

CRITERION FIVE: *The Community College of Aurora demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.*

Chapter 9

INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY AND FEDERAL COMPLIANCE

Strengths

The Community College of Aurora has the following strengths in the areas discussed in this chapter:

- A new set of values developed as part of a recent revision of the College's mission and goals.
- An increasingly diverse student body and a service area with a rapidly growing Hispanic population.
- Communication of information through a variety of media to students, faculty, administrators and community constituencies.
- Positive relationships with educational, community and government groups.
- Advisory committees that contribute expertise to College vocational programs.
- High levels of efficiency and integrity in financial and contract matters.

Challenges

The self-study and the work of the self-study committees assigned this criterion also found challenges for the future. CCA is challenged to:

- Better inform faculty, staff, and students about College policies, including sexual harassment and contract policies;
- Increase the number of African American, Hispanic, Asian and Native American staff and faculty members; and
- Establish a more comprehensive strategy for developing relations with a changing community and increasing collaboration among CCA's existing community programs.

Issues for the Future

The self-study and the work of the self-study committees assigned this criterion identified issues for the future. These issues include:

- Completing the transition to the new CCA values, integrating them into evaluation systems and communicating them to the entire College community through many means, including the *CCA Faculty Handbook*; and
- Revising the *Faculty Handbook* to include more information about faculty members' rights, responsibilities and grievance procedures and make copies of the handbook available on the CentreTech and Lowry campuses.

Introduction

This chapter will focus on how the College demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships. The discussion of institutional practices begins with the standards the College expects of students, staff and faculty. It then evaluates the College's grievance and sexual harassment procedures, diversity policies and communication. The discussion of institutional relationships includes the College's connections with other institutions and the community, as well as articulation agreements and contracts. The chapter concludes with a section on the College's federal compliance.

College Standards

Ethical behavior is essential to CCA's operation. The College adopted an ethics policy, "Ethics for CCA Employees and Others," in 1986 and revised it in 1989 (Policy/Procedure 510). However, few members of the CCA community know about this policy because it is rarely published or referenced. Thus, the ethical bases for CCA's decisions and practices are primarily the College's formal set of values and the personal standards of its faculty, staff and students. (*Resource Room document 9.1*)

CCA adopted a set of values with ethical implications before its self-study in 1993. These values were identified as respectful, empowering, collaborative, exemplary and responsive. As mentioned in Chapter 1, CCA recently revised and broadened these values as part of a reassessment of its mission, goals and strategic plan. In 2000-01, College faculty, staff and administrators agreed on a mission statement and a set of values. The final report of that process, issued in July 2001, identified the College's new values as respect, quality, access, diversity, inclusion and collaboration.

The themes that run through the College's 2002-05 strategic plan reflect these values: responsiveness to community needs, ensuring student success, reaching the underserved, increasing diversity and partnering with other institutions and community groups.

An indication of the importance the College gives to its values is their use in employee performance reviews. A challenge for the College in 2003 and beyond is to integrate the new values into the evaluation system. (*Resource Room document 9.2*)

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Communication

The College uses various means to communicate expected standards for ethical behavior to students, faculty and staff.

The College communicates standards for ethical behavior, including academic honesty, especially well to students. The *CCA Student Handbook* contains extensive and specific information about the student code of conduct, disciplinary procedures, student grievance procedures, the instructional policy on academic dishonesty, and the student academic appeal procedures. The *CCA Student Handbook* also has information on student rights, freedoms and responsibilities. (*Resource Room document 9.3*)

The *CCA Faculty Handbook* has brief sections on student responsibilities and appeal procedures to help instructors inform their students. Faculty members also help communicate College standards, particularly those related to academic issues such as plagiarism, through course syllabi and through classroom discussion. (*Resource Room document 9.4*)

The College communicates expectations for ethical behavior less well to faculty and staff than it does to students. The College's ethics policy applies to College employees and to any agent or representative (paid or unpaid) as they perform duties on behalf of the College. However, the College has not circulated the policy widely in recent years. The *State Employees' Handbook*, available only on the Web, contains information on ethical behavior, including the code of ethics for state employees and the policy on conflict of interest. The *Faculty Handbook* lacks similar policy statements. In general, the College does not include policies about ethics in employee orientation or training. When the College policy manual is available on the Web, the ethics policy will be more accessible to faculty and staff. (*Book marked on the computers in the Resource Room and Resource Room document 9.4*)

On a practical level, the process of student appeals communicates ethical standards to faculty. Students may appeal grades and other academic decisions through a process that exposes faculty decisions to examination and ethical judgment by the College community. (*Resource Room document 9.5*)

Internal Communication

The College attempts to describe its programs, policies and operations honestly and clearly to both internal and external constituencies. It has increased efforts to do so during the past two years. Moreover, CCA strives to clear up misunderstandings or misinterpretations of College programs and policies. To do so, the Communications Division may make annual, or even semester, changes to College publications. All departments view and proof these publications, along with any changes.



