# University of Northern Colorado

HLC ID 1042

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OPEN PATHWAY: Reaffirmation Review                    Review Date: 10/21/2024

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# Context and Nature of Review

## Review Date

10/21/2024

**Review Type:**
Reaffirmation Review

## Scope of Review

- Reaffirmation Review
- Federal Compliance (if applicable)
- On-site Visit
- Multi-campus Visit (if applicable)

*There are no forms assigned.*

## Institutional Context

The University of Northern Colorado is a public, doctoral institution established in 1889 and accredited by HLC since 1916. UNC recently received designation of an Hispanic Serving Institution, is working to attain a Carnegie R2 designation and is in the process of creating a College of Osteopathic Medicine. UNC's current portfolio includes five colleges, 9 cultural and resource centers, and a diverse student body. A strategic plan and strategic enrollment plan have been developed and implemented.

In the 2019 Assurance Review, UNC received a Met with Concerns in Criterion 5 regarding the operating budget balance as investment in projects to increase enrollment and revenue ultimately led to a structural budget deficit resulting from a heavy use of cash reserves. A monitoring report was required and submitted. The reviewer analysis of the interim report determined that UNC had met the requirements of the interim report but also stated that the "University should assume that the HLC Peer Review Team conducting the AY2024-2025 Comprehensive Evaluation will examine closely the institution's progress/improvements in these areas." The 2024 review team considered this report in its reaffirmation review.

## Interactions with Constituencies

President

Provost and Executive Vice President

Vice President for Finance & Administration and Chief Financial Officer

Chief of Staff

General Counsel and Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Faculty Senate Chair, Professor of Anthropology

Vice President for University Advancement

Executive Assistant to the President and Board of Trustees

Chair, Board of Trustees

Vice Provost for Academic Resources and Faculty Affairs

Assistant Provost for Academic Effectiveness

Associate Vice President of Student Affairs

Chair, Classified Staff Council and System Administrator, Information Management & Technology

Assistant Vice President of Development

Chair, Professional Administrative Staff Council

Student Government Association Representative

Assistant Vice President for Information Technology

Assistant Vice President for Human Resources

Assistant Vice President for Finance

Interim Dean, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Professor of Special Education

Director Marcus Garvey Cultural Center, Interim Executive Director, Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Associate Dean, College of Osteopathic Medicine

Registrar

Professor, Colorado School of Public Health

Dean, college of Natural and Health Sciences

Director and Professor, School of Nursing

Dean, College of Osteopathic Medicine

Associate Vice President of Research and Dean of the Graduate School

Senior Director of Academic Technology and Support Services

Professor Emerita, Colorado School of Public Health

Director, Cesar Chavez Cultural Center and Director of HSI Initiatives

30 students

Director of Assessment

Assessment Graduate Assistant

Executive Director for Undergraduate Academic Engagement

Professor, Physical Education Teaching & Physical Activity Leadership

Associate Professor and Director, School of Art and Design

Director, Center for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning

Interim Dean, Monfort College of Business

Associate Professor and Chair, Physics and Astronomy

Assistant Professor and Chair, Applied Statistics and Research Methods

Professor, Communication Studies, and Chair of Liberal Arts Council

Professor and Chair, Sociology

Associate professor and Chair, Philosophy

Associate Professor and Chair, Geography, GIS, and Sustainability

Director, Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness

Dean of Students, Community, and Conflict Resolution

Assistant Vice President, Student Academic Success

Assistant Professor, University Libraries

Dean, HSS

Library Staff

Facilities Management Staff

Chief Information Officer

GOAL Staff

Executive Director of Student Engagement

Interim Dean

Senior Operations Manager

Associate Dean HSS

Associate Dean EBS

Vice Provost

Director, NSO

Dean, NHS

AVP, Wellness and Support

ORSP Pre-Award

Associate Dean, Grad School

Budget Director

AVP Enrollment

Senior Director Infrastructure and Support services

Professor, Theatre Arts

Student Body President

Grad Council Chair, Faculty

HR Specialist, CSC Treasurer

Executive Director SBDC

AVP Finance

Associate Vice President for Administration

Professor of History, Faculty Trustee

University Licensure Officer

Associate Professor, University Libraries

Interim Dean

Dean, University Libraries

GA for Student Affairs

Financial Aid Counseslor

Director, ISUS

AVP Student Success

Director McNair Scholars

KiND Program Coordinator

Director of Research Compliance

Director of Admissions

Assistant Dean of Student Development

Student -- Office of Financial Aid

Director of Financial Aid

Teaching and Learning Librarian

ARF Manager

Associate Vice President Student Affairs

Assistant Dean, EBS

Director, ORSP

Assistant Director, Financial Aid

Financial Aid Counselor

Title IX Officer

Chair, ASLIS

Director

Financial Aid Counselor

Catalog and Curriculum Specialist

SSRC Director, HSS

Advising Center Director, MLB

Department Chair, ASRM

Director, Psychology

Program Coordinator Tutorial Services

Director of Tutorial Services

Catalog/Curriculum

Reg Systems Administration

Registrar Degree Analyst

Executive Director Counseling Center

Associate Dean, PVA

Director of Student Outreach and Support

Director of Advising, EBS

Executive Director, Ext Campus

Associate Chair, KIND

Executive Director, Undergraduate Academic Engagement

Senior Lecturer/AT Program Director

AFS Adjunct Professor

Professor, Chair KIND

Associate Provost and AVP for Undergraduate Studies

Executive Assistant to the Provost

Writing Program Administrator and Associate Professor of English

Senior Director of IMT

Director of Campus Recreation

Senior Lecturer, Director Didactic Program in Dietetics

Assistant Director, Advocacy Services

Associate Dean, EBS and Education Prep Program

Professor of Philosophy

Professor of Biology, Senator, Faculty Senate Academic Policies

Director, Center for Human Enrichments, TRIO ISSS

Financial Aid Counselor

Online Degree Coordinator and Faculty

Assistant Director of Student Marketing

Director, ISSS

Interim Executive Director, O&E

Director, CCCC, OSS, HSI

Service Specialist

Student Conduct Specialist

Dean, PVA

Assistant Director, Alumni Relations

Director APASS & NASS

AVP Development

Director, GSRC

AVP Student Affairs

Interim Dean, CBS

Director, CWGE

Director, Career Readiness

Director, CHIPC

Executive Director, SDBC

Graduate Assistant, Honors

Assistant Vice President, Financial Services

Assistant Vice President, Facilities Management

Director, Office of Budget and Financial Planning

Director of Campus Recreation

Executive Director for Housing and Auxiliary Services

Executive Director of Student Engagement

Associate Vice President for Student Affairs

Assistant to the Vice President of Student Affairs

Director of Dining Services

Director of Student Activities and Greek Life

Director of Career and Experiential Learning

Executive Director of Counseling Services

Director of Student Outreach and Support

Dean of Students

Student Support Specialist

Assistant Dean of Student Development, Community Standards, and Conflict Resolution

Director of Student Administration and Communication

Director of New Student Orientation and Transition Programs

HR Specialist

Associate Professor and Chair, Chicana/o and Latinx Studies

Interim Executive Director of Global Engagement

Assistant Professor, Leadership Policy and Development

Associate Dean, College of Performing and Visual Arts

Associate Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Data Scientist

Director of Admissions

Director, Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness

Assistant Vice President, Student Academic Success

## Additional Documents

The team reviewed 31 syllabi added to the Addendum

Additional documents requested and added to the Addendum include:

Assessment Results for Improvement

Federal Compliance Training

Onboarding Staff

Interim Monitoring Report

Feasibility Report

Winter Intersession information

Education Prep program assessment graphic

2018 Data breach information

FY19-24 Operating Budgets

FY25 Financial Report

# 1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

# 1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

The review team confirmed that the University of Northern Colorado's mission, vision and strategic plan, *Rowing, Not Drifting 2030*, was developed through a collaborative process and was approved by its Board of Trustees in 2019. Subsequently, the Board of Trustees approved moving forward with the College of Osteopathic Medicine, and in 2022, the state statute 22-056 was amended to authorize UNC to offer degrees in osteopathic medicine.

