

# Wyoming Community College Commission

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## Wyoming Community College Commission Statewide Strategic Plan (2010) and Wyoming Community College Commission Strategic Plan 2.0 (2014 Addendum)

Review and Analysis  
June 2019

### Wyoming's Community College System:

#### Wyoming Community College Commission

The Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) was established as an agency in 1951 with legislative authority following in 1967. The WCCC is the coordinating body for the community college system in Wyoming. The mission and purpose of the WCCC is to provide coordination, advocacy, funding and accountability for the community college system on behalf of the State of Wyoming as identified in Wyoming statutes.

#### Seven community college districts

The seven community colleges in Wyoming collectively enroll the majority of undergraduates in the state, and have been successful over the years, since the first community college was established in 1945. The community colleges provide student opportunities such as transfer to four-year colleges, career and technical education, adult basic education, and success in the workforce. The Wyoming community colleges are:

- Casper College, Casper, WY
- Central Wyoming College, Riverton, WY
- Eastern Wyoming College, Torrington, WY
- Laramie County Community College, Cheyenne, WY
- Northern Wyoming Community College District, Sheridan and Gillette, WY
- Northwest College, Powell, WY
- Western Wyoming Community College, Rock Springs, WY

#### Statewide Community College System Strategic Plan

The recommendation for a statewide community college strategic plan originated in 2007, and was incorporated into legislation in 2008. In developing the Strategic Plan, the WCCC was guided by an advisory council representing the WCCC, community colleges, business and industry, legislators, economic development, workforce development, education and the public.

The Strategic Plan was created with the goal of fostering communication between entities, promoting a strong and flexible community college system, a focus on operational planning, efficient use of resources, boosting incentives, breaking down barriers, and a high focus on agency commitment.

Mission: Wyoming community colleges provide dynamic, lifelong learning environments through higher education, workforce development, innovative partnerships, and civic and global engagement that lead to responsible citizenship and economic, social and cultural prosperity.

The Strategic Plan was framed by five state interests:

- Educated Citizenry • Diversified Economy • Workforce Development • Effective and Efficient Systems • Accountability and Improvement

And eight strategic objectives:

- Student Access and Success • Quality Programs • Distance Learning • Alignment of Programs and Workforce Opportunities • Partnerships • Coordination and Collaboration • Adequate Resources • System of Continuous Improvement

### **Statewide Community College System Strategic Plan Statutory Requirements**

Wyoming statutes require the WCCC to:

“Develop and maintain a statewide college system strategic plan for the delivery of educational programs in Wyoming by each college . . .” (W.S. 21-18-202 a (v))

“Approve all new programs qualifying for state funding pursuant to the statewide community college strategic plan . . .” (W.S. 21-18-202 d (i))

“Review existing programs, determine the most effective and efficient delivery of programs qualifying for state funding pursuant to the statewide community college system strategic plan and terminate state funding for those programs which are inconsistent with the statewide community college system strategic plan.” (W.S. 21-18-202 d (ii))

“The commission shall provide annual reports to the legislature and governor on the performance of individual community colleges and the college system as well as on the achievement of statewide priorities as specified in the statewide college system strategic plan” and “Reports provided by the commission to the legislature and governor shall be attached with and aligned to the college system performance benchmarks, outcome measures and other performance indicators specified in and defined by the strategic plan.” (W.S. 21-18-202 e (v)(A and E))

“The commission shall prior to the beginning of each biennial budget period, review, update and modify the statewide college system strategic plan. The plan shall clearly prescribe the components of the educational program and attach program components to statewide system priorities. This plan shall serve as the basis for state operational and capital construction budget requests and funding of the statewide college system for the applicable biennial budget period.” (W.S. 21-18-202 h)

“Develop performance benchmarks, outcome measures and other performance indicators which serve as the basis for annual reporting to the legislature and the governor . . . including but not limited to: (A) Student goal attainment and retention; (B) Student persistence; (C) Degree and certificate completion rates; (D) Placement rate of graduates in the workforce; (E) Licensure and certification pass rates; (F) Demonstration of critical literacy skills; (G) Success in subsequent, related coursework; (H) Number and rate of students who transfer.” Then “Attach performance indicators to funding to achieve established results.” (W.S. 21-18-202 h (iii))

## **Executive Summary - 2010 and 2014 Statewide System Strategic Plan**

The Statewide System Strategic Plan encompasses two distinct components: 1) 2010 Strategic Plan, which includes a Comprehensive History, Economic Analysis, Overview of Colleges, State-level Data, and Strategic Goals and Objectives; and 2) 2014 Strategic Plan 2.0 Addendum, which focuses on Educational Attainment and a refined set of goals.