Quality is a College value, one quite evident in College publications. The Communications Division's numerous national awards for excellence give evidence of the rigor and integrity with which the College carries out the communication process. The division has won 10 Paragon awards from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR), an affiliate council of the American Association of Community Colleges. NCMPR's District 4 has also awarded CCA 15 Medallion awards for publication design, logo design, radio and print advertising, and marketing/community relations plans.

To reach internal constituencies, the College uses print and electronic publications, e-mail, all-college meetings, campus television monitors and direct contact among faculty, staff and students. However, those who wish to communicate a message to the CCA community face several challenges. First, the majority of both faculty members and students are part-time, which means they keep diverse schedules. Many faculty members and students are not available to come to scheduled campus meetings or events. Second, staff, students and faculty are spread across several locations, including two primary campuses, satellite campuses and online. (*Resource Room document 9.6*)

The *CCA Catalog*, *CCA Schedule of Classes* and various departmental brochures describe the degrees, certificates and courses that CCA offers. The *Catalog* and *Schedule of Classes* also describe College policies and procedures. The *Student Handbook* contains general information on the College, including student responsibilities and rights. The *Faculty Handbook* focuses on specific information useful to instructors, particularly to those who are new or who teach part time. (*Resource Room document 9.7*)

External Communication

The College describes its programs, policies and operations externally through print publications, television commercials, the Web, cable television Channel 54, flyers and departmental brochures. The *College Catalog* and the *Schedule of Classes* describe College policies. These publications also instruct students on practical operations of the College such as registration, advising and financial aid, in addition to describing the types of degrees, certificates and courses CCA offers. (*Resource Room documents 9.8 and 9.9*)

Access is a CCA value, and the College attempts to attract students through its marketing. These efforts often target groups such as non-traditional or older students, working individuals, single parents, and ethnic groups including African Americans and Hispanics. Because a large part of marketing is visual, the Communications Division makes special efforts to ensure that all groups are well represented in visual graphics to clearly reflect the College's diversity. (*Resource Room document 9.10*)

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Grievance Procedures and Dispute Resolution

The emphasis CCA gives to the values of respect and relationships is evident in College grievance policies and procedures. Written grievance policies and procedures cover all CCA employees and students. College grievance policies come from state-level agencies. For example, the grievance policy in the *State Employees Handbook (2001)* covers CCA's classified employees. The grievance policy that covers all other employees, including regular faculty, administrators and contracted staff, is based on State Board Policy 350, and is printed in the College policy manual and on the College Web site. The *Faculty Handbook* does not contain information about grievances. (*Resource Room documents 9.4 and 9.11*)

CCA, like other community colleges in Colorado, develops its own procedures to implement state grievance policies. At CCA, the grievance procedure is the same for all employees. If the director of human resources determines that a complaint is a grievance, he first tries to resolve it informally through discussion. If the informal process does not satisfy the complainant, he/she may file a formal written complaint. Once the director receives a formal written complaint, he selects a committee with representation from four groups: classified employees, full-time faculty members, administrators and adjunct faculty members. At any point in this process, the complainant may hire an attorney and pursue legal recourse outside the grievance process.

The need to convene a formal grievance committee has been rare at CCA (the human resource director recalls only three in the last 16 years). Many problems have been resolved informally. In other cases, the complainants immediately sought outside resolution. These cases have usually involved claims of discrimination brought to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to determine if there was probable cause or not. CCA has never had a probable-cause finding.

The student grievance procedure is clearly stated in the *Student Handbook* and referenced in the *Catalog*. The handbook is available in campus offices and on racks throughout the campus.

