



COLORADO

Department of
Higher Education

1600 Broadway, Suite 2200

Denver, CO 80202

Meeting	Academic Council July 14, 2026 1:00 – 3:00 pm
Location	Remote ONLY
Call-In Information	View Meeting Recording
Meeting Participants	Provosts and Chief Academic Officers (CAOs) of the public institutions of higher education
Meeting Objectives	Members advise the Department on policy development and implementation, as well as other matters affecting higher education.

AGENDA – NOTES

1. Greetings and Introductions

In attendance: Richard Allen (CU Denver); Helen Caprioglio (CSUP); Pavel Cenkl (WCU); Jerid Counterman (CSUG); Margaret Doell (ASU); Jeremy Hawkins (CMU); Sarah Heath (CCCS); Roze Hentschell (CSU-SYS); Andy Herring (CSM); Mark Kavanaugh (CU Boulder); Mike Lightner (CU-SYS); Kim Miloch (CSU); Tina Parscal (CCCS); Shaun Schafer (MSU Denver); Susan Taylor (UCCS); Rebecca Woulfe (CCCS-FRCC); Christina Carrillo (CDHE); Brad Griffith (CDHE)

2. Approval of June Meeting Notes

[see handout: 2026-06-09 NOTES-AC.pdf]

Notes approved

3. Announcements and Discussion Items

a. Updates from CCHE Advisor Michael Lightner

Dr. Lightner provided an overview of the July CCHE Retreat and business meeting held at Colorado State University last week. Major topics included the Postsecondary Talent Development System Transition Advisory Committee (TAC), federal higher education policy developments, artificial intelligence initiatives, and innovative student success programs. Commissioners discussed federal changes affecting Pell eligibility, workforce credentials, return-on-investment requirements, and stackable credential pathways. An AI panel generated discussion about the possibility of statewide or consortial purchasing agreements for AI technologies to achieve cost efficiencies across Colorado's public

institutions. Commissioners also reviewed several student success initiatives, with particular interest expressed in the Ram Transfer Academy partnership between CSU and Front Range Community College. Dr. Lightner highlighted the considerable economic impact of Colorado's public higher education sector, emphasizing its contribution to the state's economy and the importance of preserving the strength of the higher education system during future policy discussions.

b. Postsecondary Talent Development System Transition Advisory Committee (TAC) updates

Brad provided a comprehensive overview of the TAC, which was established through House Bill 26-1317 to develop recommendations concerning the alignment of higher education and workforce development functions currently housed within CDHE and CDLE. Members were encouraged to follow the TAC website, review meeting materials, attend meetings, and engage with TAC members as appropriate. Brad explained that the TAC includes representatives from higher education institutions, workforce organizations, business leaders, and state agencies. He noted that meetings are occurring approximately every two weeks and that the committee is developing recommendations that will inform future legislation regarding the proposed merger and coordination of state-level postsecondary and workforce development functions. Council members were encouraged to participate in public comment opportunities and remain engaged as the work progresses. Brad indicated that TAC updates will likely remain a standing agenda item for the foreseeable future.

c. **Reduced-Credit Bachelor's Degree faculty survey results (Brad Griffith)**

Brad presented results from a statewide faculty survey on reduced-credit bachelor's degrees conducted in partnership with the Colorado Faculty Advisory Council (CFAC). The survey generated 686 responses and revealed substantial faculty opposition to reduced-credit bachelor's degree models, while also identifying specific concerns and conditions under which such programs might be considered. Respondents emphasized the importance of preserving bachelor-level rigor, maintaining general education requirements, protecting transferability, ensuring workforce recognition, and avoiding student confusion. Faculty expressed concerns about employer understanding of the credential, graduate school implications, advising complexity, and transfer alignment. Participants discussed possible state-level coordination, communication strategies, naming conventions, reporting requirements, pilot programs, and institutional guardrails should Colorado pursue reduced-credit bachelor's degrees in the future. Council members advocated for proactive communication planning and broader statewide coordination of academic program offerings, while also raising questions regarding curricular authority and implementation responsibilities. Brad noted that no legislation currently exists but emphasized the importance of preparing for future

