NEASC TALKING POINTS PER STANDARD

This document presents in approximately a half-page a list of elements presented in the descriptions for each of the nine standards discussed in the CCSU NEASC Self-Study. These sections are presented primarily in black with some items highlighted in colors. Each standard also includes a section labeled “APPRAISAL” and a section labeled “PROJECTION.” The appraisal section is in green ink and presents the conclusions reached regarding the standard. The projection section is presented in blue and presents thoughts about next steps.

STANDARD ONE—MISSION AND PURPOSES

Mission—Two displays are presented . . . one highlighting key words . . . the second mapping out phrases . . .

CCSU is a community of learners dedicated to teaching and scholarship that emphasizes development and application of knowledge and ideas through research and outreach activities, and prepares students to be thoughtful, responsible and successful citizens. As a comprehensive public university, we provide broad access to quality degree programs at the baccalaureate, masters and doctoral levels.

---or---

As a comprehensive public university, we provide broad access . . . to quality degree programs . . . at the baccalaureate, masters & doctoral levels.

Vision—CCSU aspires to be recognized for . . .

- Graduating broadly educated, culturally and globally aware students who will contribute meaningfully to their communities as engaged professionals and citizens;
- Contributing to knowledge through scholarship; and
- Fostering societal improvements through responsive and innovative programs.

Distinctiveness

- International Education
- Workforce and State Economic Development
- Community Engagement
- Interdisciplinary Studies . . . and . . . Cross-Curricular Initiatives

APPRAISAL—Mission statement serves CCSU well.

PROJECTION—Revising the Strategic Plan
STANDARD TWO—PLANNING AND EVALUATION

PLANNING---

- **Systematic, Purposeful, Thoughtful**
  - (a) Executive Committee
  - (b) Faculty Senate
  - (c) Integrated Planning Council
  - (d) University Planning and Budget Committee
  - (e) Facilities Planning Council
  - (f) Design Committee
  - (g) Active Faculty Governance Committees

- **Interim Strategic Plan . . . Four Institutional Needs**
  1. Increase student enrollment. . . . . . . . . Enrollmnet Plan
  2. Maintain academic excellence . . . . . . . . . Assessment & Accreditation
  3. Expand community engagement . . . . . . . . University-Wide Participation
  4. Development additional sources of funding . . . . . . Growth, Efficiencies, New Ideas

EVALUATION—

- Assessment—Regular and systematic evaluation of (a) student learning and (b) program effectiveness.
- Program Reviews & Disciplinary Accreditations
- General Education Assessment—Multi-State Collaborative to Advance Outcomes Assessment

APPRAISAL—Planning and Evaluation Systems in Place . . . growing in effectiveness

PROJECTION—Continuous efforts to assess systems’ effectiveness, modify process as needed, strengthen operations, and improve performance.
STANDARD THREE—ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

CSCU SYSTEM
- Board of Regents . . . CSCU System
- Four Universities . . . CCSU, ECSU, SCSU, & WCSU
- One State College . . . Charter Oak State College
- CSCU Leadership Develops & Implements “Students First”

CCSU GOVERNANCE
- President Zulma Toro . . . Plus 11-member Executive Committee of Three Vice Presidents Six Chief Officers, One Assistant for Safety, and One Executive Assistant:
  - Provost & VP Academic Affairs --- VP Institutional Advancement --- Interim VP Student Affairs ---
  - Univ. Counsel --- Chief H.R. Officer --- Interim Chief Facilities Officer --- Chief Financial Officer ---
  - Chief Diversity & Title IX Officer --- Interim Chief Info Officer --- Asst to Pres for Safety ---
  - Exec Asst to President
- Faculty Senate Constitution & Bylaws . . . Faculty-elected President, VP, Secretary plus active committee structure
- Collective Bargaining Agreements--Active Engagement with Key Unions . . . AAUP and SUOAF
- Constitution of the Student Government Association . . . Student-elected Student Senate

INTERINSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATIONS
- CSCU Transfer and Articulation Program (TAP)
- Hartford Consortium for Higher Education.