The self-study committee that examined grievance procedures reported three factors that it believes impair the effectiveness and fairness of the College's grievance policies and procedures:

- The College does not adequately communicate grievance policies and procedures to faculty and contract employees. They are accessible only in the policy manual in the Human Resources Office.

Written grievance policies and procedures cover all CCA employees and students. College grievance policies come from state-level agencies.

- The grievance process has no mechanism to ensure that an employee or student first discusses a possible grievance with his or her immediate supervisor or instructor. Students, for example, sometimes go directly to a dean without talking first to the appropriate faculty member.
- The short time limit (10 days) for submitting grievances may make it difficult for some to file a grievance.

Sexual Harassment

The values of respect, relationships and inclusion guide CCA policies and procedures, including the College's policy and procedures related to sexual harassment. The College's sexual harassment policy and related procedures are described in the CCA policy manual (No. 515). The College publishes the policy in the *College Catalog* and in the student code of conduct in the *Student Handbook*. There is also a statement about sexual harassment in Appendix A of the *State Employees' Handbook*. The policy is not included in the *Faculty Handbook*. Orientation for new employees covers the sexual harassment policy. However, in recent years, the College has not held the annual seminars and workshops for students, faculty and staff mandated in the policy. (*Resource Room documents 9.12*)

Diversity

CCA's diversity testifies to the influence of the College values of access and inclusion. The College's student body is growing more diverse and now includes a higher percentage of minorities than does CCA's service area. However, Hispanic enrollment has not grown in proportion to Hispanic growth in the community. (*Resource Room document 9.13*)

The discrepancy may reflect, in part, rapid growth of the city's Hispanic population over the last few years, a population that includes many recent arrivals from Mexico, including many undocumented persons. Among the undocumented are youth who have graduated from high school in Aurora but who are not eligible for in-state tuition and are, therefore, unlikely to attend college. Providing these youth access to higher education remains a challenge.

Likewise, the number of adults interested in English as a Second Language courses appears to be quite large, based on the extensive waiting lists for courses offered by the Aurora Public Schools and the response to a community-based pilot project CCA began with the city of Aurora in 2002. However, many potential ESL students cannot document U.S. or Colorado residency and are not eligible for in-state tuition. For these people, CCA's for-credit ESL courses are very expensive. Improving CCA's service to this population is the target of Goal 5, and the College requests the advice of the visiting team on this topic.

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Maintaining a diverse group of College employees is a continuing challenge for CCA. For example, while CCA's student body has grown ethnically more diverse in recent years, the College's full-time faculty has grown less diverse. In 1995, 79.2 percent (19 of 24) of full-time faculty members were White. Six years later, 88.9 percent (24 of 27) were White. The change represents both a growth in the number of full-time White faculty members and the loss of full-time Asian and Native American faculty members. The number of full-time African American faculty members (two) remained the same.

The changes in the diversity pattern for adjunct instructors from 1995 to 2001 were more complex than were the changes for full-time faculty members. In 1995, 86.3 percent of the adjunct faculty was White. In 2001, that percentage was 83.4 percent. During the same period, the percentage of African American adjunct faculty decreased, from 8.4 percent to 6.6 percent. On a positive note, the percentage of Hispanic adjunct faculty increased from 3.5 percent to 5.8 percent and the percentage of Asian adjunct faculty increased from 1.3 to 3.3 percent. In 2002, the College had no adjunct Native American faculty members.

Compared to their representation in Aurora as a whole, Hispanics are underrepresented among full-time and adjunct faculty, administrators, technical/professional staff and classified staff. African Americans are underrepresented among full-time and adjunct faculty. The situation is more complex for Asians, with underrepresentation among faculty, good representation among administrators, and underrepresentation among technical/professional staff. Although the percentage of Native Americans in the student body exceeds the percentage of the Aurora population, there are no Native Americans (1999-00) among faculty, administrators or staff. (*Resource Room document 9.14*)

Ethnicity is not the only measure of diversity at CCA. Contributing to the diversity of the student population as a whole—and to many individual classes—is the wide range of age groups. For example, in the fall of 2002, of students registered at CCA:

- 20 percent were 19 years old or younger;
- 19 percent were 40 years old or older;
- 41 percent were in their 20s; and
- 20 percent were in their 30s.

