May 29, 2007

TO: President David Svaldi,
Adams State College

FROM: Mary B. Breslin, Associate Director

SUBJECT: Final Team Report

Enclosed is the institution's copy of the final Team Report of a visit to Adams State College. The Commission encourages you to make additional copies of the Team Report to circulate to your constituencies. In addition, I have attached draft copies of the Statement of Affiliation Status (SAS) and the Organizational Profile (OP). These two documents, the SAS and the OP, will be posted on the Commission website after the Board of Trustees validates the accreditation decision of the Institutional Actions Council or the Review Committee. They are enclosed now for your information and for your review. You will receive an official action letter, an SAS and an OP following validation of the action by the Board of Trustees.

You are asked to acknowledge receipt of the Team Report and the SAS and OP worksheets; and to file on behalf of your institution, a formal written response to the evaluation team's report and recommendation. Your response becomes a part of the official record of the evaluation visit. Your response also serves as an integral part of the evaluation process, and it will be included in the materials sent to the next team that visits your institution. Please send your institutional response to me two weeks after you receive this report, send copies to members of the visiting team, and set aside some additional copies for the Commission's review process. (See Handbook of Accreditation, Third Edition, Chapter 2.2-2)

In your response, you are also asked to let me know which review option you prefer: the Readers Panel or the Review Committee. A description of these processes appears in the Handbook, Chapter 2.2-2 and 2.2-3. Please review these options and advise me as soon as possible, whether you agree essentially with the team's report and recommendation and therefore choose the Readers Panel, or whether you wish to have the team's report and your materials examined by a Review Committee. The next Review Committee meeting is September 24, 2007, in Chicago.

Enclosed please find three evaluation forms. In an effort to strengthen its professional development program for Peer Reviewers, the Commission is initiating this structured method outside of the institution's formal written response to seek from the institution an evaluation of the team. We recommend that you distribute these to knowledgeable people representative of several constituencies at your institution. You can make additional copies if you wish. Your participation is voluntary but greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions concerning the evaluation team's report, the SAS, the OP or the review options, please let me know.

Enclosures

c: Dr. Jane L. Toot, Team Chairperson
ASSURANCE SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

ADAMS STATE COLLEGE
Alamosa, CO

February 26–28, 2007

FOR

The Higher Learning Commission
A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

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I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT

A. Purpose of Visit
The purpose of the visit from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) on February 26-28, 2007 was a comprehensive evaluation of Adams State College for continued accreditation.

B. Organizational Context
Adams State College (ASC) was chartered as Adams State Normal School in 1921. In 1929 the name changed to the Adams State Teachers College of Southern Colorado. The current name of Adams State College was given in 1945. At this time, 2007, the student body is about 2750 with 2100 undergraduates and 650 graduate students. Annually, approximately 13,500 students are served through the Extended Studies program. Adams State College has a statutory role to provide regional education (REP) for southern Colorado as well as to provide teacher education in rural Colorado.

In 2003, the state dissolved the omnibus board which oversaw three state colleges. Adams State College now is governed by its own board. In 2006, the current president was hired and the College is currently conducting searches for other top-level administrators including a provost.

The College continues to live its mission to attract and serve a diverse student body. Concurrently it is dedicated to addressing educational cultural and economic needs of the rural region where it resides.

C. Unique Aspects of Visit
The visit was originally intended to include off-site visits to Eagle County Trinidad State Junior College and Otero Junior College. The team received no materials regarding these sites. Accordingly, the two draft schedules sent by the team chair to the College did not include these side trips. There was no response from the College until the second afternoon of our visit. At that time, it was jointly determined by the President and the team chair that an additional visit would be necessary to adequately evaluate these sites.

D. Sites or Branch Campuses Visited
Please see above.

E. Distance Education Reviewed
Team members discussed the Extended Studies program with several campus constituencies including the Director, faculty members, and the Provost. The programs presented meet education and training needs both in the region of ASC and abroad. The College successfully applied for approval for distance degrees in December of 2005. Extended Studies provides programming for more than 13,000 students through a combination of face-to-face, online video, and print-based media. Offerings are consistently monitored for both academic quality and efficiency of presentation. Embedded within Extended Studies are unique opportunities for high-school students (preparation for ACT, SAT) as well as other services including Paralegal Certificates and personal enrichment non-credit programs.
It was noted by the team that there is no librarian assigned to Extended Studies.