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discussions should the policy direction continue to gain momentum nationally and within Colorado.

d. Transfer initiatives update (Carl Einhaus)

- Higher Education Transfer Audit
- CCHE Transfer Subcommittee
- Review [proposed revisions for CCHE Policy I, Part L: Statewide Transfer and GT Pathways](#)

Brad provided an update on the ongoing work of the CCHE Transfer Subcommittee and implementation efforts related to the statewide transfer audit. The subcommittee remains on track to complete revisions to the GT Pathways and Prior Learning Assessment policies ahead of the October 1 implementation deadline and is expected to conclude its work by the end of September. Brad reviewed the structure of the draft policy revision document and explained how the proposed changes align with the audit's nineteen recommendations and subsequent legal and stakeholder review processes. Members were informed that these revisions are part of a broader Commission effort to conduct a comprehensive review of all CCHE policies over the next 12 to 18 months, with future policy reviews occurring on a recurring five-year cycle.

Discussion focused on several significant proposed policy changes intended to improve consistency and transparency within Colorado's transfer system. Revisions under consideration include clarifying requirements for the transfer of Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreements (STAAs)/Degrees with Designation (DwDs) without requiring additional underlying documentation in specified circumstances, strengthening provisions related to the transfer of electives and foreign university credits, clarifying the application of GT Pathways credit, improving communication expectations regarding transcripts and transfer evaluations, and formalizing guidance regarding military learning credits and their alignment with GT Pathways categories. Additional updates address applied science degrees, dual-mission institutions, Emily Griffith Technical College's authority to award associate degrees, and implementation of the student complaint process established through Senate Bill 24-164. Brad emphasized that while some of the proposed changes may represent a significant shift in practice for institutions, the revisions are intended to balance student mobility, institutional responsibilities, and compliance with statutory and audit requirements.

Council members discussed potential implementation considerations and raised questions regarding institutional impacts. Council members sought clarification regarding the applicability of STAA/DwD transfer requirements for institutions that are not participants in a particular statewide transfer agreement. Additionally, the importance of continued engagement with registrars was emphasized and noted

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concerns related to transfer-credit evaluation practices, underlying documentation requirements, data integrity, and alignment with national transfer standards. Brad responded that registrar representatives have been actively involved throughout the Transfer Subcommittee's work and reaffirmed that additional feedback opportunities will be available through upcoming stakeholder review and public comment processes. Council members were encouraged to review the draft policy revisions in detail and provide feedback as the policies move toward Commission consideration later this year.

e. Mental Health Training for Faculty and Staff

The planned discussion regarding faculty and staff mental health training was postponed due to Carl's absence. Brad indicated that the item originated from a recent convening attended by Carl and that additional information would be shared later. The topic is expected to return as a future agenda item, likely during the August meeting.

f. Institutional check-in (off-record) – Open forum for institutions to share campus updates. *Note: The meeting recording will conclude prior to this discussion.*

4. New, modified, and closed programs

a. New

- Colorado State University
 - Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education
- Metropolitan State University of Denver
 - Undergraduate Certificate in Artificial Intelligence in Business
 - Graduate Certificate in Data-Informed Decision Making for Hospitality and Events
 - Graduate Certificate in Event Fundraising, Sponsorship and Marketing
 - Graduate Certificate in Experience Design and Service Innovation
 - Master of Science in Medical Laboratory Science
- University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus
 - Master of Science in Worker Health, Safety & Well-Being
- University of Colorado Colorado Springs
 - Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education

b. Modified

- Metropolitan State University of Denver
 - Undergraduate Certificate in Nonprofit Studies changed to Undergraduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management

c. Closed Programs

- None

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ACTION ITEMS

Issue	Action / Next Step	Assigned To & Date Assigned

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