Coyote Community College Case Study
Organization Overview

1. Basic Description of the Organization

Coyote Community College is a comprehensive, two-year public college that serves and strengthens the greater Albuquerque, New Mexico, community by providing postsecondary education and learning opportunities to all who want to identify and develop their abilities and interests. Since 1968, Coyote’s programs and services have been providing accessible, affordable, high-quality higher education opportunities in a learning environment that encourages challenging, innovative teaching methods and delivery systems that enhance student learning. Coyote is a commuter college with a main campus in downtown Albuquerque and two branch campuses: one located in Bernalillo, 20 miles north of Albuquerque, and the other in Armijo, southeast of downtown Albuquerque. The campus in Albuquerque accounts for 44 percent of Coyote’s enrollment, the Bernalillo campus accounts for 25 percent, and the Armijo campus accounts for 31 percent.

With a total enrollment of 19,880 students, Coyote is the largest community college and the second largest state-supported postsecondary institution in New Mexico. As an open access institution, any New Mexico resident who is a high school graduate or Graduate Equivalency Degree (GED) recipient may enroll at Coyote. The college’s tuition rates for state residents are typically 60 percent lower than tuition charged by neighboring colleges or universities.

Coyote’s innovative, community-centered educational programs are designed to meet a variety of academic, career, and personal educational goals. Program offerings fall into one of three general areas: (1) General Education, University Transfer Education, and Developmental Education; (2) Workforce Development, Certificate Programs, and Continuing Education; and (3) Community Education and Outreach. The majority of these programs lead to the award of diplomas, degrees, or certificates. Coyote also provides high-quality student support services and resources in collaboration with community agencies to enable students to formulate their goals and pursue them realistically. These services include academic and occupational counseling, job and educational placement services, assistance in obtaining financial aid, and special needs programs.

Programs and offerings in the area of (1) General Education, University Transfer Education, and Developmental Education enable students to achieve academic and personal goals, enter the job market, or, in some cases, to successfully transfer to four-year colleges and universities. Coyote offers Associate of Arts (AA) degrees in liberal arts, business administration, education, hotel and restaurant management, computer science, pre-engineering, and biological sciences. AA degrees are intended for students transferring to four-year colleges and universities such that no remedial coursework is required upon transfer. Occupational programs in technical, vocational, and paraprofessional fields lead to an Associate of Science (AS) degree or a certificate. Occupational programs also provide retraining and upgrading of skills in these fields so that students are qualified to meet current needs of the labor market. AS degrees are generally not intended for transfer to four-year institutions. Students who do transfer with AS degrees are required to take additional remedial courses as required by each specific degree program. Students may select from 30 occupational programs, including computer technology; computer applications; day care management; nursing; retailing; computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacturing (CAD/CAM); graphic design technology; biotechnology; heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC); hydrological technology; and contract administration. In the area of Developmental Education, Coyote offers General Education Development (GED) preparation courses, courses in English as a Second Language (ESL), and strong remedial courses in math, reading, and writing. Sixty percent of all Coyote students enrolled in traditional college courses enroll in at least one remedial course, and 15 percent enroll in an ESL course.

In the area of (2) Workforce Development, Certificate Programs, and Continuing Education, Coyote provides custom-designed, on-site training, courses, and services that meet the needs of local businesses. In partnership with several local employers, Coyote offers contract training for computer networking technicians, water management specialists, office managers, contract administrators, and prison guards. Coyote also offers intensive ESL and remedial English and math courses under contract. In addition, Coyote offers a wide variety of short-term certification courses, such as Network Administrator, Network Engineer, Advanced Office Automation, Systems Engineer, Quality Auditor, Purchasing Manager, and Certified Nursing Assistant, to the general public and by contract. Continuing Education programs address those students who wish to improve professional skills, acquire new skills, or expand their fields of knowledge and general interest.

In the area of (3) Community Education and Outreach, Coyote provides programs and community services that offer multicultural, recreational, and community development activities to meet the needs of lifelong learners. These activities, which include a Women in Transition program, the Coyote Cultural Center, an Elder Learning Center, and a day care center, also encourage the use of community college facilities and services by all citizens of the community for educational and cultural purposes.