Unlike the rather substantial changes in the student population's ethnic diversity over the last few years, the year-to-year changes in age groups have been minimal. (*Resource Room document 9.15*)

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Building on its values of inclusion and respect, the College continues efforts to increase its diversity. The College has focused on recruiting more Hispanic students through a diversity committee chaired by the vice president for instruction. In addition, the president, the director of the CCA Foundation and the director of grants visit with various Hispanic groups in the community.

The College seeks to further enhance diversity by:

- offering courses in areas such as English as a Second Language, ethnic studies, and culture and conflict resolution;
- supporting student clubs such as the Black Student Alliance, International Students Club, Lazos Culturales, Lesbian Bisexual and Gay Club, and Women of Wisdom Club;
- increasing the number of course offerings and tutorial services for English as a Second Language;
- encouraging faculty and staff to attend free courses in workplace Spanish;
- responding, when possible, to Spanish-language inquiries with a Spanish-speaking employee; and
- selecting diverse committees that will recruit, select, interview and recommend employee candidates. (*Resource Room document 9.16*)

Non-Discrimination and Affirmative Action

The College states its strong support for diversity among students, staff and faculty in the discussion of student diversity programs in the *Catalog*. The *Student Handbook* more fully articulates that support:

“The Community College of Aurora recognizes that human diversity is a measure of quality within academic institutions, and is fostering a multicultural environment that promotes pluralism and values human differences. Students of different ages, races, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations and educational goals are welcome at the Community College of Aurora. Diversity in the College population provides an opportunity for students to meet with and learn from those who are similar to them as well as those who are different. This diversity adds a rich and valuable dimension to the educational experience of all students. We invite the participation of all Community College of Aurora students in an ongoing celebration of diversity.”



A statement of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination is printed in the *College Catalog* and in the *Schedule of Classes*, but the statement is not printed in the *Faculty Handbook*. The most complete statement about nondiscrimination is in the *Student Handbook*. This statement includes specific information about where individuals can obtain additional information at the College, from the community college system, and from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights. The EOC statement is on job announcements and applications, and the College advertises widely to ensure diverse and qualified candidate pools. However, the College does not have a formal affirmative action policy or program. (*Resource Room documents 9.3 and 9.17*)

There is evidence that the College's strong support for diversity has affected students in positive ways. In their responses on the 2001 Graduate Survey, 79.1 percent of respondents said that to a great or very great extent their experience at CCA had helped to improve their respect for ethnic and cultural diversity. (*Resource Room document 9.18*)

The self-study committee that gathered and analyzed information about nondiscrimination took issue with the application of the State Board policy under which the College can dismiss probationary faculty and nonclassified staff without cause. The committee found the wording of the policy (BP 3-20) to be clear but its implementation to be vague and imprecise at times. The committee pointed out that common practices (unwritten procedures that are part of the CCA institutional culture) between and within departments are not always clearly stated or defined, creating disparities in practices. (*Resource Room documents 9.19*)

Integrity in Institutional Relationships

The Community College of Aurora has numerous relationships with other institutions of higher education, public school systems, businesses, governmental agencies, community groups and student organizations. Some of these relationships involve legal and financial matters. The College strives to maintain the highest levels of cooperation and integrity in all these relationships.

Higher Education Relationships

(See Chapter 1, the section on Governance, for a brief description of public higher education governance in Colorado.)

To ensure good communication and integrity of relationships with other institutions of higher education, particularly other two-year colleges, CCA regularly participates in the following:

- The Colorado Community College System staff convenes an annual meeting of community college faculty to discuss system initiatives and provide an opportunity for faculty to meet by discipline to develop common curriculum. (*Resource Room document 9.20*)

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- Each community college discipline group has a listserv, which members use to discuss issues of common interest, for submission to system committees.
- The Colorado Commission on Higher Education staff convenes biannual meetings of faculty from two- and four-year schools to discuss system initiatives and to give faculty the opportunity to work on issues shared by the community colleges and four-year schools. (*Resource Room document 9.21*)
- The community college presidents, chief financial officers and controllers meet monthly in separate groups. The vice presidents of instruction and the vice presidents of student services also meet one day each month, jointly in the morning and separately in the afternoon. (*Resource Room document 9.22*)



Articulation and Transfer Agreements

CCA has articulation agreements with, among others, the University of Colorado at Denver (paralegal and film/video), Metropolitan State College (criminal justice), and all area vocational schools. The College has transfer agreements with private four-year schools, including Franklin University, Regis University and Columbia College. The vice president of instruction maintains these agreements. (*Resource Room document 9.23*)

Articulation and transfer agreements work well for students if they regularly talk to an advisor to understand what courses will transfer to other institutions. The *College Catalog* publishes this information, but some students, typically those who do not complete a degree before they transfer, may never see an advisor to assure they are taking the correct courses.