**F. Interactions with Constituencies**

Eight members – Board of Trustees  
President of Foundation  
Director of Foundation  
Faculty Senate President  
25 Faculty  
7 Students  
8 Alumni  
Self-Study Steering Committee  
Budget Committee (14)  
Director Extended Studies  
Academic Program Chairpersons (8)  
Director of Information Technology  
President  
Interim Provost; Assistant Provost  
Chairperson – General Education Committee  
Student Union Director  
Housing Director  
Financial Aid Director  
Director Academic Advisement  
Director Institutional Research  
Director of Tutoring  
Director of Student Life  
Intramural and Student Recreation Coordinator  
Chairman Curriculum Review Committee  
Director Alumni Relations  
Executive Director Community Development  
Vice President for Enrollment Management  
Vice President for Finance and Administration  
Dean of Students  
Director Human Resources  
Director of Communications  
Director of Library  
Director Graduate Studies  
Graduate Council  
Student Senate President  
Chairperson Assessment Committee  
Grant Directors (2)  
Director Financial Aid

**G. Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed**

Catalogs (undergraduate, graduate) 2006-2007  
Executive Summary ASC Self Study  
ASC Strategic Plan 2005-2009
President’s Four Year Plan
ASC Foundation Meeting Minutes
Faculty Salary Proposal
Employee Tuition Scholarships
By-laws of Adams State College Foundation
Curriculum Review Committee Minutes 2003-2006
Integrated Extended Campus Marketing Plan
Extended Studies Budget Fiscal Year 2005-2006
Colorado Commission on Higher Education Policies and Procedures for Statewide Extended Campus 2006
Adams State College Academic Strategic Plan 2006-2009
Council for Continuing Higher Education (CCHE) Statewide Transfer Policy
Provost’s Professional Development Budget 2004-2006
Program Review Overview
Report to North Central Association (NCA) on Assessment 1999
Conceptual Comprehensive Enrollment Management Plan
Faculty Salary Resolution
Institutional Technology Plan
Adams State College Fact Book 2005-2006
Curriculum Review Committee Program Reviews 2006
2005-2006 Student Learning Outcomes
Assessment Project
Art-Chemistry
Counselor Education – English
Exercise Physiology and Leisure Science – Music
Changes and Accomplishments since 1997 Accreditation Department of Biology and Earth Sciences
School of Business Student Marketing Research Reports
Evaluation of Learning Outcomes BUS 120: Business Computer Applications I
Samples of Student Work BUS 120: Business Computer Applications I
Evaluation of Student Learning Forms and Rubrics for BUS 401: Organizational Behavior
Sample Student Work for BUS 401: Organizational Behavior
Assessment Record Computer Science and Mathematics
Academic Program Assessment Chemistry Program
Assessment Record for Earth Sciences Program
Examples of student work supporting student learning outcomes and academic program goals
– English and Mass Communication Programs (6 volumes)
English, Mass Communications, Creative Writing, and Spanish Programs Assessment Records and Institutional Syllabi 2005
Department of History, Government, and Philosophy Assessment Plan
Department of History, Government, and Philosophy Changes Since 1997
ASC Music Department 2005-06 Summary of Assessment Data
ASC Music Department 2005-06 Assessment Documentation, Rubrics, and Institutional Syllabi
Sociology Department Assessment Reports 1999-2005
Sociology Department Assessment Records and Institutional Syllabi 2005-06

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(4/27/2007)
II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW

A. Comprehensiveness of the Self-Study Process
The initial work for the Self-Study process was started in 2004 when the Provost and a faculty team attended an assessment workshop presented by the HLC. By February 2005 a self-study committee had been formed and work began on the self-study document. For the next eighteen months, the Committee met with several consultants to refine the document and the surrounding processes. Concurrently the campus community interacted with the committee on an on-going basis. The involvement of the campus included a Day of Reflection which was well attended by students, faculty and staff. This provided a unique opportunity for dialogue among constituents about the purpose and direction of the self-study process.

B. Integrity of the Self-Study Report
The Self-Study Report was well organized and easy to follow. Especially helpful were the summaries at the conclusion of each criterion. The team did find the document to be somewhat descriptive, particularly in the areas of assessment and in strategic planning.

The resource room was very well organized with documentation clearly defined.

C. Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Previously Identified Challenges
In regard to Challenges 1 (low salaries), 2 (lack of professional development) and 4 (Title IX Compliance), the team believes the progress of the institution to be adequate.

Challenges 3 (coherent plan to enhance diversity) and 5 (lack of assessment plan for general education) demonstrated inadequate progress from ASC. Challenge 3 will be addressed in Criterion 1 and Challenge 5 in Criterion 3.

D. Notification of Evaluation Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment
Requirements were fulfilled.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS
The team reviewed the required Title IV compliance areas and the student complaint information and finds the University in all material respects to be in compliance. The definition of academic credit, semester length, and contact hours fall well within acceptable ranges for post-secondary education in the United States. The student loan default rates are low and have fallen in the past two years to just over 3 percent.

Issues with Title IX noted in the previous comprehensive visit have been addressed in a number of significant ways, including increased scholarship support for women athletes and the addition of women’s softball as an intercollegiate sport in the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference.