### 2010 Statewide System Strategic Plan Objectives:

1. Student Access and Success
2. Quality Programs
3. Distance Learning
4. Alignment of Programs and Workforce Opportunities
5. Partnerships
6. Coordination and Collaboration
7. Adequate Resources
8. System of Continuous Improvement

### 2014 Strategic Plan 2.0 Addendum:

2014 Strategic Plan 2.0 Addendum refined these eight objectives through a Strategic Vision and three goals, which are often referred to as the “4 Ps.”

*Strategic Vision: The Wyoming Community College System will provide Wyoming with the educated residents needed for a strong and diversified economy for the 21st century. Participation, Progress and Performance, and Placement. Focusing on these three objectives will lead the system to achieving this vision.*

Goal 1: Progress and Performance

Goal 2: Participation

Goal 3: Placement

Within the three goals, Wyoming statute specifies the eight performance metrics tied to the funding: Student Goal Attainment and Retention • Student Persistence • Degree and Certificate Completion Rates • Placement Rate of Graduates in the Workforce • Licensure and Certification Pass Rates • Demonstration of Critical Literacy Skills • Success in Subsequent, Related Coursework • Number and Rate of Students Who Transfer

### **Outcomes - Strategic Plan 2010 and 2014 2.0 Addendum**

The last update to the Strategic Plan was completed in 2014 in conjunction with the implementation of SP 2.0 Addendum. Significant progress has been made on both the 2010 SP and 2014 SP 2.0 Addendum. Some aspects or tasks were achieved completely, some partially met, and some were not met. Many components of the “partially met” or “not met” were identified as no longer relevant tasks or metrics. Some met, partially met, or not met tasks are targeted to continue into the future as important aspects for statewide community college education.

- Combined number of Objectives/Goals 2010 and 2014: 11
- Substantially met Objectives/Goals 2010 and 2014: 11
- Total Tasks Identified within Objectives/Goals 2010 and 2014: 69
- Total Tasks Completed 2010 and 2014: 47
- Tasks Partially Completed 2010 and 2014: 12
- Tasks Not Completed 2010 and 2014: 10
- Tasks Considered for Continuing Forward: 20

Attached is a brief high-level summary of each Objective/Goal and corresponding Task from 2010 and 2014. Supporting documentation also exists in the WCCC office with an in-depth accounting of the Strategic Objectives/Goals and corresponding Tasks, Lead Organization/Partners Affiliated, Progress, Status and Metrics 2014, and Current Status and Metrics 2019 including any recommendation to move certain goals forward.

### **Synopsis of Statewide College System Strategic Plan and Future Focus**

While there was a significant lapse in time from the last formal reporting of the Statewide College System Strategic Plan from 2010 and 2014 SP 2.0 Addendum, efforts clearly continued toward progress and implementation. The community colleges and the University of Wyoming, through efforts of their combined presidents and the WCCC Executive Director, jointly reported the 2017 Recruitment and Retention Plan, increased 2+2 articulation, adopted state-level higher education goals, and establishment of the Western Interstate Higher Education Commission (WICHE) Wyoming Attainment Taskforce. Finally, the State of Wyoming embarked upon an aggressive economic diversification strategy and plan, which resulted in identifying education and workforce as a fundamental building block. As a result, the Educational Attainment Executive Council and state-level educational attainment goals were established in two Executive Orders, 2018-1 and 2018-4, signed by Governor Mead. The 2019 Wyoming Legislature subsequently codified the educational attainment goals for Wyoming and the Educational Attainment Executive Council in Senate Enrolled Act 0061. The legislation requires the Educational Attainment Executive Council, through its membership and working body of the WICHE Attainment Taskforce and staff, to develop a State Higher Education Strategic Plan with a five-year and ten-year implementation plan to achieve the educational attainment goals. As such, this review and report of the Statewide College System Strategic Plan 2010 and 2014 2.0 Addendum will serve as the comprehensive report. The remaining 20 tasks will be tracked, whenever possible, in the future. Upon completion of the State Higher Education Strategic Plan, a new Statewide College System Strategic Plan will be developed in alignment with the State Higher Education Strategic Plan.

