RED COMMUNITY
ROCKS COLLEGE

A. Our Present

1. Distinctive organizational features

Annually more than 14,000 students look to Red Rocks Community College (College) to advance their educational goals. Located 10 miles due west of Denver, Colorado, the main Lakewood campus sits adjacent to the foothills; the campus features breathtaking views of the Rocky Mountains. Approximately 15 miles to the north of the main campus, the Arvada campus is home to several high tech programs that include radiology and sonography. Starting in the fall of 2006 the Industrial Science and Operations Department will be remodeling approximately 10,000 square feet on the Arvada campus for use as applied science laboratories and classrooms specializing in preparing highly skilled workers for careers as process operators and operator-maintainers for the energy and advanced manufacturing industries.

Since 1969, Red Rocks Community College has delivered quality education to an eclectic mix of students of all ages, incomes and backgrounds. In January 2004, the College launched a major re-engineering of our strategic planning processes. Culminating in October of 2004 with participation in the Vital Focus, the College made the collective decision to apply to become an AQIP institution. To reflect our commitment to a continuous journey of quality improvement the vision and mission of the College were revised through a participatory process involving faculty and staff. The vision of Red Rocks Community College is to be the college of first choice. The mission of the College reflects the commitment of the Red Rocks' faculty and staff to our primary purpose of student success. Our mission is to create a passion for learning through our dedication to students, our commitment to excellence and our own love of learning.

2. Scope of Educational Offerings

Red Rocks Community College offers more than 150 programs and 650 courses leading to two-year degrees or professional certificates. Innovative partnerships with universities have allowed the College to provide co-enrollment options for transfer students which is an important growth market for the College.

✓ **Transfer Students –** Forty one percent of the students enrolled in the Spring 2006 semester have declared their intent to graduate with a transfer associates degree. Transfer students are our largest student population.

✓ **Physician Assistant Program** – The College is one of only six community colleges in the country to offer a [Physician Assistant](#) (PA) Certificate. The PA program is one of only two in the state of Colorado and the only program that prepares PAs for general practice. Students have the option of co-enrolling concurrently in a Masters Degree in Clinical Leadership from Regis University or a Masters Degree in Medical Science through St. Francis University.

✓ **Associates to Baccalaureate –** The Emergency Services Department has developed baccalaureate options for in-service fire fighting personnel through the [Associates-to-Baccalaureate](#) initiative with Regis University. Students may transfer up to 90 credits from Red Rocks and graduate with a baccalaureate in Public Administration from Regis University within one year of transfer. The College expects to launch a similar program for law enforcement personnel within the next year.

✓ **Teacher Education –** The National Science Foundation estimates that more than 40 percent of classroom teachers begin their postsecondary education in community colleges. Thanks to a grant from the National Science Foundation, the College was part of a statewide initiative to create teacher education programs in Colorado's Community Colleges that now through a [statewide articulation](#) agreement transfer seamlessly to Colorado's public universities.

✓ **Colorado School of Mines –** The College has the highest number of transfer students to the Colorado School of Mines (CSM) of any college or university in the country. CSM is a public research university devoted to engineering and applied science. CSM has the highest admissions standards of any university in Colorado and among the highest of any public university in the U.S. CSM has determined that Red Rocks Community College general education transfer courses are the curricular equivalent of designated CSM courses and can be applied to the undergraduate requirements in the eight engineering degree programs offered by CSM. Students may co-enroll at Red Rocks and CSM and benefit by paying Red Rocks tuition for the required CSM courses of EPIC 151 and EPIC 251.

3. Students

For the 2005 school year our head count was 18,195 which translate to an FTE count of 4,656.67. Of the 2005 head count—

✓ 4,944 or 27 percent were enrolled full time.

✓ 13,251 or 73 percent were enrolled part time

✓ 2,939 were enrolled in distance education courses through ***RRCC Online***.

✓ 49 percent were first generation.

✓ 2,484 were attending classes at the Arvada Campus, which translates to an FTE count of 247.69. This number is included in the total FTE reported above.