The Colorado Community College System has developed a core curriculum that meets the general education requirements for arts and sciences at the state's public four-year colleges and universities. The core curriculum fulfills the general education requirements for CCA's Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees. The *College Catalog* advises students who plan to transfer to a four-year college or university to familiarize themselves with the requirements of that institution and to obtain assistance from a CCA academic advisor in planning a transferable program of study.

Community Relationships

To implement its value of service, the College relates formally to the community through a number of units, each with a different mission to the community and with a different relation to the College. All, however, contribute to CCA's role as a community college. At the same time, CCA has yet to develop a focused community strategy that increases collaboration among diverse College units to address community needs and the College's goals. Likewise, there is no clearly defined organizational structure to coordinate and implement such a strategy.

Service Learning

Much of the work of CCA's Service Learning Program is grant funded and is with public schools in low-income neighborhoods in north Aurora. For example, the program convenes a coalition of middle schools, city departments and Aurora Public School administrators to develop and support after-school programs. The Service Learning Program also provides service learning training to other community colleges, coordinates the "America Reads" program, and supports CCA students who do service in their community. (*Resource Room document 9.24*)

The Lowry Family Center

The Lowry Family Center, housed on the College's Lowry campus, provides a variety of family-related and other social services to neighborhoods in northwest Aurora and east Denver. It is heavily involved with local community organizations, schools, government agencies, service providers, coalitions and networks. The LFC is a member of the Family Resource Center Association, which represents all 20 family centers in Colorado. The LFC, like other centers, receives pass-through funding through the association from government agencies, foundations and corporations. The center also receives funding from foundations, corporations, private entities and local governments that passes through the College or the CCA Foundation. (*Resource Room document 9.25*)

The Center for Workforce Development

The Center for Workforce Development provides job training, education, case management, job-placement assistance and support services to single parents, the economically disadvantaged, displaced homemakers and persons re-entering the workplace. The center provides a nine-week certificate program in essential skills for the workplace in computers and customer service. Students who complete the program are awarded 19 college credits. The program is completely contract funded and generates FTE for all its training programs. The Center works with several businesses and over 100 customers, as well as community agencies and other CCA units. Demonstrating its commitment to the community, the center has developed a scholarship program to assist low-income families with tuition and fees for the essential skills certificate program. (*Resource Room document 9.26*)

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Business Relationships

The College relates formally to Aurora-area businesses through several units. These include:

Workplace Solutions Center

The Workplace Solutions Center (formerly Workplace Training and Development) provides credit and noncredit training for business and industry, nonprofit agencies, state and local governments, and professional civic organizations. Courses are delivered on campus or at the contracting agency's site and use a variety of modes and technologies to individualize instruction.

In addition to training, the Workplace Solutions Center offers services such as assessment and evaluation, organizational development, knowledge management solutions, database development and consolidation and internal training department coordination.

Some center funding comes from state grant programs that provide training incentives for new industries or expanding companies. In other cases, businesses pay for their own training. The grant programs also give companies the opportunity to establish long-term relationships with the local community colleges. From July 2000 through June 2001, the Workplace Solutions Center served approximately 27 businesses and 3,722 customers. (*Resource Room document 9.27*)

Small Business Development Center

The Small Business Development Center provides advice for start-up and existing businesses and offers free technical assistance and small business educational workshops. Located in the original downtown Aurora, the Aurora SBDC receives federal funds from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), with matching funds from CCA. From July 2000 to June 2001, the SBDC worked with approximately 575 businesses and 1,178 customers. The SBDC also offers a small business management program, which awards 18 college credits upon completion. About 30 businesses enroll each year. (*Resource Room document 9.28*)

Survey of Community and Business Relationships

To determine the perceptions about partnerships with CCA, the self-study committee responsible for analyzing institutional relationships surveyed agencies working with the College. The committee sent 20 surveys to persons who work directly with the Center for Workforce Development, Service Learning, Workplace Solutions Center, the Small Business Development Center, and the Lowry Family Center. The results of the survey demonstrate that CCA is working very well with other agencies and the community. (*Resource Room document 9.29*)

