LARAMIE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# Strategic Plan

## 2013 – 2020

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# Introduction

This document represents the Laramie County Community College's 2013-2020 comprehensive strategic plan. It is the result of more than a year of hard work by a core, interdisciplinary group of individuals who are committed to the success of the College, our students, and the community.

A review of the LCCC Key Performance Indicators and of measures reported through recent survey reports helped shape an evidence-based representation of the College in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. Finally, informed by the College's mission and core values, reaffirmed and newly articulated, coupled with the expectations of key stakeholders, the committee envisioned a future of the community college LCCC hopes to become and established strategies for the institution's continuous journey towards that end.

# Mission Statement

*The Mission of Laramie County Community College
is to transform our students' lives
through the power of inspired learning.*

We are all bound by a basic understanding that our students, regardless of how they arrive at LCCC, yearn for a better life by engaging in the process of acquiring knowledge. Thus, we are compelled to aid this transformation by offering diverse educational experiences designed to be inspirational for all those involved in the learning process. While we recognize our work is diverse, the entirety of the work we do is grounded in the four foundational elements of the comprehensive community college mission:

1. To prepare people to succeed academically in college-level learning (academic preparation)

2. To engage our students in learning activities that will prepare and advance them through the pursuit of a baccalaureate degree (transfer preparation)

3. To develop individuals to enter or advance in productive, life-fulfilling occupations and professions (workforce development)

4. To enrich the communities we serve through activities that stimulate and sustain a healthy society and economy (community development)

# A Vision for LCCC

## The Big Goal

Our over-arching goal is that our accomplishments as a community college will distinguish LCCC from others in the nation, in turn benefiting our communities and bringing pride to the Great State of Wyoming.

## Vision Statement

In the future we are individuals united for a single purpose - to transform our students' lives. Our nationally recognized, entrepreneurial, and innovative programs and services help students become the most sought after individuals. We develop world-class instructors. We are relentless in the use of evidence to make decisions that responsibly and efficiently allocate resources, drive instruction, and create an environment of adaptability and productivity. Every individual has the freedom to innovate and take informed risks based on promising practices and creative ideas. We fail fast, and learn from that failure as much as from our success. Clear academic pathways, high-touch services, and engaged employees are the bedrock of our students' success. We drive collaboration throughout the community to ensure the success of all students who come to LCCC. We are changing the world of higher education facing seemingly impossible challenges head on.

# Our Values

## Core Values

We believe these values are inherent in the cultural fabric of the College and could not be extracted in any way.

1. **Passion** – Our institution is wholly dedicated to engaging in our work, sharing our beliefs, and debating the merits of any course of action as we strive to transform our students' lives through inspired learning.

2. **Authenticity** – True to our Western heritage, we are genuine to a fault, without pretense, and steadfast in our dedication in delivering on a promise, product, or need.

3. **Desire to Make a Difference** – We engage in and pursue our goals for the opportunity to create better lives, better communities, and a better world for those who are here today and the generations that follow.

## Aspirational Values

We readily admit to a mismatch between our desire for these values and their existence at the College. However, our strong desire for these values will shape the actions we take to ensure the universal presence of these values at LCCC into the future.

1. **Commitment to Quality** – Quality is found at the intersection of hard work and high standards being met consistently. We are committed to promoting a culture of evidence that compels us to continuously strive for greater competence and productivity while always seeking to transform students' lives through inspired learning.

2. **Entrepreneurship** – In an uncertain era, endless opportunities await those institutions willing to take risks. Grabbing these opportunities requires informed risk-taking and innovation fostered in a safe, yet demanding environment.

3. **Tolerance** – As an institution, we must engage in wide-ranging, open-minded discourse with civility and objectivity grounded in what is best for our students as well as ourselves.

# Goals and Strategies

With an eye to the future, a strong desire for excellence and a staunch dedication to student success, LCCC has embraced the following four Strategic Goals to guide our work through the year 2020. Each of the four strategic goals has accompanying strategies with targeted outcomes that will be used to evaluate our success in achieving this plan.

# Completion Agenda for the 21st Century

Increase the number of students earning high-value credentials by reinventing the College's programs and services to be designed for the 21st century learners and aligned to drive the economic and social futures of Southeastern Wyoming.

## *Strategies*

A. Increase participation at the college through wise enrollment growth
   i. Target populations in the community that are under-represented in the LCCC student body.
   ii. Implement recruitment activities that seek to enroll young adults, especially those with some college, but no degree.
   iii. Design and launch new academic programs aligned with current or emerging community, state, or national needs.
   iv. Develop an LCCC Online enterprise with sufficient autonomy to purposefully grow offerings and enrollment in distance education using cutting-edge course design and innovative instruction.

B. Implement research-based, high-impact practices for early and ongoing student engagement in the educational process.
   i. Design a mandatory orientation program for all new students enrolling at LCCC that includes advising and registration.
   ii. Develop and deliver a strong, holistic system of student advising that assigns every student a single case manager to follow him/her throughout their educational journey.
   iii. Implement a system to ensure all students have an academic plan on file by the end of their first term and reviewed frequently that maps their coursework and milestones from start of their education journey to completion.
   iv. Create a first-year or first-term student success course required of all new students to LCCC that is contextualized to programmatic themes or pathways, designed to help students become college-ready, build significant relationships, establish their academic plan, explores careers and connects them to the community.
   v. Establish learning communities for at-risk students (developmental, first-generation, undeclared programs, etc.) that utilize prescriptive coursework and programming to provide support systems and guidance these students need to succeed in achieving their educational goal.