APPRAISAL—Former CSU system absorbed into CSCU System. President Zulma Toro hired following retirement of President Jack Miller. CSCU creates Students First Plan. Surveys in 2012, 2014, and 2016 reveal concerns about administrative communication and receptivity to employee suggestions and concerns.

PROJECTION—President Toro emphasizing (a) transparency, (b) shared governance, and (c) focuses on
- Increasing student enrollment
- Maintaining academic excellence
- Community engagement
- Developing new sources of revenue.
STANDARD FOUR—THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

ASSURING ACADEMIC QUALITY

- Effective systems of academic oversight and quality assurance
- Degree programs build sequentially... broad introductory courses to specialized courses for in-depth learning and application of knowledge. Capstone courses provide synthesis of academic learning and application.
- Benchmarking... Disciplinary Accreditations... Program Review... Academic Assessment

ACADEMIC PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- 63 baccalaureate degrees... 25 certificates
- Academic maps outline requirements and recommended course sequencing
- General Education—broad and substantive... Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Behavioral Sciences, Natural Sciences, Written and Oral Communication, Mathematics, Foreign Language, Fitness/Wellness.
- Honors Program—Embedded in General Education requirements.
- General Education Assessment... Employs Multi-State Collaborative model... AAC&U VALUE rubrics... Assesses (a) written communication, (b) critical thinking, and (c) quantitative reasoning.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

- 39 master’s degrees... 7 six-year post-master’s certificates... 2 doctoral programs.
- Graduate School Mission: “To provide students with the knowledge and skills to make contributions to their discipline and to the rapidly changing world.”
- Five Tenets: Scholarly Inquiry... Community... Integrity... Leadership... Overall Excellence
- Capstone Experiences: Thesis... Comprehensive Exam... or... Special Project

INTEGRITY IN THE AWARD OF ACADEMIC CREDIT

- CSCU-required 120 credit limit for bachelor’s degrees. Fifty-eight programs at 120 credits. Five programs granted exceptions: BS Mechanical Engineering [127], BS Civil Engineering [130], BS Manufacturing Engineering Technology [130], BS Mechanical Engineering Technology [130], BS Robotics and Mechanical Engineering Technology [130]
- CSCU Transfer Articulation Plan—22 TAP programs lead CC students to CCSU baccalaureate programs.

APPRAISAL—

- Annual department assessment reports inform updating course offerings and program requirements.
- Program review + disciplinary accreditations ensure regular external review.
- Major realignment of schools promotes STEM and other interdisciplinary interactions.
- GenEd assessment path of 2008 replaced with implementation of Multi-State Collaborative approach.
- Academic Support broad and deep: School-based advising centers... Career Success Center... Writing Center... Learning Center... Student Disability Services... Center for Teaching & Faculty Development... Instructional Design and Technology Resource Center.
- GenEd Assessment: CCSU results above national mean in Critical Thinking & Quantitative Reasoning... below nation mean in Written Communication.

PROJECTIONS—

- Multiple program modes under consideration—expanded online, expanded hybrid, & 3+2 structures.
- New enrollment management unit under development.
- Continued development of General Education rubrics.
- New Interdisciplinary Program Subcommittee of Curriculum Committee.
- Writing for the Disciplines proposal under consideration.
- Articulation agreements being updated.
- Plans to increase enrollment to 15,000 by 2023 to broaden CCSU impact & help mitigate loss of state funding.
STANDARD FIVE--STUDENTS

CHARACTERISTICS—
Increasingly diverse (33%)... Connecticut residents (96%)... Full-time (68-69%)... Female/Male (50%-50%)