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Memoranda of Understanding

Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) formalize partnerships between CCA and other agencies. They formally establish which agency will provide what services. CCA has MOUs with the following organizations:

- Aurora Fire Department
- Aurora Police Department
- Denver Fire Department
- Denver Police Department
- Medical Center of Aurora
- Rural Metro Ambulance Service
- Aurora Public Library

The vice president of administrative services maintains a file of all MOUs. (*Resource Room document 9.30*)

P-12 Education Relationships

CCA is broadly involved in P-12 education and has close working relationships with the schools and school districts the College serves. In particular, CCA has strong relationships with the Aurora Public Schools and the Cherry Creek Public Schools, the two districts that cover most of CCA's service area. The College's service area also includes portions of the Denver Public School district.

The College offers dual-credit classes for high school students under the Post-secondary Options Act. Juniors and seniors preapproved by their school counselors enroll in the CCA courses. After they complete a course with a grade of "C" or above, the school district reimburses their tuition and fees. Both the high school and the College award them course credit. CCA also offers a "Fast Track" program for high school students who have completed all requirements for graduation but who have not yet participated in their graduation ceremony. These students can take college courses for credit. (*Resource Room document 9.31*)

Among the College's other connections with schools are the following:

- CCA offers evening courses at Grandview High School.
- College advisors visit the feeder high schools in the service area to provide information to students.
- The College has an articulation agreement with T.H. Pickens to accept its certificates, with their students adding their general education courses at CCA. (*Resource Room document 9.32*)

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- CCA's vice president for instruction meets annually with principals from the Aurora Public Schools and from Cherry Creek Public Schools to share success rates of their graduates, provide information about state and system policies and discuss partnerships.
- The College offers courses to help teachers with recertification.
- In May 2001, the College received a grant of \$375,000 from the National Science Foundation to teach high school biology teachers biotechnology techniques and to loan them equipment so that they could incorporate these techniques into their biology classes. This program focused first on the Aurora high schools, then on schools in other districts in the Aurora-Denver metropolitan area. (Resource Room document 9.33)

Program Advisory Committees

Program advisory committees help keep CCA vocational classes and programs current so that students study up-to-date materials and practices and are more employable upon graduation. In addition to examining program curriculum, the committees also review facilities, budget, student competencies and student placement. Every program advisory committee is different. Some committees are more active than others; those that are active can be very effective. One challenge nearly all the advisory committees face is to increase their diversity to include Hispanic members.

Student Groups

The director of student life oversees all recognized student groups and acts as their fiscal manager. The director may deny a group's request if it exposes the College to legal liability. The director also can remove a club officer who fails to maintain a minimum grade point average or complete a minimum number of credits during a semester.

For a student group to receive College recognition, group members must present a petition with signatures of 50 or more students to the director of student life. They must also submit a constitution to student government, have a faculty or staff advisor and be open to all members of the student body. Once the College recognizes the group, the group is on probation for six months. Recognized student groups have the right to use the College name, logo and space. (Resource Room document 9.34)

State Board policy (SBCCOE Policy BP 4-50) mandates student government as the students' voice to the College president and as a means for the College to hear students' suggestions, requests and complaints. (Resource Room document 9.35) Student government consists of four executive officers elected by the student body, a representative from each student club and members elected at large. At open bimonthly meetings, these representatives set goals and present budgets to the College. Funds

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for the student groups come from student fees. They are based on the groups' budget proposals and the availability of funds. The student government, the director of student life and the President's Cabinet approve budget proposals.

CCA's student government elects two representatives to participate in the monthly meetings of the Student Life Development Council, a consortium of all 15 two-year colleges in Colorado.

Contractual Relationships

Colorado laws and regulations require CCA to track and maintain the details of all contractual arrangements, leases and memoranda of understanding. The financial office reviews contracts before signing and, after signing, sets up the cost center for each contract. If a contract involves the state controller, the vice president of administrative services or the controller signs the contract, and the president signs for the College. The vice president of administrative services monitors the financial issues related to contracts, and the instructional units monitor the performance issues. The vice president of administrative services monitors lease payments.

CCA practices full financial disclosure and follows conservative accounting principles. An outside accounting firm audits the entire community college system each year and audits CCA once or twice every three years. CCA complies with federal and state of Colorado open records laws. The College's budget is public information, but personnel records are not public.