C. Redesign the College's institutional scholarship and aid programs in a way to strategically accomplish desired outcomes.
   i. Develop aid programs and strategies that target individuals who desire to enroll at LCCC but have un-met financial need inhibiting their ability to participate.
   ii. Create aid programs designed to incentivize students to achieve key progress points along their educational path.
   iii. Work closely with the LCCC Foundation to grow existing and/or develop new private giving scholarship opportunities focused on un-met need or to incentivize student progress and completion.

D. Establish clear academic pathways based on curriculum designed to help students achieve important learning outcomes and to help them progress through academic milestones and ultimately completion.

    i. Create a new process using multiple inputs to ascertain both cognitive and affective student abilities to more accurately assess college-readiness and place students into appropriate coursework.

    ii. Redesign developmental coursework and activities to facilitate an accelerated progression to college-readiness for our students.

    iii. Completely redesign our academic programs so that college-ready, full-time students would be able to complete certificate programs in one year, and associate degrees in two years.

    iv. Publish all program curricula in ways to illustrate the progression for full-time and part-time students to complete their chosen program of study.

E. Reinvent the College's general education curricula to ensure our students are exposed to broad perspectives to some of the world's biggest questions and that they possess the skills and abilities necessary to succeed regardless of their chosen occupation.

    i. Develop and implement a LCCC General Education Core that stems from essential learning outcomes, ensure it is incorporated into all transfer programs (AA and AS degrees), and when completed results in a Certificate of General Studies.

    ii. Ensure that all applied programs (Certificates and AAS degrees) include coursework, stand-alone or integrated, that leads to institutional student learning outcomes.

F. Establish a strong system of quality assurance in our curricula and a mechanism to inform instructional effectiveness by developing coherent assessment practices across all levels of the educational program at LCCC.

    i. Establish well-defined, assessable, and common learning outcomes across all sections, locations, and delivery modalities for the same course. Pair these common outcomes with the development of accompanying rubrics and common assessments.

    ii. Establish program learning outcomes for all programs leading to a degree or certificate from LCCC, and establish rubrics and assessments to ascertain achievement of program outcomes.

    iii. Build upon the foundational work the College has done in establishing institutional learning outcomes, and integrate educational activities and assessments that yield evidence of student learning in these competency areas.

    iv. Develop a technology-based mechanism to capture and analyze assessment data to inform continuous improvement of our teaching practices.

# G O A L 2

## Connections that Improve Student Transitions

Strengthen relationships and connections with key community partners, such as K12, UW, other four-year institutions, and business and industry to improve student transitions between educational entities and into the workforce.

### Strategies

A. Expand early-college engagement of high school students to encourage greater college- continuation, ease transitions to college, and ensure students are prepared to succeed at LCCC.

   i. Continue the progress made towards the establishment of a Southeastern Wyoming Board of Cooperative Higher Education Services (BOCHES)

   ii. Create curriculum articulation groups formed of LCCC Faculty and high school teachers to ensure and improve curricular alignment.

   iii. Strengthen and expand dual and concurrent enrollment activities by implementing the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) standards.

   iv. Provide early interventions for high school students who test less than college ready in key areas such as writing and mathematics.

B. Strengthen academic alignment of LCCC Associate's of Arts and Science's degree programs to promote student completion and successful transfer to UW and other four-year colleges and universities.

   i. Establish program articulation agreements with four-year institutions that map the entire degree program sequence that illustrates a coherent pathway to a bachelor's degree and guarantees seamless transfer if students adhere to the pathway.

ii. Strengthen and expand reverse transfer systems in partnership with UW and other four-year institutions that allow LCCC students who transfer without completing a degree the opportunity to earn the credential once requirements are met as a result of coursework taken at the university.

iii. Articulate the new LCCC General Education Core with UW so that students may transfer their first-year general education coursework in a block and satisfy the UW general education requirement.

C. Expand relationships with business and industry partners to ensure programs are aligned with employer needs.

i. Building from existing documents and work pertaining to career pathways advisory committees, establish a program advisory committee handbook that will help establish new and/or strengthen existing program advisory committees.

ii. Evaluate current advisory panel membership and encourage broader participation to establish new partnerships and relationships.

D. Develop broader understanding of our communities' needs and leverage existing programs, services and activities to increase the engagement of LCCC with the community, and the community with LCCC.

i. Conduct a comprehensive environmental scanning/ needs assessment in Albany County to ascertain current and future community needs that will guide programming offered through the Albany County Campus of LCCC.

ii. Expand opportunities for students involved with co-curricular and extracurricular activities (e.g., athletics, student clubs, service learning, etc.) to engage more richly with the community in ways that help develop the community and build relationships.

iii. Encourage, track and celebrate faculty and staff involvement in community initiatives, through service on community boards, or other opportunities for civic engagement.

# GOAL 3

## An Organizational Culture to Thrive in the Future

Build the organizational capacity to thrive in the future by focusing on establishing a climate of trust, an effective, efficient and entrepreneurial workforce, and a culture of continuous improvement.