Coyote’s main campus occupies 55 acres near downtown Albuquerque. This includes seven classroom/lab buildings that feature state-of-the-art computer, CAD/CAM, electronics, and science labs. Coyote’s branch campus in Armijo formerly housed a vocational technical high school. This campus now houses labs for the hospitality, HVAC, hydrology, and...
electronics manufacturing programs. The facility in Bernalillo, which occupies five floors in an office building, offers a variety of classes that primarily serve the Native American population from nearby reservations. Although ESL and remedial classes are available at all three campuses, the Bernalillo campus serves as the college’s ESL/Remedial Center. All sites are able to accommodate the needs of the off-campus students who require occasional use of Coyote’s facilities. All facilities are located within four blocks of a major traffic artery to provide easy commutes for students, faculty, and staff.

**Principal Types of Students**

Students at Coyote are divided among (1) those enrolled in traditional college credit degree curricula, (2) those enrolled in noncredit contract training and in short-term certificate courses, and (3) those involved in the community outreach programs. Because of demands placed on their resources and time by employers, family, and others, students tend to pursue their education intermittently, and approximately 75 percent of students attend Coyote on a part-time basis. The average age of the students is 28. Women account for 58 percent of Coyote’s enrollment. The breakdown of students by ethnicity is shown in Figure 0-1. Ninety-two percent of the students at Coyote are residents of either Sandoval or Bernalillo counties. The majority of nonresident students come to Coyote through the contract training program.

Enrollment numbers are calculated as a straight headcount. The Full Time Equivalent (FTE) of these enrollment numbers is calculated only for credit courses, as designated under the New Mexico funding formula. FTE is calculated by multiplying the number of students by the number of credit hours taken per student and dividing by 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
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**Figure 0-1 Student Ethnicity**

There are 11,500 students (7,000 FTE) enrolled in the General Education, University Transfer Education, and Developmental Education curricula. Approximately 27 percent of these students recently graduated from high school, while 65 percent have been out of school for four or more years and are considered First Time In College (FTIC) students. Over 52 percent of the General Education and University Transfer students are using Coyote as a bridge to four-year degree curricula, while saving significant costs in their education. The remainder of credit students want an Associate Degree as a foundation for entry into the area workforce. Over 75 percent of students enrolled in these curricula work full- or part-time and recognize the need for higher learning in their personal development. Approximately 44 percent of students enrolled in these curricula receive financial aid from federal, state, or local programs, and 28 percent of these students receive employer reimbursement.

(2) There are 8,380 students enrolled in Workforce Development, Certificate Programs, and Continuing Education courses. Most of these curricula involve noncredit contract training and short-term courses. Since a very small portion of Coyote’s state funding is based on the headcount for noncredit students, an FTE equivalent is not calculated for these students. Over 93 percent of the students enrolled in Workforce Development, Certificate Programs, and Continuing Education courses are employed either full- or part-time, and most are seeking new skills that will make them more valuable in the workplace market. Most of these students also desire additional learning to advance within their current skill area and with their current employer. Others want to redirect their careers to a new field. Approximately 84 percent of the tuition costs for students in Workforce Development, Certificate Programs, and Continuing Education are paid by their employers.

(3) Coyote’s Community Education and Outreach programs primarily serve the college’s two-county service area, which has 434,000 taxpaying residents. More than 9 percent of the adult population in the two surrounding counties attends at least one course, program, or event within an academic year. For example, Coyote’s Native American Cultural Celebration, held the last weekend of April, has the second highest attendance of any annual public event in the state, exceeded only by the annual hot air balloon festival. Headcount numbers for Community Education and Outreach programs are not included in Coyote’s total enrollment figures since these programs involve only noncredit courses, programs, and events, and the state does not include these numbers in its funding formula.

**Faculty and Staff Base**

Coyote employs 280 full-time faculty, 830 adjunct (part-time) faculty, 40 administrators, and 150 support staff. The faculty are members of the National Education Association union. Fifty percent of full-time faculty hold a master’s degree, 40 percent hold doctoral degrees, and 10 percent hold bachelor’s degrees. Adjunct faculty, many of whom are working in the field in which they teach, hold at least a bachelor’s degree. Seventy-five percent of the administrators hold a master’s degree or higher.

The average length of employment of all faculty and staff at Coyote, including part-time faculty, is ten years. However, many faculty and staff members have been employed at Coyote for 20 years. The average age of the faculty is 46. The average age of administrators is also 46, but their average length of service is 8 years. The ethnic mix of faculty and staff is 67 percent White, 21 percent Hispanic, 5 percent Native American, 4 percent African American, and 3 percent Other. Coyote is working towards increasing both Native American
and Hispanic representation on the faculty. Faculty and staff members are about evenly divided by gender.

