COLORADO
Department of Higher Education

1600 Broadway, Suite 2200
Denver, CO 80202

Meeting	**Academic Council** **September 8, 2026** **1:00 – 3:00 pm**
Location	Remote ONLY
Call-In Information	Join Zoom Meeting Meeting ID: 822 4791 1046 Passcode: 874452
Meeting Participants	Provosts and Chief Academic Officers (CAOs) of the public institutions of higher education
Meeting Objectives	Members advise the Department on policy development and implementation, as well as other matters affecting higher education.

AGENDA

1. Greetings and Introductions

2. Approval of August Meeting Notes
   [see handout: 2026-08-11 NOTES-AC.pdf]
   The August 11, 2026 Academic Council meeting notes were approved. Motion and second were received without objection.

3. Announcements and Discussion Items
   a. Discussion of Fall Meeting Schedule and Participation in Joint Meetings with GE Council (October and November)
      CDHE staff informed members that the October and November Academic Council meetings will be combined with General Education (GE) Council meetings due to scheduling considerations and overlapping topics. Members requested advance calendar invitations and expressed concern about the GE Council's typical three-hour meeting duration. CDHE staff will explore structuring agendas to address Academic Council business first to accommodate participants with scheduling constraints.
   b. Updates from CCHE Advisor Michael Lightner

Advisor Lightner provided updates from recent CCHE and Student Success and Workforce Alignment Committee meetings. Topics included Transition Advisory Committee (TAC) activities, budget challenges, declining international enrollment, possible policy discussions regarding new degree approvals, three-year degree developments in other states, FAFSA fraud concerns, and national trends toward greater state-level oversight of institutional fiscal health. Committee discussions also focused on identifying short-term priorities related to student success and workforce alignment.

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

Members received an update on the TAC's ongoing work. Current efforts are focused on building a common understanding among committee members regarding Colorado's broader postsecondary ecosystem and preparing recommendations on system transition priorities. TAC recommendations are expected later this fall and will play a significant role in shaping implementation efforts.

d. Transfer initiatives update (Carl Einhaus)
   - Higher Education Transfer Audit

     CDHE staff reported continued progress implementing recommendations from the Office of the State Auditor's Higher Education Transfer Audit. Proposed revisions to the GT Pathways and Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) policies have been shared with stakeholders and discussed by both the CCHE Transfer Subcommittee and Student Success and Workforce Alignment Committee. Policy revisions will be presented as a discussion item at the upcoming CCHE meeting and are anticipated for action in October. Additional audit-related work includes development of military credit reporting training and an annual transfer outcomes report. CDHE expects all audit recommendations to be completed by early October.
   - CCHE Transfer Subcommittee

     The Transfer Subcommittee discussed proposed transfer and PLA policy revisions, stakeholder feedback processes, and student advising and navigation strategies. Members explored ways to help students better identify career interests, understand educational pathways, and connect skills and interests with workforce opportunities while maintaining flexibility for changing student goals.
   - Policy Revisions Progress Report

e. Reduced-Credit Bachelor's Degree summary report (Brad Griffith)

CDHE staff reviewed the public feedback process underway for GT Pathways and PLA policy revisions. Institutions and stakeholder groups were encouraged to continue submitting comments. Staff emphasized the department's commitment to transparent stakeholder engagement as part of policy development and implementation.

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

The meeting recording concluded prior to the institutional check-in and open forum discussion. No summary is included.

4. New, modified, and closed programs

   The proposed new programs were presented for informational purposes. No concerns or objections were raised during the meeting.

   a. New
      - Colorado State University
         - Bachelor of Science in Conservation and Environmental Leadership
         - Bachelor of Science in Geosciences

   b. Modified
      - None

   c. Closed Programs
      - Adams State University
         - Graduate Certificate in Public Administration
      - Colorado State University
         - Bachelor of Science in Geology
         - Bachelor of Science in Natural Resource Tourism
         - Bachelor of Science in Human Dimensions of Natural Resources

ACTION ITEMS

Issue	Action / Next Step	Assigned To & Date Assigned