

## **INSTITUTION: METROPOLITAN STATE COLLEGE AT DENVER**

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 (pp. 135-138)**

*Metro State was established as a modified-open-admissions, urban, baccalaureate institution to serve the people of the six-county greater Denver metropolitan area.*

*The college's statutorily imposed modified-open admissions selection process allows anyone 20 years of age or older with a high school diploma or GED to enroll. Students under 20 years of age are reviewed under a liberal admissions policy that allows high school students access to Metro State with a Colorado Commission Of Higher Education-imposed index of 76 or greater.*

*With a fall 2001 enrollment at census of 18,432 students, Metro State is Colorado's third largest higher education institution. The college's 4,220 students of color represent 23% of its student population. The average age of Metro State's students is 26.2 years, and about 25% of the student body is 30 years of age or older, underscoring the college's commitment to non-traditional-aged students.*

Metro State will continue to draw the vast majority of its students (traditional high school students, transfer students from community colleges and other four-year institutions, and adult learners) from the six-county Denver metropolitan area. Because of the college's unique academic programs and its affordability, a secondary market is emerging that includes Larimer, El Paso, Park, and other nearby counties. Increasingly, Metro State also can be expected to attract students throughout Colorado, who choose to pursue a post-secondary education via the college's online programs. For example, Metro State has the only undergraduate programs in Colorado in Criminal Justice and Criminology and in Hospitality, Meeting and Travel Administration.

**Has Metro's market niche changed during recent years?**

No

**Is its niche unique?**

As one of the three urban institutions in the state.

**How will this niche provide increased access to Colorado residents or the market**

**that is directly related to statutory role and mission?**

By expanding its recruitment to El Paso, Larimer and Douglas Counties, Metro disconnects from its role as a urban institution serving the Denver area. Denver is the access point for many low income adult students and high school students who do not traditionally consider enrolling in college.

Note: Criminology and Hospitality are not unique degree programs.

---

**ROLE & MISSION**

Current Statutory R&M:

*C.R.S. 23-54-101 “The Metropolitan State College of Denver is a comprehensive, baccalaureate institution with modified open admission standards except that nontraditional students, as defined by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education after consultation with the Board of Trustees of the State Colleges in Colorado, who are at least twenty years of age shall only have an admission requirement of a high school diploma, a GED high school equivalency certificate, or the equivalent thereof. Metropolitan State College of Denver shall offer a variety of liberal arts and science, technical, and education programs. The college may offer a limited number of professional programs. Metropolitan State College shall offer no graduate programs. (C.R.S.)*

Metro State’s role and mission is: (p. 4)

*The Metropolitan State College of Denver is a comprehensive, baccalaureate degree-granting urban college that offers arts and science, professional and business courses and programs to a diverse student population. Excellence in teaching and learning is The Metropolitan State College of Denver’s primary objective.*

Proposed R&M:

*Importantly, Metro State **does not seek** a change in its statutory requirement to be a modified open admissions institution, or in its role and mission, or in its Carnegie classification as outcomes of the Governor’s Blue Ribbon Panel on Higher Education. Metro State’s Carnegie classification is: “Baccalaureate Colleges—General”.*

### Institutional Mission

*The mission of The Metropolitan State College of Denver is to provide a high-quality, accessible, and enriching education that prepares students for successful careers, post-graduate education, and lifelong learning in a multi-cultural, global, and technological society. The College fulfills its mission by working in partnership with the community at large and by fostering an atmosphere of scholarly inquiry, creative activity, and mutual respect within a diverse campus community.*

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

No.

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

Admission standard as modified open

**How is the role and mission built on the institution's strengths?**

The current statutory role and mission connotes a diverse student population and urban partnerships – two of the identified strengths.

**What other R&M statements are contained in the proposal but not captured in the role and mission statement?**

### **INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHS** (p. 14)

But from the perspective of critical challenges facing Colorado public higher education today, the strengths that will be highlighted for this segment of the report to the Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel are *diversity, student-centered environment, and urban partnerships*.

### **WEAKNESS** (excluding faculty salaries and financial shortfalls) (p. 23)

*State's higher education funding mechanism...is the chief weakness with which the college must grapple is fulfilling its challenging role and mission with far fewer resources that would be expected at an institution the size of Metro State.*

## **MARKET OPPORTUNITIES (pp. 25-26)**

*In Metro State's service area, population growth has been skyrocketing at the same time that financial constraints are putting a residential university experience out of reach of more and more traditional-aged students. In the past, those students would have left home for their baccalaureate degree. Today, their ticket to a higher education is to live at home and to work part- or full-time while going to school. This mirrors the need and experience of non-traditional students for whom Metro State long has been—and increasingly will be—a magnet. Nor should the educational and retraining needs of adult learners be overlooked. They may have a degree but must upgrade their skills and knowledge to remain competitive.*

*For Metro State, this means that the college's unique urban role and mission combined with its commitment to provide a high-quality, accessible, affordable post-secondary education will become even more important. Increasingly, technology will be a key to fulfilling this commitment. That is why technology is one of the five components of Metro State's College Agenda that guides college-wide planning.*

*In the past five years, Metro State has become a leader in online distance education, in otherwise infusing technology into the curriculum, and in providing access to registration, financial aid, and myriad other student services via the worldwide web.*

## **ADMISSION STANDARDS (p.28)**

*By state statute, Metro State employs a "modified-open" admissions selection process that allows anyone 20 years of age or older with a high school diploma or GED the opportunity to enroll at the college. Students under 20 years of age are reviewed under a liberal admissions policy that allows high school students access to Metro State with a Colorado Commission Of Higher Education-imposed index of 76 or greater.*

*The college does not propose a change in admissions standards.*

**What number of freshmen applicants meets the current admission index?**

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