More information can be found at: [www.communitycolleges.wy.edu](http://www.communitycolleges.wy.edu)

# Completed from the 2010 Wyoming Community College Commission Statewide Strategic Plan

## **Student Access and Success: Promote student access to education and training programs and support students in achieving their educational and professional goals**

- 1.1 Student Access and Success- Promote student access to educations and training programs and support students in achieving their educational and professional goals.
  - a. Assess eligibility for and use of the need-based component of the Hathaway Scholarship at each college.
  - b. Assess the need for need-based aid among older, nontraditional students regardless of whether they are enrolled full-time or part-time, and target state aid to those students.
- 1.2 Increase the participation of women in programs leading to employment in occupations meeting the Self Sufficiency Standard.
  - a. Introduce middle and high school outreach activities that expose young women to science, technology, engineering and mathematics early. The WCCC staff and college representatives participated in STEM development in collaboration with UW and K-12, including the P-16 role.
- 1.3 Increase need-based aid to students.
  - b. Adopt common placement thresholds for the reading, writing and mathematics COMPASS assessments and ACT across all seven community colleges.
- 1.4 Improve statewide articulation of courses among high schools, community colleges, and the University of Wyoming.
  - c. Expand concurrent enrollment by encouraging participation among high school students ready for college- level work. SEA 52 for Adjunct Faculty Loan Program that enhanced concurrent enrollment opportunities to K-12.
- 1.5 Increase outreach to special populations.
  - a. Advocate for greater funding for adult basic education.
  - b. Continue to support adult basic education instruction in community colleges to promote success for students from underserved communities.
- 1.6 Wrap-around services offered by the colleges to support student success.
  - c. Increase housing for students with families or those who live too far away to commute
- 1.7 Recognize student success through the community college funding allocation formula.
  - a. Implement a student success component within the Wyoming community college funding allocation formula. Award 10 percent of variable costs within the formula based on course completion

## **Quality Programs: Offer quality, relevant programs that meet state and local needs**

- 2.1 Ensure colleges can adapt quickly to respond to local workforce and community needs
  - a. Maintain academic, career and technical, development, adult, continuing, and workforce education programs at all colleges to support education and skill development to meet local business, community and economic needs

## **Distance Learning: Expand the role of distance learning in serving rural and hard-to-reach populations and in providing cost savings and services for colleges and students**

- 3.1 Provide support to strengthen a statewide system for distance education.
  - b. Develop and implement a distance learning funding formula that encourages colleges to share resources and students
- 3.2 Expand distance learning opportunities
  - a. Assess the need for increasing the number of programs of study offered through distance learning

- b. Offer professional development to support faculty offering distance learning courses and recruit new faculty to teach distance courses.
- c. Ensure that distance learning students have access to the same or equivalent student support services that are available to students attending courses on campus

**Alignment of Programs and Workforce Opportunities: Align career and technical education programs with workforce development and labor market opportunities**

4.1 Target programs to industries projected to have the greatest number of job openings now and over the next 10 years and that will assist residents to reach their Self-Sufficiency Standard

- a. Partner with the Department of Workforce Services, Department of Employment, Workforce Development Council, and Wyoming Business Council to identify emerging industries they have targeted for development and leverage available federal and state resources to support workforce development, education, and training initiatives. Hold a biennial meeting of the Commission, colleges, and industry stakeholders to determine how the system will address emerging industries and workforce trends.

4.2 Place programs at appropriate locations throughout the state to ensure Wyoming can meet the labor market demands for targeted occupations.