✓ 5,982 or 33 percent declared the intent to complete a transfer AA, AGS or AS degree. 2,752 or 15 percent are planning to complete AAS degrees, and 1,578 or 9 percent were enrolled in certificate programs.

✓ The average age was 29 years.

✓ 15 percent came from underrepresented minority populations.

The following table gives the breakdown of degree types and certificates awarded in the last school year.

Degrees/Certificates Awarded	AA	AAS	AS	AGS	CER	TOTAL
2005	143	168	54	36	342	818
	17.48%	20.54%	6.60%	4.40%	41.81%	

4. Collaborative or Partnership Arrangements –

✓ **Continuing Education for Workforce Development** – Colorado has stipulated in statute that community colleges will provide workforce development. In March of 2004, the Milliken Institute ranked Colorado third nationally on the Science and Technology Index which measures how a state will perform in today's knowledge-based economy. The ranking measured the composite categories of research and development inputs; risk capitol and entrepreneurial infrastructure; human capital investment; technology and science workforce; and technology concentration and dynamism. The high tech employers in Colorado have both immediate training needs of their existing workforce as well as assistance in developing pipelines of new workers to replace an aging workforce. Estimates are placing retirement losses at more than forty percent of the existing technical workforce over the next five to ten years.
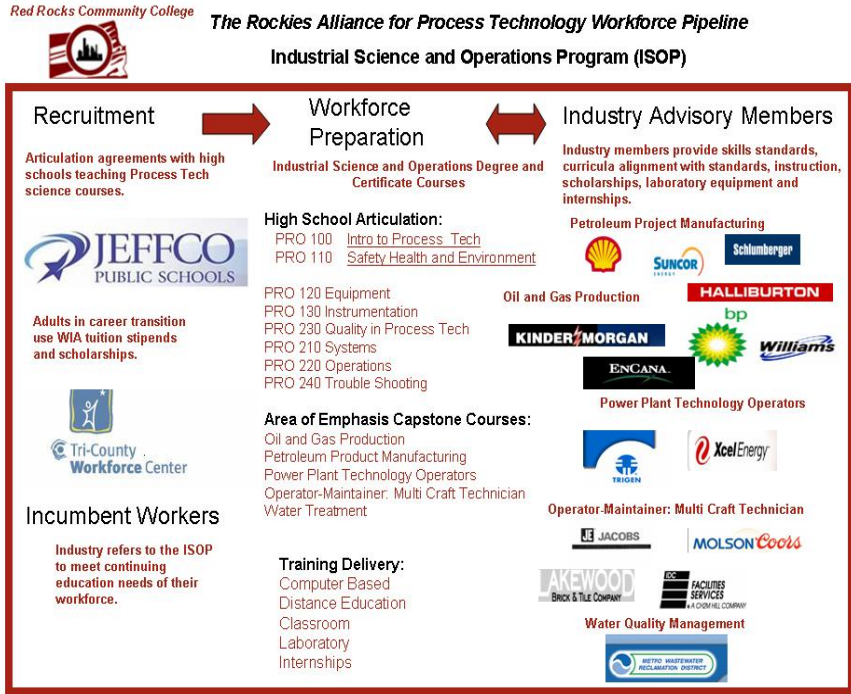
✓ **Rocky Mountain Education Center** – The Rocky Mountain Education Center (RMEC) is the Professional Workforce Development Division of Red Rocks Community College. It is comprised of the Red Rocks Training Institute, OSHA Training Institute, Colorado Environmental Training Center and the Mine Safety and Health Training Center. Our mission has expanded over the years from Environmental Safety and Health Training to include all professional development training. Annually more than 4,000 trainees complete the continuing education professional development options offered by the RMEC.

✓ **Building the Workforce Pipeline –**
The College has more than 300 employer partners participating as part of employer advisory councils to the 150 programs represented in the degree and certificate options offered by the College. Following is a detailed example of the most recent employer partnership which has resulted in the development of a new degree program.