Although the College has some issues associated with deferred maintenance, ingress and egress from buildings in disabled friendly and Student Services provides the appropriate assistance and assistive technology for students with disabilities.

IV. FULFILLMENT OF THE CRITERIA

CRITERION ONE: MISSION AND INTEGRITY. The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met
The team found evidence that the core mission of Adams State College is driven by clear and distinct statutory statements of role as well as mission.

The mission is well understood and articulated on campus. The core value of a “student-centered learning” permeates the campus and is formally expressed in documents such as its Vision Statement, Mission Statement, and Institutional Goals. As a direct result of the self-study process, the College had achieved a new level of consistency in the
understanding and expression of its mission and core values.

Mission and Planning documents are published and available. The campus has set in place mechanisms for periodic review of planning priorities and the referencing of priorities in the allocation of available resources.

The College’s mission documents and goals recognize the importance of diversity as well as prize the importance of service to underserved populations, especially Hispanic.

Faculty, staff, and students interviewed concur that a culture of inclusion permeates the campus environment.

The mission of the College is clearly expressed in the Trustees Policy Manual and in the Adams State College Strategic Plan.

The Board of Trustees of Adams State College consists of 11 members. Nine are appointed by the Governor. The Board includes a non-voting faculty trustee and a non-voting student trustee. This Board supercedes and replaces the Board of Trustees of the State Colleges in Colorado which was disbanded when the State College system was dissolved in 2003. The new Board represents Adams State College to the Governor, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and the Legislature. It is appropriately empowered with oversight and governing responsibilities and operates in a manner designed to minimize external involvement in the day-to-day operations and management of the College. A review of Board policy, minutes of meetings, and interviews with Board members left team members comfortable that the new Board understands its policy role and has assured substantial administrative authority and autonomy to the President and the campus.

The College is funded in part through a contract for service with the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. This contract includes performance goals which reflect the College’s mission and among those goals are: (1) the growth of underrepresented student cohorts including Hispanic, (2) the growth of first-generation college students, (3) the growth of other minority and low-income students, with special emphasis on the enrollment and graduation teacher candidates who are under-represented in Colorado’s public schools with a particular focus on Hispanics and Hispanic males.

The College’s mission and goals are reflected in a “zero-based” allocation process designed to “right size” the College’s components and maintain stable funding and enhance the process of establishing budget request and allocation priorities.

The College fosters integrity, provides for processes for the fair and equitable disposition of complaints and grievances, and focuses key human resources on addressing the needs of external constituencies. Evidence for this conclusion included many interviews, few or no negative public comments, and an extensive review of written documents and literature, including the College’s formal process for the disposition of student complaints.
2. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention**

While the College recognizes the importance of diversity on campus and in its off-campus service roles, the College needs to focus on the development and implementation of a formalized plan which recognizes the importance of diversity.

The College’s unique “Budget Crosswalk-Cycle” (zero-based) internal allocation process is in its initial phase of development. The College needs to improve efforts to inform the College community of the implications of zero-based budgeting and the potential benefits of a process that is labor-intensive. A low percentage of faculty and staff (25%) responded that they considered the budget priorities of the College to have derived from its statements of Mission and Institutional Goals.

The College should continue to focus efforts on the recruitment and retention of ethnic minorities on its faculty.

The College needs to complete and promulgate an Affirmative Action Plan, which follows stringent affirmative action guidelines.

The College needs to conduct a thorough review of courses listed in the General Bulletin. Many courses that are currently listed are not required in existing programs and are rarely, if ever, offered as electives for existing programs. A review of recent course schedules and interviews led the team to this conclusion.

In this area, the team is convinced that the College will address the concerns identified.

3. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.**

While it is clear that the College’s faculty share responsibility for the coherence and integrity of the curriculum, the College has not developed a well-defined faculty governance structure, which is published in official documents and readily accessible both internally and externally. The result is that the distribution of responsibilities for traditional areas of faculty governance is unclear. This challenge has been noted in previous HLC findings.

The College needs to develop either a revised governance structure or a refined structure which must include a clear definition of the role of the Faculty in institutional governance, a clear definition of the subset Committees of the Faculty Senate, the linkage of Committees to the Senate, as well as Senate By-laws and/or a Constitution that clarify the role of faculty in governance and provides for efficiency in utilizing faculty expertise and input into the achievement of College goals and the achievement of institutional efficiency.

As the new President implements a new administrative structure for the College, the roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities of the various College Administrative officers should be clarified.
4. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)

None.

Recommendation of the Team
Criterion One is met. Commission follow-up is recommended.

The team recommends a focused visit of the Commission academic year 2009-10 which addresses the role of faculty in shared governance at the College which clarifies and maximizes faculty involvement in the implementation of its mission and in the achievement of its goals.