The mission, articulated phases, and achievements associated with the development and implementation of *Rowing, Not Drifting 2030* are transparently presented on the institution's website. Importantly, it was clear to the team that *Rowing, Not Drifting 2030* is truly a guiding document that drives action, and not just words on paper. An Institutional Planning Group, comprised of the university's vice presidents and other campus leaders responsible for major initiatives, coordinates and advances work across all institutional planning efforts, including regular engagement with the campus community. UNC systematically aligns its budget and planning priorities with its mission. Each unit within the University takes the strategic plan and priorities into account in its resource allocation to ensure that budget and actions are aligned with the mission.

UNC provides a comprehensive array of baccalaureate and graduate degree and certificate programs. The curriculum process includes components for ensuring that all academic programs are consistent

with the university's mission. UNC fulfills its statutory mission related to the preparation of education professionals through its current academic portfolio and offers many of these programs online to expand access in Colorado and beyond. The proposed new College of Osteopathic Medicine is also philosophically aligned with UNC's mission and will complement existing health science programs (e.g., nursing, audiology, public health, biomedical sciences, health sciences, and behavioral sciences) to create new opportunities for research and expand the university's ability to contribute to healthy communities across the state. The team confirmed that the process to create the new college has been systematic and intentional as it relates to policies and processes with the goal of delivering an integrated program relative to faculty, curriculum, academic pathways, and research.

The UNC student profile aligns with the institutional mission, as 84% of undergraduates and 65% of graduate students are Colorado residents; 42% are first generation; 29% are from low-income backgrounds; and 31% of undergraduate students and 17% graduate students identify as students of color. Appropriately, UNC provides comprehensive student support services for their undergraduate and graduate students and specialized support designed to meet the unique needs and interests of specific student populations. Consistent with the survey results presented in the Assurance Argument, the team confirmed general satisfaction for the support services provided at UNC. Additionally, students spoke very highly of faculty and staff availability and support.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 1.B - Core Component 1.B

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

As a public doctoral research university, educational responsibilities take primacy over all other purposes. As mentioned in 1.A. the team confirmed that *Rowing, Not Drifting 2030* drives decision-making and resource allocations at the institution and it emphasizes UNC's educational role in promoting student success outcomes as its primary purpose. UNC's ongoing commitment to its educational responsibilities is also reflected in the Students First ethos that seems to permeate and guide institutional actions and interpersonal engagement.

UNC's mission, planning, and actions demonstrate a strong commitment to serve the public. Building on the 2015 designation as a Carnegie Foundation Community Engaged institution, UNC is highly ranked by CollegeNET's Social Mobility Index.

Given only 35% of Colorado's need for physicians is currently being met, the recent approval to launch the UNC's College of Osteopathic Medicine will clearly serve a public good as it scales to enroll approximately 150 students each year in this program. This development is an excellent example of how UNC engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs.

UNC public service is also reflected in the cultural contributions to the Greeley community via concerts, performances, and art exhibits. The team confirmed that the Greeley community recognizes and appreciates the educational and cultural role that UNC has in the region. Numerous examples were provided during the campus visit that highlighted the mutually beneficial collaborations that support students' educational journey and career preparedness.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

UNC recognizes its role in a multicultural society. Two of the five central values of UNC focus on respect for diversity of thought and culture and equal opportunities for all. UNC provides access, opportunity, and support to leaders and responsible global citizens.

Students' development and experience is enhanced with resources and support services such as, Asian/Pacific American Student Services, Center for Women's and Gender Equity, César Chávez Cultural Center, Gender and Sexuality Resource Center, Marcus Garvey Cultural Center, Native American Student Services, and Veterans Services. Students conveyed to the team that they appreciated and valued the administration's support for these resources.

UNC's institutional learning outcomes emphasize learning related to strengthening and improving communities and the capacity to understand and interact effectively with others whose identities, beliefs, behaviors, and values differ from their own are realized through program specific learning opportunities and through the Liberal Arts Curriculum. Impressively, as mentioned in the Assurance Argument, 68% of first year, 74% of seniors, and 64% of graduate students agree that UNC has helped them demonstrate the capacity to engage in civic, social, and political responsibilities. Faculty are also supported in their development through a variety of learning communities, workshops, and web-based resources, including several toolkits where equity and inclusion is infused throughout the resource materials.

UNC is actively working to narrow the six-year graduation rate differences across student populations and has an aspirational goal for an overall rate of 60%. Throughout the campus visit, the team learned of specific efforts designed to improve retention, persistence, and graduation rates, including, but not limited to, support for faculty development focused on inclusive pedagogy, faculty mentoring, early alert outreach, emergency financial support, and alternative multi-method pathways to demonstrate competencies.

UNC's commitment is evident through its actions, such as the creation of the Division of Diversity,

Equity, and Inclusion led by a cabinet-level vice president position (recently vacated with a search underway), evaluation of current DEI efforts against industry best practices, participation in the AASCU's Student Success Equity Intensive, and the deployment of a range of professional development opportunities for faculty and staff. The results from a recent survey revealed overall positive outcomes regarding campus climate with a few areas for improvement. UNC incorporated improvement efforts into the Phase III of the strategic planning efforts. Conversations during the site visit confirmed the sharing of the results and the perception that the institution took the results seriously.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

## Rationale

The mission of University of Northern Colorado is clear, and it appears on many university websites and publications. The mission, vision, and strategic plan of the university were approved by their Board of Trustees. *Rowing, Not Drifting 2030* emphasizes the university's primary mission, which is to educate students and equip them with the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes necessary for informed citizenship in a diverse and rapidly changing society. The mission and commitment to diversity and serving the public good guide the institution's operations, including the student profile, academic offerings, student services, and resource allocation.

# 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

# 2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

The institution's mission, statutorily established by the Colorado General Assembly and approved by the Board of Trustees, documents the purpose and role of the University of Northern Colorado as a comprehensive baccalaureate and specialized graduate research university that offers master's and doctoral degrees, with an emphasis on preparing educators. The Board adopted mission statement explicitly calls for ethical behavior to be guided by the institution's policies and procedures in fulfillment of daily life and work. UNC provides ample guidance and consistent processes to inform and report on its operations. The current strategic plan, approved by the Board in 2019, is supplemented by enrollment, facilities, technology and other plans that signal the goals and funding priorities of the institution.

The Board of Trustees Policy Manual contains guidelines on a variety of topics including budget, organizational structure, and curriculum. The University Regulations articles expand on the Board manual, and offer policy, plans and regulations on an array of matters including personnel, curriculum, and information technology. Both documents are prominently displayed online and are searchable. There is no centralized onboarding training for staff, but information on policy resources are discussed in New Faculty Orientation, and in onboarding offered by some divisions such as Student Affairs, as was affirmed in the Criterion 2 open forum.

The institution has structures in place to safeguard integrity in its human resources and relations. The desire to make the hiring process equitable was expressed in several campus meetings. To ensure fair faculty and staff recruitment, various processes have been instituted, such as anti-bias training for search committees. Equity is enhanced by the State of Colorado's requirements that salary ranges for open positions be displayed, and that an annual analysis of pay disparities be conducted. The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance upholds Title IX protections and provides training and resources on departmental services to the campus.

Annual employee compliance training on federal laws, cybersecurity and implicit bias is required as of 2018, as is an annual conflict of interest disclosure. A new employee onboarding checklist provided to departments by Human Resources makes mention of the annual compliance training available in the Cornerstone employee learning management system. Staff report that a committee has been examining methods to further increase participation in compliance training.

The institution provides information to guide campus financial operations. The Board of Trustees Fiscal Rules exist to provide safeguards for the proper expenditure of any kind of university funds or resources. Independent auditors selected by the Office of the State Auditor present their findings in UNC's Annual Financial Report on the business activities of UNC. Besides financial statements, the report gives context from a "Management's Discussion and Analysis" commentary, which includes narratives on internal decisions and external factors impacting the institution's financial position.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

The University of Northern Colorado provides clear information to its various constituencies on consumer information, as well as the contributions it makes to the educational experience and the economic development it generates. This is achieved by offering well-developed repositories of information and reports, and by providing evidence of academic and co-curricular opportunities. Information is kept up-to-date by a process of regular and inclusive reviews of material.