In November of 2004, because of the reputation of Red Rocks Community College as a premier educational provider of technical workers, the employer partners of the Rocky Mountain Alliance for Process Technology (RAPT) asked the College to become the lead higher education institution in the development of the first Industrial Science and Operations Program in Colorado for process industries. The College joined the other RAPT colleges in Wyoming, North Dakota and New Mexico in developing curricula for degree and certificate programs for process operators and operator maintainers working in advanced manufacturing in process industries. The RAPT employer partners include oil and gas exploration and production, water and wastewater treatment, power generation and distribution, beverage production and the associated container manufacturing, and the maintenance contractors supporting these process industries.

Six high schools in Jefferson County (located in the College's service area) are offering the Introduction to Process Technology 101 and Safety Health and Environment 110 course as science electives. These high schools students are earning college credit while still in high school and have a jump start of up to six credits toward completing their Associate of Applied Science degree in Process Technology. The Tri County Workforce Center is a primary source of

referrals of adults pursuing career transitions. The graphic depicts the referral pipeline that supports the five degree emphases in process technology that include Water Quality Management, Oil Production and Refining, Natural Gas Production, Power Plant Technology and Multi Craft Technicians.

5. Faculty and Staff – Spring 2006

TYPE	Bachelors	Masters	Professional or PhD	% Under Represented Populations	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
ADMINISTRATION	4	10	3	0.00%	10	8	18
FULL-TIME FACULTY	5	43	9	12.50%	39	25	64
PART TIME-FACULTY				12.07%	170	269	439
TECHNICAL PROFESSIONAL	44	19	1	13.27%	77	21	98
CLASSIFIED	10	3	0	27.47%	61	30	91
TOTAL	63	75	13		357	353	710

6. Three Operational Environment Requirements –

✓ **COF –** In July of 2004, the College Opportunity Fund became law. The legislation established a new student based process for providing state funds to institutions of higher education (IHE). Starting in the fall of 2005, public IHEs in Colorado no longer receive general fund subsidy directly from the state. In-state resident students apply for the Colorado Opportunity Fund which initiates a tuition stipend on behalf of the student. Colleges then submit their COF students for reimbursement. The Community College System redistributes the student stipends to the 13

member colleges. Students attending Colorado's Community College System (CCCS) colleges are charged a student share of the tuition. In the spring of 2006 that share is $72.75 per credit hour.

✓ **Fee for Service Performance Contracts –** COF does not provide stipends for developmental education courses that do not count toward degrees or certificates. Annually Red Rocks has more than 250 FTE enrolled in developmental education courses. COF also does not provide stipends for high school students taking dual credit courses. The Colorado Community College System must now negotiate a fee from a finite pot from the state general fund in competition with graduate school programs which have also been determined to not be COF eligible. The Performance Contract ties the Community College system to measurable increases in fall to fall retention rate of first time certificate and or degree seeking freshmen.

✓ **Basic Skills Assessment –** First-time undergraduate students must bring to the community college documentation of ACT or SAT scores. If the student does not have scores from either of these standardized assessments, or if the scores are not at the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) identified level (Part E) then the college will assess the student using the Accuplacer assessment instrument.

✓ **Enterprise Resource Planning –** The Colorado Legislature has stipulated in law that CCCS will adopt a standardized data system for all member colleges. A contract has been signed with SCT Banner to implement the system for 13 community colleges with an annual enrollment exceeding 117,000 students. The ERP is being developed in modules that include Finance Project, Student Project, Financial Aid Project, and the HR-Payroll Project. The implementation has struggled with issues related to MIF (multiple institution functionality). SCT Banner was originally developed for single campus installations.

7. Three Important Competitors –

✓ **Private Schools –** The continual repositioning of Colorado's high tech economy provides incentives for quick fix solutions for workforce development from a vast array of private educational entrepreneurs. These institutions can be appealing to a Colorado workforce all too familiar with the boom and bust cycles of our state and the need to re-tool quickly.

✓ **Public Universities –** Consistent efforts have been made among the Colorado Community College System schools to develop a Common Course Numbering System to improve the seamless transfer for students moving among the community colleges. While initiatives to develop the same sort of statewide transfer agreements with public universities have met with some success for the general academic core, attempts to support transfer students with specific discipline credits in programs such as computer science and information, construction technology, teacher education and criminal justice have been challenging. The reluctance of universities to accept discipline specific lower level courses have in many instances eroded the value of a two year degree as students are advised by universities to transfer before completing a degree at the community college.

