3.E - The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

Assurance Evidence
CSU is dedicated to facilitating meaningful undergraduate experiences that expose students to diverse cultures through community involvement in a broad array of activities that extend learning, foster leadership skills, and promote civic responsibility. CSU communicates its vast array of educational enrichment opportunities available to prospective students through many venues. The Office of Admissions takes the lead in providing information through its website and a variety of print publications. These resources provide a rich overview for prospective students. In addition, CSU provides information through standardized disclosure sites that are widely available for prospective students to perform comparative institutional research, such as the Common Data Set (CDS) This website provides some general information about potential campus experiences in a standard way. For example, a student visiting the U.S. New and World Report website could search in the CDS for schools with ROTC programs. CSU also participates in the Voluntary System of Accountability program to supply clear, accessible, and comparable information on the undergraduate student experience through the College Portrait.

As illustrated in the Campus Life section of Admissions' website, the co-curricular opportunities for students are generally organized in four categories: Living on Campus, Student Organization, Leadership and Service, and Athletics and Recreation. Promoting student engagement is the overarching feature of all these programs.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution’s mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.

Goal 6 and Goal 8 of the Strategic Plan state our commitment to provide an enriched educational environment beyond the classroom. Goal 6 includes initiatives to create opportunities for active and experiential learning in every major and in a broad range of co-curricular activities. Experiential learning is active learning that places students in a context (typically outside the classroom) in which they can directly engage with their object of study. In Goal 8, the University focuses its efforts to engage students utilizing best-practice and high-impact activities such as common intellectual experiences, learning communities, collaborative assignments and projects, service-learning and community-based learning, and capstone courses and projects, especially for first-year students and for students from traditionally underrepresented groups. Student engagement inside and outside the classroom is evaluated on a systematic basis through national and local assessments. Outside the classroom, the University also maintains efforts to engage students in intercollegiate athletics as participants, fans, and supporters.

Living on Campus
Students' homes at CSU are a place where they can study, socialize, and just generally be themselves. The residence halls feature 15 Residential Learning Communities that unite students who share interests, while the University Apartments offer a variety of living options. The Academic Village and Edwards Hall Residential Learning Communities currently house students, and include seminar rooms, the Honors office suite, and the Fireside Lounge among other amenities. This small community provides students with individual attention and support and fosters learning, social interaction, and an ethic of involvement in University life.

The Key Communities assessment plan illustrates how the program contributes to student academic success by showing that its participating students earn higher GPAs and experience lower levels of probation than non-learning community students. The Key Plus Learning Community students (sophomores) are expected to demonstrate their career decision making skills using portfolios. Students participating in Key Communities continue to demonstrate higher retention rates than students who do not participate. From Fall 2001 to Fall 2009 (with the exception of Fall 2006) Key Academic Community students had higher first-year retention rates than nonparticipating students, though the Admissions Index average scores were lower for participants than for non-participants.

Seeking a different option for social involvement, 5 percent of the student population joins one of 23 fraternities and 14 sororities. These off-campus residences are connected by the
Student Organizations
Students have opportunities to choose from more than 400 student organizations that cover academic, competitive, cultural, honorary, political, programming/service, religious, social, and recreational interests. RamLink is a student organization management tool that provides each organization with its own website where members can collaborate in discussion posts, events, photos, and other online features. Each organization has the ability to associate itself with various interests, and users can also associate themselves with particular interests and have related organizations/events recommended to them. The service clubs help students reach out to the greater community; the academic organizations speak directly to student interests; and the professional and business clubs give students valuable insights and introductions into different fields. Examples of the scope of student organizations and other co-curricular programs include the Associated Students of CSU (ASCSU), honor societies, International Programs and Study Abroad, leadership and diversity programs, residential learning communities, Marching Band, ROTC (Army and Air Force), service learning and volunteer programs, research and creativity, Honors, and Women's Programs.

Leadership and Service
CSU has been an ideal setting for students to acquire leadership skills, and students have many opportunities to exercise those skills to make a significant contribution to the world. Students can take the helm of student government, breathe life into a student organization, and get behind causes that benefit the greater community. Along the way, they develop connections/networks that will enrich their lives well beyond graduation.

Athletics and Recreation
CSU is home to 16 NCAA Division I sports in the Mountain West Conference. For recreation and other athletic activities, approximately 5,500 (18%) students participate in intramural and club sports. The newly expanded Student Recreation Center features a climbing wall and other amenities, including facilities for intramural sports, a challenge course, activity classes, fitness programs, massage therapy, and more. The greater Fort Collins area also provides an abundance of recreational opportunities. (Additional description of athletics operations is provided in Component 2.A).