ADMISSIONS & RETENTION
- Published requirements based on (a) level of degree and (b) program requirements
- Holistic admissions approach... Includes GPA, Class rank, SAT/ACT. Considers leadership, employment history/internships, & civic engagement
- Common Application... application deadlines... rolling admissions
- Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)
- First-time, full-time retention, fall to fall = 76.4 percent
- Institutional Research & Assessment (OIRA) tracks... academic performance, ...retention rates... graduation rates.
- Approximately 67 percent receive Financial Aid... Average debt at graduation = $25,162

STUDENT SERVICES & CO-CURRICULAR EXPERIENCES
- Documents (First-Year Guide & Transfer Guide)... +...Events (Orientation & Opening Day) introduce new students to available student services.
- Four School-Based Advising Centers; Explore Central advises undecided students.
- Multiple Student Support Units & Programs, include...
  ---Student Center... ---Center of Africana Studies... ---Ruth Boyea Women’s Center
  ---Veterans Drop-In Center... ---Latin American & Caribbean Center... ---LGBT Center
  ---Student Wellness Center... ---East Asian Center... ---Early Alert Program
  ---The Learning Center... ---Center for International Education... ---RECentral
  ---Writing Center... ---Office of Student Disability Services... ---Student Activities & Ldrshp Dev't
  ---L.E.A.D.S (Leadership Experiences Aimed at Developing Students)
- Student Clubs & Organizations. (148 in 2017-18)
- Student Government Association... Student Union Board of Governors... Inter-Residence Council
- Graduate Student Association
- Athletics... Academic Center for Student Athletes... University Athletics Board... Student Athlete Advisory Committee
- Vice President for Student Affairs... Office of Student Activities... Office of Student Conduct

APPRAISAL—
- Use of Common Application increased the number of applications.
- CCSU increase to 11,880 in Fall 2017. CCSU-Airbridge Program added 20 students from Puerto Rico.
- Female/Male graduation-rate gap narrowed from 14% (2002) to 8.9% (2011).
- Club involvement increasing.
- School-Based advising centers increase student interactions but require cross-unit coordination.
- Financial Aid implementing financial literacy.
- Innovative programs include embedded remediation, Summer Bridges Program, & EOP.
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PROJECTIONS—
- New-Student Orientation now provides opportunities for individual advising; a two day, overnight stay orientation piloted in Summer 2018.
- Willard-DiLoreto building renovation will create a one-stop shop for many student services.
- Huang Recreation center is expected to open Fall 2019 with state-of-the-art facilities for recreation.
- Counseling Center staffing is increasing to provide increased numbers of student contact hours.
STANDARD SIX—TEACHING, LEARNING, AND SCHOLARSHIP

FACULTY & ACADEMIC STAFF
- CCSU courses taught by faculty . . . four ranks (professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor), full-time (tenured, tenure-track, special appointment), and part-time.
- Fall 2017 . . . 448 headcount full-time faculty . . . 485 headcount part-time faculty.
- CSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement defines the faculty bargaining unit as “all full-time and part-time faculty, including department Chairpersons, Academic Division Directors and Interdisciplinary Program Directors, academic researchers, coaches, athletic trainers, Librarians and counselors.”
- CBA-SUOAF—The State University Organization of Administrative Faculty serves as the collective bargaining unit for academic staff except deans, vice presidents, and other managerial-confidential personnel.
- The Hiring and Search Manual outlines procedures for recruiting and selecting full-time tenure-track faculty.
- CCSU full-time faculty salaries are competitive; OIRA benchmarks faculty salaries by rank and discipline with regional and national public master’s level institutions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING
- CCSU offers courses in on-ground, online, and hybrid formats. Methods of instruction vary, providing broad access to quality degree programs at the baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral levels.
- Units providing instructional and research support include . . . Center for Teaching and Faculty Development . . . Instructional Design and Technology Resource Center . . . Office of Grants and Funded Research . . . Office of Institutional Research & Assessment
- Instructional effectiveness is evaluated by program faculty and reported annually in academic assessment reports to the Academic Assessment Committee, a standing committee of the Senate.