The public may read about all academic programs on the university's website. Requirements for admission to all programs are listed both online and in the undergraduate and graduate catalogues. Transfer students can use the transfer course library (see 4.A) to check which credits will be accepted at UNC. Credentials for all full-time faculty are listed in the undergraduate catalogue, and contact information of faculty is listed in the UNC directory as well as departmental websites.

A Student Consumer Information page complies with federal requirements in providing information on accreditation and affiliation, cost of attendance, campus safety and career/job placement services. Current and prospective students may use UNC's net price calculator to estimate the cost of attendance, or review the costs of tuition and fees based on their residency and academic level available on the Financial Aid website. Cost information is listed in multiple locations, including course catalogues. Accreditation status is listed on the Specialized Accreditation link from the Student Consumer Information page, and program terms of accreditation are listed, satisfying a suggestion from the 2015 comprehensive visit report.

The institution claims that experiential learning is a "hallmark of a UNC education", and has invested in programs and projects to support this through the strategic plan. The Phase I progress report for the strategic plan mentions updates on the "Students First" vision element of career readiness, and lists a number of courses that provide workplace skills and career information through internships, job shadowing, websites, assignments, and field experiences. Participants in the Student Affairs session noted that student employment is a critical high impact practice, which provides work experience and mentoring, combined with the financial resources many students require. The introduction of a 4-year career readiness pathway by the Center for Career Readiness prepares

students for personal success and to be contributing members of society by mapping out actions that equip them to pursue employment. The Research Nights event for undergraduates, and the annual Research Day for all UNC students highlight some of the ways that research opportunities are encouraged and celebrated.

In a campus session, numerous examples of community engagement were mentioned, many of which also provide economic development. The university partners with the Greeley arts community in sharing concert and gallery spaces. The Bright Futures workforce development partnership with Weld County provides UNC students with tuition assistance. The César Chávez Cultural Center works with area middle schools to provide tutoring. The Small Business Development Center works with hundreds of businesses in the community to provide customized professional development and consulting. Several more examples of engaging in dialogue with the community to identify resources of mutual benefit were cited.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

The UNC Board of Trustees consists of nine members, seven of whom are appointed by the Governor of Colorado. Appointed trustees serve four-year terms, that begin on a rotating basis, and may serve multiple terms. The other two non-voting members include a faculty member and a student government representative, both elected by the bodies they serve.

Board governance is outlined in the Board Bylaws, which stipulate meeting frequency, committee structure, and the duties of Board officers. As a member of the state higher education system, the Bylaws reference financial and legal requirements the university must adhere to, such as the Fiscal Rules of the State of Colorado. The relationship of the President to the Board is specified in the Bylaws, and authority in financial and personnel matters are delegated to the President as defined. Authority is delegated to faculty in developing curriculum. The 2022 Curriculum Handbook establishes the role of faculty in curriculum development, and specifies the function of the Board in notifications and approvals. When discussing the role of the Trustees and the autonomy of the President, the President expressed appreciation that the Trustees view their roles as providing support and guidance, rather than advocating for personal interests.

To prepare for their duties, a dual approach is taken to trustee orientation. The Trustees Chair reported an informal onboarding process, with information shared among fellow trustees. Information on the roles and expectations of trustees, including adhering to the conflict of interest policy, as covered in the Bylaws, are shared with incoming trustees by the institution. Information is provided on relevant issues both through an annual retreat, and by presentations of campus personnel at Board meetings. Ongoing institutional support of the trustees was described by UNC's General Counsel who serves as Secretary to the Board, and who oversees agenda and minutes preparations, as well as advising on legal matters.

The Board of Trustees is committed to the success and financial health of the institution. The President provided examples of ways in which the Board has advocated for funding and key initiatives. The Board is highly involved with UNC in a number of ways, ranging from attendance at campus events, to advocating for initiatives as the state level. At a recent retreat, trustees examined key issues including increasing diversity in faculty, and future enrollment impacts. The Board chair expressed deep support for the strategic plan's Students First vision, and mentioned several ways in which UNC is committed to institutional priorities, such as career readiness and maintaining an accessible cost of education.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

The institution demonstrates commitment to academic freedom and freedom of expression through policy and programs, and offers examples of how the campus community participates in an environment that supports the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. For instance, the Board of Trustees policy on Academic Freedom and Freedom and Professional Ethics sets down a definition of academic freedom, and states that faculty are "engaged in a profession that depends upon freedom for its health and integrity" (p.2). The UNC Promotion and Tenure Guidelines state that, "The purpose of tenure is to create an environment in which academic freedom is protected." (p. 4). Additionally, the Board policy on faculty evaluation cautions that collegiality is not meant to be a category of decision-making that threatens academic freedom.

Freedom of expression on the UNC campus is protected by the Board Policy on Peaceful Assembly. The Dean of Students provides a webpage that outlines student rights of assembly and speech, which is supplemented with posting and permit information. The Student Code of Conduct states that the institution "values freedom of expression and encourages learning through respectful and meaningful discussion of experiences, viewpoints, and ideas." (p.2). A "Know Your Rights" workshop is provided by the ACLU each year for campus and community, and presents information on how first amendment and campus policy intersect.

In the Criterion 2 open forum, a number of faculty members expressed that they felt that the institution supported their autonomy in matters of teaching, research, and publication. There was consensus that no interference had been experienced. The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs described their efforts extended to guide those who may be apprehensive about the viability of their research topic, as supportive without intention to censor. A 2022-2023 HERI survey likewise expressed faculty feelings of academic freedom, with 77% of faculty respondents rating their autonomy and independence at UNC as satisfied/very satisfied.

In a 2022-2023 Diverse Learning Environments Survey on Classroom Climate, 79% of student respondents reported feeling comfortable sharing their own perspectives and experiences in class. Students attending the student luncheon session related feeling very comfortable expressing their opinions in and outside of class. The President reported that the right to campus protest assemblies was protected.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

UNC encourages and supports faculty and students in the pursuit of research and scholarly activities, and provides the policies and procedures to do so in a responsible and ethical manner. The Associate Vice President of Research and team within the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs provide resources for acquiring grant funding and conducting research appropriately. This work is augmented by various councils, committees, and boards such as the Institutional Review Board, that develop policy and ensure research integrity and compliance.

UNC reports results that affirm a widespread participation in research experiences. This includes their estimate that 71% of undergraduate degree programs require research or scholarly practice related to the discipline, and sample course descriptions provided as evidence. At the graduate level, each student is required to take SRM 600: Introduction to Graduate Research. UNC reports that 536 research applications have been reviewed by the IRB since the 2019 Assurance Review. The Undergraduate Research Mentorship Program, a collaboration between the Office of Undergraduate Research, Office of Research, and the Graduate School, offers a program that funds and supports a mentoring program which connects undergraduates with graduate student mentors in research and creative projects.

To prepare those pursuing research programs, guidance is offered through coursework, training, and presentations. The Director of Research Compliance described various trainings available to the campus, both online and in person. The CITI program has seen 1,428 faculty staff and students complete a training module since the 2019 Assurance Review. University libraries offer workshops, course-embedded instruction, or for-credit courses on the ethical use of information.

Ongoing support as well as project monitoring is provided in various ways. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee oversees the humane treatment of animal subjects. The Procedures for Research Involving Human Participants reference the requirement for evidence of CITI ethics training for projects judged to involve more than minimal risk to subjects. In 2018, a Data Security

Policy for Research Projects Involving Human Subjects was created to provide security for subjects' personally identifiable data. Financial oversight of sponsored activity includes management of the annual financial conflict of interest policy.