✓ **Sister Community Colleges –**The College Opportunity Fund (COF) has created competition among the five metro area community colleges for enrollment, particularly in the general education transfer courses we all offer.

8. Three Important Opportunities and three Critical Vulnerabilities –

Opportunities –

✓ **College Options for High School Students** – In 2003, The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) revised the Admissions Standards Policy for Colorado's public universities. The increased requirements for high school credit completion in math, English, sciences and foreign language are intended to reduce the remediation levels of high school graduates going on to college. While in theory, the logic of increasing high school rigor is defensible, high schools are faced with tough decisions exacerbated by limited budgets and classroom space to deliver the additional coursework. Red Rocks Community College has offered a wide range of dual or co-enrollment options for high school students; however these efforts have been episodic involving only a few high schools. We are working with our K-12 partners to develop systemic pro-active strategies with the goals of closing the gap between high school graduation and college readiness, and increasing the number of high school graduates going on to college.

✓ **Community Partnerships** – The stakeholders of Red Rocks Community College have consistently rated the College as a valued partner in the development of responsive programs and initiatives. The College is pursuing new partnerships with the First Judicial District and the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office that will introduce college pathways to clients of the courts and detentions. The Work Force Investment Act (WIA) has provided incentives that have helped to strengthen the ability of the College to launch new workforce programs as part of the long standing partnerships with the Workforce Boards. WIA in partnership with the Department of Labor has introduced new funding mechanisms that will help the College and the Work Force Boards create college and employment pipelines for individuals receiving literacy and ESL services from providers in the community.

✓ **Enterprise Resource Planning** – While the initial challenges of implementation have proved frustrating in the short term, the potential of the improved information flow delivered via a broad based web access that exponentially increases the self-service capabilities for students, faculty and staff will produce an environment where our data can work for us! With the tools introduced by the ERP the reality of data driven decision making will be easily accessible for virtually every function of the College.

Vulnerabilities –

✓ **Space** – The more than thirty percent funding reduction to Colorado's IHEs over the past four years and the freezing of capitol construction on college campuses statewide has left the College ill-prepared to continue to meet the burgeoning demands of Colorado's high tech employers. Laboratory space is at a premium. Our trade programs are operating in space that teeters on being unsafe with no immediate viable options for expansion.

✓ **Staffing** – Consistent with other community colleges in the state, 60 percent of our classes are taught by part time instructors. While the more than 350 part time instructor contractors bring a wealth of experience as professionals in the industries about which they teach, research is consistent indicating student performance and retention is impacted when instructors are not available to students outside of the classroom. Staffing limitations impact us in other areas as we are restricted in salary ranges which constrain our ability to hire talent from industry to help us deliver state of the art programs. Staffing classifications set by the state create tension on our campuses as different employee groups do not have consistent benefits or employment rights.

✓ **Our Image** – Those who know us love us! However, we struggle with the perception that community colleges provide only technical training or are only meant to serve underperforming students.

B. Our Future

1. Three chronic frustrations –

✓ **Planning and Support of Student Success Initiatives** – The Student Success Committees of Assessment of Student Learning, Advising, Enrollment Management, and Learning Support Services were formed in January of 2005 as a result of a year long strategic planning process that culminated with the Vital Focus. These committees have developed strategies that have formed the context for our Action Projects. The committees have been successful in engaging a broad base of participation in the planning and pilot implementation. We are struggling with the committee structure. Specifically, how does the work of the committees move from a pilot phase to becoming an integrated business practice of the College? How is the committee membership transitioned to avoid member burnout yet retain the energy and focus of the original members? The College is developing a culture that encourages broad based staff and faculty involvement in developing new programs and initiatives. As this process evolves protocols will be established that effectively integrate tested programs and initiatives to sustained functions of the College.

✓ **Student Advising** – The consistent delivery of effective advising has been a long standing challenge for the College. Resource competition has driven tough decisions in how to best staff the general academic advising functions. Efforts to ensure that the general advisors have current discipline information have not achieved consistent results. Efforts to ensure that the general advisors have current discipline information have not achieved consistent results.

