.4 million designated for capital construction and general campus capital equipment, as well as an $11.2 million reserve fund created to offset future shortfalls in funding from state allocations or local property tax revenues, based on the economic outlook for both major sources of funding. We anticipate that at the end of fiscal year 2012, the College will hold a reserve fund of approximately $16 million to help offset the anticipated continuing deterioration of state funding for higher education. This amount will equal approximately two years' worth of state funding as directed by Board Goal #1. Colorado is fast approaching being the first state to completely defund higher education. It is fiscally prudent of the College to assure its longevity through sound fiscal management of resources. **(CC5A-1)**

The budgeting process starts at the department level and moves for approval to the division and Senior Management level.   Each budget line item must indicate alignment with one or more BOT goal. As stated in 6R1, division staff monitor the budget, along with the Budget Director and the Chief Administrative Officer. Budget reports are given to the BOT at each board meeting. Six months before the end of the current fiscal year, budget development begins for the following year.

Present spending is thoroughly analyzed, and adjustments for the current budget are presented to the BOT for review and approval. Results of this review provide the baseline for the budget for the following year. **(CC5A-5)**

Additionally, a "new initiatives" fund was created in the President's budget to address unanticipated projects. The President reviews the new/unanticipated initiatives with Senior Management before approving funds. Examples of past initiatives are: Community College Day; expenses within the AQIP project *Closing the Loop*; the "Redefining Our Culture" initiative, and the new Strategic Marketing Plan.

Our resources support our educational programs and plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality. All requested funds are reviewed for impact on the college as a whole, with emphasis on our mission as an educational institution. As mentioned in 6P2, we identify administrative and support services needs in various ways. One of the most visible means of communicating needs and providing solutions is the weekly Senior Management meetings. Either individually or through department meetings, employees communicate their needs to their senior manager. Typically, Senior Managers bring issues to their weekly meeting for further discussion and decisions. **(CC5A–2)**

In addition to careful management of our fiscal resources, we work to ensure that our human resources, along with the physical and technological infrastructure, will meet college and student needs. Senior Management closely monitors allocation of human resources: every position to be filled, whether replacement or new, must be approved by this group. In making these decisions, they analyze job duties, impact on programs, alternative staffing options, and budgetary effects. Our Human Resources department handles hiring for all approved positions and follows strict processes to ensure all new hires meet the qualifications and training required for their position. We also make sure all facilities and

technology resources will meet or exceed program standards. To that end, the college has recently renovated another major Greeley-Campus class-room building, bringing it up to the same modern technology and bright, useful spaces that charac-terize our other new or remodeled buildings. **(CC5A-1&4)**

8P7. Addressing risk in the planning process

The college compares itself with peer groups, conducts SWOT analyses, holds annual strategic planning retreats for BOT and Senior Manage-ment, and uses models to provide conservative estimates to address the risk in planning. For example, our Chief Administrative Officer uses a financial model to consider prospective fiscal scenarios based on revenues from property taxes, oil and gas taxes, and state funding. Senior Management communicates risk information via deans and directors meetings, ACAC, Senior Management open forums, and department meetings so that such information can be consid-ered in the planning process.

In addition, our planning process for each Aims department applies a variety of resources and practices to assess and address risk. Focus groups, task forces, advisory committees, and associations such as the Aims Staff Association, identify potential or actual risks and provide suggestions to address them. For example, academic programming collects data from Eco-nomic Modeling Specialist Inc. (EMSI) to under-stand the local labor market's need for educated and skilled labor. EMSI data are then reviewed by the advisory and curriculum committees and contribute to our decision to start, revise, or suspend programs, such as those in which gradu-ates place into low-paying jobs and risk defaulting on their financial aid loan; those that saturate the market with graduates in one specific field; or those for which the curriculum no longer teaches needed skills.

8P8. Ensure development of faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities

The previous Systems Appraisal recognized our processes in this area as a Significant Strength (SS). In addition to the ongoing efforts of faculty and staff associations, the Center for Professional Development, Human Resources, and the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center, specific taskforces or committees may be charged with advancing employee development. For example, the Instruc-tional Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC) works on faculty development for online instruc-tion. ITAC is also exploring a model for a two-day, in-house online faculty training seminar, which could be adopted for training in the 2012-13 academic year.

Category Eight Results

8R1. Measures of effectiveness of the plan-ning processes and systems

The college evaluates internal and external measures of effectiveness for planning and for required reports to agencies such as the Colorado Department of Higher Education, Colorado Com-munity College and Occupational Education System, Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Program, State Board of Nurs-ing, Perkins for Career and Technical Education Programs, and the Higher Learning Commission.

In the last four years, we have focused on reten-tion of special populations, primarily students with developmental needs, and maintenance of suc-cessful completion rates; therefore, much of the data analyzed applies to enrollment management, including such surveys and reports as SENSE, CCSSE, CCFSSE, ACT SOS, NCCBP, NCHEMS, CCCS (remedial course completion), IPEDS, BACCHUS Network Benchmarks, and Student Life event surveys.

Departments use such data to set short- and long-term goals, determine the evaluative criteria for those goals, and examine whether results show we have reached those goals. Although we do not have a system-wide tool to measure effectiveness, a new AQIP project will focus on this area. In addition, with recent hiring in the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment (institutional

Board Goals 2009-10	Strategic Initiatives	Results
Goal 1: Increase access and opportunity for students.	A. Development of Enrollment Management Committee to oversee effectiveness of programs: TRIO Grant, First STEP, College Promise, Emerging Scholars, and Priority Scheduling	1. Concluded First STEP program – not effective. 2. Ongoing monitoring of priority scheduling and still determining how best to measure 3. Developed Emerging Scholars advising program through AQIP Action Project. (See section 1P15) 4. Met or exceeded all grant objectives. As a result, TRIO Grant renewal was submitted, as was proposal for new TRIO/STEM Grant.
	B. One-Stop Center for all Student Services	1. Renovated College Center
Goal 2: Improve demonstrated student success.	A. Continue and grow AAA 101 and Emerging Scholars	1. Improved retention rates of students with remedial needs from fall to spring. See Table 1-D.
	B. Action Project, Using course-embedded assessment to promote student learning in general education	1. Allocated time for discussions about quality student assessment. As a result, all Math written assessments were rewritten. 2. Provided additional training to full-time instructors and ongoing training for part-time instructors 3. Implemented revisions to part-time faculty orientation for incoming fall 2010 faculty
	C. Action Project, Completing the assessment loop, implementing an evaluation feedback processes	1. Reflective Practice Groups for faculty -focus on assessment and collaborative learning
Goal 3: Improve internal and external communication.	A. Increase organized opportunities to encourage communication and dialogue about college9	Implemented or continued: 1. "Fireside chats" – academic discussions open to college in 09-10 2. Senior Management open forums 3. Food for Thought: lunch with the President in 08-09 4. Suggestion Box for budget reduction ideas, and Think Tank
	A. Social media use	1. Started Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube
Goal 4: Develop opportunities to support energy industries	A. Continue developing MIST program (add certificate levels and start approval process for AAS degree).	1. Changed name to Applied Energy Technologies, AAS and certificates approved 2. Received TAACCT grant to purchase mobile lab for off-site learning

8-B: Board Goals 2009-10, with Senior Management Developed Strategic Initiatives and Accomplishments

research) department, we can pursue the goal-setting system for each department.

8R2. Performance results for accomplishing organizational strategies and action plans (See Tables 8-B and 8-C)

Board of Trustee Goals 2010-11 and 2011-12	Strategic Initiatives	Results
Goal 1: Develop a budget representing the current economic situation, while maintaining the quality of academic programs to help students learn • Maintain a general fund balance sufficient to cover the projected two-year downturn	A. Focus on sound fiscal practices	1. Reduced budget for each department by a minimum of 10% 2. Established adequate reserves to offset potential shortfalls of state funding and/or property tax revenues 3. Allocated resources to operating mandates and college priorities 4. Instituted hard close on weekends for all locations to reduce HVAC costs 5. Explored alternative funding: grants and/or gifts
	B. Program Evaluation	1. Analyzed the effectiveness of the Suggestion Box and the Think Tank and whether to keep, add, or conclude programs 2. Discontinued leased facilities - Downtown Center, the Early Childhood Center
	C. Tuition Evaluation	1. Instituted differential tuition for higher cost programs
Goal 2: Engage employees in continuous improvement initiatives and activities to support learning.	A. Continue focus on Learning-Centered College	1. ITAC, FTLC, AQIP projects
	B. Emphasize college partnerships with all levels of education, from K-12 through university transfer	1. Continued support for Career Academy, concurrent enrollment, articulation agreements, 3+1 agreements with universities
	C. Increase flexibility in course delivery to make programs more available	1. Established ITAC, instructional designer; training for new online instructors; priority schedule and changed to "Desire2Learn" framework for online courses;
	D. Engage students to improve success	1. Scheduled Convocation speaker, Robert Sherfield; AAA 101/109 curriculum; and I-Focus Workshops
Goal 3: Measure institutional effectiveness and impact of student engagement and outcomes	A. Review instructional data.	1. Reviewed *Assessment* Action Project (Senior Management, divisions, ACAC, and ACEA). Related Action Project instituted Reflective Practice Groups. Continuous updates heard in ACAC.
	B. Assess ability to benefit	1. Established the pre-requisite committee to develop new prerequisites for college level courses and maximize student success. 2. Developed Emerging Scholars and AAA courses
	C. Assess program effectiveness and efficiency	1. Use EMSI data; advisory committees and CTE required data; and data results from all AQIP projects.
	D. Incorporate accountability metrics in college operations.	1. Developed peer groups for IPEDS and NCCBP to compare operations and outcomes; implemented PACE survey series and analysis of results; developed Action Plan to formalize assessment plan for each department

8-C: Board Goals 2010-11 (continued in 2011-12), with Senior Management Developed Strategic Initiatives and Accomplishments

8R3. Projections or targets for performance and action plans over next 1-3 years.

Formal data collection is not system-wide at Aims. We gather data for some departments, especially academics and student services, but not for all; therefore, we can apply evidence-based projections only to select departments. In those departments, we expect improved student learning experiences in the next one to three years, demonstrated by improved performance on our assessment of learning measures. With the benefits of the Emerging Scholars Program and a requirement for AAA courses for most students, we also expect to see increased retention in high-risk student groups. Finally, we hope to see an increase in college enrollments as measured by both credit (FTE) and non-credit options.

We project the completion of three AQIP Action Projects. These projects have focused on the following strategic priorities:

- *Aligning Part-Time Personnel Practices with those of Full-Time Employees* (Valuing People)

- *Planning for Data-Driven Decision Making* (Measuring Effectiveness, Planning Continuous Improvement)

- *The Writer's Community* (Helping Students Learn)

We project the start of four new programs on the Fort Lupton Campus: Agricultural Education, Agricultural Business, Agricultural Production, and Applied Energy Technologies. We expect increased enrollment for programs on which our strategic marketing plan is focusing: Loveland Campus, Fort Lupton Campus, Windsor Automotive Center, Applied Energy Technologies, and Communication Media. Finally, in the near future, the state of Colorado will be adopting performance contracts with higher education institutions. Therefore, in addition to our goals for access, enrollment, and retention, we will adopt performance contract goals which include successful completion.

8R4 Comparing results for continuous improvement with other higher education organizations.

Aims has collected data on performance results of services used compared to other higher education institutions. Please see 7R3 for the results of the ACT Student Opinion Survey and the NCCBP. As described in the planning processes in 8P1, 2, and 3, Aims reviewed the results and made improvements in areas deemed actionable.

Although we have described the process above, we do not have a system to analyze results of our CI processes. This is an area we need to develop, and we are taking steps to do so, as part of our new AQIP project, *Developing Systems to Measure Effectiveness.*

8R5. Evidence of an effective system for planning continuous improvement

The strongest evidence that our system for planning continuous improvement is effective is the initiation of ten Action Projects and successful completion of six of them, with four active Projects at this time. Our Action Projects in the last seven years, have made a significant impact on our institution, our employees and how we help students learn. Our four "Helping Students Learn" projects have

- allowed us to lay the groundwork for an effective, institutional-level assessment system

- empowered faculty to use assessment data to improve programs

- designed an advising system for students with two or more developmental needs that significantly improves their retention and completion rates

- developed a series of short, topical student seminars to grow better writers and faculty seminars to encourage inclusion of writing assignments in cross-curricular courses

Other projects have determined the needs of our student stakeholders, improved morale in full- and part-time employees, and improved our system of storing, retrieving, and analyzing data. Continuous Improvement Initiatives (CI^2) have provided additional advances in student registration, financial aid services, and course pre-requisites.