APPRAISAL—
- CCSU faculty are highly qualified and make strong contributions to teaching, research, and service.
- Collective bargaining agreements provide secure and stable foundations for responsibilities and conditions of faculty employment.
- Racial and ethnic diversity in faculty and staff has increased but have not kept pace with changes in the student body. In Fall 2017, women constituted 44 percent of full-time faculty and 52 percent of the assistant professors.
- Changes to recruitment processes promote a more representative mix of faculty and staff.
- In FY2017, 38 of 73 grant proposals were funded, totaling nearly $3 million.
- Online course offerings and enrollments have increased, though heavily focused in summer and winter intersession.

PROJECTIONS—
- Advising-related goals include (a) utilizing direct and indirect assessments to identify challenges and obstacles to student success, and (b) ensuring that school-based advising centers generate university-wide shared outcomes through varied approaches, processes, and practices.
- Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey [SSI] and the National Survey of Student Engagement [NSSE] with the Academic Advising module will continue to be administered; an in-house survey is under development for implementation in Fall 2018.
- CCSU will provide faculty with professional development opportunities related to successful pedagogical practices to meet the needs and learning styles of 21st Century college students.
- The Faculty Senate will review and update online policies in the Faculty Handbook.
- Continued efforts to redeploy resources to meet emerging needs required of growth to 15,000 students will be necessary
- Improving racial and ethnic diversity among faculty and staff continues as a major goal.
STANDARD SEVEN—INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

HUMAN RESOURCES
- CCSU employs a sufficient number of qualified personnel to support its mission and strategic objectives.
- Of 948 full-time employees, 448 were full-time instructional faculty.
- Of 622 part-time employees, 485 were part-time instructional faculty.
- Seven collective bargaining agreements
- Performance evaluations are conducted; in-service training and professional development are provided.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES
- Conservative balanced budgets, contingency planning and strategic reallocations characterize CCSU’s financial management.
- Fringe expenses have increased significantly (86 percent) over 10 years.
- Tuition increases averaged 4.5 percent annually over 10 years; state funds 36 percent of CCSU budget.
- Board of Regents has sole authority and autonomy in all budget and finance matters.
- University Planning and Budget Committee recommends resource allocation to the president.
- CCSU Foundation governed by independent Board of Directors.
- Endowment more than tripled since 2008; annual gifts exceed $3 million.

INFORMATION, PHYSICAL, AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES
- CCSU's campus includes 314 acres, 3.7 million gross square feet, 70 buildings
- Master Plan from 1999 guides Capital Construction Program.
- CSUS 2020 program and Connecticut Health and Education Financing Authority bonds have funded an extraordinary campus transformation since 1999.
- Student Technology Center, 25 discipline-specific computer labs, 17 computerized classrooms, plus 175 of 235 general purpose classrooms with teaching stations, software, internet access, projectors, speakers, cable television, and document cameras support instruction.
- $500,000 annual replacement schedule for computer technology.
- Instructional Design and Teaching Resource Center supports faculty and staff; IT Help Desk available 60 hours per week.
- Elihu Burritt Library—644,720 bound volumes + 121,954 electronic books
- Access to library resources for all CCSU students through BlueNet Accounts.
- Access to State of Connecticut research ITCT databases and Council of Connecticut Academic Library Directors Reciprocal Borrowing Agreement expands access to borrow from 33 academic libraries in Connecticut.
- Operational and Technological Safety overseen by (a) Office of Environmental Health and Safety and (b) CCSU Police Department. CCSU Police accredited through Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.

APPRAISAL
- July 2017—State Employees Bargaining Unit Agent Coalition Agreement was ratified. CSU-AAUP agreement provided greater support for part-time faculty and increased credit-weight of lab courses.
- CCSU is fiscally secure. Balance sheet shows unrestricted reserves in 2017 of $35.3 million.
- UPBC plays strong role in reviewing and recommending changes to the president regarding contingency plans, new funding, and reallocation requests.
- Financial Aid Office Effectiveness Review and Desk Audit concluded no systemic weaknesses present; numbers of repeat findings were not significant.
- CCSU a leader in streamlining processes to reduce transaction processing time and enhance internal controls.
- CCSU’s 2012 Master Plan has produced significant improvements to campus infrastructure.