The vice president of administrative services and his staff record, monitor and account for all financial transactions. Audits of CCA's federal, state and private funds ensure efficient fiscal operations. CCA maintains specific program/department cost centers. The College does not permit general fund monies to roll into the next fiscal year. The CCA standard is prompt and correct payment for expenditures.

CCA does not own or operate sub-corporations. However, it does contract with outside businesses for several on-campus services. The company that runs the College bookstore, for example, pays a commission based on a percentage of sales.

CCA charges self-funded units an administrative fee of 6 percent of expenditures. These monies go into the College's general fund. For example, 6 percent of student fees used to support student government go to the general fund.

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Federal Compliance

Credits, Program Length and Tuition (I.C.9)

The Community College of Aurora uses semester credit hours as the basic measure of students' learning experiences. The minimum contact times follow the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's full-time equivalency (FTE) guidelines. This approach to measuring students' learning experiences is common to all state-funded Colorado institutions of higher education.

The *CCA Catalog* publishes the course descriptions, which provide students with an accurate description of the course, including the credit hours identified by lecture and lab hours. Student transcripts reflect the official course prefix and number, course title, course credits and the grade earned by the student. The standards for the academic record (transcript) follow the recommendations of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

The total number of credit hours defines program length. All associate degree programs are a minimum of 60 credit hours, and the minimum for certificates varies based upon business and industry requirements. The current *CCA Catalog* states the requirements for the associate degree and certificate programs.

The State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) establishes resident and nonresident tuition rates and policies for the community colleges. Tuition rates are published in the *Schedule of Classes* and on the CCA Web site.

Compliance With the Higher Education Reauthorization Act (I.A.5)

The Financial Aid Office actively seeks to control student loan default rates. The office does not process student loans as part of automated packaging of financial aid. All student loan borrowers attend a student loan entrance counseling session before their student loan is certified. A designated financial aid counselor then reviews student loans individually. Students with academic problems or with high loan debt may be asked to meet individually with the financial aid counselor. Some student loan applications are denied, or the requested dollar amount is reduced, because of a lack of academic progress or high loan debt. Students may appeal these decisions by meeting with the director of financial aid. The College delays all student loan disbursements until 30 days after the first day of classes, as required by regulation. These measures have helped keep the college's default rate low (8.2 percent in 2001, 8 percent in 2000, 5.5 percent in 1999 and 9.9 percent in 1998).



Advertising and Recruitment Materials (IV.B.2)

The Community College of Aurora provides accurate information regarding its programs, services and policies in the *CCA Catalog*, *CCA Student Handbook*, *CCA Schedule of Classes*, the College Web site, program brochures and other advertising and recruitment materials. The College provides information about its affiliation with the Higher Learning Commission, along with the commission's address and telephone number, in the *CCA Catalog*, the *CCA Schedule* and the College Web site. (*Resource Room document 9.36*)

Professional Accreditation (III.A.1)

The Community College of Aurora does not hold any specialized accreditation with a single agency that covers one-third or more of either the College's offerings or its students.

Requirements of Institutions Holding Dual Institutional Accreditation (III.A.3)

The Community College of Aurora is not affiliated with another federally recognized institutional accrediting body and is affiliated only with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

Public Notification of Comprehensive Evaluation Visit

The following information was posted:

Community College of Aurora is seeking comments from the public about the College in preparation for its periodic evaluation by its regional accrediting agency. The College will undergo a comprehensive evaluation visit April 14-16, 2003, by a team representing the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Community College of Aurora has been accredited by the Commission since 1988. The team will review the institution's ongoing ability to meet the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation and General Institutional Requirements.

The public is invited to submit comments regarding the college:
Public Comment on Community College of Aurora
The Higher Learning Commission
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60602

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. Comments must be in writing and signed; comments cannot be treated as confidential. All comments must be received by April 2, 2002. For more information on the Community College of Aurora and the North Central accreditation visit, see the CCA website at www.CCAurora.edu



Records of Student Complaints

The College has established a procedure for addressing formal, signed complaints that students make in writing to an institutional officer who has the responsibility to handle the complaint. The institutional officers include the College president, the vice president for student services and enrollment management, and the vice president for instruction. The student complaint is reviewed and investigated, and the institutional officer who received the complaint responds to the student. The vice president for student services and enrollment management maintains the record of student complaints.