### Strategies

A. Establish processes and programs to proactively focus on employee recruitment, retention, development and performance.

   i. Implement a fresh, comprehensive model for new employee onboarding and initial orientation to the College.

   ii. Continue progress towards establishing an employee recruitment process that incorporates strong search processes (e.g. search committee orientation, objective screening tools, clear channels of communication, etc.).

   iii. Implement improved performance management systems for employee evaluation and development.

   iv. Research and implement a new model for compensation of the different employee groups at the College.

B. Building upon the early work of the Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL) Taskforce, fully implement the structure, programming, and services of the CTL to develop a world-class teaching staff.

   i. Implement an intensive first-year experience for new faculty that exposes them to the institution, and more importantly builds a foundational knowledge base to become excellent instructors.

   ii. Create a continuous improvement academy through which ongoing professional development will be made available to all faculty to continuously evaluate and improve instructional effectiveness.

   iii. Establish a defined and purposeful path to faculty promotion and advancement in rank.

C. Continue to strengthen the culture of continuous improvement by improving current or developing new processes and supporting infrastructure necessary to support continual analysis of performance and plans to continuously improve.

   i. Develop a comprehensive institutional planning framework, accompanied by documentation guidelines for the levels of planning while utilizing technology-driven mechanisms for monitoring progress.

   ii. Revamp the academic program review protocol to incorporate combined elements of traditional program self-study as well as performance evidence derived from indicator measures.

   iii. Design a new protocol of the frequent review and analysis of the effectiveness of co-curricular programs or service areas to assess their performance and guide improvement practices.

D. Finalize the establishment of a strong system of Board of Trustees policies and accompanying Administrative Procedures.

    i. Develop needed policies and procedures pertaining to academic affairs, such as new program development and approval, degrees and certificates structure, general education, etc.

    ii. Continue our work towards updating and adding new human resources policies and procedures to guide our employment structures, practices and relationships.

    iii. Strengthen policies and procedures pertaining to college affordability, specifically looking at the development of these for student fee approval and review.

# GOAL 4

## A Physically Transformed College

Transform the College's physical environment into a vibrant, and appealing place conducive to the engagement of students and community through campus renovations, additional facilities, and beautiful grounds.
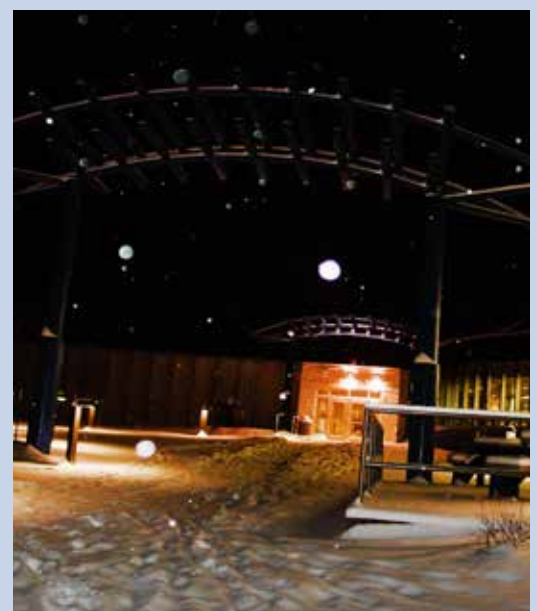
### Strategies

A. Aggressively pursue the completion of the LCCC Building Forward facilities plan.

    i.   Finalize planning and secure funding to construct a new student services, university, and instructional building on the Cheyenne campus.

    ii.  Finalize planning and secure funding to construct a new industrial technology building on the Cheyenne campus.

    iii. Initiate planning updates, form community advisory groups, and pursue avenues to fund and build a new LCCC Fine and Performing Arts building on the Cheyenne campus.

    iv. Continue the collaborative progress with UW in planning, securing funding and constructing a new Albany County Campus building on the UW campus.

    v.   Research and secure expanded options for student housing in Cheyenne to meet current and anticipated demands.

B. Remodel/renovate/expand existing campus facilities and infrastructure to transform the campus in ways designed to meet the future needs of our students and community.

    i.   Plan, secure funding, and renovate the Ludden Library to embrace a new vision for this space and function – the Ludden Library and Learning Commons.
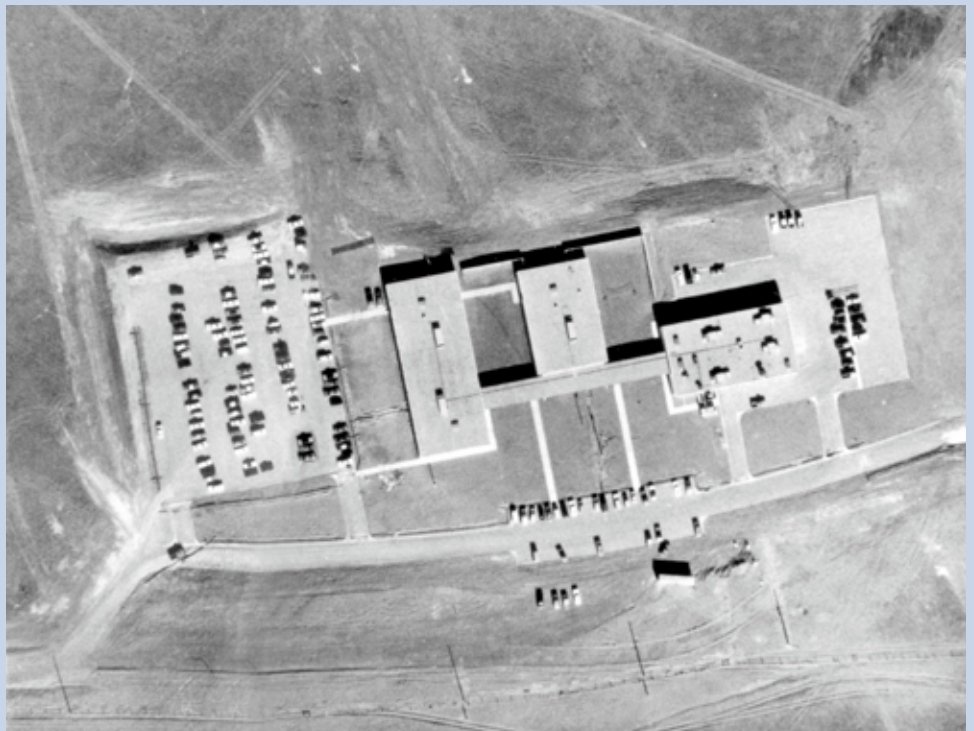
    ii.  Expand and renovate recreational facilities on campus for students and community by seeking partnership opportunities with the proposed Cheyenne Rec Center.