CRITERION TWO: PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE. The organization’s allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

1. Evidence that Core Components are met
The Extended Studies Program has made deliberate, thoughtful, and successful progress serving students in the region and beyond. Based on interviews, materials in the resource room, and institutional data, the program is committed to offering quality programs whose growth can be sustained. This year, approximately 20,000 students are enrolled in independent study options and teacher education programs in collaboration with community college partners, as well as participating in professional development opportunities developed for regional school districts. Extended Studies meets educational needs for those who are not able to participate in on-campus, traditional offerings.

Even without a professional grant writer, Adams State College has been successful in securing external support from federal agencies that has enabled the institution to develop numerous mission-consistent programs to respond effectively to multiple societal, demographic, and multicultural needs. In particular, teacher preparation, selected academic departments, and the Office of Community Partnerships have demonstrated energetic, innovative, and proactive approaches to developing initiatives that have enhanced access, increased program quality, and strengthened the relationship between community and the College.

The integrated approach to student success evidenced through intentional enrollment management, the One Stop Student Center, Freshman Interest Living/Learning Residence Hall Communities, efforts to access effectiveness by the Student Union and the Housing Office, and increasing evidence of functional cross-training of employees were noted as intentional, proactive strategies by the team. While evidence was largely anecdotal and little data was yet available to measure the effectiveness of these strategies at ASC, other campuses have demonstrated that these changes can increase access and improve retention.
In recent years, Adams State College and its campus community have been tested by a series of crises. Without doubt, the institution's staff, faculty, and administration have demonstrated capable crisis management. Once ASC has put into place systems and structures to handle day-to-day operations; a process where planning drives budgeting, and program assessment results in campus-wide quality improvement, energies and talents will far more often be devoted to positioning ASC to meet the needs of its future students and communities, rather than addressing current emergencies.

2. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention**

It was clear to team members that considerable effort is being expended keeping the campus facilities clean. However, it was equally evident that deferred maintenance issues must become an allocation priority during the current budget-decision cycle. Not to do so will put ASC at a disadvantage in student recruiting and potentially increase the institution's risk-management outlook.

While progress has been made in supporting faculty development with monies to enable travel to workshops and conferences at other campuses or in other states, ongoing funding at appropriate levels is not assured. Without access to professional development, it is difficult for any future-oriented, proactive institution to continue to serve a diverse campus student population and a growing off-campus constituency. Offering on-site learning and development opportunities for faculty members can have simultaneous benefits of enhancing faculty skills and solidifying faculty cohesion, while being more economical and involving far more individuals.

Concerns about salary compression and inversion, faculty turnover, and adequate numbers of faculty members for certain offered programs surfaced during interviews, in the self-study, and selected materials in the Resource Room. Overall, faculty morale seemed good and pride in the institution was clear. However, these issues, if not addressed, will make it increasingly difficult for ASC to sustain its academic reputation.

The team believes ASC will continue to progress toward workable solutions to these concerns.

3. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.**

In the judgment of the team, ASC currently lacks a coherent, integrated strategic planning process across the institution with demonstrated goals, objectives, action plans, timelines, responsibility designations, outcomes, measures, and evaluation protocols which are necessary for efficient operation of ASC. In the absence of an effective strategic planning process, institutional intentionality suffers and a shared sense of institutional priorities cannot be created.

While significant work has been initiated in assessment of student learning, the institution does not demonstrate a consistent and active assessment culture which is appropriately
directed and supported throughout the college. Moreover, is there little evidence that assessment results have been used to improve institutional programs. A widely understood and supportive campus assessment environment that leads to ongoing continuous review of the curriculum directed toward sustained growth and programmatic quality is essential to ASC’s avowed programmatic value of continual improvement.

The team found evidence that Adams State College is making progress toward an engaged, participative faculty governance structure, but that considerable work remains to be accomplished to achieve that goal. Adams State College must develop and implement a formalized faculty governance system to facilitate stability and growth in the institution. Without a well-defined participative system of faculty governance, there cannot be genuine institutional commitment to supporting and strengthening the quality of the institution’s educational offerings.

The ASC administrative structure is currently under review for change to a more traditional provost model. While the team believes it is outside their role to recommend one structure above all models that could be implemented, the team does believe that it is important for the future of the institution to define clearly areas of responsibility and levels of accountability within the administrative organization of the institution. Without these explicit definitions, widely communicated and well-understood, institutional progress towards achieving vision, mission, and goals will be impeded.

4. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)**

None.

**Recommendation of the Team**

Criterion Two met; Commission follow-up recommended.

Focused visit in three years on (1) formalization of strategic planning process, (2) clarification of oversight and execution of assessment, (3) delineation of the role and authority of faculty in a shared governance structure for the institution, and (4) definition of responsibility and accountability within the administrative structure of the institution.