Expectations for ethical behavior in research and scholarly activities is described in a number of publications including the Research Misconduct Policy and the Student Code of Conduct. Processes for reporting and investigating misconduct are available, and administrators who lead investigations are identified. Satisfying a suggestion from the 2015 comprehensive visit, Section 3-8-101(1) of the University Regulations includes a section on non-human animal subjects, and states that all research projects must be reviewed by the IACUC.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

## Rationale

The University of Northern Colorado definitively demonstrated the ways in which it acts with integrity and ethical conduct in fulfilling its mission. Policies such as the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees and University Regulations provide information to the campus on appropriate actions in governance, personnel, and other matters. Financial audits and budget reports provide transparency in the fiscal operations of the institution. Investment and infrastructure surrounding research endeavors prepare students, faculty, and staff to conduct ethical research. Fairness in employment opportunity and adherence to federal compliance are evident in the training provided by Human Resources. The campus community expressed confidence in the academic freedom and freedom of expression afforded at UNC. A commitment to experiential learning was broadly articulated by many including a trustee, administration, faculty, staff, and students. Diverse community engagement projects, frequently combined with economic development, was cited as one of the ways the institution upholds its commitment to experiential learning.

# 3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

# 3.A - Core Component 3.A

The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

UNC has degree programs and student services that are appropriate to its mission and institutions of its type. The curricular process, outlined in evidence and reinforced in meetings held on campus, is robust and faculty driven. Board policy articulates that "curriculum design is within the purview of the faculty," and curricular changes move through a variety of committees (which include faculty members) through to the Board of Trustees, if necessary. Learning outcomes are provided for courses, programs, and the general education program. UNC also has five institutional learning outcomes that are incorporated into academic and co-curricular programs; these outcomes get mapped to program learning outcomes.

Evidence was provided, both on campus and via stakeholder discussions, to demonstrate that learning outcomes are consistent across modalities and when offered via dual credit. From the discussion in the open forum, there are processes in place to ensure there are differentiated learning outcomes and expectations for cross-listed courses. The Assessment Council mentioned that assessment data are collected for dual credit courses and that improvement and refinement of the assessment process for dual credit is a work in progress since dual credit courses are a small percentage of the credit hours generated.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

UNC's general education program, the Liberal Arts Curriculum, is based on a liberal arts foundation with core competencies reflective of the LEAP framework; it meets the requirements of the State of Colorado for guaranteed transfer. UNC has gone the additional step and included requirements for a multicultural studies course and an international studies course consistent with the mission. The program was designed with significant faculty involvement, aligns with institutional learning outcomes, and was approved by the Faculty Senate. Courses that are part of the curriculum must be approved by the Liberal Arts Council through a robust syllabus review process. The syllabus review process is also used to determine if courses are allowed to remain in the program. A member of the Liberal Arts Council described this process and the commitment to remove courses that don't meet the requirements of the syllabus review process.

UNC places a strong emphasis on providing students opportunities to experience growth in regard to working and living in a multicultural world. For example, UNC recently gained designation as an Hispanic Serving Institution, the general education core requires multicultural and international coursework, multiple co-curricular activities are provided, students have the opportunity to study abroad, and the recent HERI survey results suggest students are participating in those opportunities. This dedication to multicultural opportunities was reinforced in several meetings during the visit.

UNC has made a significant commitment to research and anticipates the institution will meet the requirements of a Carnegie R2 classification next year. It was noted in the Institutional Planning session that UNC was funding research and scholarship internally while not including those funds in

the overall research funding reporting; when these data are included UNC anticipates meeting the R2 threshold. The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs has seen a growth in FTE in both compliance and in the hiring of a new Director of Research Development to coordinate opportunities for campus researchers. The team heard numerous examples of how students are participating in research at the graduate and undergraduate level, and UNC supports a spring showcase for student research and creative scholarship.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.
3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.
4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
5. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

UNC has the faculty and staff resources needed to provide high-quality programs and student services. The faculty comprise 45% of UNC's employees with 13% identifying as racial or ethnic minorities and 53% identifying as women. It is referenced that there is a greater diversity among staff. The team heard from stakeholders that there are mechanisms in place to ensure a diverse pool of candidates during the hiring process; position postings and job descriptions are reviewed intentionally in regard to preferred qualifications, postings are placed in a broad array of locations, and hiring committee members take implicit bias training. There was a decline in faculty numbers due to attrition, but there has been a recent replacement of 32 vacancies; leadership reinforced that the faculty to student ratio of 14 to 1 is a key consideration when faculty positions are requested through the new position request process.

There are sufficient faculty at UNC to carry out the teaching, service, and research needs of the institution. Faculty are involved in curriculum and assessment committees, serve as mentors and advisors for students, and contribute to the governance of UNC. In the open criteria sessions faculty discussed their processes for curricular development, assessment, and program review. Learning outcomes for cross-listed courses are analyzed by course with additional outcomes required of the graduate course. Historically, UNC has used Digital Measures to track faculty qualifications though

they have started placing faculty qualifications in Banner to better facilitate the tracking process; required qualifications are the same regardless of whether the faculty member is part-time, full-time, adjunct, or teaching dual credit. If a faculty member is credentialed based on tested experience, letters are retained on file in the dean's office.

There are ample opportunities for faculty and staff to receive professional development and remain current in their respective fields. In the open forum the team was provided with many examples of these opportunities to include workshops provided by the CETL (effective online teaching, decolonizing the curriculum, culturally responsive teaching), workshops provided by instructional design staff associated with Canvas, the assessment symposium, 80 hours of professional advising training, DEI trainings and workshops, and conference attendance as unit budgets allow. In addition, UNC provides faculty and staff with an opportunity to participate in a tuition remission program. Finally, UNC has an annual sabbatical process that can support up to 30 faculty each year.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

UNC provides student support services consistent with an institution of its size and scope. UNC has recently achieved designation as an HSI, its undergraduate population is roughly 42% first generation, and 29% low income. Given the mission and student demographics, UNC has placement and support services designed to assist student success. UNC uses placement tests for math and English, uses the EAB Navigate early alert system, has an Intensive English Program for English language learners, and a Success at UNC course for students placed on probation. UNC has nine cultural and resource centers to serve various student populations (e.g., Cesar Chavez Cultural Center, Disability Resource Center, Marcus Garvey Cultural Center, Veterans Center) and students mentioned they are provided opportunities to participate in multicultural events, study abroad, and undergraduate research, and they can also attend a variety of performing arts events. Academic support services include tutoring, supplemental instruction, peer mentoring, success coaches, and the Bears First program. A member of Student Government Association also mentioned their project to purchase a Quizlet license to further support students in their academic success. Students have access to a fitness center, two dining halls with additional food vending opportunities around campus, a shuttle to get them across campus, and significant green space.

As reported in the Assurance Argument and reinforced in on-campus meetings, professional advisors are located in academic success centers in each college and school. At risk students and those who have not declared a major are advised in SOAR, housed in the Office of Student Academic Success. Depending on the college or school, students may also have access to success coaches and/or peer mentors.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

## Rationale

UNC provides a quality education and has the resources and infrastructure required to support the students it serves. The strategic plan, *Rowing not Drifting, 2030,* provides a vision for an institution that puts "students first," and the faculty profile and student support services provided reflect that vision. It is evident that students have opportunities to participate in co-curricular high impact practices and events sponsored by student life. UNC provides students with nine support centers, TRIO programs, SOAR, student mentors, career development support, tutoring, supplemental instruction, advising, and numerous other programs as part of a robust student support infrastructure to meet retention and persistence efforts outlined in the strategic enrollment plan. In addition, faculty and staff are supported in maintaining currency in their field through professional development, tuition remission, and sabbaticals. UNC has demonstrated that "students first" and a quality education are integral to its operations.

# 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

# 4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

Evidence provided in the Assurance Argument and the addendum demonstrate how the UNC uses assessment results for improvement of student learning. UNC has a comprehensive program review process that covers academic programs, academic support programs, and student affairs programs. In 2022, UNC's Office of Assessment and the Assessment Council engaged in the development of a new program review model for non-accredited programs. In the new process, UNC maintains a five- to six-year program review schedule for all programs, with an annual health check process and a mid-cycle report to the Assessment Council to ensure that programs stay on track with the review process. Moreover, beginning in 2024-2025 academic year, the Assessment Council will review assessment plans and results as part of the comprehensive program review of non-accredited programs. This process was affirmed during our meeting with the university assessment team.