    iii. Modernize, expand, and update the College's data and technology infrastructure.

C.  Build the capacity to maintain a more attractive exterior infrastructure and landscape on campus

    i.  Complete façade updates to existing concrete buildings to provide a more visually appealing, and current exterior feel.

    ii.  Expand hardscape and landscaping to the campus grounds, adding the infrastructure to water and maintain a more robust landscape, while understanding the limitations of our regional climate and the need to be resource conservation-minded.

D.  Implement the comprehensive campus way finding plan to update and enhance campus signage and directional guidance for students/visitors.

    i.  Improve interior and exterior signage on campus.

    ii.  Finalize exterior campus lighting projects.

    iii. Building from current architectural plans, construct campus gateways to formally identify and provide engaging main entrances to the campus.

# The Context for Strategic Planning

## From Access to Success: National Focus on Community Colleges

While the nation continues to slowly emerge from the Great Recession and again regain its position at the top of the global community, all eyes are shifting to higher education with attention on the community college as never seen before. Numerous organizations, agencies, and initiatives have set a common goal for the nation – to regain its prominence by having the best educated citizenry in the world, or 60% of the American population with a college credential by 2025. As a result, there has been a paradigm shift away from the access mission of the community college, to access merged with accountability for student success and completion.

In order to contribute to the national goal, and fully support economic and community development in southeast Wyoming, LCCC must become nimble and responsive to the rapidly changing skills and abilities demanded in the 21st century workforce and citizenry. To promote change, it is vital we reimage ourselves by exploring a process-driven approach and system that leads to educational reinvention in our programs and services while adopting high impact policy practices for student success and completion.

According to the American Association of Community College's *Reclaiming the American Dream: A Report from the 21st Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges* (2012), "... amidst serious contemporary challenges, community colleges need to be redesigned for new times. What we find today are student success rates that are unacceptably low, employment preparation that is inadequately connected to job market needs, and disconnects in transitions between high schools, community colleges and baccalaureate institutions." This report goes on to suggest three key elements (3 R's) for reimagining the community college:

1. **Redesign:** Increase college completion rates, improve college readiness, and close skill gaps by purposely aligning education with job competencies.

2. **Reinvent:** Align the college's mission to meet 21st century education and employment needs and maximize on partnerships to improve college support systems.

3. **Reset:** Support policies and practices that promote rigor, transparency, and accountability.

Numerous other organizations and initiatives have emerged and are catalyzing the paradigm shift. These include efforts by the Lumina Foundation's *Goal 2025*[1], the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's *Completion by Design*[2], and Complete College America[3], just to name a few. They join more seasoned initiatives such as the League for Innovation's *Achieving the Dream*[4] and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement[5].

A major driver of all of these initiatives is a growing corpus of research and evidence pertaining to the community college. Matched with the rise of predictive and action analytics, and supported by more robust technologies and data systems, we are beginning to gather evidence-supported best practices, understanding the pitfalls in our student's educational journey, and better design and model for our own interventions.

For example, after more than a decade of survey data, the CCSSE has identified five benchmarks important to students' college experiences and educational outcomes[6]. The Community College Research Center (CCRC) at Columbia University has, in a very short timeframe, amassed an impressive collection of literature focused solely on major issues facing community colleges and student success[7]. The National Center on Education and the Economy (2012) recently released what is claimed to be the first empirical study to determine what it means to be college and work ready, forging new ground in identifying areas for improvement in curriculum alignment and developmental education[8].

In his most recent monograph, Access, Success and Completion, Terry O'Banion (2012) perhaps best summarized and clarified the work community colleges must embrace to meet the new demands for success in their institutions. Based on history and evidence he proposes a model for the student success pathway grounded in institution and student planning. This work provides a unique foundation on which LCCC's strategic actions can be built.

## A Wyoming Imperative

In an October 31, 2011 Wyoming Community College report on Remediation, Retention and Graduation Rates to the Joint Education and Appropriations Interim Committee (2011) community colleges committed to the following goals in order to decrease the time to degree or certificate for at-risk students:

1. Establish infrastructure to provide high-risk students a customized pathway to successful completion of college level math, English, and reading intensive courses, within one year.