**CRITERION THREE: STUDENT LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING.** The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

1. **Evidence that Core Components are met**

The institution has articulated specific assessable goals and established objectives for student academic achievement for each academic program. Institutional syllabi for each course have been established that provide a framework for ensuring consistency across courses and through the delivery of each program. The goals and objectives have been integrated into regular academic program reviews. While not formally documented, discussions with members of the faculty and administration indicate that the institution
has made improvements in academic programs in response to the results of these program reviews.

Teaching is central to the mission of ASC and prospective faculty members are made aware of the centrality of teaching in the hiring process. Surveys of faculty members indicate that they are well aware of the role of teaching in their evaluations, and that a positive tenure decision will depend on a faculty member's ability to demonstrate effective teaching. The institution regularly evaluates the teaching done by both full and part-time faculty members. As a result, ASC demonstrates a high level of commitment to teaching and has been effective communicating that value to its faculty.

Adams State College has established effective programs for student support. Tutoring services are provided with adequate space, are well staffed and well supervised. The institution has been proactive in identifying and responding to emerging needs for tutoring as they arise. Instructional technology is up to date and the institution provides adequate resources to support the upgrading of equipment. Advising is well organized, with faculty advising students who have declared majors and professional advisors working with first year students and students who have not chosen a major. The institution has created an environment in which students have access to the information and support they need to succeed. The staff understand the need to formalize the assessment of student support programs have and plans to do so. The institution is beginning to consider the results of the NSSE and Academic Profile to improve the learning environment, albeit in a limited fashion up to this point.

The institution is committed to serving a heterogeneous student body, reflecting the economic and ethnic diversity of its service area and the limited educational alternatives available to prospective students in the area. It has taken steps to develop academic programs that directly speak to the needs and interests of the area. The identification of the campus as an Hispanic serving institution will serve to highlight what is an already strong commitment to diversity programs.

2. Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention

While Adams State College provides learning resources that are, in general, adequate, its library's book collection is outdated. This could become an increasing problem as the institution adds new degree programs, particularly at the Graduate level. The institution plans to expand its use of distance learning. This will put additional demands on the library which is hampered by its lack of a distance learning librarian.

While the Institution has demonstrated a strong commitment to faculty development by restoring some of the funds cut from the faculty development budget, greater emphasis is needed. The institution needs to build on earlier success such as the Center of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CELT) program which serves as a point of reference for many members of the faculty. The institution would be well served to explore opportunities for similar in-house/onsite faculty development activities as ways to develop a strong campus community and further the development of its faculty as teachers and scholars.
Adams State College is aware of these areas of concerns and it is the belief of the team that the institution will focus developing appropriate strategies.

3. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.**

The institution's overall efforts regarding the assessment of student learning outcomes are not well organized. While significant work has been initiated in assessment of student learning – as noted above, the institution does not demonstrate a consistent and active assessment culture which is appropriately directed and supported throughout the college. Assessment efforts are unsystematic and appear to be without clear direction and there is little evidence that assessment results have been used to improve institutional programs. There is no clear delineation of responsibility for the oversight or execution of the assessment plan. There is a lack of a common assessment vocabulary among faculty and staff, and there is considerable variation in the approaches to assessment across programs. A widely understood and supportive campus assessment environment that leads to ongoing continuous review of the curriculum directed toward sustained growth and programmatic quality is essential to ASC’s avowed programmatic value of continuous improvement.

While the institution is clearly committed to shared governance and recognizes the leading role to be played by the qualified faculty in determining the curricular content and strategies for instruction, the faculty committee structure is not well articulated. The curricular review committee and general education committee provide opportunities for faculty review, but there is no formal mechanism to provide overall faculty oversight of curricular matters or to provide an integrated and coordinated approach to curricular development. The institution needs to refine its faculty governance structure, delineating the role and authority of the faculty, and establishing clear charges to and relationships among faculty committees in a shared governance structure for the institution.

4. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)**

None.

**Recommendation of the Team**

Criterion Three is met; Commission follow-up recommended.

The team recommends a focused visit in three years which will address the extent to which there has been clarification of oversight and execution of assessment and a delineation of the role and authority of faculty in a shared governance structure for the institution.

**CRITERION FOUR: ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY, AND APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE.**

The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.
1. **Evidence that Core Components are met**

Adams State College integrates general education, which includes arts and humanities, mathematics, physical and natural sciences, behavioral and social sciences, written and oral communications, and the use and application of technology, into all of its undergraduate degree programs. The general education requirements meet the standards set forth in GT Pathways, the Colorado statewide guaranteed transfer program for general education.

Adams State College recognizes the importance of professional development and strives to provide opportunities for all employees. Through the use of Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) funds, employee scholarships, and on-campus training sessions, the College has found creative ways to foster professional development with limited funding. These monies will be available for each summer for the next four years through funding from the new Title V Cooperative grant. The institution acknowledges that additional funds for professional development should be budgeted.