Additional evidence that our CI planning is effective comes from the institution of the All College Action Committee (ACAC) that oversees the development and monitors the progress of our Action Projects and CI^2s. The broad representation of this committee allows for extensive input to solve problems and guide improvements. The establishment of a committee to drive continuous improvement confirms our commitment to this principle.

Category Eight Improvements

8I1. Recent improvements for Planning Continuous Improvement

Aims Community College has embraced the AQIP process and focused on how to improve and implement continuous improvement systems. In ACAC we systematically reviewed our system appraisal as well as benchmark data.   ACAC then discussed how to implement systems for improvement and how to replicate best practices. As a result of these conversations, Aims has implemented new AQIP projects; increased communication about the college's mission, goals, and measured outcomes; and developed task forces such as the Registration Task Force which looks at quality and efficiencies of the admissions, registration, and financial aid application process.

The college has made a concerted effort to instigate a cultural shift in decision-making, so stakeholder needs are represented more accurately in the decision-making process. In addition, we have incorporated established measures and gathered and reviewed data to guide decision-making. With that said, Aims is in the process of implementing

the latest AQIP project, *Developing Systems to Measure Effectiveness.*

8I2. Selecting processes and setting targets for Planning Continuous Improvement

As stated in 8I1, we are making a cultural shift to intentionally and thoughtfully plan CI and establish a culture of evidence as part of CI. This process and shift will include more stakeholders in the planning process and incorporating the college mission, vision, goals, and specific data into our processes.

By including more stakeholders in decision – making processes, reviewing data on performance, and improving lines of communication through ACAC, we learned of specific areas needing improvement: financial aid and marketing. Question 3I2, describes our response to financial aid issues reported in the CCSSE survey. In marketing, we initiated a new strategic marketing plan in summer 2011, re-organized the Public Information Office, and recently hired a new Director of College and Community Relations. Our culture, size, and infrastructure provide a framework to quickly implement CI. We look forward to continuing to develop a formalized CI system to improve our efforts and show that our systems and results are evidence-based and effective.

Introduction

As a community college, Aims focuses many resources on developing and building relationships within our local and broader communities. Many close partnerships arise between Aims and other educational institutions, from public K-12 school districts, to charter schools, through public and private institutions of higher education located in our state. Our partnerships with regional school districts have produced extremely successful programs that not only provide immediate benefits to participating students, but also encourage them to consider continuing their education at Aims after high school graduation.

Beyond other educational institutions, we also pursue and develop partnerships with governmental and business entities in our service district, including government workforce centers, economic development offices and major employers. Aims is frequently called on to develop programs to support workforce needs in our region, both through non-credit customized training and workshops and through academic programs leading to certificates and degrees focusing on the skills students will need to become good employees. We have recently developed new programs to develop skills in agricultural production, agriculture business management, and the oil and gas industry to meet the needs of the largest employers in our region.

The college regularly collects data reflecting the benefit of these partnerships for our institution, students and community. Such data ranges from enrollment and transfer rates for our students to employer satisfaction with Aims graduates. The college also surveys students to ascertain the impact of special services provided to students through partnerships with outside agencies. While the collection and analysis of data is regularized, some of the processes still exist in departmental silos and the process of continuous improvement through use of this data has not been formalized. Thus we estimate our maturity in a systems

approach at a beginning Systematic level. To pursue improvement in this area, we will use the newly approved Action Project, *Developing Systems to Monitor Effectiveness*, to formalize standing processes and develop methods where none currently exist.

Category Nine Processes

9P1. Building relationships with educational organizations and other organizations from which students are received

Collaborative relationships are encouraged through the institution's mission and values statements and the strategic plan. Aims believes in building relationships with both students and members of our greater community. The strength of these ties enhances the ability of the college to fulfill its mission.

Aims creates, prioritizes and builds relationships based on a shared vision with community consideration. Information comes to the college from a variety of sources, but all key relationships are monitored by the President, Senior Management, and the department directly involved in the relationship. Among them, they prioritize personnel and resources to facilitate partnership support.

Aims is committed to improving relationships with educational organizations as evidenced by the hiring of an Academic Pathways Director. This position facilitates all collaborative educational agreements with high schools, such as Concurrent Enrollment, ASCENT, GED, and the Centennial BOCES High School Diploma Program, as well as articulation agreements with two- and four-year institutions. Creating a single contact department for P-20 initiatives, instead of having services spread throughout the college helps build relationships with educational partners. With local high school graduation rates declining and the Colorado remediation rate for two-year colleges at

58%, Aims is sharing remedial competencies, course objectives, and syllabi with the local K-12 school districts in an effort to reinforce our educational relationship with local high schools. Additionally, we offer remedial course work to University of Northern Colorado students on their campus.

Table 9-A illustrates benefits of partnerships with organizations that provide our students, how benefits are supported, how they are assessed, and how they are balanced with new priorities.

Educational Institutions Community Agencies	Expected Benefits	How are benefits supported?	How are benefits assessed?	How are benefits balanced with new priorities?

K-12
    Students
    Teachers
    Counselors
    School administrators
 	
Centennial BOCES High School
 	
Charter and Online High Schools
 	
Home schooled students/parents
 	
Colorado Gear Up Grant for college readiness
	Awareness leading to increased enrollment; shared resources	Classroom visits/tours
		
		College for Kids
		
		College day/night fairs
		
		Community events
		
		Distance education to rural communities
		
		Professional development for K-12 teachers
		
		Educational Conferences
			Attendance numbers for recruiting events
			
			Concurrent enrollment and articulation numbers
			
			Alignment of curriculum for career pathways
			
			Dialogue between high school and Aims faculty/administration
				Increased high school student enrollments through these programs:
				Career Academy, College Promise; Concurrent Enrollment & ASCENT
				are monitored and results evaluated.

Community Colleges and Universities (state and private) Area technical and vocational schools	Shared resources Programmatic dispersion Ease of transfer Increased articulations	Faculty to Faculty conference Joint curriculum development Guaranteed Transfer programs and courses Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)	Increase in the number of Colorado Department of Higher Education statewide articulations Increase cooperation"	New programs are state-approved and scheduled through a two-year Master Course Scheduling System
Workforce Centers (Weld, Adams, Boulder, and Larimer)	Educating for industry need; New program development Industry-specific training through Continuing Education	Summer school-to-work youth initiatives Federal funding/stimulus packages Workforce Investment Act (WIA)	Students working with Workforce centers are tracked, and data is collected for state reporting.	Industry and economic trends from a regional perspective New industry in area Safeland & OSHA training for new Oil & Gas companies
Military/VA	Program aid to defray student expenses Retooling for civilian jobs	To provide better access to VA benefits, we hired PT VA specialist in the financial aid office.	Veteran Forums Participation in veteran-orientated education fairs	VA benefits are tracked to ensure program funding and completion.

9-A: Relations with Educational Institutions and Community Agencies that Send Students to Aims, showing Benefits and How Benefits are Supported and Measured

9P2. Building relationships with the educational institutions and employers that depend transfer and graduates students

Our relationship-building efforts begin with assessing community need. Aims representatives sit on boards and committees of economic development organizations, regional and local workforce centers, and chambers of commerce to specifically address future needs for education and job skills training. After the initial request for a new program is received and discussed with the Career and Technical Education (CTE) department, job growth and sustainability data are collected and analyzed, and the new program is reviewed by Senior Management. Industry letters of support are obtained and a Program Develop-

ment Team is assembled. Meeting minutes and other required documentation are submitted to the state, and other pertinent agencies, for approval. Ultimately, the new program will supply graduates to meet emerging industry needs. In addition, the Director of Continuing Education works with local businesses, as well as new and existing industries, and collaborates with area economic development entities to attract new business to the area and create credit-bearing and non-credit offerings to meet the training needs of regional employers.

As a local district college, Aims works with the Colorado Department of Higher Education on protocol regarding statewide transfer articulation agreements for bachelor's degrees in the state of Colorado. The purpose of a statewide transfer

Educational Institutions Employers	Expected Benefits	How are benefits supported?	How are benefits assessed?	How are benefits balanced with new priorities?
Four-year Colleges and Universities (state and private)	Cooperative Agreements with UNC and CSU Seamless transfer	2:4 Faculty to Faculty conference Articulation agreements CDHE's General Education Council (GEC) and Guaranteed Transfer (gtPathways) confirm course number, content and scope of transfer courses are comparable	Cooperative agreements Joint statewide articulation negotiations Acquisition of skills necessary for success in university-level course work is measured by retention and success rates	Educational discussions Aims offers remediation on four-year campuses
Area Employers	Credit or non-credit training offered to local employers Aims administers Colorado First Grant training dollars See chart 2R2 • Leprino Foods • Vestas Blades • Vestas Nacelles • UQM Motors	Documented increase in Corporate Education's course offerings Hiring a director specifically to work with regional businesses *WorkKeys* testing to prescreen employee candidates for Vestas	State employer surveys completed annually Vestas uses *WorkKeys* testing to pre-screen job applicants, resulting in a higher quality applicant pool Continuing Education courses are evaluated through Biznet	Contracts reviewed and renewed annually Initiatives support local businesses and industry

9-B: Relations with Educational Institutions and Community Agencies that Receive Transfer Students from Aims or Hire Graduates, showing Benefits and How Benefits are Supported and Measured

articulation agreement is to identify the courses a student at a Colorado public two-year college must complete as part of an Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree in order to guarantee that the student can efficiently complete a bachelor's degree program (BA or BS) at any public four-year college or university. This relationship ensures credit transferability throughout public colleges in the state of Colorado.

In collaboration with Senior Management and ACAC, the Academic Pathways Director and Director of Continuing Education are responsible for developing a systematic process for creating, prioritizing, and building relationships with educational institutions and employers that benefit from the our transfer students or graduates.

Table 9-B, on the previous page, illustrates the benefits of partnerships through which we provide transfer students or graduates, along with how those benefits are supported, assessed, and balanced with new priorities.

9P3. Building relationships with the organizations that provide services to students

Aims cultivates partnerships to provide student services through the following steps:

1. Identify services students need by analyzing the student demographics and surveys.

2. Develop a strategic plan and assign a liaison to determine the unique needs of each relationship and form a committee if needed.

3. Successfully implement this plan by building collaborations through:

    a. professional development

    b. systematic coaching and consulting

4. Monitor and support the plan and hold the leadership team and employees accountable for the effective implementation.

Table 9-C details the benefits of partnerships that provide services for our students and how those benefits are supported, assessed, and balanced with new priorities.

Service Providers and Donors	Expected Benefits	How are benefits supported?	How are benefits assessed?	How are benefits balanced with new priorities?
Coalition of Colorado Campus Alcohol and Drug Educators Weld County Prevention Partners	Increased awareness about impaired driving Alcohol and drug abuse prevention	Based on data, we engage in a comprehensive social norms campaign	Worked closely with Team Fort Collins and Weld County Prevention Partners to collect data about alcohol and drug use in northern Colorado.	Student Life provides programming based on student input, evaluations, and requests.
Private referrals, donors, and sponsors of Aims	Increased access to education for low-income, first-generation, and otherwise disadvantaged students	Funding for tuition or books or both	On a case-by-case basis	On a case-by case-basis

9-C Relations with Community Agencies and Organizations that Provide Services to Students at Aims, showing Benefits and How Benefits are Supported and Measured

Some additional services for our students:

- North Range Behavioral Health is a private, non-profit corporation providing mental health services to students on campus.

- Aims is represented on the steering committee and sub-committees for the Weld Project Connect. The project committee members form partnerships with over 50 service agencies, as well as government, regional businesses, and educational institutions to provide one-on-one support and services for local populations at a single location, on one day. These services help people who might otherwise not have the resources to consider college, and they can decrease homelessness in Weld County.