2. Increase the completer success rate in college level math, English and reading intensive courses for high-risk students by 5% by the end of two years.

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1  More information on Lumina's Goal 2025 can be found at
   www.luminafoundation.org/goal_2025.html
2  More information on Completion by Design can be found at www.completionbydesign.org
3  More information available at www.completecollege.org
4  More information available at www.achievingthedream.org
5  More information available at www.ccsse.org
6  See www.cccse.org for more information
7  See http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu
8  See www.ncee.org/college-and-work-ready

3. Increase the degree and certificate completion rate for high-risk students by 5% by the end of three years.

In 2012, Governor Matt Mead accepted an invitation for Wyoming to join the Complete College America Alliance of States[9] in order to increase the number of students successfully completing college. A team was assembled with representation from the Governor's Office, Wyoming Community Colleges, University of Wyoming, the Legislature, and employers to address this effort. Participation in Complete College America requires the state, through its team, to:

1. Set Completion Goals

2. Develop Action Plans and Move Key Policy Levers

3. Collect and Report Common Measures of Progress

In addition to joining the Complete College America initiative, Wyoming has also adopted Common Core Standards for the K-12 system. According to the Common Core State Standards Initiative[10], "These standards define the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs. The standards:

• Are aligned with college and work expectations;

• Are clear, understandable, and consistent;

• Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills;

• Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards;

• Are informed by other top performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society; and

• Are evidence-based

Fully preparing students through their K-12 educational pathway for college and career readiness, while providing clear standards for postsecondary alignment, helps support a larger goal of increased college completion.

## K-12 Connections

According to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education's (WICHE's) *Knocking at the College Door* report (2012), Wyoming will see a decline in the production of high school graduates through 2015, but then will witness a dramatic increase through 2025. Evidenced by the high numbers of elementary school students in LCCC's service region, it is likely the College's service area will be impacted by this increase.

LCCC partners with three school districts; two within Laramie County and one in Albany County. LCCC has concurrent and dual enrollment agreements with all three districts, provides transitional advising and a Partnership Diploma Program in Laramie County School District No1 (LCSD1). LCCC and LCSD1 have also identified and documented career pathway roadmaps that help students identify a career pathway beginning in 9th grade.

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9  See www.completecollege.org/alliance_of_states/
10 See www.corestandards.org

LCSD1 is the largest of the LCCC partner districts. In the 2012/2013 school year, Laramie County School District No. 1 (LCSD1) enrollment was 13,299. LCSD1 had a 71.97% graduation rate in 2010/2011. Laramie County School District No.2 (LCSD2) is located in the southeast corner of Wyoming in eastern Laramie County and houses two high schools, one in Burns and one in Pine Bluffs. In 2009/2010, LCSD2 experienced an 83.05% graduation rate. Albany County School District No.1 (ACSD1) is a public school district based in Laramie, Wyoming and serves the cities of Laramie and Rock River. In 2009/2010, ACSD1 experienced an 86.86% graduation rate.

Through these partnerships, a number of opportunities have been identified that support strengthening the seamless transitioning between secondary and post-secondary education within our districts. For example, with a new Laramie High School building being completed in the near future and its proximity to the Albany County Campus, potential exists for developing early college career academies and growing dual enrollment. In addition ACSD1 is interested in providing students the opportunity to complete their associate degree while still in high school through a stronger partnership with LCCC. Along the same lines, LCSD1 and LCSD2, in partnership with LCCC, are exploring the establishment of a Board of Cooperative Higher Education Service (BOCHES) in order to expand opportunities for seamless transitioning from secondary to post-secondary education through concurrent and dual enrollment while also addressing articulation and remediation issues. Last, LCSD2 has expressed a desire to partner more closely with LCCC in an effort to bring more diversity in early college offerings by potentially bringing faculty and other resources from the LCCC Cheyenne campus to Eastern Laramie County.

## Responsiveness to Community and Economic Development Needs

The bedrock of any community is an integration of both economic and societal health. One cannot exist without the other. This places community colleges, such as LCCC, at the core in promising to develop and sustain both. We do this through our responsiveness to the workforce and cultural needs of the community. Our three primary mechanisms for delivering on this promise include applied academic programs, transfer education towards a bachelor's degree or beyond, and tailored enrichment and training activities.

LCCC has built solid relationships with private employers and many business organizations, including the Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce, Cheyenne LEADS (a non-profit economic development organization), the Wyoming Business Council, and the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services. The College is fortunate also to have strong ties to many social and local government entities such as the City of Cheyenne and Laramie County. These strong ties ensure open conduits for communication about local and regional needs, and LCCC's response to them.

While healthcare remains a key leader for careers both locally and nationally, information gathered from the Chamber and Cheyenne LEADS, along with data gathered from the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, indicate that there are three other key areas of industry critical to economic stability and development in our region. Those three are computer information technology,

warehousing/distribution, and energy. In addition, with the existing and incoming activity of the Swan Ranch Development in southwest Cheyenne, manufacturing is considered to be an emerging industry.