The College demonstrates a commitment to lifelong learning through support for and faculty participation in regional artistic and educational activities and events.

Adams State College recognizes its faculty, staff, and student achievements through public announcements, publications, awards banquets, press releases, other media, and coverage on the College website and in the alumni magazine. For example, the Associated Students and Faculty organization sponsors an annual Faculty Awards Banquet, at which faculty are recognized for excellence in academic advising, interdisciplinary initiatives, extra-curricular advising, and research and publications.

The College provided evidence that faculty and students collaborate outside the classroom on activities designed to support student achievement and on a variety of scholarly projects.

Adams State College graduate students engage in acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge in a variety of ways, including creating works of art, serving in their communities as interns, or conducting action research projects to assist their school districts.

Adams State College utilizes capstone courses, internships, field experiences, and practica to provide links between the knowledge and skills gained in the classroom and the hands-on experience needed to succeed after college. Inquiry, discovery, and application are addressed in each of these experiences.

Effective curricular planning is evidenced by environmental scanning reports that guide curricular changes and by the documentation of need listed in Curriculum Review Committee proposals. Adams State College assesses the relevance of its curricula by means of program reviews that in some cases involve external evaluators. Additional feedback is obtained from alumni and employers. However, the use of external...
consultants as a part of program reviews is limited. Also, few programs have professional advisory committees.

The College recognizes the importance of educating and training students so they may succeed in work and life. The missions and assessment profiles of programs across the College explicitly define student learning outcomes aimed at instilling in students the skills and competencies necessary to be productive members of society. Evidence of success may include performance in capstone courses and seminars, student publications and graduate theses, attainment of specific scores on standardized exit and licensure exams, and successful completion of student teaching, internships, or specific performance evaluations.

Although ASC does not have a formal diversity plan, evidence supporting the institution’s success in instilling an appreciation for diversity included National Survey of Student Engagement results, which indicated ASC seniors reported serious conversations with students from different religious backgrounds, political opinions, or personal values more frequently than counterparts at peer institutions.

Policies related to academic integrity are included in the Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, and the Trustees’ Policy Manual, which address issues related to the responsible acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge. Each semester, the College conducts a convocation for new freshmen at which the students recite and agree to adhere to principles of personal and academic integrity.

Adams State College has an Institutional Review board, which ensures that all research involving human subjects is conducted in an ethical and responsible manner.

The institution’s strategic plan emphasizes a life of learning by establishing the promotion of the scholarly and creative achievements of faculty, students, and staff as one of its core objectives.

2. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention**

Adams State College has demonstrated an appreciation for and an understanding of the need to provide sufficient funding for ongoing professional development. The College would do well to identify funding beyond the CELT program. The College recognizes the benefits that accrued from an over 80% faculty participation in the CELT program. To find internal resources to fund an effective professional development program or identify outside sources would help to support faculty development.

The team believes that ASC will develop strategies to support faculty development.

3. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.**

None.
4. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)**

None.

**Recommendation of the Team**
Criterion met; no commission follow-up recommended.

**CRITERION FIVE: ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE.** As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

1. **Evidence that Core Components are met**

The College engages with the communities it serves through regional education offerings as mandated by the state of Colorado in 2002. This is particularly evident in Teacher Education. One four year grant has successfully provided programming for sixty classroom teachers to earn masters degrees in special education.

There are a number of other grants which ASC has obtained through the Teacher Education Department. These include grants for teachers of linguistics to enhance academic skills. All in all these awarded grants have amounted to 5.4 million dollars in funding to the institution.

The community partnership center funds forums in the community entitled 'Talk Straight with Adams State' which has helped to use community and college resources more efficiently and improve communication among all parties.

Program reviews held on five year cycles review current offerings and suggest new initiatives in response to community surveys. An example of this is the RN to BSN completion.

Sociology students work with several community agencies to provide services in such areas as domestic violence, homelessness and teenage pregnancy.

The TRIO program works to prepare students at risk so that they can succeed in higher education endeavors. Adams State College has served an average of 1,000 students on an annual basis from the San Luis Valley region. In addition, Student Support Services works consistently with first generation students to assure retention and graduation. Numbers average around 175 students served on an annual basis.

Adams State College has hosted a business development center since the late eighties which is now an independent Business Support Center. It has won state recognition and served 889 clients between 2003 and 2006. In business, ASC has also developed an impressive grant record and leveraged these into $610,000. As in education, the school of business at ASC was awarded recognition for the initiatives in creating a virtual business incubator.
The College has received a HUD HSIAC grant to renovate a vacant campus building for a Community Partnership and Outreach Center. It is envisioned that communication with the community will be further enhanced above its already effective level. Another connection with the community will be the ability to showcase local cultural artifacts and art.