PROJECTIONS
- Students First Initiative examines fiscal functions, information technology, financial aid, institutional research, human resources and facilities to identify system inefficiencies and areas for possible consolidation and centralization.
- UPBC, IPC, and president have approved 11 new positions to address emerging and existing needs.
- Escalating retirement rates for State of Connecticut require careful management of positions at CCSU.
- CCSU moving to Banner 9 in December 2018.
- Continued progress toward $80 million endowment goal.
- Creation of new or alternative sources of funding is one of four major university goals.
- Continued attention to reallocating resources will be required as enrollment increases to 15,000.
STANDARD EIGHT—EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

- Major progress in assessment since 2008 reflected in department participation (96 percent) and adoption and implementation of Multi-State Collaborative [MSC] model for General Education assessment.
- Interim strategic plan guides actions as a new strategic plan is being developed.
- CCSU evaluates and fine-tunes planning process annually.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

- Academic Assessment Committee provides feedback; coordinates assessment program consistent with assessment policy.
- Program Review Policy requires a full assessment report every fifth year.
- Evidence of curricular change based on assessments
- Multi-State Collaborative model has broadened the student population being assessed, moving from only students enrolled in GenEd courses to all undergraduate students, including seniors.
- Outcomes assessment employed by Student Affairs
- Student Engagement Indicators measured through National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE), and Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI).

STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS

- Summer Bridges, Educational Opportunity Program, and First-Year Experience deliver orientation to academic practices, policies, and resources plus student success strategies.
- The Learning Center serves students who are not performing successfully with guidance, academic coaching, and tutoring.
- Educational Opportunity Program—serving first-generation and low-income students for success in college for 50 years.
- Early Alert allows faculty to identify students in need of potential intervention through web-based reporting.
- Academic Maps alert students to checkpoints, warn about approach events that could delay graduation, and alert students to specific program requirements.

RETENTION AND GRADUATION

- Retention and graduation rates for first-time full-time students and full-time transfer students are tracked. Time to degree for undergraduate and graduate students by program are tracked.
- Over 10 years, first-time full-time student retention has ranged between 76 and 81 percent.
- First-to-second year retention rates of part-time master’s students ranges between 70 and 76 percent.
- Ninety percent of respondents to a post-graduation survey of graduates between 2013 and 2015 rated their overall academic experience at CCSU as “Good” or “Excellent.”

APPRAISAL—

- The Academic Assessment Committee [AAC] recognizes that assessment is a long-term process and has created a more sustainable schedule for departments.
- Annual norming sessions have improved inter-rater reliability within the AAC.
- Efforts to balance the assessment workload by reducing the reporting burden while at the same time improving the quality of feedback generated a rebound in departmental participation.
- CCSU has made significant progress on assessment of student learning since 2008.
- A Chronicle of Higher Education article in 2016 describes how CCSU expanded beyond the MSC model in developing an adapted approach to GenEd assessment.
- MSC model strengthened CCSU’s community engagement efforts employing the AAC&U Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric.
- Student engagement indicators led to a shift away from a centralized advising model to school-based advising centers.
- Evidence of assessment-driven changes are present in FYE, The Learning Center, EOP, and Early Alert.
- Since 2008, the six-year graduation rate has increased from below 50 percent to as high as 57.3 percent with the 2009 cohort, most recently at 52.1 percent.
- Efforts to address the graduation-rate gap between male and female CCSU students have successfully narrowed the gap to the national norm.