✓ **Basic Skill Assessments** – Statewide policies have begun to address the student retention issue of appropriate placement in math and English courses using ACT or other standardized placement scores. Students continue to enroll in humanities and technical courses with basic skill competencies well below college level as system policies do not address placement requirements for these courses. While faculty in these disciplines have the option to add placement scores as pre-requisites, without a system wide policy, students are free to "shop" system colleges looking for the college with the least restrictive placement policies.

2. Three elements of your shared vision –

Following are initiatives that are in the research and development stage.

I. Seamless student-friendly processes with co-located services delivered by staff knowledgeable in enrollment, registration, financial aid, assessment and advising protocols. Student advising is comprised of a dynamic infrastructure that seamlessly integrates general information advisors with faculty that are supported in the role of discipline specific and transfer advising.

II. Red Rocks Community College has a vision to be a regional education leader in offering responsive programs.

✓ *The College Prep Initiative* The College Prep initiative encompasses three goals; 1. Integrated approach to academic and college preparation courses, 2. Comprehensive

academic and support services for underserved target populations, and 3. Assessment testing that increases student success through accurate placement across disciplines.

✓ *The Physician Assistant (PA) Institute* prepares PAs for PANCE recertification

✓ *The Emergency and Public Services Department* offers expanded [alternative delivery options](#) that include hybrid (classroom and online) preparation of first responders to meet the demand in rural Colorado

✓ *Interdisciplinary Instruction* offers innovative options for students to improve retention and completion that are delivered using research based strategies. Options include learning communities, honors program, service learning, block scheduling, and cross-curricula blending of course content in disciplines such as criminal justice, psychology and political science.

III. The physical plant of the Red Rocks Community College campuses supports the agility required to respond effectively to the rapidly evolving workforce preparation and continuing education needs of Colorado and the Rocky Mountain region's high tech industries.

3. Three most critical principles of high performance organizations –

✓ **People –** Consistently the strongest attribute of Red Rocks Community College is our customer focused approach in all we do. Our success in this arena is because of the commitment of our faculty and staff to the success of students. The planning efforts that have lead us to AQIP have refocused our efforts to cultivate the leadership qualities of our employees. New opportunities have been created for employees to take on new challenges as part of the instructional re-organization that was implemented in the fall of 2005.

✓ **Leadership –** The re-organization of instruction completed in December 2005 has changed the grouping of departments under the four deans with the goal of facilitating the development of new cross curricula opportunities. The role of discipline chairs held by faculty is in the process of being reviewed. It is anticipated that the chair will assume responsibilities as a faculty leader. The leaders will convene discipline teams and facilitate inter-curricula approaches as part of the continual process of improving teaching and learning while also responding to the evolving needs of the College's employer stakeholders. As an example, the new Industrial Science and Operations Department (ISOD) has been placed with the sciences. ISOD is developing a high school pipeline of coursework that is being taught as science courses. This strategy appeals to employers as students are receiving foundational grounding in scientific principles required for employment and the strategy also address the pre collegiate requirements for high school graduates to complete additional science credits.

✓ **Agility –** The change in the disbursement of general funding of IHEs in Colorado as a result of the Colorado Opportunity Fund, and the adoption of SCT Banner have produced new external challenges in how we approach the business of education at Red Rocks Community College. While we develop new business models in response to these changes, the omnipresent needs of our students and our stakeholders for quality programming will continue; we must remain vigilante in our ability to respond. It is hyper-critical for our continued success that we develop protocols that transcend process silos reinforced through efforts such as staff cross training while pursuing new interdepartmental relationships that will result in improved performance.

4. Three to four tentative action projects –

Red Rocks Community College sees these projects as initial strategies that will focus our institution on the business of the College—teaching and learning.   We developed them through a year-long, college-wide planning process guided by our Student Success Committees. These action projects will makes us proficient in the continuous quality improvement cycle as we develop specific strategies, implement those ideas, assess their effectiveness, and make changes as needed. We are preparing to integrate these Action Projects into the life of the College. We have the expectation that these activities will produce specific, measurable results in a timely fashion. The College will use these projects to define and shape the teaching, the learning, and the student services that build student success.

