

INSTITUTION: FORT LEWIS COLLEGE

This analysis paraphrases or provides excerpts from an institution's role and mission document on market niche; role and mission; and strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. Page references to the final role and mission document are included. Each analysis section is followed by standard questions prepared by CCHE staff as a context for the Blue Ribbon Role and Mission discussion.

MARKET NICHE

Fort Lewis College continues to offer accessibility to higher education across the region, the State of Colorado and the nation. Enrollment, as described earlier in this document, mirrors target market niches. The College has identified its student market in three areas: primary, secondary, and tertiary. The State of Colorado is the primary market. The local region is a special sub-set of the State. Current data indicate that Colorado high school and community college enrollments are on the upswing and projected to increase each year for the next five years. Fort Lewis College has made a commitment to visit every high school in Colorado on a three-year rotation basis. (p. 32)

Is it unique? No

Has it changed? No

How will it provide increased access to Colorado residents or the market that is tied to this institution's role and mission?

ROLE & MISSION

Current Statutory R&M

23-52-102 Fort Lewis College, which shall be a general baccalaureate institution with moderately selective admission standards. Fort Lewis shall offer selected undergraduate professional programs.

23-52-101 The Fort Lewis College had its beginnings on land originally set aside by the federal government as an Indian school; that a sizeable Indian population on the campus is desirable; that the state will continue and improve the outstanding Indian education program now in existence at Fort Lewis College.

Proposed R&M

No change. Fort Lewis College has chosen to pursue its mission via its historic role as an undergraduate, public, four-year liberal arts college. Because of the liberal arts focus, we require common general education courses, which include the fine arts, humanities, social sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences in addition to more specialized junior and senior courses offered through the various majors.

Institution Vision statement:

The mission of Fort Lewis College is to open minds and kindle thought and action by instilling in students knowledge, a desire to acquire knowledge, the tools for doing so, and an understanding of how knowledge can be put to use for a common good. The experiences students have here should help them learn to live wisely and should make a significant difference in their futures by enabling them to pursue their own educational goals throughout their lives. They should be able to demonstrate thoughtful scholarship in pursuing and weighing knowledge. They should be able to communicate and cooperate with others. The College should also play an active role in the community and the region as a multifaceted learning resource.

*Fort Lewis College has chosen to pursue its mission via its historic role as an **undergraduate, public, four-year liberal arts college**. Because of the liberal arts focus, we require common general education courses, which include the fine arts, humanities, social sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences in addition to more specialized junior and senior courses offered through the various majors. Our curriculum is designed both to ensure that students understand the values and assumptions implicit in their major fields of study and to prepare them for a rapidly changing world.*

*It is essential to Fort Lewis College's mission that we contribute to the cultural diversity and economic development of the Four Corners region. To play an active role in the community, state, and region, we must ensure that our programs fulfill the needs of our student population and the **residents of our area**. Our ethnic and regional heritage must be reflected in the make-up of our student body, in our special programs, **and in our curriculum**. Because of terms established in the original charter of the College, ...the College will continue to enhance **educational opportunities for other minority groups, especially those originating in the Southwest**.*

Is the institutional perspective consistent with the statutory role and mission?

Clear commitment to a liberal arts role and mission with strong general education tied to its historic foundation (p.) and serving the southwest region (i.e., Four Corners and Colorado).

What parts of the role and mission differentiate this institution from other Colorado public institutions of higher education?

Role in serving Native Americans

Does the institution suggest a statutory change?

No

How is it built on the institution's strengths?

What other R&M statements are contained in the proposal but not captured in the role and mission statement? (pp. 4-5)

Various indicators suggest there may be a need for more graduate-level education in Southwest Colorado. There is the possibility that Fort Lewis College might offer graduate work as a way of meeting that need. However, the State Board of Agriculture has not yet taken action to approve the offering of graduate courses or programs at Fort Lewis College.

At this point, no significant changes are anticipated in the mission of the College. The major challenge of the institution will be to continue strengthening its arts and sciences core, professional programs, and services to its students and the larger community that it serves.

STRENGTHS

1. **TEACHING & LEARNING.** *A combination of focus on student learning and a faculty dedicated to teaching with an institutional commitment to providing access to a quality education for students who might otherwise not have such an opportunity.*
2. **ACCESS** *College is committed to providing educational opportunities for those who might not otherwise have those opportunities.*

3. **CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT & AMBIANCE** Strong residential orientation (35% of students live on campus); *New buildings and landscaping. One of the prettiest campuses in the West; Outdoor recreational opportunities; Aggressive student services, from Career Advising to outdoor pursuits, counseling; Technology support. Fort Lewis College has been ranked number 10 among Baccalaureate II Colleges in a recent "Most Wired Campuses" ranking by Yahoo; Strong community support.*

WEAKNESS (excluding faculty salaries and financial shortfalls)

Academic preparedness of new freshmen and poor retention

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES (p. 9)

1. *Enrollment Growth*
2. *Expanded Service to the Region*
3. *Expanded Collaboration with CSU and USC*
4. *International Education and International Students*
5. *Research Opportunities (e.g., Southwest Center) The growth and diversification of the area has increased the opportunities for applied research. Likewise, the expansion of the Center of Southwest Studies is providing more opportunities and support for research in the region.*
6. *Cooperation with Regional Schools*

ADMISSION STANDARDS

Fort Lewis College admits all students who have an Index score of 80 or higher. Some students below that index (i.e., window students) are also admitted, in an effort to maximize access. On average, 17.6% of freshmen acceptances are in the Window and 20.7% of freshmen enrollments are among students in the Window. The percentage of the enrolled freshmen class in the Window is currently at 21%,(p 10)

What number of freshmen applicants meets the current admission index?

2,154

If the window was decreased to 10% or less how would this impact freshmen enrollment?

Fort Lewis potential could enroll 89 fewer freshmen, those with an index below 75. However, like all moderately selective institutions, FLC may gain an equal or greater

Fort Lewis College
Role and Mission Discussion: November 16, 2001
Prepared: 12/27/2001

number of enrolled freshmen if the window of the highly selective universities decreases.

If admission standards were waived for the Native American applicants, how would this impact freshmen enrollment?