PROJECTIONS—

- The Center for Teaching and Faculty Development will focus faculty development on programs that emphasize writing across the curriculum; faculty are developing a proposal that will introduce a Writing in the Disciplines requirement. Both of these initiatives respond to GenEd assessment results and NSSE indicators.
- OIRA will continue facilitating assessment scoring retreats where faculty focus on GenEd.
- AAC is examining assessment requirements of external, discipline-specific accrediting bodies to identify areas of overlap.
- Better understanding of student progress and success post-graduation will lead to changes in how CCSU tracks employment of graduates at appropriate intervals.
- Collaborative, multi-division efforts to improve retention will join the efforts of the new Enrollment Management unit with Academic Affairs and Student Affairs in defining appropriate actions.
STANDARD NINE—INTEGRITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

INTEGRITY—CCSU administrative officers, units, faculty, staff, policies, and procedures ensure honesty and integrity in operations as reflected below:

- CCSU leaders understand their statutory and ethical responsibilities.
- Dealings with external constituencies are governed by contracts that include core principles such as nondiscrimination and respect for the privacy of students.
- CCSU is committed to the pursuit of academic freedom for faculty and students.
- Laws governing the CSCU mandate accountability and transparency.
- CCSU’s comprehensive Nondiscrimination in Education and Employment Policy ensures “no person shall be discriminated against in terms and conditions of employment, personnel practices, or access to or participation in programs, services, and activities . . . .”
- CCSU policies and procedures ensure programs, operations, and responsibilities are managed with honesty and integrity.
- CCSU’s Academic Affairs and Student Affairs divisions ensure students are treated with honesty and integrity.
- CCSU’s Divisions of Administrative Affairs and Student Affairs manage operation related to the health, welfare, and physical environment.
- CCSU policies ensure institutional integrity. CCSU adheres to CIHE requirements of institutional integrity across faculty and student populations.

TRANSPARENCY—Information is provided to the public about CCSU’s processes for admissions, employment, grading, assessment, student discipline, and consideration of student complaints and appeals.

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE—A breadth of information is provided to the public to assist prospective students with the decision-making process and to provide transparency to the campus and the community.

APPRAISAL—

- CCSU has a statutory mandate to train its full-time workforce in (a) diversity-related issues and (b) annual Title IX training.
- Additional trainings are available to faculty, staff, and students in the following:
  -- Sex Signals
  -- On Being a Man
  -- Bro Code
  -- The Hook Up
  -- Take Back the Night
  -- Walk of No Shame
- Recent allegations of sexual misconduct by faculty in a particular department have resulted in swift actions.
  -- External investigation of old and new allegations
  -- Open fora encouraging students to come forward
  -- Directive to maintain all such records indefinitely
  -- Established a Task Force on Sexual Misconduct
  -- Change in reporting deadline
  -- Mandate that all reports be investigated
  -- Established a website for anonymous reports
  & Campus Climate
- Improvements in SSI results related to (a) Student disciplinary procedures are fair, (b) Administrators are available to hear students’ concerns, and (c) Students are free to express their ideas on this campus.
- October 2012 US Department of Education Title IV Program Review found several FAFSA verification violations, resulting in a return of $87,175 in Federal Pell Grants. Review also found some calculation errors regarding return of Title IV funds after student withdrawals. Also, CCSU’s Clery reports were 38 days late in 2012, and we were late with two reports in 2016.
- Since 2008, Student Consumer Information on the website has been greatly expanded.
- A new website was launched in Fall 2017.
- President Zulma Toro demonstrates a welcoming and inclusive style and an open-door policy, responsive to the community and public at large.
- The existing directory is functional but inconsistent. A uniform directory for all faculty and staff is under development.

PROJECTIONS—

- CCSU will continue to exercise due diligence in managing financial aid and meeting reporting requirements.
- CCSU is committed to creating a safe, welcoming environment for all students and employees.
- All records related to allegations will be retained indefinitely.
- The Sexual Misconduct & Campus Climate Task Force will review how CCSU handles sexual misconduct complaints, reporting findings by December 2018.
- Academic Affairs and Human Resources will resolve inconsistencies in the faculty and staff directory.
- President’s Executive Committee will maintain compliance with NEASC transparency standards.