✓ **Assessment of Student Learning –** Integrate the assessment of student learning strategies initiated by the Assessment Committee into Instruction as the first step in institutionalizing assessment as an ongoing function of the teaching and learning processes of Red Rocks Community College.
✓ **Enrollment Management –** Implement "student-friendly" processes refined from pilot initiatives conducted by the Enrollment Management Committee that seamlessly deliver admissions, registration, scheduling, advising and placement assessment services.
✓ **Advising –** Continue to refine the pilot initiatives of the Advising Committee as the next step toward institutionalizing the initiatives of faculty advising, academic alert system for students at risk of failure, and broadly disseminating "Tips for Success" a resource guide that can be used by advisors and faculty.
✓ **Learning Support Services –** Pursue the development of proposed initiatives of the Learning Support Services Committee that focus on targeted populations including underperforming students.   The Committee has designed implementation strategies for Tutors without Borders to increase the integration of learning support services in the classroom and Summer Bridging Programs to improve the academic and ESL preparation of prospective students from underrepresented populations.

Action Project Worksheet	*Challenging*	▮	☐	☐	☐	☐	*Easy*
Red Rocks Community College **Colorado**	*Complex*	☐	▮	☐	☐	☐	*Simple*
	High Payoff	▮	☐	☐	☐	☐	*Low Payoff*

Action Project idea # 1 : Institute Iterative Assessment Practices throughout Instructional Services

AQIP Criterion to which this primarily relates: Planning Continuous Improvement

Briefly describe what you would like this project to accomplish.

Embed throughout the instructional processes the continual improvement practice of setting clear learning and/or program expectations, systematically gathering, analyzing and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance is matching the expectations, and documenting the evidence as important information that will be used in planning subsequent program and or teaching modifications.

Where did the idea or stimulus for this project originate?

The Vital Focus' Constellation Survey and Conversation Day (10/2004) identified the need to improve the process of data driven decision making to achieve the measurable outcomes of student retention and student completion/graduation. The Assessment Committee was formed to prioritize goals and design the implementation strategies.

Which specific needs of your students or other external stakeholders would be better met if you accomplished this project? How?

The strategies associated with the classroom assessment goal are formative. They are designed to give students early feedback on progress, and help faculty formalize the process of deliberately reflecting on student performance. The formative strategies create tangible evidence that can guide instructional adjustments specific to improving student learning.

How would doing this project allow you to better meet your employees needs? Which, specifically?

Red Rocks Community College has a strong reputation among our stakeholders for excellence in teaching and the learning of our students. Other than summative evidence of tests, certification exams, and course grades we do not have consistent documentation of teaching practices that produce students prepared for transfer and workforce success. Without this evidence we are not as effective as we could be in planning and implementing improved teaching strategies.

How would accomplishing this project change or affect your institution's culture?

The initial implementation phase of assessment is focused on instructional processes. Our long range goal is to model across the institution the cycle of gathering performance data and measuring performance against clearly stated expectations. Public institutions of higher education in Colorado are required to document and show increased measures of student success defined as access, retention and completion. To achieve these objectives mandated as part of the state funding we receive, our teaching and learning and student support services must be seamlessly connected with the shared commitment to quality evidenced by the effective use of assessment's iterative cycle for program improvement.

What leadership and employee enthusiasm and support is there for doing this project now?

Assessment has been a continual challenge for us. We are constantly engaged in assessment activities as we intuitively react to student's needs. However our intuitive approach does not maximize the collective power we have as good teachers to build a culture of continual quality improvement. Formalizing the process of assessment will require faculty designed implementation with administration support and management. Our president has explicitly stated that instituting a strong assessment plan across instruction is a top priority.

Action Project Worksheet	Challenging	☐	◼	☐	☐	☐	Easy
Red Rocks Community College **Colorado**	Complex	☐	☐	◼	☐	☐	Simple
	High Payoff	◼	☐	☐	☐	☐	Low Payoff

Action Project idea # 2 : Create a Student Welcome Center, Improve Graduation Rates, and Increase Alternative Scheduling Options.