- Aims' Kiefer Library partners with an electronic library collection: full-text articles and books are available 24/7 both off and on campus.

- The college bookstore partners with the library to house all textbooks for student checkout. This year, students may also rent textbooks for a low, one-time fee.

- In response to student request for online payment, we researched and adopted NelNet as our online tuition payment service provider. A change in policy requiring students to pay in full or set up a payment plan before the semester begins realized a 47% increase in tuition collections. Additionally, students can now get their 1098-T forms online.

- Aims partnered with Heartland Payment Systems to develop the Aims Campus Card. This Discover card offers students immediate access to all financial aid and funds, acts as student ID for access to the gym and library, and can be used to make everyday purchases.

- Aims instituted DegreeWorks, a comprehensive academic advising, transfer articulation, and degree audit software program, that helps students and their advisors successfully negotiate certificate or degree requirements, leading to improved retention and graduation rates.

- Aims Student Life office partners with local law enforcement to provide prevention programming (impaired driving prevention, alcohol and drug abuse prevention). In 2011 we received a small Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) grant to provide comprehensive impaired driving prevention activities on campus. We worked closely with Team Fort Collins and Weld County Prevention Partners to collect data about alcohol and drug use for Aims students ages 18-21. With the data, we engaged in a comprehensive social norms campaign that continues today.

- Clinical and internship placements for students enrolled in occupational programs.

9P4. Building relationships with the organizations that supply materials and services

Aims Community College strives to build relationships with vendors that provide quality service and products at fair market prices. The Aims purchasing process is decentralized; therefore, the individual departments and academic divisions determine their needs and specifications for acquisitions. The Purchasing department collaborates with and assists the different departments and divisions with vendor research, establishing specifications or deliverables, and developing calls for proposal when necessary.

Vendors are selected using criteria such as accessibility, cost, reputation, and service.

We participate in several cooperatives that provide vendors and contracts, allowing the college to select the best vendors to meet our requirements, while in turn building value based relationships. Aims maintains a list of standardized products that enables the college to build relationships with specific vendors.

Aims continues to build relationships with new vendors as needs arise. We demonstrate appreciation of our vendors by timely payments.

9P5 Building relationships with the education associations, external agencies, and the general community

Many Aims relationships are based on historical, political, or legal precedence. We participate in decisions at the state level; we work to build and maintain relationships with the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) and the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE), as well as with other two- and four-year schools, by participating in state of Colorado committees, task forces, and meetings. Additionally, our lobbyist at the state capitol helps us understand proposed legislation and how other institutions of higher education are responding to that legislation. Such participation allows us to be proactive in building coalitions that will meet our needs.

Most often we prioritize and build relationships based on external stimuli. As the economy weakened, our Career Services department partnered with Employment Services of Weld County and the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) to host job fairs for our students and community members. Sharing resources for advertising, marketing, and other expenses has benefited all partners. The unemployed/under-employed community benefits by having the opportunity to attend several regional fairs annually, and employers benefit from the wide pool of applicants. Job fair evaluations are collected from both job-seeking participants and attending employers and provide feedback with which to improve future fairs.

Recently, Aims was asked to collaborate with the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley/Evans School District 6, the International Business and Medical College (IBMC), and the Greeley Chamber of Commerce to develop a shared database for internship and job shadowing opportunities. This collaboration could help maximize community opportunities and resources for students without overlapping calls and requests to businesses. The project is still under evaluation, and each member will determine if such collaboration could evolve into a relationship from which all may benefit. At Aims, it will be reviewed by ACAC, as

a possible collaborative relationship to be pursued.

9P6. Ensuring that partnership relationships meet the needs of those involved

Most of our partnership general agreements, MOUs, and contracts are reviewed annually to ensure Aims continues to meet the needs of the partner organization. We regularly meet with area high school partners to determine needs and improve processes. Our clinical partners are surveyed annually to monitor student and faculty experiences. CTE department chairs work closely with our high school partners to align course curriculum for Career Pathways, therefore creating forums for dialogue between CTE instructors and high school faculty. Additionally, our CTE faculty seeks expertise from area employers through semi-annual advisory committee meetings.

Through partnerships with area community employment agencies, we are able to respond quickly to local business hiring shortages. Recently, the oil and gas industry increased production in the Northern Colorado region. Aims hosted an Oil and Gas forum in September 2011, in partnership with Employment Services of Weld County to determine skills needed for entry level employment in the industry. Although Aims offers a manufacturing degree and certificate program, it was determined that graduates from this program did not acquire the skills needed for the oil industry. Using survey results, Continuing Education responded by offering non-credit, short-term, industry-specific classes in June 2012, and we increased the number of CDL drivers regionally. New Oil and Gas degree and certificate programs were approved by the state in May and HLC in June. Aims began offering credited courses in the fall of 2012. To ensure this program continues to meet stakeholders' needs it will be regularly evaluated using the methods discussed above, i.e., annual reviews by program advisory committee and yearly employer surveys.

9P7. Creating and building internal relationships

Communication is a core component of building and maintaining internal relationships. To ensure communication across institutional departments, the All College Action Committee (ACAC) team of 33 representatives from various areas of the college was created. This group is charged with analyzing employee feedback in order to develop Action Projects and College Improvement Initiatives, as well as Quick Fixes to immediately address problems. Recently, ACAC has instituted an awareness campaign to increase employee feedback. An ACAC suggestion box was placed on the *Aims Daily* homepage, and the committee reviews and analyzes submissions to find options for continuous improvement.   ACAC members regularly submit articles about their mission and progress in the *Aims Daily*. Other internal communication is provided through department and division meetings and through Senior Management minutes.   Faculty (ACEA) and staff (ASA) leadership meet regularly with the President, and employee feedback is encouraged during open meetings. See section 5P7 for more information on communication at Aims.

Category Nine Results

9R1. Measures of building collaborative relationships, external and internal

Examples of quantitative measures that reflect Collaborative Relationships include:

K-12 schools and Other Institutions of Higher Education

- The Academic Pathways department collects data on K-12 learners to determine the proportion of those students who transition to Aims.

- The college determines the number of, as well as the type of, degrees and certificates awarded annually

- We analyze student enrollment, demographic and first-generation statistics, retention, transfer and graduation rates

Service Providers

- Aims collects and examines the results of student and employee satisfaction surveys and course evaluations, including data on satisfaction with service providers.

Employers

- The Career & Technical Education (CTE) department collects data on completion and placement data, as well as employer satisfaction. This data impacts program revision and choices about which programs to develop or discontinue.

- Aims collects data on the number and type of contracts signed for training through Continuing Education, as well as training evaluation surveys.

Since processes in this area tend to be tied to a particular department, person, or a short-term initiative, we will look to our new AQIP Action Project, *Developing Systems to Measure Effectiveness*, to develop and implement aligned processes to measure effectiveness across the campus.

9R2. Performance results for building collaborative relationships

- In fall 2010, Aims partnered with North Range Behavioral Health to offer non-emergency counseling services to students. Individuals who participated in these services reported reduced stress (81.3%), increased ability to cope (50%), and increased motivation (50%). Furthermore, 43.8% indicated that they would have dropped out of school if they had not received these services. Based on these results, the institution has contributed additional funding to continue this critical initiative.

- For the past three years the Aims accounting department has participated in the Tax Help Colorado program, partnering with the Denver based Piton Foundation, giving our Accounting students the opportunity to learn tax law, earn credits, give back to the community, and gain solid practical work experience. Last spring Aims helped over 1,000 low-income taxpayers file their tax returns for free. The program returned nearly $2 million to the local economy. (See 2R2)

- Institutionally and privately funded scholarship awards totaling $740,243 assisted 765 students. Institutionally-funded awards totaled more than $895,000 and assisted more than 940 students.

- The Aims Foundation supports students with numerous general and program-specific scholarships of varying amounts. In 2010-11, they granted 116 scholarship awards totaling $102,966.

- Due to generous business community support, School District 6 graduates may attend their first year of college at little or no cost, through the College Promise Scholarship Program, which provides financial support for tuition, books, and fees for students' first year at Aims following high school. To date, College Promise students have been awarded 45 certificate and/or degree credentials.

- In the 2010-11 academic year, 224 students earned their high school diploma through the Weld County High School Diploma Program and Larimer County High School Diploma Program, provided by Aims Community College to area school districts through Centennial Board of Cooperative Educational Services. Forty-four program graduates from the 2010-11 cohort have since continued their education at Aims.

- College recruiters participated in 128 recruiting events in 2010-11 covering the demographic and geographic diversity of Aims communities. Sixty-six activities were conducted for specific high schools.

- Aims' Intensive English Program (IEP) helps English language learners enrich their lives in the United States by preparing them to enter the job market or take regular college courses at Aims. During the 2010-11 school year, 70 students were enrolled in at least one IEP course. Of these students, five have continued their education in academic courses at Aims.

- In spring 2011 Aims received results of an economic impact study, showing that the College is responsible for almost $1 billion in regional return on investment.

- The Career Academy Scholarship Program develops partnerships between Career and Technical Education programs and K-12 districts in our service area. The first year of the Career Academy program was 2008-09. Fort Lupton High School signed a contract for 30 students to come to Aims to receive CTE education. These students received college credit and in some cases a college program certificate. Currently, the program has increased to five school districts, and student numbers have increased by 66%.   Books and most materials are provided for the student within the contracted program's agreement.

- Aims has negotiated and maintains approximately 70 agreements with healthcare organizations and physicians to provide clinical learning opportunities for health career students.

- Articulation agreements with two- and four-year partner institutions have increased 30% – 50% within the past five years, and the Academic Pathways Director is working on an improved system to update, renew, align, and disseminate articulated agreements to internal and external partners.

9R3. Comparing performance results for Building Collaborative Relationships with those of other higher education institutions

Aims has published an *Annual Report* to the Community for the past seven years.

[2012 Annual Report](#)

[2011 Annual Report](#)

[2010 Annual Report](#)

[2009 Annual Report](#)

These reports highlight student performance compared to local and national statistics, and employer satisfaction.   They also highlight our collaborative community relationships. Our financial highlights tell a story in numbers while demonstrating Aims' effort to reduce overhead costs and maximize student success. They highlight our students, our collaborations with employers, and our commitment to program development that will sustain our community. They are a report card to all those who contribute to Aims each year.

To assess the quality of student learning, a number of our CTE programs have sought and received separate specialized accreditation or approval, as seen in Table 9-D. The process of self-study, reporting, and outside review that is required for program accreditation allows the department to focus on successes and opportunities for improvement. While the program accreditation process does not allow for direct comparison with other institutions, we believe that submitting our programs to scrutiny by reviewers and successfully receiving program accreditation evidences program compliance with the highest possible standards.

Comparisons for Building Collaborative Relationships are also detailed in Category 2: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives. Please see section 2R3 for comparisons with other institutions of higher education for Tax Help Colorado and the Colorado First/Existing Industry Grant Program.

Program	Accreditation/Approval Agency
Associate Degree Nursing Program	Colorado State Board of Nursing (SBON) and National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission (NLNAC)
Automotive	National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF)
Nurse Aide & Med Prep	Colorado State Board of Nursing (SBON)
EMS-Paramedic and Surgical Technology	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)
Peace Officers Academy	Colorado Peace Officers Standards and Training Board
Fire Science	International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC).
All Aviation programs	Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Transportation Security Administration (TSA)
Early Childhood Program	National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

9-D: Career and Technical Education Programs that have Received Additional Accreditation or Approval from Outside Agencies

Category Nine Improvements

9I1. Recent improvements in Building Collaborative Relationships

As an AQIP institution, Aims Community College has made a commitment to continuous quality improvement in all areas of the institution. In an effort to better monitor conformity to state and federal regulations, as well as requirements from our accrediting agency, the college has developed a new reporting oversight structure. Both the new Accreditation Officer and the External Reporting Oversight Committee collaborate with internal departments and liaise with external organizations to enhance accountability for compliance and reporting issues. (See 2P1) In 2011 we restructured a vacated position and hired an Academic Pathways Director charged with developing and maintaining a system for articulations with individual Institutions of Higher Education to complement the statewide articulations agreements that already exist. The new AQIP Action Project, *Developing Systems to Measure Effectiveness*, will work to formalize systems that monitor our collaborative relations, allowing us to increase in process maturity.

