



COLORADO

Department of
Higher Education

1600 Broadway, Suite 2200

Denver, CO 80202

Meeting	Academic Council August 11, 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

1. Greetings and Introductions

In attendance: Laura Borgelt (CU Anschutz); Helen Caprioglio (CSUP); Pavel Cenkl (WCU); Jerid Counterman (CSUG); Margaret Doell (ASU); Kyle Gruenhagen (UCCS); Jeremy Hawkins (CMU); Roze Hentschell (CSU-SYS); Andy Herring (CSM); Mark Kavanaugh (CU Boulder); Mike Lightner (CU-SYS); Matt Makley (MSU Denver); Karen Marrongelle (CU Denver); Kimberly Miloch (CSU); Janice Nerger (CSUG); Kathryn Regjo (CMC); Rebecca Woulfe (CCCS-FRCC); Christina Carrillo (CDHE); Carl Einhaus (CDHE); Brad Griffith (CDHE)

2. Approval of July Meeting Notes

[see handout: 2026-07-14 NOTES-AC.pdf]

Notes approved

3. Announcements and Discussion Items

a. Updates from CCHE Advisor Michael Lightner

Dr. Lightner provided an update on the August meeting of the CCHE Student Success and Workforce Alignment Committee. Discussion focused on the work of the Postsecondary Talent Development System Transition Advisory Committee (TAC), broader considerations regarding the future structure of higher education in Colorado, and challenges associated with operating a highly differentiated higher education system. Committee members discussed whether existing systems require incremental improvements or more substantial rebuilding and noted concerns related to

institutional scale, differentiation among institutions, and the limitations of applying traditional market-based approaches to higher education. Dr. Lightner also shared observations regarding evolving expectations for higher education governance and workforce alignment as Colorado prepares for a gubernatorial transition and the recommendations that will emerge from the TAC process. Carl noted that conversations surrounding artificial intelligence, student advising, workforce navigation, and career exploration continue to play an increasingly significant role in statewide discussions about student success.

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

Carl provided an update on the work of the TAC. He noted that the committee continues to meet twice monthly and is currently focused on understanding existing agency functions, exploring future governance structures, and fulfilling the statutory requirements established for its work. Discussion is increasingly centered on how a future governance framework could coordinate higher education and workforce development functions currently managed through separate boards and agencies. The committee's recommendations are expected by early December, requiring members to remain focused on the specific deliverables outlined in statute while recognizing that implementation decisions will ultimately occur under a future gubernatorial administration. Members were encouraged to monitor TAC meeting materials and recordings posted on the Governor's website to remain informed as the work progresses.

c. 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](#) and [CCHE Policy I, Part X: Prior Learning Assessment](#)

Carl provided an update on implementation of the statewide higher education transfer audit recommendations and the ongoing work of the CCHE Transfer Subcommittee. Carl reported that CDHE has made substantial progress in addressing the nineteen recommendations identified in the Office of the State Auditor's transfer audit. Staff anticipate completing all required actions before the October 22 CCHE meeting. Formal consideration and approval of the resulting policy revisions is expected to occur at that meeting.

The Transfer Subcommittee continues to meet twice monthly and is focused on completing the remaining audit recommendations while also beginning discussions about longer-term transfer initiatives. Current efforts include development of a

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statewide annual transfer report that would provide greater insight into transfer participation, STAA/DwD, transfer outcomes, and other statewide transfer metrics beyond those required by Senate Bill 24-164. Additional work is underway to improve military-affiliated student reporting and documentation practices, including development of training resources for institutional researchers and reporting staff.

Carl also reminded members that proposed revisions to the GT Pathways and Statewide Transfer Policy and the Prior Learning Assessment Policy are [currently available for public comment](#). The proposed changes are directly tied to recommendations from the transfer audit and include substantial revisions affecting transfer-credit evaluation, prior learning assessment, military credit recognition, and documentation requirements. Members were encouraged to review the proposed policies, share them broadly with institutional stakeholders, and submit comments before the August 23 public comment deadline. Council members emphasized the importance of institutional review and feedback, noting that the revisions could have significant operational impacts across Colorado's colleges and universities. CDHE will review all feedback received through the public comment process before final recommendations are presented to the Commission for adoption.

d. Mental Health Training for Faculty and Staff

Carl facilitated a discussion regarding mental health and behavioral health support for faculty, staff, and students following his participation in a regional convening organized in partnership with the JED Foundation and WICHE. Members shared examples of current institutional efforts focused on building awareness, increasing resource referrals, and integrating mental health support into campus culture. Colorado Mesa University highlighted training led by staff with social work expertise designed to help faculty identify and respond appropriately to students experiencing challenges. CSU representatives discussed systemwide investments in mental health initiatives, participation in the JED Foundation framework, and broader efforts to embed wellness into institutional culture. Additional examples included CSU Pueblo's "Red Folder" initiative and Colorado Mountain College's "Refer Like a Pro" campaign, which equips faculty and staff with information about available resources and referral processes rather than expecting them to serve as mental health practitioners. Members generally agreed that awareness, referral training, and resource visibility are critical components of an effective campus response. Carl indicated that this conversation would continue in future meetings as institutions share practices and explore opportunities to strengthen mental health supports throughout Colorado higher education.

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

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4. New, modified, and closed programs

a. New

- Community College of Aurora
 - Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health: Mental Health and Wellness
- Community College of Denver
 - Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health: Mental Health and Wellness
- Pikes Peak State College
 - Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health: Mental Health and Wellness
- Pueblo Community College
 - Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health: Mental Health and Wellness
- Red Rocks Community College
 - Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health: Mental Health and Wellness
 - Bachelor of Applied Science in Echocardiography

b. Modified

- Community College of Aurora
 - Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health changed to Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health: Addiction Recovery
- Community College of Denver
 - Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health changed to Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health: Addiction Recovery
- Pikes Peak State College
 - Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health changed to Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health: Addiction Recovery
- Pueblo Community College
 - Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health changed to Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health: Addiction Recovery
- University of Colorado Colorado Springs
 - Bachelor of Science in Health Care Science changed to Bachelor of Science in Health and Wellness

c. Closed Programs

- Colorado State University
 - Bachelor of Science in Environmental Health
 - Bachelor of Science in Fermentation Science
 - Bachelor of Science in Microbiology

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- Bachelor of Science in Watershed Science

During discussion of academic program notifications, members reviewed recent modifications to several BAS programs related to Behavioral Health and Wellness. Institutional representatives explained that the participating community colleges originally operated a single BAS program with multiple tracks but determined that maintaining separate tracks within one degree was creating challenges related to scheduling, student progression, and program administration. To improve clarity and consistency, the colleges transitioned from a single BAS with concentrations to two distinct BAS degree programs while maintaining the underlying curriculum and educational pathways. Members expressed interest in the broader behavioral health education strategy and received clarification that the modifications represent restructuring of existing offerings rather than creation of entirely new programs.

ACTION ITEMS

Issue	Action / Next Step	Assigned To & Date Assigned

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