AQIP Criterion to which this primarily relates: Supporting Institutional Operations

Briefly describe what you would like this project to accomplish.

The three strategies identified by the Enrollment Management Committee (EMC) comprise the Action Project. The strategies will 1. Increase the number of students completing graduation applications, 2. Improve the retention of students by integrating block scheduling options of general transfer courses, and 3. Create a student welcome center that integrates admissions, enrollment and student support services.

Where did the idea or stimulus for this project originate?

The EMC explored improving student access services, increasing retention rates and improving graduation rates. The EMC analyzed retention data, conducted student surveys, visited other colleges, and met with staff from the student services departments. The strategies developed are based on best practices and research based approaches to the issues of access, retention and completion.

Which specific needs of your students or other external stakeholders would be better met if you accomplished this project? How?

1. The graduation strategy developed an awareness campaign alerting students to the benefits of applying for an associate's degree prior to transfer. 2. Block scheduling is highly correlated with improved retention. 3. The "Student Friendly Admissions and Registration Center" (Center) will physically centralize the services students' access upon entering the College. The physical relocation will be the impetus for seamless access and improve the interconnectedness between the student support services of admissions, advising, financial aid, High School relations, International Education, placement testing and student records. The Center will create more opportunities for other groups of the college to be engaged. Faculty will be actively involved as faculty advisors.

How would doing this project allow you to better meet your employees needs? Which, specifically?

1. Graduation rates are a measurable benchmark of the College's success. Opportunities to modify transfer agreements to include degrees as well as credits are intriguing to faculty. 2. The block scheduling offers logistic challenges but presents new opportunities for creativity among faculty such as linking courses, offering learning communities or maximizing the use of alternative learning options associated with hybrid (online and face-to-face) teaching. 3. The Center will create many more opportunities for professional development of staff associated with cross-training among the functions located in the Center.

How would accomplishing this project change or affect your institution's culture?

The Center will serve as an institutional model of how different departments can function seamlessly with the goal of improving the delivery of student support services.

What leadership and employee enthusiasm and support is there for doing this project now?

1. Staff are very positive about promoting graduation advantages. It's fairy simple with a large payoff. 2. Evidence of improved retention from Weekend College and accelerated online courses is a strong motivator to pursue this promising approach with general education courses. 3. While the physical move and associated remodel of the Center will be time consuming and somewhat challenging, the support of the concept of improving the seamless delivery of services has been well received. There is a general sense of excitement for the new service delivery model. The administration has already begun drafting the remodel plans.

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Action Project Worksheet

Red Rocks Community College
Colorado</td><td>Challenging</td><td>☐</td><td>■</td><td>☐</td><td>☐</td><td>☐</td><td>Easy</td></tr>
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Action Project idea # 3 : Disseminate Discipline Specific Information into General Advising and Create a Mentoring Program for Underperforming Students.

AQIP Criterion to which this primarily relates: Understanding Students and Other Stakeholders Needs.

Briefly describe what you would like this project to accomplish.

The Advising Committee (AC) has developed three strategies 1. Involve faculty in the general advising center to increase student access to discipline specific information as part of the initial advising visit. 2. Develop discipline specific and transfer specific advising TIPS for SUCCESS. Disseminate broadly in campus publications for use by general advisors and students. 3. Institute an academic alert process that pairs underperforming students with trained mentors.

Where did the idea or stimulus for this project originate?

1. & 2. The Constellation Survey responses from Vital Focus indicated faculty are concerned with the number of students that do not seek advising or receive discipline information from general advisors that may not be current. 3. Self reported CCSSE data from students indicated a strong belief that advising was important (80% of respondents) yet 60% has never used advising, and of those that had only 20% reported satisfaction with the services. More than 11% of our degree and certificate seeking students have GPAs below 2.0 which put them at risk of not completing their educational goals.

Which specific needs of your students or other external stakeholders would be better met if you accomplished this project? How?

1. & 2. Students will be more likely to access advising services if discipline specific information is offered as part of the initial general advising process. 3. Linking students with mentors trained from the ranks of faculty and students selected to be mentors is associated with improved performance in the research on student retention.