9I2. Selecting processes and setting targets for improved performance in Building Collaborative Relationships?

Currently Aims is one of the top ten largest employers in Weld County. Consequently, we use our employees as points-of-contact for collaborative relationships. We live in and patronize local businesses in our respective communities. Therefore, all employees are responsible for building collaborative relationships. Our internal culture encourages employees to start dialogues that may enhance a service or offer a new possibility for partnership. Our deans and directors are the conduit to share collaborative ideas or concerns for areas of improvement with Senior Management or ACAC. If a partnership exists that can be strengthened, or if a need is identified for a new partnership, an internal department is assigned to establish a relationship. Increasing student enrollment and community awareness, increasing retention and degree completion, and offering educational opportunities that attract new employers into our service area are indicators of successful collaborations.

Glossary

AAA	Advanced Academic Achievement (First Year Experience Course)
ACAC	All College Action Committee
ACEA	Aims College Education Association (The campus professional organization of the Aims Community College faculty, as recognized by the Board of Trustees)
ACT SOS	ACT Student Opinion Survey
AMP	Academic Master Plan
AQIP	Academic Quality Improvement Program
ASA	Aims Staff Association
ASCENT	"Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment." A "5th-year" program supported by the Colorado General Assembly.
BACCHUS Network	A college and community-based network focusing on promoting wise decisions concerning alcohol or tobacco use, illegal drug abuse, unhealthy sexual practices and other high-risk behaviors.
CAAHEP	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education
Career Academy	A partnership between Aims and five local school districts that allows high school students to focus their concurrent enrollment studies on six career and technical programs: Audio Technician, Automobile Service Automobile Collision, Carpentry, Graphic Design, Nurse Aide
CCCS	Colorado Community College System
CCFSSE	Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement
CCHE	Colorado Commission on Higher Education
CCNS or CCCNS	(Colorado) Common Course Numbering System
CCOES	Community College and Occupational Education System
CCSSE	Community College Survey of Student Engagement
CDHE	Colorado Department of Higher Education
CI	Continuous Improvement
CI^2	Continuous Improvement Initiative
College Promise	A community-supported scholarship program that allows Greeley-Evans School District 6 graduates to attend Aims for one year at little or no cost.
Concurrent Enrollment	A program through which students earn college credit for courses taken during high school. Students enroll at a university or college to attain high school and/or college credit for these courses.

CTE	Career and Technical Education
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
gtPathways	Colorado State Guaranteed Transfer Program
H2H	Human to Human
IEA	Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment (Institutional Research)
IFSAC	International Fire Service Accreditation Congress
ITAC	Instructional Technology Advisory Committee
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
NACUBO	National Association of College and University Business Officers
NATEF	National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation
NCCBP	National Community College Benchmark Project
NLNAC	National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission
NCHEMS	National Center for Higher Education Management Systems
PDQ	Position Description Questionnaire
POST	Police Officer Standards and Training
QoWL	Quality of Work Life Survey
RPG	Reflective Practice Group
SBCCOE	State Board for Community College and Occupational Education
SBON	State Board of Nursing
SENSE	Survey of Entering Student Engagement
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TSA	Transportation Safety Administration
UNC	University of Northern Colorado

General Education
Course Approval Process

1. Check the Colorado Common Course Numbering System (http://www.cccs.edu/cccns/) to determine if the course already exists.

STOP
2. Contact Curriculum Committee Assistant, Kathy Lee.

Course is in CCCNS

3. Prepare and complete Course Information (CIF) form and a prepare course syllabus.
4. Send electronic copy of the CIF and syllabus to the Curriculum Committee Assistant.
5. Obtain appropriate signatures on the CIF from the Department Chairperson and Academic Dean.
6. Attend curriculum committee meeting to request approval of new course.
7. Once course is approved by Curriculum Committee, the CIF is signed by the Curriculum Chairperson. Course may be offered at Aims at this point.
8. Curriculum Committee Assistant forwards Course Information form to Admission and Records for Banner, Degree Works, and Catalog input.
9. Curriculum Committee Assistant forwards Course Information form to Financial Aid.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS:

Curriculum Committee Chairperson: Lori Hatchell x6215
Curriculum Assistant Chairperson: Jan Stapleton x6340
Curriculum Committee Assistant: Kathy Lee x6244

Course Does Not Exist in CCCNS

3. Prepare and complete Course Information (CIF) form, prepare course syllabus, and Course Guide Template.
4. Send electronic copy of the CIF and Course Guide Template to the Curriculum Committee Assistant.
5. Obtain appropriate signatures on the CIF from Department Chairperson and Academic Dean.
6. Attend curriculum committee meeting to request approval of new course.
7. Once course is approved by Curriculum Committee, the CIF is signed by the Curriculum Chairperson.
8. Curriculum Committee Assistant forwards CIF to Admission and Records for Banner, Degree Works, and Catalog input. Course may be offered at Aims at this point, but it should also be entered into the CCCNS database:
   a. Curriculum Committee Assistant sends the CIF information for posting to the CCCNS database for 30 day review by the state discipline chairpersons and the state curriculum committee members.
   b. If the state bodies have concerns, they will send their comments to the discipline chair for review. Any adjustments will be sent to Aims Curriculum Committee for resubmission.
   c. When the state bodies approve the course (this takes at least two months), the course will be added to common course numbering database.
   d. If needs adjustment, a Course Maintenance form should be created to reflect the newly approved status of the course signed by the Department Chairperson, Academic Dean, and the Curriculum Committee Chairperson.
9. Curriculum Committee Assistant forwards Course Information form to Admissions and Records to update Banner, Degree Works, and Catalog input.
10. Curriculum Committee Assistant forwards Course Information form to Financial Aid.

Course Consideration for
State Guaranteed Transfer (SGTC)

1. Complete Nomination Form and attach a sample syllabus.
2. Return completed forms to Jeff Reynolds for submission.
3. Choose to attend reading of submitted courses in Denver.
4. If approved, complete course information maintenance form to add SGTC information [i.e. AH-2, etc.].

Aims Community College

9/25/2012

New CTE Course/Curriculum Approval Process

#1 Check the Colorado Common Course Numbering System (http://www.cccs.edu/ccens/) to determine if the course already exists

#2 All new courses must be approved by the CTE Advisory Committee before proceeding, and must be documented in the Minutes.

STOP **#3** Contact Curriculum Committee Assistant Kathy Lee AND CTE Assistant, Landon Loyd.

Course Exists

#4
- Prepare Aims Course Information Form (CIF).
- Obtain advisory minutes, syllabus, and advising worksheets.
- Obtain appropriate signatures (Department Chairperson, Academic Dean).

#5
- Send CIF, advisory minutes, syllabus, and advising worksheets to Aims Curriculum Committee Assistant, Kathy Lee for presentation at the next committee meeting.

#6
Upon approval, Curriculum Committee Chairperson and CTE Dean will sign.

#7
- Department Chairperson contact the CTE Assistant, Landon Loyd to open Program Approval.
- CTE change form to Admissions and Records and Financial Aid.

#8
CIF is then forwarded to Admissions and Records for database entry by CTE Assistant, Landon Loyd.

#9
- Financial Aid and VA eligibility determined
- Course may now be scheduled into Banner, Degree Works, and Catalog.

#10
The Director of the Student Success Center will determine course equivalencies with transfer institutions.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS:

CTE Dean: Brenda Rask x6332

CTE Assistant: Landon Loyd x6279

Curriculum Committee Chairperson: Lori Hatchell x6215

Curriculum Assistant Chairperson: Jan Stapleton x6340

Curriculum Committee Assistant: Kathy Lee x6244

Course Does Not Exist

#4
- Prepare Aims Course Information Form (CIF).
- Submit to 2:2 Chairperson.
- Obtain advisory minutes, syllabus, and advising worksheets.
- Obtain appropriate signatures (Department Chairperson, and Academic Dean).

#5
- Send CIF, Course Guide Template application page, advisory minutes, syllabus, and advising worksheets to the Aims Curriculum Committee Assistant, Kathy Lee for presentation at the next meeting.

#6
Upon approval, Curriculum Committee Chairperson and CTE Dean will sign.

#7
Curriculum Committee Assistant sends CIF information to Chief Academic Officer for posting to the CCCNS bulletin board for 30 day review.
- At the end of review, state may approve.
- If not approved by the state, their comments will be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee and changes will then need to be made and resubmitted.

#8
- Department Chairperson contact the CTE Assistant, Landon Loyd to open Program Approval.
- CTE change form to Admissions and Records and Financial Aid.

#9
CIF is then forwarded to Admissions and Records for database entry by CTE Assistant, Landon Loyd.

#10
- Course may now be scheduled into Banner, Degree Works, and Catalog.
- Financial Aid and VA eligibility determined.

#11
The Director of the Student Success Center will determine course equivalencies with transfer institutions.

9/25/2012

Mandatory Course Completion Chart				
Assessment Requirement	**College Preparatory Course Sequence & Prerequisites**	**If enrolling in 1 course**	**If enrolling in 2 courses**	**If enrolling in 3 or more courses**
Reading only	**REA060** - (not eligible to enroll in any college level courses – Limited exceptions are allowed in specific CTE programs with Department Chair approval) **REA090** –(eligible to co-enroll in college level course work in which the prerequisite has been met)	Must enroll in Reading	Must enroll in reading and AAA101.	Must enroll in reading and AAA 101. May enroll in any other course for which the student has met the prerequisite.
Math only	**MAT045** – (eligible to co-enroll in college level course work in which the prerequisite has been met) **MAT090** - (eligible to co-enroll in college level course work in which the prerequisite has been met) **MAT099** - (eligible to co-enroll in college level course work in which the prerequisite has been met)	Must enroll in Math	Must enroll in math and AAA101.	Must enroll in math and AAA 101. May enroll in any other course for which the student has met the prerequisite.
English only	**ENG030** - (eligible to co-enroll in college level course work in which the prerequisite has been met) **ENG060**- (eligible to co-enroll in college level course work in which the prerequisite has been met) **ENG090** - (eligible to co-enroll in college level course work in which the prerequisite has been met)	Must enroll in English	Must enroll in English and AAA101.	Must enroll in English and AAA 101. May enroll in any other course for which the student has met the prerequisite.
Reading and Math	*See sequence of course work above*	Must enroll in Reading	Must enroll in reading and math or AAA 090.	Must enroll in reading, math and AAA 090. May enroll in any other course for which the student has met the prerequisite.
Reading and English	*See sequence of course work above*	Must enroll in Reading	Must enroll in reading and English or AAA 090.	Must enroll in reading, English, and AAA 090. May enroll in any other course for which the student has met the prerequisite.
Math and English	*See sequence of course work above*	Must enroll in Math.	Must enroll in math and English or AAA 090.	Must enroll in math, English, and AAA 090. May enroll in any other course for which the student has met the prerequisite.
Reading, Math and English	*See sequence of course work above*	Must enroll in reading	Must enroll in reading and AAA 090.	Must enroll in reading, math, English and AAA 090. May enroll in any other course for which the student has met the prerequisite

<u>Welding Advisory Committee</u>

<u>Name</u>	<u>Business Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Dave Adler	General Air	Business/Industry
Orvin Adolf	Harsh	Business/Industry
Glenn Ashley	Bollman Technical Education Ctr	Education
Heidi Lanning	Eaton High School	Education
Wade Lutz	Big R Manufacturing	Business/Industry
Gary Magnuson	Xcel Energy	Business/Industry
Michelle Moorman	Summit Utilities, Inc.	Business/Industry

<u>Ex-Officio Members</u>

Dan Doherty	Academic Dean	Aims Community College
Paul Hasty	Department Chair	Aims Community College
Jeff Klein	Assistant Professor	Aims Community College
Brenda Rask	CTE Director	Aims Community College

3P2 Building and Maintaining Relationships with Students
(excerpt from 2008 Systems Portfolio)

Maintaining a relationship with students is seen as a process, not an event. The diversity of our students and their associated interests and needs require a wide variety of programs, events, and approaches. Aims has a strong Student Life organization devoted to interaction and promotion of students at all of its campuses. This includes a student government organization with elected representatives for special areas of coverage such as technology and non-traditional students as well as the general members from each of the three campuses. Student Services has increased the attention paid to advising and tutoring, with plans to offer on-line tutors in the Fall 2008 semester. This increased interaction and support also provides feedback on needs and the effectiveness of new programs.