**Relationship to Parent Organization**

As a state community college, Coyote operates within the guidelines of the New Mexico Commission on Higher Education and is approved by the New Mexico State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC). The SBCC is the leading advocate for the entire community college system with the state Department of Education, the state legislature, other state agencies, and the public. The SBCC also establishes standards, policies, and practices required for New Mexico’s community colleges, and it assesses and coordinates educational needs and services in the best interest of the entire state. For example, the SBCC appropriates state funding, approves tuition rates, approves programs and offerings, approves major construction and repairs, and sets qualifications for student admission.

Coyote’s oversight body is the Board of Governors (BOG). The members of Coyote’s BOG are elected by voters in seven geographical districts within the two-county region the college serves. Funding for programs and for most construction and equipment comes from a property tax levy in the two-county region and annual appropriations by the New Mexico legislature. Coyote’s BOG approves spending over $50,000, intergovernmental agreements, bond spending, building improvements, and construction. The BOG also provides continuous evaluation and assessment of Coyote’s policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that the college is fulfilling its mission and achieving its purposes. In addition, Coyote has a private non-profit foundation for private contributions, which are increasing every year.

Coyote is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCACS), and 12 individual programs are certified or accredited by other appropriate organizations. Coyote was reviewed by the NCACS in 1998 and is scheduled for another review in 2008. Coyote is also responsive to a variety of federal, state, and local regulations, including the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations, federal and state financial aid regulations, and affirmative action guidelines. Coyote complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

### 2. Student and Stakeholder Requirements

Although Coyote’s primary stakeholders are its students, key stakeholders also include college faculty and staff, four-year colleges and universities to which Coyote’s students transfer, local employers, the New Mexico SBCC, Coyote’s BOG, and the surrounding community at large, including local taxpayers. The requirements of the primary stakeholders are shown in Figure 0-2.

### 3. Relationships to Other Organizations

There are ten public high schools and four private high schools in Coyote’s two-county service area. The college communicates expectations regarding the required performance level of its incoming students through partnerships with area high schools and specific articulation agreements. These articulation agreements define the requirements of both Coyote and the partner schools in terms of what skills and abilities are linked to student success. This usually includes a list of critical skills in major academic areas and suggested high school courses. In addition, Coyote faculty serve on curriculum advisory boards in the local school districts and work closely with members of the English and math faculties at the local high schools.

Coyote is also proud of its partnerships with the colleges and universities to which the majority of its credit students transfer. Faculty members from these universities serve on Coyote’s Curriculum Advisory Teams. In addition, articulation agreements with all four-year institutions in the region are in place for all of Coyote’s university transfer programs (AA degrees),

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Acquisition of needed skills and knowledge, learning skill development, accessibility, flexibility in scheduling, affordability, increased capacity for self-directed learning, responsive services, effective curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty/Staff</td>
<td>Receive professional development, feedback, support, recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-year colleges and universities</td>
<td>Strong student academic foundations compatible with higher learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers</td>
<td>Current/future employees’ acquisition of needed skills/knowledge/attitude, cost efficient learning, innovative problem-solving and team skills, leadership skills, computer proficiency, professional proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBCC and BOG</td>
<td>Return for dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxpayers and community</td>
<td>Fulfillment of education needs that are not met by other institutions, support to region/state, efficient expenditure of funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Figure 0-2 Stakeholder Requirements
Coyote continues to explore alternative means of meeting valid
sors to design their schedules to meet their completion goals.

Students interested in these degree programs meet with advi-

bination of self-paced study and traditional on-campus classes.

aid (needed to meet the high tuition costs). Coyote offers
opportunities for shortened degree completion through a com-

centrated schedules and aggressive assistance with financial

requirements of shortened cycle times while still achieving
competency goals. While proprietary colleges often leave
graduates deeply in debt, Coyote attempts to keep tuition and
fees to a minimum to reduce the need for student borrowing.

A key differentiator of on-line programs offered by out-of-
state colleges is convenience. Students can attend on-line
courses any time of the day or night to accommodate their
busy and sometimes changing schedules. Coyote is responding
to this need by developing both on-line and video-based pro-
grams. In addition, Coyote's key differentiator is that it focuses
on preparing graduates to be successful in the local community.
Input of local employers in the planning process, new pro-
gram design, and student internships enables Coyote's gradu-
ates to find desirable jobs in the local community more easily
and to succeed at those jobs.