- a. Solicit recommendations from Advisory Committees, economic and workforce development agencies, and industry representatives to help determine where programs would be most successful within the state
- b. Use the program approval criteria described in Strategic Objective 6 to make decisions about the number and location of new programs for targeted occupations

**Partnerships: Support economic development through partnerships with local and statewide business and industry, government and education agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community groups**

5.1 Expand current partnerships with business and industry

- a. Document use of local and statewide Advisory Committees for career and technical education and workforce training programs
- b. Develop a plan for using Advisory Committees for multiple purposes in community college regions and across the state
- c. Identify opportunities to fund noncredit workforce training programs to support rapid response to workforce development opportunities. Actively partner with the Department of Workforce Services, the Workforce Development Council, the Wyoming Business Council, and the Department of Employment to identify and respond to opportunities and to reinforce the community colleges' role and primary resources for workforce training

**Coordination and Collaboration: Improve system efficiency and effectiveness through enhanced communication and coordination**

6.1 Provide shared policy development and decision making and improve collaboration among WCCC Commissioners, WCCC staff, and the colleges.

- a. Use the Consultation Agreement as defined
- b. Use the strategic plan criteria for new program approval based on state interests
- c. Use the strategic plan criteria for capital construction approval based on state interests

6.2 Implement processes to improve system efficiency and reduce unnecessary redundancy.

- a. identify and pursue opportunities to automate and centralize selected college operational functions

**Adequate Resources: Provide adequate resources, given available funds, distributed in a way that promotes quality and positive student outcomes**

7.1 Ensure the colleges have and maintain adequate facilities aligned with the statewide strategic plan.

- a. Prioritize capital construction projects once each biennium so that colleges have time to plan for the future
- b. Change state statute to allow biennial prioritization of community college capital construction projects
- c. Consider student housing proposals as part of the capital construction prioritization process
- d. Identify funding each biennium for upgrades to equipment needed for college programs that meet state needs and strategic objectives

7.2 Employ sustainable and comprehensive funding mechanisms that recognize the multiple functions and roles of community colleges.

- a. Provide funds to address the costs of enrollment growth
- c. In the future, introduce additional elements to the state community college funding formula that emphasize student success and program quality. Access is currently the priority reflected in the funding formula's focus on FTE enrollment in credit programs.

### **System of Continuous Improvement: Emphasize accountability and student success**

8.1 Build a state wide longitudinal data system for community colleges.

- a. Determine the cost of a data warehouse that could house unit-level data for all community college students, including credit and noncredit students.
- b. Continue to collaborate on collection and submission of appropriate college and student level data while data warehouse is being assessed and implemented
- c. Install a data warehouse at the WCCC that can house and maintain a state community college longitudinal dataset
- d. Ensure WCCC staff have the database and research expertise to maintain and use data effectively and to distribute funding based on results to improve student and institutional outcomes
- e. require colleges to submit unit-level enrollment, student, course, and financial data each term and annually to populate the longitudinal database
- f. Create a state longitudinal data system that links K-12, community colleges, and the University of Wyoming

8.2 Develop an accountability system that allows the WCCC and the colleges to demonstrate the state's return on the state's investment

- a. Identify additional indicators that demonstrate the state's return on its investment
- b. Develop an annual report detailing statistical information and accountability results statewide and by college and make it available to policymakers and the public

8.3 Use data to promote student success and program improvement.

- a. Identify performance measures and structures that promote ongoing program and quality improvement at the state and local levels
- b. Respond to findings, where negative or positive

## **Completed from the 2014 (2.0 Addendum) Wyoming Community College Commission Statewide Strategic Plan**

### **Goal 1: Progress and Performance**

A. Improve timely progress in the first year toward completion of degrees, certificates, and credentials

E. Ensure Wyoming community college graduates outpace the national rate at which they pass licensure and certifications required to enter the workforce

### **Goal 2: Participation**

B. Increase the rate and frequency of Wyoming high school students participating in dual and concurrent enrollment

C. Seek and assist students needing to enroll in high school equivalency certificate programs offered at Wyoming community colleges

D. Continue to strengthen participation in non-credit courses to serve business and industry

E. Provide lifelong learning and enrichment opportunities

### **Goal 3: Placement**

D. Expand and improve data resources to assist students and colleges with decision making.

## **Partially Completed from the 2010 and 2014 (2.0 Addendum) Wyoming Community College Commission Statewide Strategic Plan**

### **Student Access and Success: Promote student access to education and training programs and support students in achieving their educational and professional goals**