The College sponsors a number of cultural events and initiatives in cooperation with the community. These are well received by the external communities.

A very concrete instance of college and community collaboration is the move of the Valley Community Fund to a campus location. The Fund hosts 29 member non-profit agencies.

The evidence is overwhelming in demonstrating how ASC lives its mission in the communities it serves.

2. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components need organizational attention**

Publications within the institution require review for accuracy and consistency.

3. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components require Commission follow-up.**

None.

4. **Evidence that one or more specified Core Components are not met and require Commission follow-up. (Sanction or adverse action may be warranted.)**

None.

**Recommendation of the Team**

The Criterion is met; no commission follow-up recommended.

**V. STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS**

**A. Affiliation Status**

No change.

**B. Nature of Organization**

1. **Legal status**

No Change.

2. **Degrees awarded**

No Change.
C. Conditions of Affiliation

1. Stipulation on affiliation status
   No Change.

2. Approval of degree sites
   No Change.

3. Approval of distance education degree
   No Change.

4. Reports required
   None.

   Progress Report
   Topic(s) and Due Date (month-date-year)
   Rationale and Expectations

   Monitoring Report
   Topic(s) and Due Date (month-date-year)
   Rationale and Expectations
   Condition Statement (if . . . then)

   Contingency Report
   Topic
   Rationale and Expectations

5. Other visits scheduled
   Type of Visit: Focused.
   Topic(s):
   Strategic Planning
   Assessment
   Governance
   Administrative Structure
   Timing: In three years (academic year 2009-10).
   Rationale and Expectations
   The team found that the process for Strategic Planning needed to be formalized
   with demonstrated goals, objectives, action plans, timelines, responsibility
   designations, outcomes, and evaluation activities. The team also found that the
   assessment activities were not consistent and that there was no evidence of an
   institution-wide culture of assessment (noted in 1997, also). There was no
   evidence of oversight. In addition, the team found the need for delineation of
   the role and authority of faculty in a shared governance structure. Finally, ASC
   would benefit from a clear definition of responsibility and accountability within
the administrative culture of the institution.

The team believed that these issues are complex and could best be evaluated through a focused visit.

6. Organization change request
No Change.

D. Commission Sanction or Adverse Action
Not applicable.

On Notice
Due Date for Report
Rationale and Expectations
Areas That Must Be Addressed

Probation
Next Evaluation Visit
Rationale
Areas That Must Be Addressed (requirements for removal of probation)

Denial or Withdrawal of Status
Rationale

E. Summary of Commission Review
Timing for next comprehensive visit (academic year – 2016-2017)

Rationale for recommendation:
In light of the evidence that was demonstrated in the self-study and primarily during the visit, the team recommends continued accreditation for ten years. The team saw a dedicated faculty and staff providing services according to the mission. The team believes the concerns noted for the proposed focused visit can be met by the institution and should not detract from a recommended ten year accreditation time-line.

VI. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND EXPLANATIONS
Adams State College has put considerable effort into meeting the challenges in the 1997 visit, while they were concurrently going through considerable turmoil in governance and administration. The team recognized these efforts. Those challenges which were an issue in 1997, and were not yet resolved but which also were shown to be nearly completed such as the diversity plan was not included on the focused visit although it was listed as a challenge.

In regard to low salaries and faculty development, the team believed that ASC is making acceptable progress particularly with the financial constraints imposed by the state of Colorado. Again, the team elected not to include those two issues in the recommended focused visit.
ADVANCEMENT SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

ADAMS STATE COLLEGE
Alamosa, CO

February 26–28, 2007

FOR

The Higher Learning Commission
A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

Dr. Jane L. Toot (Team Chair), Dean of College of Health Professions, Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Dr. Carlotta E. Lockmiller, Director of Assessment & Institutional Effectiveness, East Central University, Ada, OK 74820

Dr. Bette G. Midgarden, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Minnesota State University Moorhead, Moorhead, MN 56563

Dr. Jack L. Oakes, Chair/Professor, Computer Information Science, Missouri Southern State University, Joplin, MO 64801

Dr. Samuel H. Rankin, Jr., Professor, Chadron State College, Chadron, NE 69337

Dr. Andrew R. Weiss, Professor of Business, Purdue University-North Central, Westville, IN 46391
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I. OVERALL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

A. History and Environment
Adams State College (ASC) began as Adams State Normal School in 1921. Through the ensuing years even with changes in governance and economic difficulties, the College has remained true to its mission to provide educational, cultural, and economic opportunities to the residents of the San Luis Valley and even beyond to a global market.

The College community from board members, to faculty, students, and staff understand, support, and act out the principles stated in the mission, vision, and institutional goals. Equally evident is the support afforded to the College from the external community.

Adams State College has made significant strides forward since the last comprehensive visit. However, the team offers the following advice and suggestions.