How would doing this project allow you to better meet your employees' needs? Which, specifically?

1. Faculty piloted working in the general advising center during spring registration. A survey of faculty participating indicated a strengthened sense of community. Favorable comments noted the benefit of students receiving discipline specific information prior to committing to class registration. Faculty also reported satisfaction with learning more about the College processes from the general advisors. The general advising staff reported satisfaction with faculty on site as a great benefit to students with discipline specific questions.

How would accomplishing this project change or affect your institution's culture?

1. & 2. General advising has operated as a separate function from instruction as the majority of the general advising functions are specific to admissions and registration processes. However, students' needs would be better met by having more of a one-stop concept where general advising and initial discipline specific advising are integrated. 3. Faculty and staff appreciate specific opportunities to get to work closely with students. Response from faculty and staff to be trained as mentors has been strong. However, students at risk are not quite as receptive. We are working on pursuing other motivators to encourage students to take advantage of the mentor services.

What leadership and employee enthusiasm and support is there for doing this project now?
The Advising Committee has developed sub committees that have engaged a broad spectrum of faculty and staff in the planning and implementation of the advising strategies. The administration is supporting the implementation of the advising strategies.

Action Project Worksheet	Challenging	☐	■	☐	☐	☐	Easy
Red Rocks Community College Colorado	Complex	☐	☐	■	☐	☐	Simple
	High Payoff	■	☐	☐	☐	☐	Low Payoff

Action Project idea # 4 : Increase Awareness and use of Learning Support Services.

AQIP Criterion to which this primarily relates: Helping Students Learn

Briefly describe what you would like this project to accomplish.

The Learning Support Services Committee has developed four strategies to improve student success in the classroom. 1. RRCC Exchange offers a Forum that convenes three times/semester facilitated by a student and faculty team to engage faculty, students and staff discussing educational issues as peers. 2. Develop a marketing plan to improve student awareness of learning support services on campus. 3. Bring tutors into the classroom during group and individual work time to help with specific assignments. 4. Improve the academic readiness of under performing high school graduates entering college by offering summer Boot Camps.

Where did the idea or stimulus for this project originate?

The Learning Support Services of tutoring and skills labs are offered in the Learning and Resource Center(LaRC)which is physically located separately from most of the instruction areas of the College. The CCSSE indicated a lower than average number of students used these services at Red Rocks than other colleges our size. Faculty also reported that in many cases students who need the help are not likely to go to the LaRC outside of class time. An average of 24% of recent high school graduates enrolling as first time freshmen at Red Rocks require remediation in one or more subjects of math, writing and/or reading.

Which specific needs of your students or other external stakeholders would be better met if you accomplished this project? How?

2. & 3. Improved awareness of Learning Support Services should increase use by students. Students will have additional learning support in the classroom. 4. Retention rates for students beginning in remedial education in college are less than 40%. The Boot Camp will give students options to prepare for assessment testing over the summer.

How would doing this project allow you to better meet your employees' needs? Which, specifically?

1. The Exchange helps faculty interact with students outside of the classroom on issues that are important to students which is correlated to higher retention. Staff benefit from having an opportunity to dialogue with students on a regular basis. 3. Faculty carry five classes and are typically responsible for the learning needs of more than 100 students each term. Introducing additional learning services in the classroom will increase the availability of faculty to assist students during class time.

How would accomplishing this project change or affect your institution's culture?

The Tutors without Borders concept of bringing tutoring to the classroom is exciting; however, it is a departure from the original design of the LaRC as a centralized hub of service centers that include writing and math labs, self help computer pods, one-on-one subject specific tutoring and scheduled group tutoring sessions. If successful the Tutors without Borders will drive the need to invest additional resources as the demand for tutoring resources will increase at least initially.

What leadership and employee enthusiasm and support is there for doing this project now?

The Learning Support Services committee has engaged a cross section of staff and faculty in the sub committees responsible for the design and implementation of the strategies. The administration is very supportive of the strategies and has acknowledged the importance of increasing the utilization of the learning services offered on campus.