There is solid evidence to indicate that UNC has a process to evaluate all credit leading to a degree. UNC's Office of the Registrar implements course transfer policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts from institutions that maintain accreditation from U.S. Department of Education recognized accreditors. Meeting minutes demonstrate that faculty members regularly oversee the process leading to the awarding of credit.

UNC manages course pre-requisites, as well. Any required course prerequisites are identified during the curriculum approval process, which is overseen by the college curriculum committees, affirmed during the Criterion 3 and 4 open forum session. Banner, the student information system, is used to enforce the structure of the course prerequisites as reflected in the approved course proposals.

UNC sets qualifications and expectations for instructors teaching in the dual enrollment program. These instructors are considered adjunct faculty and must hold a master's degree or equivalent in the appropriate discipline. Although UNC has an effective faculty performance evaluation process, it varies between units and relies on various metrics, including teaching evaluation, peer review, and workload. This was affirmed on campus during the Criterion 3 and 4 open forum session.

All UNC degree programs in fields requiring certification or licensure accreditation maintain accreditation with the appropriate professional associations. This information is posted on the university website and in the catalogs.

UNC maintains a deep connection with its alumni through various venues, including an annual alumni survey that collects information about alumni success. Recent survey results (2023-2024) demonstrated that 84% of undergraduate degree recipients reported being employed and/or in graduate school within one year of graduation. Moreover, 78% of undergraduate alumni reported that their UNC education prepared them well for their careers. Extensive discussion during our meeting with the UNC's Board Chair and student affairs leadership team demonstrates that this success is attributed to a campus-wide career readiness initiative that started in 2019. Additionally, UNC has developed a publicly available Alumni Employment Dashboard to help students pick careers in a high-demand industry.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

UNC has provided evidence that the program assessment process for achievement of program learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings is completed systematically and sustainably. There was discussion in the assessment meeting and open forum that some programs, such as the MA in Applied Statistics & Research Methods, MA in History, BA in Geography, GIS, & Sustainability, and BA in Philosophy, Assault Survivors Advocacy Program and Student Conduct and Accountability are early in the process of collecting assessment data under the new combined program review and assessment process. Other programs, such as the Teacher Education Program, go above and beyond expectations and drill down to assess individual students' performance, identifying those at risk early in the process. In addition, the Liberal Arts Core general education program is also assessed annually via a new process utilizing rubrics within Canvas.

UNC is committed to assessment and program review processes that improve student learning and drive curriculum revisions and pedagogical innovations. For example, the Physics program enhanced students' communication skills by incorporating more group work and interactive learning, while Economics has used data on DFW rates and equity gaps to implement continuous assessments. Cocurricular programs also apply assessment data to enhance services and address barriers, such as the Office of Health Promotion's UNC Flourish campaign, which used mental health data to inform its strategic plan.

Since 2013, UNC's Assessment Council has funded $150,000 in mini-grants to support projects focused on improving student learning. These grants have been used for program-level assessments, curriculum development, and understanding the impact of course modalities. Results are shared at UNC's annual Teaching and Assessment Symposium. Institutionally, UNC uses equity and graduation dashboards to guide faculty in developing an inclusive teaching environment and adopting the use of Canvas in all courses regardless of modality.

There is solid evidence that demonstrates UNC has taken multiple steps to streamline the data collection process using the Canvas system and has created a culture of assessment on campus via the

work and support of a new Director of Assessment. Moreover, UNC's Assessment Council has also worked to promote participation of faculty and staff in the assessment effort by holding program assessment workshops and one-on-one assessment consultations, creating an on-demand video series on assessment, developing a Course Assessment Toolkit, and maintaining a webinar assessment library and searchable web-based repository of assessment resources. UNC is encouraged to continue its program assessment and continuous improvement efforts.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious, attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

UNC has set clear, achievable goals for student retention, persistence, and graduation rates, aligned with its mission, student demographics, and academic programs. According to UNC's strategic plan, the university aims to reach an 80% fall-to-fall retention rate, a 45% 4-year graduation rate, and a 60% 6-year graduation rate by 2030. Progress towards these goals is closely monitored through a publicly accessible dashboard on the university's website. Over the past three years, UNC has recorded its highest retention and persistence rates, achieving a 75.8% fall-to-fall retention rate and an 85% persistence rate. Conversations throughout the campus visit indicated high energy among faculty and staff toward achieving the 2030 retention and graduation rates goals.

Since the 2015 Comprehensive HLC Evaluation, UNC has focused on enhancing its data capabilities. In 2019, the university began developing data dashboards, and by 2020-2021, it reorganized its data structure by creating the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness and restructuring its data department into the Office of Business Intelligence and Data Engineering. This restructuring and new staff hires have significantly improved UNC's data collection and analysis capabilities. Since implementation, the dashboards have evolved to offer insights into disaggregated data views by degree level, college, and academic unit. In addition, alumni employment outcomes are collected via surveys like the annual alumni survey and other sources (direct communications with alumni, LinkedIn information, etc.). These combined data efforts support program review and inform actions for improving student outcomes and equity.

UNC is committed to student success through its Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan, which utilizes data on student retention, persistence, and graduation to inform strategies aligned with

the university's objectives. The SEM committee analyzes various data, including enrollment, admissions, faculty, and survey data, to guide decision-making. One example of data-driven action is UNC's initiative to expand outreach to the Greeley school district, particularly targeting the local Hispanic population. Additionally, UNC's HLC Quality Improvement Initiative established college-level student success committees, led by associate deans, that use student outcomes data to identify strategies for addressing barriers to success. For instance, the College of Natural and Health Sciences recommended using equity dashboards and provided professional development to support first-year and first-generation students. While the Quality Initiative ended in June 2024, UNC plans to continue these committees as part of its ongoing strategy to improve student outcomes.

UNC follows established best practices for collecting and analyzing student data, guided by the Common Data Set, Colorado's Student Unit Records Data System, and IPEDS. The university uses the integrated Banner system to manage demographic, enrollment, and course-related data, with the registrar overseeing data stewardship and system access. In 2021, UNC formed a Data Governance Steering Committee and a Data Strategy Committee to enhance its data processes, introducing guidelines for sharing student data, survey protocols, and implementing the Faculty Load and Compensation function.

UNC also has strict data protection guidelines, with regular data integrity reports run by the Office of Business Intelligence and Data Engineering. These efforts ensure data accuracy, with specific protocols in place for identifying and correcting errors, as outlined in the registrar's operations manual. Data governance subcommittees continue to improve these processes, including refining data definitions. This was affirmed during the Criterion 3 and 4 open session.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

## Rationale

The University of Northern Colorado ensures the quality of its educational programs through a comprehensive program review process, which includes specialized accreditation and national standards where applicable. Faculty oversee credit transferability, and the university maintains clear policies through the registrar. Graduate success is documented and publicly shared.

UNC fosters a practical assessment culture driven by faculty and staff engagement, professional development, and regular evaluation. Assessment practices guide curricular and program improvements, with ongoing support to ensure faculty have the skills needed for effective assessment. Student learning assessment is integrated into program reviews, promoting continuous improvement.

The university sets clear student success targets and uses data to track progress. UNC has rigorous data quality procedures to ensure reliable and valid data used at the institution, college, and department levels to inform program improvements. Outcomes and actionable data are publicly shared through dashboards to enhance programs and student success.

# 5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

# 5.A - Core Component 5.A

Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

The administrative structures and processes that UNC has put into place are adequate to supporting the institution as it works to fulfill its mission. The governance structure, with a state-authorized Board of Trustees providing oversight and delegating management of the institution to its leadership team, is standard for regional public universities in many states. The structure of the board (seven voting members appointed by the state governor, and two additional members elected by faculty and students) is likewise typical for institutions of this type. The presence of a faculty-elected member on the Board is a particularly good practice, helping to institutionalize the relationship between the Board and the faculty.

Of particular note is the Board Policy Manual, which details policies and procedures both for the Board itself and for important areas of student affairs, personnel, and faculty affairs. The policies and procedures in the Manual are well-organized and clear.