Coyote's growing, individualized, technology-based delivery of
education programs with related support services (individu-
alized program design and certification), which is targeted to
employed adult students with needs for specific skill develop-
ment, is another important competitive advantage. Planning is
focused on providing learning excellence through use of state-
of-the-art learning technologies to expand the off-campus
student population while retaining the current levels of on-
campus students.

The principal factors that determine competitive success
include accessibility, flexibility in scheduling, affordability,
ability to offer high value at a low cost, the effectiveness of
the curriculum, the time to complete programs, and the range
of programs offered.

5. Organizational Directions

Dr. Gayle Brooks, who previously served as Deputy Provost at
McMoto Industrial University, was selected as Coyote’s
President in 1992, with a mandate to reverse a six-year-long
trend of declining enrollment and diminishing student success.
In the last eight years, Coyote has shown steady increases in
enrollment and in student success as judged by student
employment rates and acceptance rates by four-year colleges
and universities. The foundation of this turnaround was the
establishment of a common mission, vision, and values
(Figure 0-3). These provide continuing direction for the col-
lege and drive specific goals to stretch Coyote’s capabilities.

In 1994, under the direction of Dr. Brooks, Coyote developed
and adopted LEARN, a three-point philosophy of education.
These three points are:

- **Learning Excellence**: All aspects of the education process
  are learner-centered, and the needs of the learner are para-
mount. Recognition of the diversity of learning styles and
  rates of learning is fundamental. Technology is used as a
  tool to facilitate learning.
- **Assessment**: Assessment of learning is ongoing for both
  learners and learning facilitators. Technology is a tool to
facilitate the assessment of processes associated with learning.

• Recognizing Needs: It is imperative to identify and respond to the needs of all of Coyote’s stakeholders. Needs vary by stakeholder, as shown in Figure 0-2.

The LEARN philosophy is now the foundation for all leadership decisions and strategic initiatives, and it is inherent in the measures Coyote uses to monitor performance. Implementing the tenets of LEARN requires a combination of innovative on- and off-campus approaches, using electronic media and other technologies for both individual and group learning, learning assessment, and needs recognition.

For many years, Coyote defined its uniqueness by focusing on Albuquerque’s unserved and underserved populations, with strong emphasis on meeting the needs of traditional learners. For example, to meet the needs of New Mexico’s large indigenous, non-English-speaking population, Coyote developed an outstanding ESL program. While the LEARN philosophy is helping Coyote to maintain a focus on traditional learners, it is also identifying new student groups to help support the college’s strategic directions in the area of increasing access. The new focus groups include economically disadvantaged students, single parents, and physically disabled students.

As a result of implementing LEARN, Coyote recently identified the following three key technology-based strategies designed to improve student learning and meet learner requirements. Each of these strategies is currently at different levels of implementation within the college:

1. Incorporation of technologies into the traditional classroom: In order to enhance student learning, instructors are being encouraged to incorporate multimedia into traditional delivery techniques.

2. Technology mediation allowing individually paced learning: Computer-based instruction allows learners to begin precisely at their current level of knowledge and progress through structured materials at their own pace. Monthly start dates of sequenced courses allow students to proceed to the next course when ready, with no delays or potential loss of learning due to waiting.

3. Distance learning delivery methods: A variety of technologies allow Coyote to meet learner needs. An interactive video system (teleclasses) ties the three campuses together to decrease the need for students to drive from one campus to another. This also allows Coyote to offer some traditionally low enrollment courses that meet specific student needs, including upper-level foreign language and math classes. On-line courses offered via the Internet and video-based courses (telecourses) offered via cable television and video cassette checkout meet the needs of students with difficult schedules and geographic constraints.

