

Criterion Three Conclusion

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

Assurance Evidence

CSU fulfills this criterion by offering a high-quality educational experience in the many aspects of the students' experience: how they are recruited and admitted; the scope and integrity of information provided to prospective and current students about the institution and its programs; guidance provided to new, continuing, and transfer students to facilitate their success; quality learning offered through each of the academic program's curriculum; educational enrichment through co-curricular programs; and opportunities for networking with other students, instructors, and staff that establish the value of a residential experience on a large, doctoral, research-intensive campus. The broad focus for the past six years on implementing the SSI has enhanced the student-centered focus of the University and is showing significant improvements in the students' experiences and successes.

Strengths

- Student access to a high-quality faculty as evidenced by research and scholarly activities: creation and discovery, application, and dissemination of knowledge through teaching and service.
- A broad array of high-quality academic programs characterized by depth, breadth, currency, and relevance of learning.
- A general education for undergraduates, the AUCC, that includes the knowledge, skills and competencies that serve not only the students, but the public purpose of developing an educated, global society.
- Excellent student support services that are integrated throughout the student experience, often setting the standard for best practices, and very effective as evidenced by gains in NSSE scores.
- Enhanced undergraduate student advising that focuses on how to succeed in addition to academic planning.
- An enriched learning environment provided through many co-curricular learning experiences such as service learning and residential communities.
- Significant investments to improve the capacity and service of the Libraries in support of student learning.
- An institutional commitment to improved learning and teaching by establishing TILT.
- Focused efforts to improve student efficiency in progressing to graduation by course capacity analysis to inform course availability adjustments.

Challenges

Within the broad scope of Criterion 3, there are challenges both to sustain the quality of programs and student support services and to respond to opportunities with new or revitalized programs and services. Some of the leading challenges are as follows:

- Increase the number of tenure-track faculty, both to re-establish the importance of full-time faculty members and to accommodate enrollment growth.
- Provide academic program enhancements that improve the quality of learning by students and fulfill the needs of a global society through review, revision, and approval of new programs of study.
- Update and staff student support services to meet the evolving complex needs of students to increase student success and graduation (learning).
- Improve operational efficiencies to ensure that students have access to adequate course capacity as needed to proceed efficiently to graduation.
- Provide more professional development opportunities to increase the quality of teaching by faculty members and graduate assistant instructors.
- Provide inflation funding for the Libraries' journal acquisitions to keep pace with rising costs.

Plans for enhancement

Area 1: Teaching and Learning of the *Strategic Plan* contains 13 major goals with numerous objectives and initiatives that have been crafted for sustaining and improving the quality of

CSU's teaching and learning programs. The goals and strategies of the SSI are actively being reviewed and refined in 2013 to sharpen the institutional focus on improving the learning quality and success of undergraduate students. New initiatives, such as the science of learning, are being advanced by TILT to improve teaching and learning across the campus. CSU recently became the national home to The Reinvention Center (discussed in Component 5.D.2), which offers new opportunities for refinement of our teaching and learning programs. Likewise, the Graduate School is proposing to implement a professional development program (in conjunction with TILT) to support better academic performance and professional outcomes of graduate students; and it plans to provide additional support (e.g., increased subsidy of health insurance, more tuition premiums, increased amount and number of fellowships and other awards) to become more competitive for attracting and retaining graduate students. The Division of Student Affairs is aggressively pursuing the development of new programs to provide the support services needed by students with complex needs. And, through the Division of Enrollment and Access, CSU continues to recognize its obligation to assist students with financial aid through improved efficiency of strategically awarding institutional and state need-based financial aid.

Sources

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