Internally the university has standing shared governance structures to represent faculty, staff, and students, allowing different constituents to engage with the governance of the institution. These include a Classified Staff Council (CSC), Professional & Administrative Staff Council (PASC), Faculty Senate, and a Student Government Association. Some of these structures are stipulated in the Board Manual, which is a sound practice. It was mentioned in the Assurance Argument and reinforced in meetings and open sessions on site that administration attends meetings of the

governance groups to discuss campus updates and answer questions. Feedback is solicited via surveys, open fora, roadshows (held for the development of the strategic enrollment plan), and town halls.

Representatives from these governance bodies are included in many of the university's consultative structures, including the Budget Advisory Group set up in 2023, and the Institutional Planning Group built to coordinate efforts within the university's strategic plan. The Institutional Planning Group is composed of representatives from the councils, senate, and the cabinet. The Faculty Senate Chair is included in the President's Cabinet, which is notable in giving the faculty a voice at the level where many decisions are being made. During the campus visit, representatives of all of these groups indicated that there is a great deal of communication with the central administration, with the President attending CSC and PASC meetings as well as opportunities for all campus constituencies to attend Town Hall meetings. The Faculty Senate also has a pair of committees, the Salary Equity Committee and the Faculty Welfare Committee, which make recommendations on particular budget issues that are taken into consideration as budgets are being built. In building the FY24 budget, faculty advocacy through this structure was instrumental in increasing the allocation towards faculty salary increases, in line with the university's "Enhance and Invest" strategic priority.

UNC gathers a great deal of data, both from its internal data systems (retention, completion, enrollment, etc.) as well as surveys of students (NSSE) and faculty (HERI). Some of these data are incorporated into academic program reviews, enabling adjustments at the program/curriculum level to try to improve student success. High-level dashboards have been built to show progress towards major strategic objectives like retention and graduation rates, while granular student-level data captured in EAB Navigate is used to direct attention towards students who may need assistance. Data provided include information required for federal reporting (IPEDS, Common Data Set, Fact Book, etc.), data for strategic planning (strategic metrics, enrollment and retention, alumni employment, etc.), budget dashboards, and information provided to units for program review. During the visit the team learned that data on space usage led the IT division to develop a program of converting under-utilized computer labs into student lounge spaces, while data on food insecurity from the National College Health Assessment has led the university to begin construction of a food pantry and basic needs hub. UNC has piloted a Student Experience survey, which it is now building into its first-year orientation program, to continue to feed data to Student Success Teams located in each academic college. Faculty input in the form of early alerts is used to direct case managers located in the Student Affairs division where students have social or other needs outside of the academic realm.

Faculty oversight over academic requirements and policies is exercised through the Faculty Senate as well as committees within each academic college and department, using structures that are typical and appropriate for a comprehensive university. These processes are supported by the Office of the Provost and informed by significant amounts of data. Data infrastructure has been and continues to be built out to ensure that departments and colleges have information that is both comparable across the university as well as allowing for the uniqueness of particular programs to be a part of the process. Throughout the campus visit faculty and staff talked extensively about the collaborative culture of the institution, and the extent to which there is a broad agreement on the mission and vision which drives the academic environment.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's resource base supports its educational offerings and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

UNC has systems in place to manage its staffing over time that are adequate and typical for an institution of its size and type. Like many public institutions, UNC put into place a system in which every replacement or new hire must be justified in light of the university's priorities. This system, which ran in FY24, required all hiring requests to be vetted through the Cabinet. The university is currently evaluating whether to continue this additional layer of approval in the current and future years. Systems for vetting, developing, and evaluating faculty and staff are appropriate to maintain a qualified staff and faculty in line with the university's mission and plans. There are extensive faculty and staff development opportunities related to UNC's "Students First" mission, for example around culturally attuned engagement for the Hispanic population, which many employees engage with each year.

UNC has established a fairly detailed set of goals and metrics as part of its *Rowing Not Drifting 2030* strategic plan. These goals on the whole aligned with the "Students First" mission. Even goals that are not obviously directly connected to student success, like the goal of increasing research expenditures and achieving R2 status, are talked about in terms of student involvement in research and improving the student experience. Many of the metric targets (for example, increasing the 4 year graduation rate by 7% and URM 4 year graduation rate by 14%) are ambitious. Plans are still being developed on how to achieve these goals, and most of the actions associated are in the early stages of implementation. The institution has made some significant infrastructure investments, including bringing on EAB Navigate and utilizing Slate for retention-related communications. Further evidence of progress should be available by the time of the next HLC mid-cycle review.

For the purposes of budget development and management, UNC has developed processes (some discussed below) to manage budgets flexibly. Most notably, the institution's fiscal health does not depend on its achievement of all of the enrollment and student success metrics it has set for itself in its strategic plan. These goals were described by numerous stakeholders as important statements of value and direction without a sense of concern over adverse consequences if the exact targets are not

achieved by 2030. This posture enables the institution to be both ambitious in vision and mission and realistic in implementation.

One of UNC's most ambitious plans is the creation of a new College of Osteopathic Medicine. Start-up costs for this project total around $200 million, including $127 million for building construction and equipment, $42 million in escrowed funds (required by the accrediting body), and $31 million in start-up capital to sustain the operation until student enrollment makes the college self-sufficient. Remarkably, all of these funds have been secured from sources outside the university's own budget: $169 million from the State of Colorado for building, equipment, and escrowed funds, and $31 million in operating capital from private donations. The university continues to fund-raise, and it seems clear at this point that they have the financial resources in hand to make this effort successful.

In 2019 UNC received a Met With Concerns in Criterion 5 regarding their operating budget balance. At the time, the university had invested a significant amount of its cash reserves in various projects designed to grow enrollment and revenue. When that growth did not materialize the university was left with a structural budget deficit. Cash reserves were significantly depleted, with a year-end low of a little over $40 million and a mid-year low point less than $25 million – a very small reserve for an institution with a $200 million operating budget. HLC staff analysis of the 2021 Interim Monitoring Report indicated that there should be continued attention to this area.

UNC has successfully managed to gain control of its operating budget balance, resulting in balanced or near-balanced operating budgets in the last five fiscal years (FY20 through FY24). This was achieved through a number of fiscally prudent actions, including:

- Instituting a Shared Administrative Services model in FY20, drafted with the help of Huron Consulting. This shift resulted in a net reduction of roughly 70 staff positions.
- Changes to employee benefits, including increasing employee shares of health care premiums, freezing compensation increases for a few years, and lowering the tuition benefit for dependents of employees.
- Retirement incentives for faculty and the strategic use of attrition to reduce staff expenses further.
- Systemic review of non-personnel expenditures.

When the COVID pandemic hit in early 2020 the university took a number of further steps to contain costs, including travel restrictions, temporary pay decreases for executives, deferring pay increases, and eliminating nonessential expenses. These efforts, coupled with an influx of government support from Federal HEERF funds, resulted in significant operating surpluses in FY20, FY21, and FY22. These were used in large part to rebuild the university's cash reserves, which now stand at a healthier $70 million.

As a result of all of this work, UNC's first post-COVID budget in FY23 showed a modest operating surplus of $2.6 million. The FY24 operating budget slipped back into a very small deficit of $700,000, largely as a result of some unanticipated maintenance issues and challenges in financially modeling a new scholarship structure. The university has incorporated data and analysis from the FY24 scholarship rollout into its FY25 budget projections. Current indications are that the FY25 operating budget will again yield a small surplus of roughly $2 million. Taken collectively, UNC has demonstrated over the last five years that they are successfully living within their means and managing their operating budget appropriately such that their fiscal allocations ensure the achievement of their academic mission.