Data from Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce (Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl, 2013) and the Wyoming Department of Workforce Service's Research and Planning Division (2013) illustrate that a number of occupations within the key industries in Southeastern Wyoming will have significant annual job openings through 2020. These occupations are typically accessed through a community college education and have a mean hourly wage of $15 or more. Specifically, twenty-two occupations related to Health Care, Computer Technology, Energy and Manufacturing are documented as having more than 27 openings annually from 2012-2020. Data extracted from the Wyoming Department of Workforce Service's Occupational Projections through 2020, specifically for the Cheyenne Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Wyoming Total Annual Openings by Occupation through 2020**

| Title | Annual Openings | Mean Hourly Wage | Typical Education |
|---|---|---|---|
| Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations | 2275 | $23.53 | Some College |
| First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers | 626 | $31.03 | Some College |
| Maintenance and Repair Workers, General | 485 | $20.02 | Some College |
| Electricians | 440 | $26.06 | Some College |
| Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers | 351 | $23.14 | Some College |
| Industrial Machinery Mechanics | 300 | $26.77 | Some College |
| Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters | 190 | $21.32 | Some College |
| Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists | 204 | $26.30 | Some College |
| Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines | 187 | $25.60 | Some College |
| Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics | 164 | $19.40 | Some College |
| Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses | 93 | $20.07 | Some College |
| Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers | 87 | $18.82 | Some College |
| Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics | 68 | $15.15 | Some College |
| Dental Assistants | 70 | $16.13 | Some College |
| Machinists | 63 | $21.08 | Some College |
| Dental Hygienists | 53 | $31.44 | Associates Degree |
| Radiologic Technologists and Technicians | 44 | $26.11 | Associates Degree |
| Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers | 40 | $34.63 | Some College |
| Computer Systems Analysts | 30 | $31.80 | Associates Degree |
| Computer Network Support Specialists | 31 | $24.54 | Some College |
| Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment | 29 | $27.90 | Some College |
| Respiratory Therapists | 27 | $25.80 | Associates Degree |
| Power Plant Operators | 30 | $32.10 | Associates Degree |

There are a number of other high demand occupations related to these same industries requiring a bachelor's degree or higher as also documented by the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services at the following link

http://doe.state.wy.us/lmi/projections.htm. Because of LCCC's transfer mission, the baccalaureate programs with which it articulates should be influenced by these occupational needs as well. Overall, by 2020, sixty-five percent of all jobs in Wyoming will require some postsecondary education or training.

Although specific labor market needs should influence the College's educational programs, our work should not, and cannot, be solely focused on production training. In fact, it is becoming evident that many critical needs in our workforce and our society remain centered on developing a combination of intellectual, practical, and adaptive creative abilities in our students regardless of their chosen occupation. For example, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has suggested that not only is there a completion shortfall in higher education today, there is also a quality shortfall (Humphreys, 2012). This shortfall is a result of too few students achieving proficiency in specific learning outcomes and that the "increasing complexity of our world is adding to what a well-educated person must know and be able to do."

Schneider (2010) suggests that, in addition to traditional and subject-related knowledge, there are at least six new areas of knowledge, skills and abilities that individuals must possess to be successful. While employers ask for greater emphasis on such traditional outcomes as "communications, analytic reasoning, quantitative literacy, broad knowledge of science and society, and field-specific knowledge and skills" they are also seeking graduates with high levels of "global knowledge and competence; intercultural knowledge and skills; creativity and innovation; teamwork and problem-solving skills in diverse settings; information literacy and fluency; and ethical reasoning and decision making." A recent study by Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce (2013) found that employers will likely seek cognitive skills such as communication and analytics from potential employees rather than physical skills traditionally associated with manufacturing and other high-skill occupations.

Thus, in a time when institutions of higher learning are shifting focus to occupational skill development, it is perhaps more imperative that we reimagine and strengthen the general education program of the College to compliment the technical and practical skills necessary in a single occupation with those abilities required of all occupations.
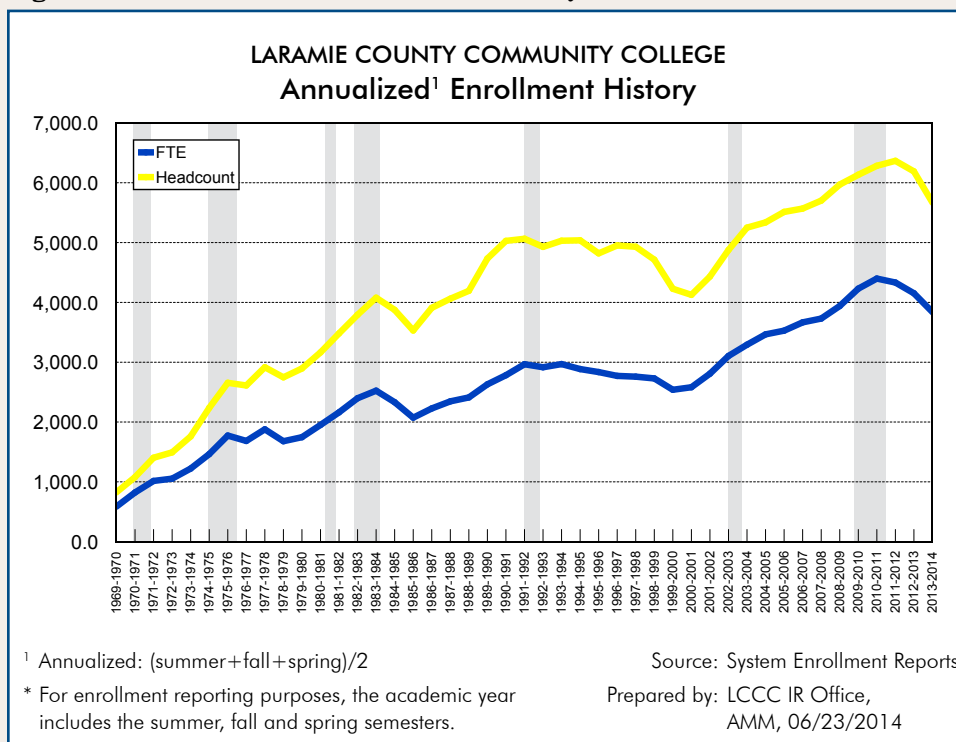
# Internal Evaluation