2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students’ educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

The Division of Student Affairs (DSA) maintains a rigorous process of assessment to demonstrate the effectiveness of its programs and to aid planning to improve student support services that contribute to co-curricular learning. The Assessment and Research Steering Committee (ARSC), composed of membership from all units of DSA, provides guidance to processes of annual unit assessment planning, five-year reviews, and major national assessments (e.g., CIRP Freshman Survey). DSA has utilized the campus-wide website known as Planning for Researching Improvement and Supporting Mission (PRISM) to manage program assessment and planning activities. Each student service unit is expected to include at least one student learning outcome goal in its unit’s assessment plan. Through use of the PRISM interactive webpage environment, staff of each unit have a place to (1) articulate their values about quality, (2) create student development and program outcomes, (3) view the strategies that other units use to promote students’ achievement of their development goals, (4) explore the assessment or research methods that programs use to determine progress, and (5) learn of the improvements and best practices being implemented to strengthen student performance. Some examples of activities and subsequent assessments that demonstrate co-curricular contributions to students’ educational experiences follow.

The Student Leadership, Involvement and Community Engagement (SLiCE) program brings together 372 student organizations, student leaders and student volunteers under one banner, making our campus a more engaged and caring community. SLiCE also partners with the Office of Service Learning on the academic side. Involvement in SLiCE programs allows students to enrich their academic and social experience at CSU. SLiCE actively assesses performance, such
as the following student leadership outcome: "Students participating in the President's Leadership Program (PLP) will report learning and development in the following areas: critical thinking, collaboration, ethics, values clarification, diversity awareness, social responsibility, and leadership efficacy." The PLP students participate in extensive service-learning and experiential-learning activities including alternative weekend trips, leadership retreats, community internships with local non-profits and businesses, and Project Homeless Connect.

- In total, PLP students participated in 2,340 hours of service and 1,175 hours of leadership training outside of their classroom experience.
- PLP implemented PLP Scholars, a select group of students who participate in enriched leadership development experiences throughout their four years at CSU. For its inaugural year, PLP scholars attended small group discussions with the CSU President and top faculty, met bimonthly with a peer mentor and the PLP program director, attended a meeting with the President’s Cabinet, and implemented service projects with the Matthews House and Respite Care.
- The PLP assisted CSU recruitment efforts with 60% of first-year PLP students (24 of 40 students) citing the program as “important” or “very important” to their decision to attend CSU. Supporting the Division’s goal of academic access and success, 25% of PLP students identified as first-generation.
- The number of PLP students of color has been increasing dramatically. Twenty-eight percent of PLP students who completed both semesters of the program in 2010-11 identified as students of color compared to 13% in 2009-10. For the upcoming academic year, 26% of students admitted to the program identified as students of color.
- The interdisciplinary Leadership Studies minor (approved Spring 2013) builds on the content and success of the PLP to challenge students to be more prepared for leadership in their academic disciplines and to understand the need for collaboration across disciplines to make advances in their field.

The Rams Engaging in Active Leadership (REAL) certificate program completed its third year under the direction of the SLiCE office. The REAL experience allows participants to advance their own knowledge with regard to effective, intellectual, and cultural leadership. REAL provides all interested CSU students with an accessible opportunity to develop and enhance a personal philosophy of leadership that includes an understanding of self, groups, and their community. SLiCE partnered with many campus offices to create this experience. This year there were 225 workshops for 1,909 participants, who completed 2,400 service hours.

Alternative breaks sponsored by the SLiCE office successfully completed 19 (17 domestic and 2 international) service trips over winter, spring, and summer breaks in 2010-11. There were a total of 210 student participants who provided 10,906 hours of direct community service to 16 non-profit agencies both nationally and internationally. Thirty-four student site leaders spent a total of 1,768 hours completing leadership training in the alternative break site leader school in order to successfully execute one of the 19 alternative break trips.

Students’ educational experiences are also enriched through student employment. For example, Housing & Dining Services provides many experiences (over 1,000 positions) through programs such as Bakeshop Practicum Program, Student Conference Assistants, Nutrition Intern Program, Marketing Internships, Employment for FRCC Culinary Program students, Construction Management Internships, Dining Services Advisory Council membership, Residence Assistants, Mystery Shopper program, Community Coordinators and Resident Assistants, Desk Staff, Graduate level Assistant Hall Directors and Apartment Managers. These employment opportunities assist students in paying for their education and provide them with experiences to enhance their education.

Lory Student Center Dining Services provides undergraduate internships to students with a focus on event planning of large events, from meeting initially with customers for planning to coordinating services on the day of the event. Student interns planned 25% of ballroom events during the Fall and Spring semesters of 2010-11.

The primary institutional-level tool used to measure student engagement (enrichment through co-curricular activities) is the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) which is described in more detail in Component 4.B.2. In general, while both first-year and senior students showed improved engagement and personal development in the most recent 2011
survey over the 2009 NSSE administration, even larger gains were made since the formal design and implementation of the SSI in 2007.

**Sources**

- Admissions
- Admissions - Campus Life
- Admissions - Online Publications
- Assessment and Research Steering Committee guidelines
- College Portrait
- Common Data Set 2012-13
- NSSE Final Results, CSU 2012
- RamLink
- SLiCE
- Strategic Plan 2012 (Page 10)
- Student Affairs Assessment Learning Communities (Page 3)
- Student Affairs Assessment Learning Communities (Page 4)
- Student Affairs Assessment SLiCE