Budget development at UNC is done through an incremental model, where the previous year's budget provides a starting point on which to build the following year budget. This process starts in early December, with information going out through the Budget Advisory Group, unit meetings, and campus-wide town halls to gather input. Budget development goes through two to three rounds of feedback from constituencies across campus before a final budget is presented to the Board of Trustees in May. Strategic decisions are made at the cabinet level based on strategic priorities and input from across campus. Once the budget is adopted, managing within that budget is the responsibility of the unit Vice Presidents, assisted by Business Operations Managers that are part of the Shared Administrative Services model. This centralized structure produces standardized reports for units across campus and helps each unit maintain spending within appropriate limits, making adjustments as needed over the course of the year in response to enrollment, revenue, and other data.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

## Rating

Met

## Rationale

The processes UNC has put into place for periodic academic program review and the new annual health checks appear very well-designed, with a rich use of data. These processes are new, having been started in 2022, but appear to have been widely embraced across campus by most academic departments. Programs write a self-study that includes a standardized set of metrics around enrollment, credit production, cost, and learning outcomes. The institution has been working to link this process to curriculum development, so that proposals for new programs and program revisions follow a similar format and data structure. The five-year review process is staged by year, allowing programs to spend time developing learning outcomes, refining rubrics for those outcomes and locating assessment within their curriculum, and then gathering data. Programs that have external accreditation, like teacher education and health professions, are appropriately aligned with their required professional standards.

Planning processes for UNC involve broad input from across the campus, with consistent representation from students, faculty, and staff. Conversations throughout the campus visit indicated a great deal of awareness and engagement from constituencies across campus. Many faculty and staff work across unit boundaries on a variety of cross-functional committees and working groups, including the Institutional Planning Group, the Budget Advisory Committee, and the Strategic Enrollment Plan Committee.

UNC fosters significant engagement with external constituencies as well. Extensive collaboration with external partners has been part of the College of Osteopathic Medicine effort, including conversations with most of the health systems and hospitals in Colorado. The university's president is deeply connected with economic development conversations in Greeley, and the university partners

with other local organizations on joint projects to improve the life of the community and the campus. For example, UNC is standing up a new basic needs resource hub on campus in partnership with the City of Greeley. The university has also engaged in an aggressive effort to bring their alumni back onto campus as part of professional development courses, required in many majors, to connect them with current students. UNC also uses alumni as mentors in career readiness programs.

UNC is in the midst of developing and implementing a new Strategic Enrollment Plan, which will demonstrate its capacity for planning across a range of different enrollment scenarios. Past multi-year planning scenarios presented to the Board in 2021 contained only flat or growing enrollment models, although enrollment continued to decline for another three years after that. The current Strategic Enrollment Plan has built in a greater level of flexibility and agility, and the university is looking extensively at its data on sub-populations to identify where there are opportunities to both grow new student enrollment and to retain current students. Student retention is a significant part of UNC's overall strategic enrollment approach, evidenced by investments in systems (EAB Navigate, Slate) as well as deployment of advisors and success coaches for at-risk students and other initiatives outlined throughout the Assurance Argument and in campus visit discussions. These efforts have shown results in recent years in boosting the university's retention rate, which in turn increases overall enrollment.

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# 5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

## Rationale

UNC has done a great deal of work in recent years to improve its governance, data, and strategic planning infrastructure to ensure that resources and planning are aligned with the university's mission, informed by data, and responsive to changing conditions. The process of creating and implementing the *Rowing Not Drifting 2030* strategic plan has led the university to develop many cross-functional teams and groups, to engage in extensive communication with constituencies across campus that is widely described as transparent, and to build a culture of collaboration informed by data and driven by a shared sense of mission. Significant efforts have been made to align resources with goals and to make sure that those resources are carefully managed so the university is living within its means. Goals and plans that align with the strategic plan and which require additional resources, like the UNC Empower Center and the new College of Osteopathic Medicine, have been met with impressive fund-raising from both state and private sources. Success in these and other areas, such as data-informed improvements in student retention, have strengthened the university's structures and processes for planning and implementing, and have engendered significant buy-in across campus constituencies.

# FC - Federal Compliance

## Rating

Met

## Federal Compliance Filing Form

- FedCompFiling_UNCO_2024

## Rationale

Federal Compliance Rationale Template
Effective September 1, 2024–August 31, 2025

**Instructions:** When an evaluation that includes a Federal Compliance Review is released to the peer review team in the Assurance System, copy and paste the text below into the Rationale section of the Federal Compliance tab.

### 1. ASSIGNMENT OF CREDITS, PROGRAM LENGTH AND TUITION

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

**Rationale:** Definitions for a credit hour and contact hour at both the undergraduate and graduate level at UNC conforms with generally accepted Carnegie definitions and HLC expectations. Scheduling of classes at UNC is overseen by assigned schedulers who follow these prescriptions considering differences in semester lengths and weekly meetings for courses that differ also in the number of credit or contact hours assigned to them. The schedulers are well informed of the rules and policies of the university with respect to credit hour definitions. The Registrar regularly runs integrity checks, reports that can be generated within the Banner system, to ascertain all variances that may have occurred mistakenly through the scheduling system.

The syllabi of 31 course sections were examined focusing on online and short-term iterations of standing courses. This examination verified that online, hybrid, and compressed courses are equivalent in terms of work expectations and student learning outcomes to traditional face to face offerings at UNC.

### 2. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR HANDLING STUDENT COMPLAINTS

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

**Rationale:** The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) handles student complaints receiving such complaints in writing from students and managing the disposition of the complaint. The process is well documented in policy and published on the webpages for the OEIC, Office of Institutional Equity & Compliance at UNC (unco.edu). UNC uses Maxient to record all aspects of the complaint process. This software can be used to review complaints and discern if there is a trend that may need further follow up.

### 3. PUBLICATION OF TRANSFER POLICIES

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

**Rationale:** Credit transfer policies at UNC are documented and published within its online catalogs for both undergraduate and graduate studies. Earned college credit eligible for transfer must come from a regionally accredited institution. Credit for a variety of prior learning experiences such as CLEP and Advanced Placement examination is also available to students upon application. A maximum of 90 credits may be transferred into an undergraduate program of study and at least 50% of a graduate program must be completed at UNC.

### 4. PRACTICES FOR VERIFICATION OF STUDENT IDENTITY

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

**Rationale:** UNC follows the typical academic protocol of issuing unique student ID numbers, a secure login for university-based email, Canvas, and the UNC portal that is password protected. Students must create and maintain password integrity to gain access to university resources. Students are directed to not share their login credentials with anyone. UNC has established requirements and guidance for passwords that reflect best practice in cybersecurity. In addition, UNC uses Microsoft Multi-factor Authentication and provides information for students about installing the software to protect their accounts. The Student Code of Conduct prohibits acts of dishonesty including misuse of student identity information.

Honorlock is UNC's online proctoring solution and was chosen considering student privacy protections. Use of Honorlock is voluntary by online university instructors.

### 5. PROTECTION OF STUDENT PRIVACY

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

**Rationale:** Student data at UNC is maintained in a Banner database system that the registrar is tasked with ultimate oversight and authorization of access for entering and retrieving student data. Access permission to the student data is closely monitored. As part of UNC's strategic plan, a Data Governance Steering Committee and Data Strategy Committee were established to further enhance data collection, analysis, and security processes.

Student privacy concerns as defined under FERPA and HIPAA are addressed by university policy and

the training of all employees. In addition, UNC has established processes to ensure that third-party vendors maintain appropriate data security protocols, and all purchases of software and technology are subject to a compliance review.

### 6. PUBLICATION OF STUDENT OUTCOME DATA

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

**Rationale:** UNC provides public access and dissemination of student outcome data online on its Data Resources Page (https://www.unco.edu/data/); through its Graduation and Retention Public Dashboard (https://www.unco.edu/data/achievement-public.aspx); and an Alumni Outcomes Dashboard (https://www.unco.edu/bears-go-big/). These publicly available websites address the broad variety of its student populations and programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The information includes retention, completion, required state licensure exam pass data, and data about the institution's students after transfer or graduation. The interactive sites make it possible to drill down to specific information that is helpful to prospective students and others to evaluate pertinent UNC metrics.

### 7. STANDING WITH STATE AND OTHER ACCREDITORS

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

**Rationale:** UNC is in good standing with the Colorado Department of Higher Education. UNC does not have a physical presence in any other state. The institution participates in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement and follows federal state authorization laws and regulations. UNC is in good standing with all accreditors it has dealings with including:

- Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics
- American Psychological Association
- Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International
- CAATE: Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education
- Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education
- Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
- Commission on English Language Program Accreditation
- Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs
- Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology
- Council on Education for Public Health
- International Association of Counseling Services
- National Association of School Psychologists
- National Association of Schools of Music
- National Association of Schools of Theatre

There are no pending or final actions associated with these accreditations that are published online (https://www.unco.edu/accreditation/) and available in the UNC Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs.