1.3 Increase need-based aid to students

- a. Provide a common online enrollment portal for all community colleges

1.4 Improve statewide articulation of courses among high schools, community colleges, and the University of Wyoming

- a. Focus articulation between the community colleges and the University of Wyoming on programs leading to occupations with pay that meets the Self-Sufficiency Standard
- b. Align the work of the community colleges with the state's strategic plan for career and technical education

1.5 Increase outreach to special populations

- c. Connect adult basic education programs to career pathways opportunities

1.6 Wrap-around services offered by the colleges to support student success

- a. Enable all community college students to develop a personal pathway allowing them to maximize the use of college resources in pursuing their goals

### **Quality Programs: Offer quality, relevant programs that meet state and local needs**

2.1 Ensure that colleges can adapt quickly to respond to local workforce and community needs

- b. Collaborate with the Department of Employment to build upon existing data resources and publications to develop a report targeted for use by community colleges. Tailor biennial report of Wyoming economic and labor market trends to community college regions
- c. Implement periodic reviews of college strategic and master plans to ensure they align with the statewide strategic plan

### **Partnerships: Support economic development through partnerships with local and statewide business and industry, government and education agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community groups**

5.2. Identify and develop new ways to share data and information with other state agencies and organizations

- a. Partner in ongoing efforts to establish shared data and information systems among public sector agencies, including the Department of Employment, Workforce Services, Education, Health, the WCCC and the University of Wyoming

### **Adequate Resources: Provide adequate resources, given available funds, distributed in a way that promotes quality and positive student outcomes**

7.2 Employ sustainable and comprehensive funding mechanisms that recognize the multiple functions and roles of community colleges

- b. Help the colleges obtain and maintain resources through special purpose funding for innovative college programs aligned with the statewide strategic plan. Assist in identifying the start-up costs of developing and implementing new programs

### **Goal 1: Progress and Performance**

C. Monitor demographic sector performance in order to target and serve sub-cohorts of students. Increase the number of degrees and certificates produced, with a specific focus on those seen as high-value for Wyoming's needs

D. Ensure colleges are working with local businesses and industry to provide non-credit certificates and credentials which are nationally recognized wherever possible for Wyoming's workforce

### **Goal 3: Placement**

B. Increase the rates at which Wyoming community college students successfully transfer to a four-year institution to pursue a bachelor's degree

## **Not Completed/ Not Relevant from the 2010 and 2014 (2.0 Addendum) Wyoming Community College Commission Statewide Strategic Plan**

**Student Access and Success: Promote student access to education and training programs and support students in achieving their educational and professional goals**

1.1 Increase need-based aid to students

- c. Introduce a need-based state grant available to all Wyoming residents who attend a community college or the University of Wyoming and who are not receiving aid from the Hathaway Scholarship or other sources.

1.2 Increase the participation of women in programs leading to employment in occupations meeting the Self-Sufficiency Standard

- b. Recruit female community college students, particularly those who are displaced homemakers or single parents, into nontraditional career fields through enhanced career counseling and marketing
- c. Continually seek pay equity for women employed by the community colleges

1.6 Wrap-around services offered by the colleges to support student success

- b. Increase childcare capacity for students with families

**Distance Learning: Expand the role of distance learning in serving rural and hard-to-reach populations and in providing cost savings and services for colleges and students**

3.1 Provide support to strengthen a statewide system for distance education.

- a. Increase fiscal support for WyDEC's coordination of distance learning statewide, including the WyCLAS Website

**Alignment of Programs and Workforce Opportunities: Align career and technical education programs with workforce development and labor market opportunities**

4.1 Target programs to industries projected to have the greatest number of job openings now and over the next 10 years and that will assist residents to reach their Self-Sufficiency Standard

- b. Pilot one to three P-16 career pathways. Ensure all partners are involved in the planning and implementation, including K-12, the University of Wyoming, the WCCC, and workforce and economic development agencies and organizations

**Goal 1: Progress and Performance**

B. Increase the rate at which students persist from semester to semester

**Goal 2: Participation**

A. Increase participation in credit-bearing coursework and programs

**Goal 3: Placement**

A. Increase the placement of community college graduates into the Wyoming workforce with livable wages

C. Increase the placement of at-risk and underrepresented students