We begin to build a potential relationship at the pre-school and elementary school level through our "College for Kids" and other programs where the college provides a wide range of organized activities for young children during the summer. More directly pertinent contact is made through recruiter visits to middle schools, hosting math and science fairs and other school district wide activities. We also purchase specifically directed mailing lists that let us send information and requests for questions and

discussion to prospective students and their parents. This contact accelerates and becomes more focused at the high school level, encouraging students to participate in dual enrollment programs that allow them to earn high school and college credit simultaneously.

We have initiated and expanded student orientations (both on campus and on-line) and placed common modules devoted to effective use of WebCT and on-line learning concepts in general. These programs provide a uniform introduction to the unique characteristics of web-based interaction and learning.

Aims also has a student oriented communications program, including a printed monthly newsletter, on-line information placed on the web site, and a new form of communications placed in restrooms called the "Toilet Paper". We have also worked to have student representatives involved in new projects such as the

upgrade/replacement of our course management system and in the re-design of our web site to ensure that students get the information they need as directly and quickly as possible.

3P2 Portfolio Review:

3P2   SS   Through an active Student Services program, Aims has been able to increase its student advising and tutoring programs with plans to offer online tutors in Fall 2008. The college has also created programs with local middle schools by hosting events of interest to them (e.g., College for Kids). Additionally, it has implemented a creative approach to communicate with its own students through the "toilet paper" initiative.

8P7 Strategies and Professional Development (renumbered 8P8 in 2012 Portfolio) (excerpt from 2008 Systems Portfolio)

The college ensures faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities are developed and nurtured to address requirements regarding changing institutional strategies and actions plans in several ways. Each year the college begins the year with a convocation day. The President starts the day by giving a state of the college address. She discussed important accomplishments and new initiatives for the year. In addition, at that time the college has a keynote speaker that has expertise in one of the areas the college is focusing on in that particular year. The keynote speaker and activities of the day lay the groundwork for developing employee planning and expectations for the upcoming year. The Center for Professional development (CPD) and the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC) are two departments of the college whose specific purpose is to support employees in understanding and developing skills and/or knowledge in the institutional strategies, goals, plans, etc. These areas continuously offer training sessions, educational opportunities, innovative workshops and webinars to assist and support employees in understanding and meeting college goals. In addition, the college has a Learning Centered Task Force which regularly holds meetings for the college to discuss best practices in learning centered activities as they relate to each constituency. The dialogue includes demonstrations and discussions regarding what staff, administration, and/or faculty is/are doing that would be supportive of the learning centered college. In addition, dialogue includes assessment of the level of success of each effort and how it may apply in other areas. Finally, the college allocates an administrative position, the Associate Dean for Learning and Organizational Development, to the oversight of integrating the college's strategic initiatives into the learning-centered college concept.

Each employee builds a plan in the spring of each year with mid year revisions or review finishing with year end evaluations. This gives employees and their supervisors an opportunity to focus on professional development opportunities for each employee for the following year. Thus, the process of strategic goal development and planning is brought down to the individual level. Mid year reviews allow for mid course corrections if goals need to be adjusted.

8P7 Portfolio Review:

8P7	SS	ACC has a well organized process for encouraging professional development tied to the College's goals. The process begins at the beginning of the year with presentation by the president and a keynote speaker focusing on one of the College's key goals. The Center for Professional Development and Faculty Teaching and Learning Center offer training de signed to enhance the accomplishment of College goals. The College has an administra tive position, Dean for Learning and Organizational Development, to help oversee the inte gration of College goals.

0-300

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY

BOARD POWERS

The Board of Trustees shall possess the powers delegated and required by law, including but not limited to the following:

A. To take and hold in the name of the college so much real and personal property as may be reasonably necessary for any purpose authorized by law;

B. To employ a chief executive officer to administer the affairs and the programs of the college, pursuant to a contract;

C. To adopt written policies, rules and regulations, not inconsistent with law, which may relate to study, discipline, conduct, safety and welfare of all students;

D. To determine financial and educational policies and provide for the proper execution of such by selecting competent administrators, instructors and other personnel for the administration, operation and maintenance of the institution;

E. To prepare and adopt a budget, to fix tuition and fee rates, to accept gifts and to purchase, hold, sell or rent property and equipment;

F. To promote the general welfare of the college for the best interests of education and the junior college district; and

G. Pursuant to applicable provisions of law, to discharge or otherwise terminate the employment of any personnel.

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees

Date: April 7, 2004

Reviewed for Content: January 27, 2011

0-600

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY
BOARD OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

The duties of the officers of the Aims Junior College District Board of Trustees are defined by C.R.S. 23-71-124 through 126.

A. The Board President shall preside at all meetings of the Board, shall sign all orders on the county treasurer for payment of money, but no orders shall be drawn upon the county treasurer except in favor of parties to whom the junior college district has become lawfully indebted. The Board President shall appear in behalf of the junior college district in all suits brought by or against the district, but, if the President is individually interested, this duty shall be performed by the Secretary of the Board. In the absence of the President, the Secretary shall preside at any meeting of the Board. (C.R.S. § 23-71-124).

B. The Secretary of the Board shall keep an accurate record of the expenses incurred by the junior college district and shall present the same to the Board whenever called upon, shall give notice of all regular and special meetings, shall keep such records and make such reports as are required by law. Any of the special duties of the Secretary may be delegated by the Board to a paid secretary who may be appointed by the Board. (C.R.S. §23-71-125).

C. The Treasurer of the Board of Trustees shall countersign all warrants drawn by the President and Secretary on the county treasury and shall keep account of the same, shall take charge of all moneys received on account of the junior college district and shall render a statement of the finances of the district as shown by the records of his office at the close of each fiscal year and at any other time when required by the Board. Financial statements and records of the Junior College District shall be in accordance with the provisions of part 5 of article 1 of title 29, C.R.S. and The Board Treasurer shall perform such additional duties and be subjected to such additional obligations as are imposed by law. (C.R.S. § 23-71-126).

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees
Date: April 7, 2004

Revised: April 6, 2011

0-650

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY
CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR TRUSTEES

Recognizing that public appointment carries great responsibility, the Trustees of Aims Community College should at all times act in a manner consistent with their fiduciary responsibilities to Aims Community College and should exercise particular care that no detriment to Aims Community College would result from conflicts between their interests and those of the College or even the appearance of impropriety.

For purposes of this policy a Trustee is considered to have a conflict of interest when the individual, or any of his or her immediate family (i.e., spouse, parents, siblings or children) or Associates (i.e., any person or organization with which the Trustee is associated or serves as a director, officer, managing partner, employee or trustee, or has a financial interest sufficient to enable him or her to exercise control or to influence policy significantly) either (1) has an existing or potential financial or other interest which impairs or might reasonably appear to impair, the individual's independence of judgment in the discharge of responsibilities to the College, or (2) may receive a material financial or other benefit from knowledge of information confidential to the College.

In furtherance of the foregoing objective, it has been the practice of the Board of Trustees to minimize and avoid, where possible, business relationships between the College and any Trustee or organization in which any Trustee has a significant interest. The Board of Trustees desires to clarify and reaffirm its commitment and practice with respect to conflicts of interest.

1. At the commencement of each academic year or at the time the information becomes available, each Trustee shall submit in writing to the Secretary of the Board or a designee a list of all corporations, partnerships, proprietorships, or other organizations in which such Trustee has an interest as officer, director, partner, employee, owner or controlling (i.e., with an interest of 5% or more) stockholder, which list shall be available upon request to all other Trustees.

2. At the commencement of each academic year or as the situations become known to them, each Trustee shall submit in writing to the Secretary of the Board or a designee a list of situations that involve actual or apparent conflicts of interest related to the institution.

3. It shall be the policy of the College not to contract with or enter into a commercial relationship (other than employment of officers of the College) with any Trustee or corporation, partnership, proprietorship or other organization in which such Trustee has an interest as officer, director, partner, employee, owner, or controlling stockholder.

4. This policy shall be in addition to any other requirements imposed by law with respect to potential conflicts of interest.

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees
Date: October 6, 2010

Reviewed for Content: January 27, 2011

0-1000

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY
REPRESENTATIVES TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

To promote effective communication between the Board of Trustees and the employees and students of the College, there shall be six non-voting representatives to the Board comprised of:

1. Two faculty representatives

2. Two student body representatives

3. Two support staff representatives

These representatives will be chosen by their peers, will be invited to work sessions with the Board and the administration, and will attend Board meetings on a regular basis.

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees
Date: January 8, 1986

Revised: November 1996
**   January 7, 1998**

Reviewed for Content: January 27, 2011

1-100

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY
COLLEGE PRESIDENT DUTIES

The President, as chief executive officer, is accountable to the Aims Junior College District Board acting as a body. The President is charged with performing the chief executive officer duties in accordance with the established policies and directives of the Board and the State of Colorado to administer the affairs and programs of the College. The duties include, without limitation:

1. To implement policies, procedures, regulations, contracts and other authorized directives;

2. Hire, sever and administer the employment relationship of all College employees in accordance with law and policy;

3. Attend all regular and special meetings of the Board, including executive sessions, unless otherwise requested by the Board;

4. Direct the formulation of and recommend to the Board, personnel policies, classification plans, and salary structures;

5. Provide and be responsible for the formulation of all reports required by the Board and by state and federal authorities;

6. Administer all instructional program and business affairs of the College;

7. Communicate and inform the Board, from time to time, concerning the activities of Aims and in particular any deficiencies in the operation of the institution, as noted by the President;

8. Provide continuing leadership and direction to the deans, directors, and other persons in leadership positions in the performance of their administrative duties and responsibilities. Delegate to each such person the appropriate authority for supervision and administration of the area under his or her supervision and jurisdiction;

9. Represent Aims and the interests of Aims in the community, the state, and the nation, as is appropriate from time to time, and as directed by the Board; and

10. Provide and maintain an effective system of campus governance at all campuses; and

11. Assist and guide, as appropriate, the Aims College Foundation and any other organization made known to the President by the Board which supports Aims.

The Board will review and evaluate the performance of the President. The evaluation instrument will be developed by the Board. The evaluation should be accomplished in January of each year.

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees

Date: December 7, 2005

Reviewed for Content: October 15, 2008

1-105

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY
CODE OF ETHICS

Public confidence in the integrity of Aims Community College demands that all employees and Trustees demonstrate high ethical standards at all times. Employees and Trustees should serve Aims with integrity and honesty, and should discharge their duties in an independent and impartial manner. In order to fulfill this trust, all Aims employees and Trustees:

1. Shall serve the College with respect, concern, courtesy and responsiveness;

2. Shall demonstrate high standards of personal integrity, truthfulness and honesty and shall through personal conduct foster public confidence and trust in the College;

3. Shall not use his or her position to bestow any preferential benefit to anyone related to the employee or Trustee by family, business or social relationship;

4. Shall not disclose or use or allow others to use confidential information acquired by virtue of College employment for private gain;

5. Shall not accept any compensation, gift, payment of expenses or any other thing of value which would influence discharge of his or her duties;

6. Shall not use College time, property, equipment or supplies for private gain;

7. Shall expose corruption or impropriety at the College whenever discovered;

8. Shall support equal access and employment opportunities;

9. Shall comply at all times with the standards of conduct set forth in title 24, article 18 of the Colorado Revised Statutes.

The President may implement appropriate procedures to carry out the intent of this policy.

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees
Date: February 4, 2004

Reviewed for Content: October 15, 2008

1-200

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY

SHARED GOVERNANCE

The concept of shared governance, which is defined as meaningful involvement in the decision-making process of all constituencies of the College community in those decisions and policy recommendations which affect them, will be utilized at Aims Community College. Every reasonable effort to create and maintain effective communication within and between the various constituencies of the College will be an institutional commitment.

The Board recognizes its authority and will exercise its responsibility for final decisions.