## Background

LCCC has grown substantially since its inception, although there have been times of increase and decrease throughout its enrollment history. Over the past decade, the College's enrollment has grown substantially; however recent enrollment trends suggest that growth may now be leveling off. Figure 1 provides a historical picture of enrollment in the College's credit-bearing coursework.
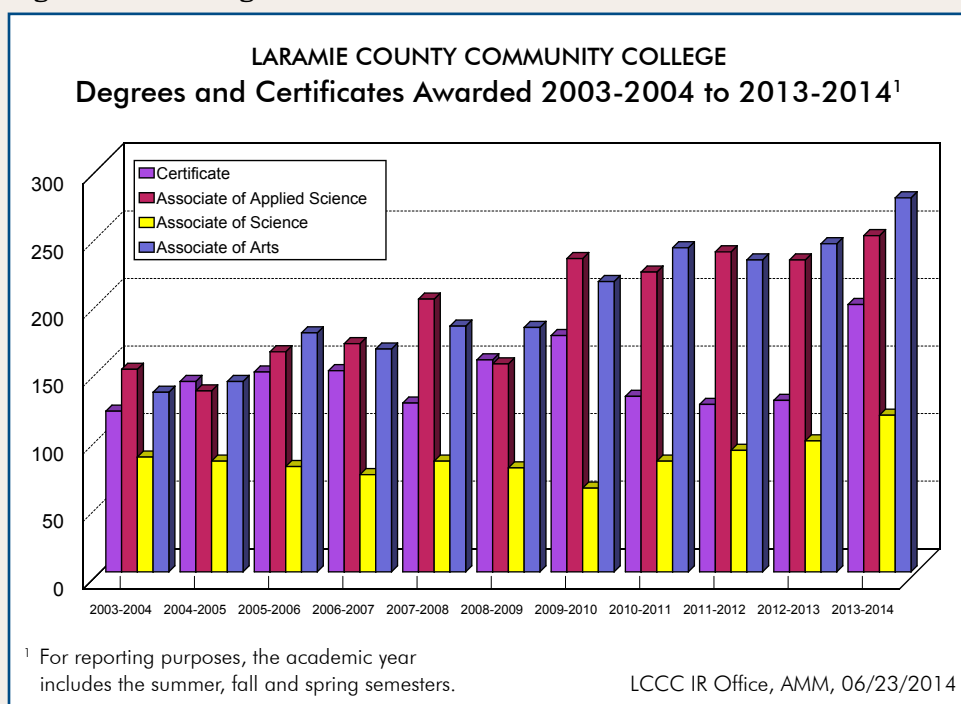
**Figure 1. LCCC Annualized Enrollment History**



LARAMIE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Annualized[1] Enrollment History

[1] Annualized: (summer+fall+spring)/2
* For enrollment reporting purposes, the academic year includes the summer, fall and spring semesters.

Source: System Enrollment Reports
Prepared by: LCCC IR Office, AMM, 06/23/2014

Accompanying the enrollment growth has been a growing number of graduates from the College. See Figure 2. There were 487 degrees and certificates awarded in the 2003/2004 academic year and 840 in the 2013/2014 academic year, an increase of approximately 72% and representing the largest graduating class in the institution's history. However, the increased numbers of degrees and certificates awarded appear to solely be a function of increased enrollment. The rate at which LCCC students succeed is considerably lower than other comparative institutions. For example, the fall 2011 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data shows LCCC's graduation rates in all three of the categories measured (completion in normal time, 150% of normal time, and 200% of normal time) to be lower than the median of the comparison group of

colleges. LCCC's overall graduation rate in this report is 13%, compared to that of the peer institutional average of 21%. At the same time however, the transfer out rate is higher (33%) than the median of the comparison group (20%).

**Figure 2. LCCC Degrees and Certificates Awarded**

LARAMIE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Degrees and Certificates Awarded 2003-2004 to 2013-2014[1]

Certificate
Associate of Applied Science
Associate of Science
Associate of Arts

2003-2004  2004-2005  2005-2006  2006-2007  2007-2008  2008-2009  2009-2010  2010-2011  2011-2012  2012-2013  2013-2014

[1] For reporting purposes, the academic year includes the summer, fall and spring semesters.

LCCC IR Office, AMM, 06/23/2014

Access and affordability are still cornerstones of community colleges, and fortunately an education in a Wyoming community college such as LCCC is an exceptional value. The cost to students and their families remains low at LCCC because of the sustained investment of the state and local taxpayers. LCCC's revenues derive from three sources – tuition and fees, local taxes, and state appropriation. Wyoming has continued to invest in higher education as a state, with more than 60 percent of the College's funding coming directly from the state. Even with recent budget reductions in the current biennium, LCCC still spends far more per student than our peer institutions.

The Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) has the statutory responsibility of setting tuition for the seven Wyoming community colleges, and though they have continued to raise tuition on an annual basis, it still ranks as the most affordable when compared to other community colleges in the WICHE region. Low tuition and fees, matched with strong median household income, and supported by healthy merit-based financial assistance from the state and College, makes LCCC a great value for both residents and neighboring states. The only area of continued concern is the lack of any state-funded need-based financial assistance.

## *Institutional Performance*

As mentioned previously, it is critical that community colleges across the nation help students stay engaged and, ultimately, succeed in their post-secondary pursuits. Institutional improvement in this regard requires a diligent, evidenced-based assessment of how institutions perform. To this end, LCCC has adopted

a comprehensive set of key performance indicators (KPI's) and is in the process of developing a rigorous system of assessment for these and their accompanying measures. While still in its infancy, initial analysis has provided a foundation for assessing the College's current effectiveness in helping students succeed and how efficiently we do that. A summary of the current state of institutional performance according to the KPI's was presented to the strategic planning team and has informed this plan.

## College Climate

Although LCCC has been blessed with strong finances, dedicated community support, and increasing enrollment, it has also faced challenges. From the mid to late 2000's, the College struggled under strained leadership issues. In fall 2009, the College administered a survey as a result of institutional tension and concerns about the organizational climate. The survey consisted of a series of statements to which employees were asked to indicate their level of agreement. Approximately 70% of employees participated and the results indicated a strained internal climate. In 2011, the Board of Trustees engaged the College Brain Trust[11] to conduct a comprehensive organizational assessment to examine organizational structure, staffing ratios, and other key practices and processes with a specific focus on the human resources structure of the institution. The CBT's findings and accompanying recommendations were released to the campus late 2011, and became a priority of the new president when he took office in January of 2012.

With this knowledge, current leadership at the College has brought a new focus on reinventing the College and its culture into a community that is student-focused, committed to the highest quality standards and performance, and dedicated to student success and completion. This is proven in actions already taken by administration to reorganize several key areas of the College. Some examples include: strengthening the Human Resources function; more closely aligning programs with relevant functional areas; reinventing College Council to serve as the institution's shared governance body; focusing on updating outdated policies and procedures; and involving individuals campus-wide in the development of this strategic plan. Initial results of this work are showing promise.

There is a solid start and a strong foundation, from which a new culture at LCCC is emerging. During a June 2013 SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis conducted with campus-wide representation, LCCC's strengths were discussed and current leadership was identified as a strength within the College. Other strengths identified included, but are not limited to: strong community and statewide support, a good reputation with our primary stakeholders, employees who sincerely care about our students and the College as a whole, experienced staff and faculty who are committed to providing high-quality education opportunities for students, and teams willing to implement needed changes to support student success and completion.

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11 For more information go to www.collegebraintrust.com

# Conclusions

Creating formal processes and plans to address the challenges identified, include rapidly changing workforce demands, barriers to college completion, and college and career readiness are crucial. Every campus team member must clearly understand his or her significant role that supports student success and completion, be empowered to perform that role, and be willing to stand accountable for executing that role.

As an organization centered on the highest quality service to its students and their communities, LCCC, must hold itself accountable for ensuring student and community success.

By implementing reforms such as clearly defined educational pathways for students seeking careers, systems designed to better align educational programs to careers, educational programs that are aligned with business and community needs, practices for remedial students that are proven to have high impacts, student services that support students through every stage of their academic lives, and an entire campus community unified around a common vision, mission, and institutional goals, LCCC will move forward towards 21st century education best practices that support a 60% graduation rate by 2025.

# About the College

Established in 1968, Laramie County Community College (LCCC) is a comprehensive community college serving Laramie and Albany counties in Southeast Wyoming. LCCC delivers educational programming at the main campus in Cheyenne, through a rapidly growing Albany County Campus, at outreach sites in Pine Bluffs and F.E. Warren Air Force Base, as well as through distance education. Laramie County borders both Nebraska and Colorado. It is at the crossroads of two major interstate highways and two major railroads. The state capitol of Cheyenne is located in Laramie County. Laramie County boasts a growing economy and a population of 92,680 from the 2011 census, a low unemployment rate of 4.5% as of June 2013 and ranks first in population and fifteenth in area when compared to the other twenty-two counties in Wyoming. Albany County is located north of the Colorado state line and west of Laramie County. In 2011, the population was 36,752. Its county seat is Laramie, which is also the home of the University of Wyoming.

LCCC offers a wide range of academic, career/technical and community education programs. Since its inception in 1968, LCCC has grown from under 1,000 credit enrollment headcount to a 7,789 annualized headcount during the 2012/2013 academic year.

In 2001, the College expanded its non-credit offerings to include workforce development courses and services with enrollments now exceeding 6,700. Workforce development has worked with 485 business and governmental partners to provide training opportunities for incumbent and incoming workers.

LCCC is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), and has selected the Academic Quality Improvement Program[12] (AQIP) pathway for its accreditation model. AQIP is one of several pathways leading to accreditation with the HLC. AQIP differs from other accreditation pathways in that it is grounded on principles of continuous quality improvement.

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12 Detailed information about AQIP can be found at www.ncahlc.org/AQIP/aqip-home.html

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