



COLORADO

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

Group Name: Rural College Consortium

Committee or Taskforce: Committee

Charge:

The purpose of the Rural College Consortium is to serve in an advisory capacity to CCCS and system college leadership, while spearheading change as a committee advocating for the unique needs and challenges our rural colleges face. The Consortium will focus its work on four broad areas that have been identified as top priorities for all the rural colleges as they relate to student services and academic affairs. These priorities are the challenges and needs associated with Programming, Failing Infrastructure, Recruiting/Marketing, and Hiring Qualified Staff and Faculty. Specific challenges and needs within each of these broader areas are delineated below.

Roles & Responsibilities:

- Serve as an advisory team to the system Chancellor and executive leadership for matters related uniquely to the rural colleges in the CCCS system.
- Review and provide feedback regarding current and proposed changes to practices that affect the rural colleges within the CCCS system.
- Identify and compile a list of Top Priorities for the rural colleges
- Engage in thoughtful and inclusive conversations around identifying and providing solutions to the unique challenges identified within the Top Priorities.
- Recommend solutions and advocacy for those solutions to resolve the unique challenges identified within the Top Priorities at the system level.
- Identify, vet, and share research, trends, and best practices related to rural colleges with system leadership and system colleges.
- Recommend best practices, services, and resources currently available, and still needed, to the system colleges.
- Monitor data and progress of solutions to the Top Priorities.
- Provide feedback to the system on results of the solutions implemented.
- Develop recommendations for other priorities at the rural colleges to advocate for at the system level in the future.

Rural College Consortium Top Priorities:

1. Programming

Background: Rural colleges are experiencing difficulty in onboarding new and innovative programming to serve their communities. Challenges include limited enrollments for specialized programs, lack of resources including equipment, facilities, and faculty, and the inability to take on financial risk.

2. Failing Infrastructure

Background: Rural colleges are experiencing the pain of inadequate physical and technological infrastructure. The preponderance of structures/facilities on rural campuses were built prior to current ADA compliance standards leaving rural colleges vulnerable to civil rights facility audits. In addition to accessibility concerns, these

structures/facilities require financially onerous maintenance, which negatively affects general funds and reserves. Likewise, rural colleges lack the resources to update and maintain on campus-technology including internal network servers, Wi-Fi connectivity, and classroom technology.

3. Recruiting/Marketing Diversity

Background: Due to limited marketing budgets/staff, rural colleges are experiencing extreme difficulty messaging their value. The rural colleges feel their “reach” only extends as far as their respective service areas and their niche programs. Supplemental marketing through CCCS would help rural colleges increase enrollment in out of service area and diverse populations.

4. Hiring Qualified Faculty and Staff

Background: In all programs of study, but most disruptively in Allied Health programs, rural colleges are experiencing difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified full-time faculty and staff. Primary challenges include remote locations, lack of marketing/messaging, and salary limitations.

5. COVID-19 Pandemic Response (current year)

Background: As of March, 2020, rural colleges are facing challenges foreseen and unforeseen as it relates to the system response to the COVID-19 pandemic. To date the true outcomes of this response exercise remain unseen, however, rural Vice Presidents anticipate substantial losses in revenue, enrollment, personnel, and resources. While the sincere hope is that the pandemic is short-lived and the concerns are quickly mitigated, this will remain a priority area for the consortium until such mitigation occurs.

Meeting Times and Dates:

The Rural College Consortium will meet monthly via WebEx with one in person meeting per year, hosted at one of the rural colleges.

Membership:

The Rural College Consortium is composed of 16 total members, 13 are representatives from each of the rural colleges and 3 from the System Office. The following professional affiliations have representation on the committee:

- System Office
 - Vice Chancellor Academic & Student Affairs, Student Affairs – 1 Member
 - Associate Vice Chancellor Student/Dir E & I, Student Affairs – 1 member
 - Director of Academic Programs and Curriculum, Academic Affairs – 1 Member
 - The Consortium reserves the right to add new members as requested by the individual institutions
- Colleges
 - Vice President of Instruction/Academics – 9 Members (current)
 - Vice President of Student Affairs – 3 Members (current)
 - Executive Assistant to the VPI – 1 Member (current)
- Chair
 - At the beginning of each academic year, the Committee will elect a Chair from among its members to serve administratively and as a representative to CCCS
 - The Chair of the Rural College Consortium will attend the CCCS Presidents meeting once per quarter to present and update on the committee’s platform, priority objectives, and tangible requests
- Ex-Officio

- The Consortium membership reserves the right to add ex-officio members as needed to include but not limited to, business officers, HR directors, marketing directors etc., in the event such content expertise is desired or required

Expectations of Committee Members:

- Provide passion, knowledge, and skill sets that help identify challenges, create solutions advocate for needs, and drive change to implement solutions and overcome challenges facing rural colleges.
- Communicate and receive feedback from other “Rural College Functional Groups” as several of these have also come together since the creations of this committee.
- Serve as a liaison to each rural college and community
- Attend Rural Consortium meetings
- Participate actively in discussions
- Listen to and respect the perspectives of other members of the committee
- Represent the best interests of all the rural colleges and other colleges within the System as a whole and not any one individual college

Resources:

- Webex
- Access to various System Office staff members
- Web-based collaboration space (i.e. SharePoint, etc)
- Time of executive leadership at CCCS, including Chancellor Garcia, and system colleges to present and advocate for solutions identified in the top priorities for the rural colleges

System Office Staff Support:**Questions or Clarification:**

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