II. CONSULTATIONS OF THE TEAM

A. Grant Writer
Although the College has an impressive record in procuring grants, a grant writer could provide professional guidance and writing support for faculty applications. It is assumed that ASC will continue to work with external communities to submit collaborative proposals. A full-time grant writer would provide invaluable support to non-profit agencies in these joint efforts.

B. Faculty Development
Adams State College has been supportive of faculty development in a difficult financial climate for higher education in Colorado. Scarce resources may be put to more effective use by importing speakers, and/or seminars. This on-campus development can also serve to foster faculty cohesion as members go through learning activities together.

C. Professional Advisory Committees
While ASC has a strong liberal arts orientation, the professional schools are a growing part of the culture of the College. Each of these programs brings forth a unique set of needs. Such issues can find a considerable amount of guidance through professional advisory committees. The members of such groups come from professional and lay external audiences as well as discipline specific faculties. Such an eclectic gathering, in addition to advising duties, can provide entry to donors, adjunct faculty, academic critics and supporters, and student recruiters. They are often a necessary component for professional accreditation self-studies and visits.

D. Board Development
Adams State College has talented members on both the Board of Trustees and the Board of the Foundation. As both of these boards are made up of a broad spectrum of skills and interests, board development programming may be helpful in optimizing the contributions by the members to the College.

E. Day of Reflection
Adams State College initiated a “Day of Reflection” as a mechanism to assure the campus community understood the intent and content of the self-study. This was a very well attended event by all campus constituents. It was viewed by the team as not only a clever way to prepare for the on-site visit, but also an initiative to enhance campus-wide communication. The team suggested that such a day become an annual opportunity for those on campus and in the region to dialogue about concerns, new directions, current status, and future possibilities.

III. RECOGNITION OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS, PROGRESS, AND/OR PRACTICES

As has been stated on previous pages, ASC has demonstrated a remarkable ability and perseverance to practice their stated mission. This is particularly notable in light of the economic conditions under which this institution operates. The grants which have been obtained in education, business and music to name a few provide ample evidence of ASC’s success. It is to the credit of administration, faculty, staff, board members, students, and community that this “can-do” environment prevails.
Team Recommendations for the
STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

INSTITUTION and STATE: Adams State College, CO

TYPE OF REVIEW (from ESS): Continued Accreditation

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW: Comprehensive Visit for Continued Accreditation

DATES OF REVIEW: 2/26/07 - 2/28/07

Nature of Organization

LEGAL STATUS: Public

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

DEGREES AWARDED: A, B, M

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

Conditions of Affiliation

STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS: Out of state offerings are limited to courses in Northern New Mexico.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

APPROVAL OF NEW DEGREE SITES: Prior Commission approval required.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES: No prior Commission approval required for existing Master's or Baccalaureate degree programs offered through the Extended Studies Division.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

REPORTS REQUIRED: None

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

OTHER VISITS REQUIRED: None

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: 2009-2010, Focused Visit on Strategic Planning, Assessment, Governance and Administrative Structure

Summary of Commission Review

YEAR OF LAST COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 1996 - 1997

YEAR OF NEXT COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION: 2006 - 2007

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: 2016-2017
ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

INSTITUTION and STATE: Adams State College, CO
TYPE OF REVIEW: Comprehensive Visit

Educational Programs

Programs leading to Undergraduate
Associate 2
Bachelors 18

Programs leading to Graduate
Masters 5
Specialist 0
First Professional 0
Doctoral 0

Off-Campus Activities

In-State:
Campuses: None
Sites: Denver (Douglas County); Grand Junction (Mesa State College); La Junta (Otero Junior College); Lamar (Lamar Community College); Leadville (Summit County School District); Pueblo (Pueblo School District 60); Trinidad (Trinidad State Junior College); A von (Eagle County); Canon City (Garden Park High School); Cortez (Montezuma-Cortez School District RE-1); Durango (Fort Lewis College); Ellicott (Ellicott School District); Haxtun (NE Colorado BOCES); Steamboat Springs (Steamboat Springs); Stratton-Limon (Stratton High School)
Course Locations: None

Out-of-State:
Campuses: None
Sites: None
Course Locations: None

Recommended Change:
(+ or -)
Out-of-USA:

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<tr>
<td>Course Locations: None</td>
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Distance Education Certificate and Degree Offerings:

Present Offerings:
AA in Liberal Arts offered via Correspondence; AS in Liberal Arts offered via Correspondence; BA in Business Administration offered via Correspondence; BA in Interdisciplinary Studies offered via Correspondence; BA in Sociology offered via Correspondence; BS in Business Administration offered via Correspondence; Certificate in Paralegal offered via Correspondence; Certificate in Victim Advocacy offered via Correspondence; MA in Counselor Education offered via Internet

Recommended Change:
(+ or -)