

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

Assurance Evidence

During the past several years, CSU has affirmatively renewed its commitment to conducting its affairs transparently through increased accountability and disclosure. This culture is evidenced by the following examples:











- Development of the *Accountability at Colorado State University* website, which includes information on fiscal accountability, financial data, financial transparency, budget, research, faculty and staff, and students.
- Annual publication of the *Financial Accountability Report* since 2008.
- **Enhanced web access to Institutional Research** data and fact publications, including the *Fact Book*, IPEDS Data Feedback Reports, the Common Data Set, student success (retention and graduation rates), degrees awarded, roster of faculty (includes credentials), and other ad hoc data reports.
- CSU's commitment to accountability involves an open, public campus planning and budgeting process described in Component 5.A.5.
- All relationships with special (program) accreditors and the Higher Learning Commission are publicly disclosed on the Accreditation website and listed in detail in the Federal Compliance section 4.0(i).
- **The Division of External Relations oversees Marketing, Public Relations, Communications and Creative Services, and Web Communications.** External Relations provides central marketing, media and community relations, events, design, photography, Web, TV and video services for a variety of university clients and has responsibility for ensuring the integrity of communications via these services as described in the Federal Compliance 4.0 (g) section.
- CSU participates in the *Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA)* - a project specifically created to provide greater accountability through accessible, transparent, and comparable information on public 4-year institutions of higher education. Participation in the VSA is voluntary; however, CSU is one of more than 300 institutions that elected to join the VSA project and publish their information on the College Portrait website.
- CSU complies with the Colorado Public (Open) Records Act (C.R.S. 24-72 201 et seq.), making all public records open for inspection by any person at reasonable times, except as otherwise provided by law.
- Board meetings are open to the public, and each meeting includes an opportunity for public comment to the Board.
- The *General Catalog*, the *Graduate and Professional Bulletin*, and nearly all other publications prepared for students and prospective students are updated annually and **are readily available publicly in electronic format on the web without restriction by registration or login.**
- All costs of attendance (COA) are clearly disclosed on the *Student Financial Services* website, including a required net price calculator.
- A new tuition and fees calculator is provided online (beginning in the summer of 2011) to help students, prospective students, and families better plan and budget for their CSU education. This new web tool allows students to estimate tuition and fees costs for different credit loads and different academic programs. The calculator also explains the different charges that might appear on a student's tuition bill and provides links to those program areas that are funded through various fees, so that students can see how their funds are spent in support of their education.
- **The Division of Enrollment and Access, which includes the offices of Admissions, Student Financial Services, the Access Center, and the Registrar, holds accuracy, accountability, and transparency as core values guiding all their activities. CSU fully supports the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Principles of Excellence guidelines for educational institutions receiving Federal funding. Schools that agree to participate will:**
 - Provide students with a personalized form covering the total cost of an education program;
 - Provide educational plans for all Military and Veteran education beneficiaries;

- End fraudulent and aggressive recruiting techniques and misrepresentation;
- Provide accommodations for Service Members and Reservists absent due to service requirements;
- Designate a Point of Contact for academic and financial advising;
- Ensure accreditation of all new programs prior to enrolling students; and
- **Align institutional refund policies with those under Title IV.**

In addition, CSU maintains full compliance with all federal requirements for complete and accurate disclosure of information to constituents as described in the Federal Compliance section in response to HLC Policies 4.0 (f), (g), (h) and (i).

The 2012 NSSE results provide evidence that CSU presents itself clearly and completely to students. Ratings in the Supportive Campus Environment (SCE) section have been continuously improving through the series of NSSE administrations, with statistically significant improvements noted in the latest survey. CSU first-year students have a higher mean for the SCE benchmark compared to first-year students at peer institutions, and CSU seniors have an equivalent mean for the SCE benchmark compared to seniors at peer institutions (see NSSE p. 17).

Sources

-  Accountability
-  Accreditation
-  Enrollment and Access
-  Financial Accountability Report FY2012
-  GI Bill Principles of Excellence
-  Institutional Research
-  NSSE Final Results, CSU 2012 (Page 11)
-  Student Financial Services
-  Tuition and Fees Calculator
-  Voluntary System of Accountability