Prior to 1995, Coyote viewed each campus as a separate educational unit. Academic leadership was provided by a Campus President, each campus had its own faculty, and there were some differences in program offerings from campus to campus. However, as Coyote moved toward adopting the LEARN philosophy, campus leaders recognized that education does not necessarily occur solely in a campus facility, and students are not campus-specific in their orientation. With technology-mediated instructional methods, including teleclasses, telecourses, and on-line courses, these campus distinctions became increasingly less useful. As a result, Coyote reorganized faculty into discipline-related academic divisions rather than campus-specific groups. The college also eliminated Campus President positions and created Campus Director positions, whose responsibilities are limited to facility management and involve no academic oversight. These changes have allowed full integration of Coyote’s educational delivery processes and prevent fragmentation of educational services.
Student Performance Results

As discussed in Item 6.1, Coyote uses a variety of high-level measures to demonstrate overall student performance. Since the adoption of LEARN and related processes, Coyote has organized its team structure to drive learning processes that are the same regardless of where learning takes place. Whether learning takes place on one of Coyote’s three campuses, off-site as contract training or a telecourse, or on-line, the processes that drive learning are all the same. Although the Leadership Team and Learning Team, in particular, are able to track results segmented by learning place, especially when opportunities for improvement are identified, those results are too extensive to present here. Therefore, the results presented in Category 7 are only segmented by issues critical to Coyote’s current strategic action plans.

Results for Student Persistence (Figure 7.1-1) show the percentage of First Time in College (FTIC) students retained from fall to spring or from spring to the following fall. These results are segmented by full-time and part-time students, and by the three focus groups that have been incorporated into strategic planning.

Coyote’s results for the percentage of students who complete Occupational Degree and Certificate programs (Figure 7.1-2) are the benchmark for community colleges in New Mexico. Many of Coyote’s programs offer some type of licensure or certification exam. Pass rates for each of these exams has been tracked independently since 1992, and are aggregated by exam type. Figure 7.1-3 segments the results for nursing, since this is one of the college’s larger exams. Results for Passing Rates on Licensure and Certification Exams (Figure 7.1-3) are shown as a percent improvement since the number of students taking each exam, the difficulty of the exam, and the pass rates all can vary significantly between exams.

Another indicator Coyote uses to monitor student performance on an ongoing basis is Course Completion Rates (Figure 7.1-4). These rates represent the percentage of students that complete credit courses with a “C” or better, measured at the end of each fall, spring, and summer semester.

Coyote’s ability to provide quality transfer courses and programs is critical to ensure student success at four-year colleges.

Figure 7.1-1 Student Persistence

Figure 7.1-2 Students Who Complete Occupational Degree and Certificate Programs

Figure 7.1-3 Passing Rates on Licensure and Certification Exams

Figure 7.1-4 Course Completion Rates
and universities. Coyote has an arrangement with all four-year state institutions in New Mexico through which the college can track Student Success at Transfer Institutions (Figure 7.1-5). Coyote obtains the university graduation GPA of Coyote’s transfer students compared to the graduation GPA of students who entered the university as freshmen. The SBCC provides Coyote with the state average for this measure to use as a comparison. Coyote’s results are well above the state average.

Coyote also tracks the median hourly wage of its graduates (Figure 7.1-7) and compares results to the median wage of workers in the surrounding area. This is an indication that Coyote’s graduates are able both to earn more and to increase their earning potential faster than the average area worker.

Coyote administers exams for both incoming students and graduating students that can be used to assess the quality of math and English skills. A measure of the success of Coyote’s program comes from the improvement for individual students between their entrance and exit from Coyote. The drop in improvement in math in 1997 reflects the results of a
statewide recruiting effort for high-achieving math students in 1995. Because these students had higher than average beginning math skills, there was less room for improvement prior to their 1997 graduation (Figure 7.1-8).

As a state community college, Coyote is required to have all of its second year students in AA and AS programs take the New Mexico State Competency Examination (NMSCE).

This examination tests basic competencies in reading, writing, and mathematics. Coyote’s pass rates for the NMSCE are shown in Figure 7.1-9. Data provided by the SBCC indicate that the average NMSCE results for all New Mexico community colleges are in the low 80s for reading and writing, and in the low 70s for math. Even the average state university scores are only slightly higher than Coyote’s scores.

In many of Coyote’s occupational programs and AS degree programs, exams are administered to assess students’ competence for entering their targeted occupation. Each of these exams has a minimum level considered as passing. Coyote measures the ratio of each student’s actual score to the corresponding minimum standard to determine how well it is preparing students to excel in their chosen occupations. Students not meeting minimum standards (failing) have a ratio of less than 100%; students exceeding minimum standards (passing) have scores at or above 100% (Figure 7.1-10).

A key measure of the effectiveness of Coyote’s English as a Second Language (ESL) and remedial math and English courses is the percentage of students who can pass Coyote’s entrance exams after taking the preparatory program one time. Students who are repeating these programs are not included in this metric (Figure 7.1-11)