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees
Date: May 31, 1972

Revised: December 9, 1980
        August 4, 2004
Reviewed for Content: October 15, 2008

2-150

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY
SCHOLARLY ETHICS

As members of the academic community, faculty have a responsibility to promote moral integrity and behavior; abide by ethical principles regarding academic freedom and intellectual integrity; avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of impropriety; and abide by the fair and respectful treatment of others. Faculty are guided by ethical principles that address their professional responsibilities as teachers, members of learned professions, scholars, and, more generally, members of college communities.

The president will establish procedures to enable implementation of this policy.

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees
Date: June 20, 2007

Reviewed for Content: October 15, 2008

2-300

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY
TRANSFER CREDIT

Aims Community College is committed to ensuring the academic quality and consistency of its degrees and programs, while recognizing the educational value a transferring student may have received at a previous institution of higher learning or through alternative means. For this reason, the guiding considerations for transfer credit at Aims are:

- The educational quality of the learning experience at the sending institution;

- The comparability of credit to be transferred;

- The appropriateness and applicability of the credit to the student's program at Aims;

Recognized alternative sources of higher learning.

Transfer credit is documented on the student's permanent record as credit only, with no indication of grade or quality points, and does not affect the student's Aims Grade Point Average (GPA).

With these principles in mind, the President will cause procedures to be developed to define coursework acceptable for transfer into Aims Community College.

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees
Date: November 1996

Revised: July 28, 2010

2-300A

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROCEDURE

ACCEPTABLE TRANSFER CREDIT

Aims Community College will accept in transfer the following credit, provided such credit is equivalent or comparable to Aims coursework and applicable to the student's program at Aims:

- Courses completed with a grade of "C" or better from Colorado's "state guaranteed general education courses" list designated by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE),
- Courses completed with a "C" or better at other accredited colleges and universities,
- College course work completed with a "C" or better outside of the United States, provided it is evaluated first by a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES), such as the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) or World Education Services (WES),
- Credit for learning outside the traditional classroom that is demonstrated through standardized tests such as the College Level Examination program (CLEP), the Advanced Placement Program (AP), the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES), the International Baccalaureate program (IB), and Excelsior College Examinations,
- Courses or examinations offered by businesses, the military, and other government entities, as recommended in the American Council on Education (ACE) National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training,
- Credit through Course Challenge and Portfolio Assessment administered at Aims.

Transfer credit for Liberal Arts degrees (A.A. or A.S.) requires regional accreditation, while Career & Technical Education programs (A.A.S. or Certificates) may also accept credit from nationally-accredited colleges and universities.

Credit up to ten (10) years old is generally accepted; however, there is no all-inclusive age limit for transfer credit as the college must retain the right to determine obsolescence of credit based on the subject matter. Some selective-admissions programs with state certification or licensure considerations may not accept credit as old as ten (10) years, or may require a qualifying assessment or exam score prior to acceptance of the credit toward the program's entrance or graduation requirements. In addition, credit older than ten (10) years old may be granted in certain Career & Technical Education programs, or with Academic Dean's approval.

The acceptance of transfer credit is documented on the student's permanent record as credit only, with no indication of grade or quality points, and does not affect the student's Aims Grade Point Average (GPA).

APPROVED: Dr. Marsi Liddell
Aims Community College President
Date: September 27, 2010

2-900

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY

REVIEW OF EXISTING PROGRAMS

All academic programs offered through the College will be reviewed according to the criteria and timelines established by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and/or the College administration.

The President shall establish procedures to implement this Policy, if necessary.

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees
Date: June 7, 1989

Revised: November 1996
           September 3, 2003
           May 4, 2011

3-110

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY
HIRING OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS

An annual audit of all funds and budgets of Aims Community College shall be conducted by an external auditing firm. Results of each audit shall be reported to the Board of Trustees each year.

An external auditor shall be selected by the College every five years from qualified Certified Public Accounting firms according to Aims Community College contracting policies and procedures, subject to annual appropriations by the Board of Trustees.

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees
Date: September 6, 1989

Revised: November 3, 1993
**   May 4, 2011**

Reviewed for Content: July 27, 2010

<u>3-850</u>

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY

COPYRIGHT AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Aims Community College is committed to carrying out all scholarly work in an open and free atmosphere complying with all applicable laws regarding copyright. The College, as an institution devoted to the creation, discovery, and dissemination of knowledge, supports (1) the responsible, good faith exercise of full fair use rights, as codified in 17 U.S.C. § 107, by faculty, librarians, and staff in furtherance of their teaching, research, and service activities; (2) copyright ownership for creative, non-directed works by faculty, staff, and students and College ownership of directed employment-related works; and (3) protection of ownership rights for creators of works that require a different ownership model.

The President of Aims Community College shall establish procedures to enable implementation of this policy.

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees

Date: November 5, 2003

Revised: April 6, 2011

Reviewed for Content: October 15, 2008

3-875

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY

PEER-TO-PEER FILE SHARING

Aims Community College shall disseminate an annual disclosure to students that (1) states that un-authorized distribution of copyrighted material, such as through peer-to-peer networks, may subject students to civil and criminal penalties, (2) describes the penalties for such violations, and (3) includes the institution's policies on peer-to-peer file sharing.

In compliance with The Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110-315) (HEOA), Aims Community College shall maintain a plan to "combat unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material and a procedure for peer-to-peer file sharing. In developing and maintaining the plan, Aims Community College will consider technology-based deterrents. Report language accompanying the Higher Education Authorization Act explicitly states that technology-based deterrents include "bandwidth shaping" and "traffic monitoring to identify the largest bandwidth users." Aims Community College will also offer, to the extent practicable and in consultation with the Director of Information Technology, alternatives to illegal downloading."

The President shall issue procedures to implement this policy.

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees
Date: September 1, 2010

3-905

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY
COMPUTING AND COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCES
APPROPRIATE USE

Purpose:
- In support of its mission of teaching and community service, the Aims Community College provides access to computing and information resources for students, faculty, staff and community members within institutional priorities and financial capabilities.
- The Computing and Communications Appropriate Use Policy contains the governing philosophy for regulating faculty, student, staff and community use of the college's computing resources. It applies to all users at all locations regarding the appropriate use of equipment, software, computing and communications networks and data.

Policy

The users of college resources are responsible for respecting and adhering to local, state, federal and international laws, which include but are not limited to the Colorado Open Records Act and Digital Millennium Copyright Act. It should be recognized that all public records are open for inspection by any person at reasonable times with the exception of data relating to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Users who violate any such laws may be subject to prosecution and/or litigation. If either should occur, the College will fully comply with any subpoenas to provide all information necessary for prosecution and/or litigation. All recorded ACC network activity may be turned over to the appropriate legal authority.

The College has the right to monitor any and all aspects of its computer and communications systems including employee e-mail, voice mail, and file structures on any college system. The right to monitor computer system and communications equipment includes, but is not limited to, monitoring users Internet sites traffic, monitoring chat groups and newsgroups, reviewing material downloaded or uploaded by users, and reviewing e-mail sent and received by users.

The computer and communication systems are provided to the employees to assist them in meeting the requirements for the performance of their positions at Aims Community College. Employees should have no expectation of privacy in the use of College computers, including but not limited to documents created, sent or received on college systems. Systems are owned by Aims and they are provided to conduct college business; all transactions data on the systems are considered to be business-related. Willful violations of these policies may result in disciplinary action following College procedures and guidelines in consultation with the appropriate supervisor. The disciplinary action may include permanent loss of all resource accounts and privileges, suspension (for students) or dismissal (for employees). Intellectual property rights are governed by Federal statutes and by the Aims Community College Copyright and Intellectual Property Policy 3-850.

Systems' users should adhere to all rules which apply to all computer and telecommunications resources including mainframe hosts, mid range hosts, micro computer hosts, file servers, desktops, notebooks, laptops, handheld devices, network infrastructure, telephone and voice mail systems, Internet connectivity, bulletin board systems, e-mail systems and other resources as outlined in related procedures.

Aims technology users are subject to this policy and must respect the rights of other users including rights to privacy, rights of ownership of data and intellectual property, freedom of speech, freedom from harassment, intimidation and unwarranted annoyance.

APPROVED: Aims Board of Trustees
Date: 1999
Revised: July 28, 2010

4-700A

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROCEDURE
FACULTY CREDENTIALS

Minimum Qualifications – Faculty
Degrees required as a minimum qualification must be from one of the six regional accrediting associations.

Full-Time Faculty – University/College (Transfer Courses)
Minimum Qualifications:
- Faculty must hold a Master's Degree, including at least eighteen graduate-level semester hours in the program area/discipline to be taught. An exception to the eighteen graduate-level semester hours in the program area/discipline to be taught may be recommended by the Department Chair with approval by the Academic Dean and President for individuals with special expertise, knowledge, and ability. Such individuals may include recognized experts in a specific field or visiting faculty from other institutions who bring unique expertise to the College.

- Classroom teaching experience is desirable.

Part-Time Faculty-University/College (Transfer Courses)
- Minimum qualifications for part-time faculty shall be a bachelor's degree and at least 18 graduate level semester credits in the program / discipline area assigned.
- An exception to the eighteen graduate-level semester hours in the program area/discipline to be taught may be recommended by the Department Chair with approval by the Academic Dean and President for individuals with special expertise, knowledge, and ability.

Full-Time Faculty – Career and Technical Education
Minimum Qualifications:
- Faculty must hold a career and technical education credential in the discipline in which they teach as required by the Colorado State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education. Criteria for the credentials vary slightly by discipline. Permanent forbearance of career and technical education experience or other deficiencies related to career and technical education credential requirements may be granted only by the CCCS Credentialing Oversight Committee. For more information on required credentials, contact the Career and Technical Education Director or review the criteria at http://www.coloradostateplan.com.

- Full-time CTE faculty must show that a combination of their education and work experience is equal to at least one level beyond that of the courses they teach – toward that end, faculty must hold a Bachelor's Degree or equivalent. The equivalent of a Bachelor's Degree shall be defined as:
  ◊ Associates' Degree (A.A., A.S., or A.A.S.) plus 4,000 hours of related work experience. (*Note*: *the 4,000 hours of related work experience may also be used for career and technical education credentialing requirements*).
- Faculty who do not hold a Bachelor's Degree or equivalent but who demonstrate exceptional work experience and teaching ability may be hired with the provision that they meet the above standards within three years. An exception to these requirements may be granted on the recommendation of the Department Chair with approval by the Academic Dean and President if the person has, at a minimum, a career and technical education credential and exceptional work experience above the minimum required for the

credential. Examples of evidence of exceptional work experience **may** include industry certifications, 150 percent of the experiential hours required by the credentialing process, teaching experience, etc.

Note:
- Certain career and technical education areas may have additional standards to meet accreditation licensing or certification requirements.
- General education courses for CTE which do not transfer may be taught by full or part-time faculty in the content area. Specific qualifications shall be determined by the department chair.

Full-Time Faculty – Career and Technical Education Teaching Transfer Courses

- Full-time CTE faculty must show that a combination of their education and work experience is equal to at least one level beyond that of the courses they teach – toward that end, faculty must hold a Master's Degree or equivalent and a career and technical education credential in that field.
- The equivalent of a Master's Degree shall be defined as: Bachelor's Degree plus 4,000 hours of related work experience. (*Note*: *the 4,000 hours of related work experience may also be used for career and technical education credentialing requirements)*.
- An exception to these requirements may be granted on the recommendation of the Department Chair with approval by the Academic Dean and President if the person has, at a minimum, a Bachelor's Degree in any field, a career and technical education credential and exceptional work experience above the minimum required for the credential. Examples of evidence of exceptional work experience **may** include industry certifications, 150 percent of the experiential hours required by the credentialing process, teaching experience, etc.

Part-Time Faculty-Career and Technical Education

- Part-time instructors shall meet the same minimum qualifications as full-time faculty in the assigned area.
  - ◊ Exceptions to the degree may be granted for programs in which degrees are not industry standards. Related work experience shall be considered more valuable than an academic degree in those programs. (Complete form for PT equivalent experience.)
  - ◊ Other exceptions shall be handled the same as full-time faculty.

Additional Criteria:
- Part-time Faculty who teach career and technical education courses that are intended to transfer shall meet the same qualifications as university/college parallel (Career and Technical Education faculty teaching transfer courses).
- Part time instructors have slightly different requirements than full-time faculty to achieve their career and technical education teaching credential; see http://www.coloradostateplan.com.

Full & Part Time – Instructional Personnel in Developmental Education

Instructional personnel in development education shall present appropriate evidence or certification of specialized skills for teaching as set forth below:
- Faculty shall have a bachelor's Degree in a related discipline plus either:
  1. Eighteen (18) graduate hours in the subject matter appropriate to teaching developmental education OR
  2. Eighteen (18) graduate credit hours in education OR
  3. A K-12 teaching credential/license and three years teaching experience.
- The equivalent experience exception for 18 graduate semester hours or the K-12 teaching credential/license and three years teaching experience shall be defined as:

      a. At a minimum 4000 hours of experience in the discipline or in a field closely related to the discipline.
- Equivalent experience must be verified.
- Classroom teaching experience desired.
- An exception to these requirements may be granted on the recommendation of the Department Chair with approval by the Academic Dean and President for individuals with special expertise, knowledge, and ability. Such individuals may include recognized experts in a specific field or visiting faculty from other institutions who bring unique expertise to the College.

FINAL APPROVAL: Dr. Marsi Liddell
Aims Community College President
Date: August 12, 2011

Revised: May 16, 2012

<u>**5-601A**</u>

**AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROCEDURE
STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

A. INTRODUCTION

As members of an academic community, Aims Community College Community College students are expected to conduct themselves in a mature and responsible manner, to promote a sense of cooperation within the college, and to work to build an atmosphere that is most conducive to the goals of higher education within the institution.

Students at Aims Community College Community College are members of both the College Community and the larger communities of which the college is a part, and, as such, are entitled to all the rights and protections enjoyed by members of the larger community. At the same time, admission to Aims Community College Community College carries special privileges and imposes responsibilities apart from those rights and duties enjoyed by non-students. As members of the larger community and as members of the College Community, Aims Community College' students have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a lawful manner and in compliance with the College's Standards of Student Conduct or other published college policy or regulation including standards of conduct set forth in course syllabi.

B. DEFINITIONS

1. **Campus.** All land, buildings and facilities of or owned by, used or controlled by Aims Community College Community College, and all streets, alleys, sidewalks and public ways abutting any land of the College.

2. **College.** Aims Community College Community College, including satellite campuses and outreach locations.

3. **College Community.** Members of the college community are any student, employee, or guest of the college.

4. **Dangerous Weapon**. A firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, or a firearm facsimile; any pellet or BB gun, or other device, whether operational or not, designed to propel projectiles by spring action or compressed air; explosives or dangerous chemicals, a fixed blade knife with a blade that measures more than three inches in length or a spring loaded knife or pocket knife with a blade longer than three and one-half inches; or any object, device, instrument, material or substance, whether animate or inanimate, used or intended to be used to inflict death or bodily injury.

5. **Drug or Controlled Substance.** Any controlled substance as defined in the Colorado Criminal Code.

6. **Instructional Area.** Any class, lab, faculty office or other area designated for instruction.

7. **Misconduct.** Any act proscribed in the Standards of Student Conduct or which violates any other published College policy or regulation prescribing a standard of student conduct.

8. **Organization.** Any student group recognized by the College pursuant to any relevant policy of the College. The term organization shall also include any Student organization established by or other organization whose presence on Campus is approved by an academic or administrative unit of the College.

9. **Student.** Any person taking courses on the Campuses of Aims Community College. This includes persons who are applying for admission or have been admitted but not yet enrolled in courses, persons who enroll for a full-time or part-time course load, and persons who are pursuing undergraduate, professional, developmental or personal enrichment programs of study. A person who is not officially enrolled for a particular term but who has a continuing relationship with the College, such as completion of academic work from a prior term, or an individual who was a Student, as defined herein, at the time of an alleged misconduct shall be considered a Student for the purpose of these Standards of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures. Wherever the word "Student" is used in this document, it may also mean more than one Student, a Student Organization, or representatives of a Student Organization.

10. **Student Mediation Assistance and Advocacy Program Process (Student MAAP).** Located in the Student Life Office. The program provides mediation for student complaints and information about formal proceedings.

Unlawful. Conduct in violation of any ordinance of a municipality or county or in violation of any law or regulation of the United States or the State of Colorado.

C. MISCONDUCT

Student Misconduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. **Conduct Relating to Acts of Dishonesty.** Aims Community College Students are expected to demonstrate qualities of morality, honesty, civility, honor, and respect. Behavior which violates these standards for which discipline may be imposed includes, but is not limited to, the following:

    a. **Cheating**. Copying or attempting to copy the academic work of another Student (including but not limited to quizzes, examinations, assessment tests, and assignments); using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices for an academic examination or exercise; engaging or attempting to engage the assistance of another individual in misrepresenting the academic performance of a Student; or communicating information in an unauthorized manner to another person for an academic examination or exercise.

    b. **Fabrication or Falsification**. Falsifying or fabricating any information, College document, record, or instrument of identification. Falsification is the alteration of information, while fabrication is the invention or counterfeiting of information.

    c. **Plagiarism**. Use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement; unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person; or use of an agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

    d.   **Complicity in Academic Dishonesty**. Helping or attempting to help another student to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

    e.   **Falsifying Grade Reports**. Changing or destroying, or attempting to change or destroy grades, scores, or markings on an examination or in an instructor's or the College's records.

    f.   **Lying.** Furnishing false information to any College official, faculty member or office.

    g.   **Other**. Additional standards of conduct relating to academic honesty specified in writing by an academic division or department and/or an individual faculty member for a particular course.

2. **Conduct Causing Disruption or Obstruction of College Operations, Activities, or Functions.** Although students have the right to free expression as guaranteed by the First Amendment, conduct which materially disrupts the normal operations of the College, which involves substantial disorder, or which invades the rights of other persons shall constitute misconduct. This may include the following:

    a.   Leading or inciting others to materially and substantially disrupt scheduled activities at any location on the College campuses.

    b.   Substantial disruption or obstruction of teaching, research, administration, or other College activities, including its public service functions on or off campus, or other authorized activities on Campus. Examples of disruptive behavior in a classroom include but are not limited to persistent arguing with the instructor, monopolizing conversation, frustrating efforts of the instructor to maintain control of the class, violating class conduct provisions of course syllabi, and verbally abusing or threatening the teacher and/or any student.

    c.   Material or substantial disruption of any activity or event of or sponsored by the College or an organization, either on or off campus.

    d.   Obstruction of ingress to or egress from any College building or facility.

    e.   Obstruction of the free flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic on Campus.

    f.   Obstructing or failing to comply with the directions of a peace officer, firefighter, or College official in the performance of his or her duties on the Aims Community College Campuses, or at any activity or event sponsored by the College, or at an organization of the College.

    g.   Using obscene language in the classroom or directed to any College employee.

3. **Conduct Related to College Property or Property of Members of the College Community.** Conduct related to the misuse, theft, or damage to college property or to property of members of the College community shall constitute misconduct. Such negligence may include the following:

    a.   Unauthorized occupation or use of or entry into any College building or facility, including both indoor and outdoor facilities.

    b.   Destroying, defacing, stealing, or making inaccessible library or other College-owned resource material or equipment.

    c.   Forging, altering, or otherwise falsifying any College document, College record, or any College instrument of identification, including but not limited to parking permits, transcripts, college ap-

plications, student IDs, registration forms, or insurance forms.

d. Borrowing, lending, or improperly possessing any College instrument of identification.

e. The use of college computing resources for any purpose other than the purposes for which they are intended is an act of misconduct. The following misuses of computers are considered misconduct:

i. Disrupting the intended use of computers or computer networks.

ii. Damaging or destroying computer equipment or computer-based information.

iii. Using a computer for unauthorized personal and business purposes.

iv. Violating copyright laws or license restrictions with respect to the copying or use of computer programs, data, material, or information.

v. Unauthorized use of another person's identification or password.

vi. Unlawful or unauthorized access to or use of computers, computer networks and computer data, programs, materials, or information.

vii. Attempting to create, alter, or delete records or entries on computer files without authorization.

viii. Exhibiting obscene pictures or literature on College computers or in print.

ix. Attempting to influence College personnel to engage in any of the above listed acts.

f. Unauthorized use of College property, facilities, equipment or materials.

g. Possessing, producing, manufacturing, or having manufactured without proper authorization, any key or unlocking device for use on any College facility or lock.

h. Traffic violations on the Campus, including reckless endangerment, reckless driving, speeding, or operating any vehicle while intoxicated.

i. Taking or damaging the property of other Students, College employees or members of the College Community.

4. **Conduct Involving the Use of a Controlled Substance, Alcohol or Tobacco.**

a. Students are prohibited from selling, representing they are selling, dispensing, or representing that they are dispensing, possessing, distributing, using, abusing, or being under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance while on Campus or at a College sponsored event, whether or not on Campus.

b. The use of all tobacco products is prohibited in all buildings owned and operated by the College.

5. **Conduct Causing or Threatening Harm or Injury to Other Persons.**

a. Prohibited conduct includes, without limitation, the following:

b. Engaging or attempting to engage in any act for the purpose of injuring, threatening to injure, or unreasonably alarming a member of the College including but not limited to physical abuse, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment, or coercion.

c. Engaging in or attempting to engage in any act for the purpose of unreasonably interfering with the

work, education or the environment or activities surrounding the work or education of any member of the Campus Community.

c. Using obscene language to verbally abuse any member of the Campus Community.

d. Any disparaging comment, epithet, slur, insult, derogatory opinion, or other expressive behavior concerning age, race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other personal characteristic of an individual or group in such a manner as to exhibit a pattern of abuse or to create a hostile environment, or to provoke a violent reaction or a perception of threat directed toward any member of the College Community.

e. Conduct which is disorderly, lewd or indecent.

f. Sexual harassment which includes making unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or other unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature toward any member of the College Community, or sexual behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for any member of the College Community.

g. Carrying, bringing, using or possessing any Dangerous Weapon on Campus or at any College sponsored activity.

h. Participating in, making claims of, or claiming responsibility for terrorist activity (such as threats of bombs, biological weapons, et.al.), whether in fact or as a hoax.

6. **Conduct Causing an Abuse of the Disciplinary Process**

Prohibited conduct includes, without limitations, the following:

a. Failure to obey the summons of a College official.

b. Falsification, distortion, or misrepresentation of information to a College official before or during the Disciplinary Process.

c. Disruption or interference with the orderly conduct of a Disciplinary Proceeding.

d. Attempting to discourage an individual's proper participation in, or use of, the Disciplinary Process.

e. Attempting to influence the impartiality of a member of a Disciplinary Proceeding.

f. Harassment (verbal or physical) and/or intimidation of a member of a Disciplinary Proceeding.

g. Failure to comply with the sanction(s) imposed under the Disciplinary Process.

h. Influencing or attempting to influence another person to commit an abuse of the Disciplinary Process.

7. **Social Media.** All aspects of this policy pertain to entries or posts on social media outlets. Students are prohibited from making entries or posts to social media outlets that violate federal, state, or local law. Any such violation will result in additional disciplinary action, up to and potentially including, expulsion from the institution.

8. **Other Unlawful Acts of Misconduct.**

Any act that occurs on any of the College Campuses or at any activity or event sponsored by the college that is in violation of any other College policy, standard, or regulation prescribing a standard of student conduct or any ordinance of a municipality or county or any law or regulation of the United States or the State of Colorado.

FINAL APPROVAL: Dr. Marsi Liddell

                        Aims Community College President

Date: **February 13, 2004**

Revised: September 21, 2009
              April 30, 2011

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROCEDURE
DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

General: The Aims community includes students who are engaged in both credit and non-credit classes at three principal and all satellite campuses and outreach locations. Each member of the Aims community is expected to uphold the policies and procedures of the College as well as the laws of our community. This procedure applies to the relationship between students and Aims. Students are subject to two sources of authority: civil and criminal authority and Aims authority. Neither is exclusive.

This procedure will be followed when a student is charged with violating the Student Conduct Code set forth in Procedure 5-601A. These procedures should be interpreted broadly with a sense of fairness both for the student and the Aims community.

Definitions:

1. Impartial Decision Maker: The individual or committee designated by the President to hear student disciplinary appeals.

2. Notice: Notices which are required to be given by this procedure shall be considered served upon the student when given by personal delivery or mailing by certified mail to the address the student has filed with the College's admissions and records office. If notice is mailed, student shall be given three (3) additional days to respond.

3. Sanctions: One or more of the following may be given when there is a finding that a student has violated the College's Code of Conduct. All sanctions will be issued in writing and a copy will be placed in the student's confidential file maintained by the Office of the Dean for Student Services. The probability of more severe disciplinary action is probable for any subsequent violation of the Code of Conduct.

   a.   Warning: A Notice served upon the student advising him or her of a violation of the Code of Conduct or some other College rule.

   b.   Probation: A reprimand for violation of specified regulations for a designated period of time.

   c.   Loss of Privileges: Denial of specified privileges for a designated period of time.

   d.   Other disciplinary sanction: fines, restitution, assignment to perform services for the benefit of the college or community; required meetings with an advisor or other College official; administrative restriction to selected parts/locations of campus sites; or other sanction that doesn't result in the student being denied the right of attending classes.

   e.   Withdrawal from class: Administrative withdrawal with consequent loss of tuition and fees from a class or classes.

   f.   Summary Suspension: An immediate action taken by the Dean for Student Services, or other designated College official, to ensure the safety and well-being of members of the college community or preservation of college property; to ensure the student's own physical or emotional safety and well-being; or if the student poses a definite threat of disruption or interference with the normal operations of the college. In such event, the hearing before the Impartial Decision Maker (if requested by the student), shall occur as soon as possible following the suspension.

i. Faculty determination: If a student is unresponsive to a faculty member's intervention and continues to be disruptive in the classroom, it is appropriate to ask that student to leave for that class session. Longer suspensions can be done only in accordance with college procedures.

g. College Suspension: An involuntary separation of the student from the College, with consequent loss of tuition and fees, for misconduct apart from academic performance for a specified period of time not to exceed two academic terms. Suspension differs from expulsion in that after the stated time period the student is eligible for re-admission. Students may be suspended from a class, use of a College facility or an activity in the sole determination by an authorized College employee that the conduct is in violation of the Code subject only to an appeal to the Dean for Student Services to ensure that the action was taken pursuant to college rules.

h. College Expulsion: An involuntary separation of the student from the college, with consequent loss of tuition and fees, for more than two academic terms; a student is not eligible for re-admission unless at the end of the separation he or she can prove that the behavior that resulted in the expulsion has been resolved.

4. Day: Refers to calendar day unless otherwise noted below.

Procedures:

1. Decision: The Dean for Student Services or his/her designee (hereinafter Dean) shall receive all allegations of student misconduct, investigate the complaints and make a Decision. The Dean may refer the complainant and the student to the process set forth in Procedure 5-601D for informal resolution while retaining jurisdiction of the complaint. The Dean may decide that the charges can be disposed of administratively by mutual consent of the parties involved on an acceptable basis. If an administrative resolution is not reached, the Dean shall issue a Decision which determines whether the alleged conduct occurred; whether the conduct violated the Code of Conduct or College policies or procedures; and impose a sanction(s) if appropriate. The student shall receive written Notice of the Decision and be advised of his or her right to appeal the Decision by filing a written appeal with the Dean within seven (7) days of service of the Decision. In the case of suspension or expulsion, the sanction shall be imposed no earlier than six days after service of the Notice unless it is a summary suspension or the sanction is agreed to by the student. If an appeal is requested, suspension and/or expulsion shall not be imposed until the appeal procedures below have been completed.

2. Appeal:

a. In the event of an appeal, the Dean shall give written Notice to the student and the Impartial Decision Maker which describes the conduct to be inquired into; the Code of Conduct and/or College policies or procedures which were allegedly violated; the date, time and place of the alleged violation; the sanction that is threatened and the date, time and place of the hearing before the Impartial Decision Maker. The Notice shall be given at least seven (7) days prior to the hearing, unless a shorter time is agreed to by the parties.

b. Conduct of Hearings. The Impartial Decision Maker shall determine its own hearing procedures, keeping in mind the following guidelines:

1. Student shall have the right to be heard by the Impartial Decision Maker. In the event that the student is under the age of eighteen or incapacitated, he/she may have an advisor present to assist him/her in presenting his/her case.

2.   Students do not have the right to be represented by an attorney during these proceedings except in the case where civil or criminal actions concerning the student are pend-

ing and in that case the attorney's role shall be advisory only. The Student is responsible for presenting his/her own case and, therefore, advisors are not permitted to speak or to participate directly in any hearing except as provided in #1 above.

3. Student shall have the right to identify documents, witnesses and other material he/she would like the Impartial Decision Maker to review before making a final decision.

4. Hearings shall be conducted in private unless all parties agree otherwise.

5. A record of the hearing will be maintained by the Impartial Decision Maker.

c. Determination by Impartial Decision Maker. The Decision Maker shall make its findings and determinations in closed meeting out of the presence of the Dean and the student charged. Separate findings are to be made as to the conduct of the student, and on the sanction(s), if any, to be imposed. No discipline shall be imposed on the student unless the Impartial Decision Maker is persuaded by a preponderance of the evidence that the student committed the alleged conduct and that it constituted a violation of the Code of Conduct and/or College rules, that the student should be sanctioned (including modifying the sanction imposed below) and that the discipline is reasonable given the violation. The student and the Dean shall be given written Notice of the decision. The decision shall be issued within five calendar days of the close of the hearing and it shall become final unless a petition for review is filed.

d. Petition for Review. The Dean or the student may petition the president to review the Impartial Decision Maker's decision by filing a written petition within five (5) days after notification of the decision. If a review is requested, the other party will be given three (3) days to respond to the petition and his/her response materials will be given to the President to review before a decision on the petition is made.

e. President's Decision. The President shall review the record of the case and the petition and may affirm or reverse the decision of the Impartial Decision Maker. The record shall consist of the Impartial Decision Maker's written documents and the recording of the hearing and any written materials submitted in support of the Petition for Review. The president shall notify the Dean for Student Services and the student in writing of his or her decision within fourteen (14) days of service of the Petition for Review. The president's decision is final.

3. Miscellaneous:

a. College disciplinary proceeding may be instituted against a student charged with violation of a law if the violation occurred at the College or College-sanctioned activities or was of such a nature as to impact upon the College which is also a violation of the College's Student Code of Conduct. Proceedings under this Procedure may be carried out prior to, simultaneously with, or following civil or criminal proceedings off-campus.

b. Time limits for scheduling of hearings may be extended at the discretion of the Impartial Decision Maker.

c. The procedural rights afforded to students above may be waived by the student.

FINAL APPROVAL: Dr. Marsi Liddell

Aims Community College President,
Date: February 13, 2004

Revised: April 18, 2011

5-601C

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROCEDURE
STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCESS

Scope: Aims Community College provides this grievance procedure for its students. Additionally, clients of the College and volunteers who are providing a service for the benefit of the College under the supervision and control of a college employee may only grieve a decision which bans him or her from the campus. A grievance may raise any matter which the grievant believes violates or inequitably applies written Aims' policies or procedures. The grievant must be personally affected by such violation or inequitable action. Matters that are not grievable include those matters which the College is without authority to act, academic decisions, and disciplinary actions. Academic decisions which are believed to be the result of discrimination on a prohibited basis should be submitted to the EEO Officer.

Informal Resolution: A Grievant is encouraged to resolve the issue informally by use of the process described in Procedure 5-601D, the MAAP process. If that process fails or is impracticable, the grievant should proceed by discussing the concern with the person, or the person's supervisor, who is believed to have caused or contributed to the matter on which the grievance is based (hereafter called the respondent). A respondent may be an Aims' employee or faculty member, student, volunteer, contractor, or client. Grievances based upon illegal discrimination are not covered by this procedure. Complaints of discrimination or unlawful harassment should be brought to the attention of the Equal Opportunity Officer.

Formal Resolution: If informal resolution fails, the grievant may file a written statement of the matters complained of and the remedy sought within twenty (20) calendar days of the incident. The written complaint should be filed with the Dean for Student Services. After receipt, the Dean for Student Services will determine whether or not the situation presents a grievable matter. The grievance will be dismissed if the matter is determined not grievable and the grievant will be notified of the reasons. A dismissal of a grievance may be appealed to the President.

If the matter is determined to be grievable, the Dean for Student Services or designee shall conduct a hearing and establish reasonable rules for the grievance procedure. Fact finding will be conducted which will give the grievant and responding Aims' personnel, who were named in the grievance, an opportunity to explain what they know about the matters surrounding the grievance and to review any related evidence. The Dean for Student Services or designee may choose to hear the information in individual meetings. If the student is a minor or incapacitated, an advisor may assist the grievant in presenting his or her case. Right to representation by an attorney during the proceedings is not permitted, except in the case where civil or criminal actions concerning the student are pending, and in that case the attorney's role shall be advisory only. The grievant is responsible for presenting his or her own case and, therefore, advisors are not permitted to speak or to participate directly in any hearing except when the student is under 18 or incapacitated.

Considering the oral and written statements and comments, the Dean for Student Services or designee shall issue a decision within ten (10) calendar days of the close of the hearing. The decision shall reject the grievance or grant the grievance and make recommendation(s) to resolve the issue(s). Copies of the decision shall be served to the Grievant and the Respondent either personally or by certified mail to the addresses on file in the Admissions and Records Office.

Appeal: The decision of the Dean for Student Services or designee is final unless a Petition for Review is filed with the President by either party within five (5) calendar days of notification of the decision. The Petition for Review may be filed only on the following basis:

1. A violation of this procedure,

2. The decision was arbitrary and was not based on the facts of the grievance, or

3. The Grievant or Respondent can provide newly discovered information that was not available during the meetings or hearings.

Upon receipt of a petition, the President will review the record and issue a written decision within ten (10) calendar days of the receipt of the petition. The College President's decision is subject only to review by the Board of Trustees pursuant to Policy now 0-1100. The scheduling timelines described above may, for good cause, be extended.

FINAL APPROVAL: Dr. Marsi Liddell

Aims Community College President

Date: February 13, 2004

Revised: September 21, 2009

Return to Category 3

5-601D

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROCEDURE
STUDENT MEDIATION, ASSISTANCE AND
ADVOCACY PROGRAM PROCESS

Scope:

If a student has a complaint, issue, concern, or problem with a College employee or department, another student or an instructional situation as described in 5-601C, the first step is to contact the Student Mediation, Assistance and Advocacy Program (MAAP) Office. The Office is charged with assisting students and resolving their issues informally.

Referral to MAAP:

1. Initial contact for a student when there is a complaint, issue, concern or problem should be the MAAP Office.
2. The MAAP Office should be contacted before contacting a dean or other College official.
3. The student may refer themselves directly to the Office or they may be referred by a College employee (faculty, staff or administrator).
4. A back-up referral option will be identified in the case it might be necessary.

Process:

The MAAP Office can provide the following services:
1. Describe, explain and/or advise a student about the process they should use if a situation occurs in which the student is seeking guidance.
2. Conduct an intake of the relevant information and complaint.
3. Assist the student if an advocacy situation exists.
4. Assist the student in interpreting and applying proper procedures as is appropriate and navigate the College system.
5. Provide information for all students in relation to rights and responsibilities.
6. Provide mediation services; student to student, student to employee, as appropriate.
7. Refer students to College resources or community resources, as is necessary.

If working with and through the MAAP Office does not lead to a resolution the student will be referred to another institutional process.

FINAL APPROVAL: Dr. Marsi Liddell

Aims Community College President

Date: March 23, 2004

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Hyperlinks to Aims Webpages Contained in Systems Portfolio

Annual Report to the Community

   2012: http://www.aims.edu/about/pio/annual-report/2012.pdf

   2011: http://www.aims.edu/about/pio/annual-report/2011.pdf

   2010: http://www.aims.edu/about/pio/annual-report/2010.pdf

   2009: http://www.aims.edu/about/pio/annual-report/2009.pdf

Strategic Marketing Plan

   http://www.aims.edu/about/strategic_plan.pdf

Board of Trustees

   http://www.aims.edu/about/board/