## 8. RECRUITING, ADMISSIONS AND RELATED ENROLLMENT PRACTICES

**Conclusion** (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

**Rationale:** Members of the Admissions department core leadership team (director, associate directors) conduct internal training during orientation of new employees, annually, and ongoing as needed regarding student recruitment. The University has a published recruitment code of conduct that applies to all recruiters acting on behalf of the university, including third-party contractors. An annual All-Staff Retreat is conducted that is attended by all members of the admissions team to facilitate and receive training, typically 2 full days.

### APPENDIX A: TITLE IV PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Complete this section **only if** the institution has submitted an Appendix A. Review any negative actions taken against the institution since HLC's last Federal Compliance review and identify any implications for the institution's current compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or other HLC requirements. Provide a detailed rationale for any Core Components identified as Met with Concerns or Not Met.

**Rationale:**

### MANDATORY REPORTING: FRAUD, ABUSE OR FAILING TO MEET TITLE IV RESPONSIBILITIES

Federal regulations require HLC to notify the U.S. Department of Education related to the following item. Do not skip this section.

In the course of the peer review team's evaluation of this institution, have the reviewers encountered any reason to believe that (i) the institution is failing to meet its Title IV, Higher Education Act program responsibilities (if the institution participates in Title IV, HEA programs) or (ii) that the institution may be engaged in fraud or abuse?

**Answer** (Choose one response and delete the other)**:**

No

**Rationale** (If the team responded "Yes," explain the reasons for concern in detail. Otherwise, leave this section blank.)**:**

## Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# Review Dashboard

| Number | Title | Rating |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Mission | |
| 1.A | Core Component 1.A | Met |
| 1.B | Core Component 1.B | Met |
| 1.C | Core Component 1.C | Met |
| 1.S | Criterion 1 - Summary | |
| 2 | Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct | |
| 2.A | Core Component 2.A | Met |
| 2.B | Core Component 2.B | Met |
| 2.C | Core Component 2.C | Met |
| 2.D | Core Component 2.D | Met |
| 2.E | Core Component 2.E | Met |
| 2.S | Criterion 2 - Summary | |
| 3 | Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support | |
| 3.A | Core Component 3.A | Met |
| 3.B | Core Component 3.B | Met |
| 3.C | Core Component 3.C | Met |
| 3.D | Core Component 3.D | Met |
| 3.S | Criterion 3 - Summary | |
| 4 | Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement | |
| 4.A | Core Component 4.A | Met |
| 4.B | Core Component 4.B | Met |
| 4.C | Core Component 4.C | Met |
| 4.S | Criterion 4 - Summary | |
| 5 | Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning | |
| 5.A | Core Component 5.A | Met |
| 5.B | Core Component 5.B | Met |
| 5.C | Core Component 5.C | Met |
| 5.S | Criterion 5 - Summary | |
| FC | Federal Compliance | Met |

# Review Summary

## Conclusion

UNC has experienced significant change since 2018. There is new, experienced senior leadership within the leadership team, a strong strategic plan with significant campus buy-in and a sense of ownership, and a holistic strategic enrollment management plan that sets goals and includes tactics that honor the institution's mission and student composition. The collegiality of the faculty and staff is readily apparent, as is the collaborative nature of the president's cabinet and the Institutional Planning and Strategic Enrollment Plan committees. In addition, the president's commitment to open, engaging, effective communication has been integral to creating the support for and ownership of the strategic plan and the culture they are building associated with the plan. UNC embodies a "student first" mission expressed in the positive environment observed while on campus.

UNC has recently dealt with financial constraints which have resulted in budget cuts, a new position request process, and reallocation of resources. Through this challenge, UNC has been intentional and deliberate about its improvement efforts keeping the focus on the strategic plan and student success. This was evident in the external funding garnered for the College of Osteopathic Medicine, the increased support for the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, and the recent designation as an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). The team encourages the institution's improvement efforts and commitment to retention, persistence, and continuous improvement goals.

Finally, the team recognizes and encourages the significant commitment to DEI efforts as evidenced by student support centers and activities, DEI programming, faculty and staff professional development, and the HSI designation. This strength for UNC integrates well with strategic planning, retention goals, and the student first mission.

Given that UNC has a strong strategic plan with demonstrated commitment to its implementation, a strong financial position, a commitment to student success, and a strong data and assessment infrastructure, it is clear that UNC should be eligible to choose either the Open or Standard Pathway for accreditation.

## Overall Recommendations

**Criteria For Accreditation**
Met

**Sanctions Recommendation**
No Sanction

**Pathways Recommendation**
Eligible to choose

**Federal Compliance**
Met

*No Interim Monitoring Recommended.*

# INTERNAL

## Institutional Status and Requirements (ISR) Worksheet

Higher Learning Commission

## Review Details

**Institution:** University of Northern Colorado, Colorado

**Type of Review:** Open Pathway - Comprehensive Evaluation Visit

**Description:**

**Review Dates:** 10/21/2024 - 10/22/2024

☐ No Change in Institutional Status and Requirements

## Accreditation Status

**Status:** Accredited

✓ No Change
☐ Recommended Change:

**Degrees Awarded:** Associates, Bachelors, Doctoral, Masters, Specialist

✓ No Change
☐ Recommended Change:

**Reaffirmation of Accreditation:**

Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2014 - 2015
Year of Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2024 - 2025

☐ No Change
✓ Recommended Change: 2034-2035

## Accreditation Stipulations

**General:**

The institution is approved at the following program level(s): Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, Specialist, Doctoral

The institution is not approved at the following program level(s): None

The institution is limited to offer the following program(s), within the approved program levels listed above: Associate of Arts and Associate of General Studies.

✓ No Change
☐ Recommended Change:

## Additional Locations:

Prior HLC approval required.

✓ No Change
☐ Recommended Change:

## Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs:

Approved for distance education courses and programs. Approval for correspondence education is limited to courses.

✓ No Change
☐ Recommended Change:

## Competency-Based Education:

✓ No Change
☐ Recommended Change:

## Pell-Eligible Prison Education Program:

✓ No Change
☐ Recommended Change:

# Accreditation Events

**Pathway for Reaffirmation of Accreditation:** Open Pathway

☐ No Change
✓ Recommended Change: eligible to choose

**Upcoming Reviews:**

No Upcoming Reviews

✓ No Change
☐ Recommended Change:

**Upcoming Branch Campus or Additional Location Reviews:**

No Upcoming Reviews

✓ No Change
☐ Recommended Change:

## Monitoring

**Upcoming Monitoring Reviews:**

No Upcoming Reviews

✓ No Change
☐ Recommended Change:

## Institutional Data

**Academic Programs Offered:**

| Undergraduate Programs | | |
|---|---|---|
| Associate Degrees: | 2 | ✓ No Change<br>☐ Recommended Change: |
| Baccalaureate Degrees: | 55 | ✓ No Change<br>☐ Recommended Change: |
| **Graduate Programs** | | |
| Master's Degrees: | 43 | ✓ No Change<br>☐ Recommended Change: |
| Specialist Degrees: | 2 | ✓ No Change<br>☐ Recommended Change: |

| Doctoral Degrees: | 20 | ✓ No Change <br> ☐ Recommended Change: |
|---|---|---|
| **Certificate Programs** | | |
| Certificates: | 32 | ✓ No Change <br> ☐ Recommended Change: |

## Contractual Arrangements:

No Contractual Arrangements

✓ No Change
☐ Recommended Change:

## Off-Campus Activities

### Branch Campuses:

No Branch Campuses

✓ No Change
☐ Recommended Change:

## Additional Locations:

UNC Denver Center at Lowry, 1059 Alton Way, Bldg 758, Denver, Colorado 80230 United States

UNC Loveland Center at Centerra, 2915 Rocky Mountain Avenue, Loveland, Colorado 80538 United States

Windsor High School, 1100 Main Street, Windsor, Colorado 80550 United States

✓ No Change
☐ Recommended Change: