

The Two-Year Degree — Sources & Supporting Documentation

Companion to the deck and the one-pager. Every claim in the plan links back to the page it came from. All links verified August 12-13, 2026.

The short version

A 60-credit **Associate of Science in Computer Science** at one of four local, regionally accredited community colleges – Front Range, Community College of Denver, Red Rocks, or Arapahoe. At the family's two-course-a-semester pace it's **eight semesters** – the college's own part-time map says the same – and a strong placement score plus summer courses can pull it shorter. The only open questions are **which campus** (default FRCC, with named switch rules) and **how many courses this fall** (decided by the placement-test rule).

1. The degree is real, and it's the same at all four schools

Claim: The AS in Computer Science is a 60-credit statewide "Degree with Designation" – the curriculum is identical at every Colorado community college, which is why the campus choice is pure fit.

- Colorado Department of Higher Education, *Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreement – Computer Science* (signed August 2020). The actual agreement, signature page and all:
https://www.coloradomesa.edu/transfer/documents/statewide-agreements/staa_computer-science-august-2020-final-with-signature-page.pdf
- FRCC's own catalog entry for the AS-CS, showing the 60-credit requirement and the statewide agreement references: <https://frontrange.smartcatalogiq.com/en/current/catalog/program-information/my-academic-plans-maps/business-and-information-technology/computer-science/computer-science-associate-of-science/>
- RRCC's Computer Technology page, describing the AS in CS as aligned with the Colorado Statewide Articulation Agreement: <https://www.rccc.edu/academic-programs/computer-technology>

Note: the plan doesn't depend on transferring anywhere. The agreement is cited here because it's the proof that the degree is standardized statewide – the same 60 credits no matter which campus.

The actual course spine (from the catalogs)

- **CS core (12 credits):** CSC 1060 Computer Science I → CSC 1061 Computer Science II → CSC 2025 Computer Architecture/Assembly.

- **Math ladder:** MAT 1340 College Algebra → MAT 1420 Trigonometry (or MAT 1440 Pre-Calculus) → MAT 2410 Calculus I → MAT 2420 Calculus II. The remaining credits are general education and electives.
- ACC's 2026-27 catalog and CCD's course catalog are the references:
<https://www.arapahoe.edu/academics-programs/programs/computer-science>
<https://catalog.ccd.edu/programs-courses/courses/mat/>

2. Accreditation

Claim: All four are public colleges in the Colorado Community College System, regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Nothing for-profit, nothing competency-based.

- HLC institutional directory – look up any of the four schools: <https://www.hlcommission.org/>
- ACC additionally holds the NSA/DHS Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense designation (see section 3).

3. The four campuses — the case for each

FRCC — the logistics pick

Three physical campuses plus online sections, so the commute works no matter which side of town life lands on. FRCC's own published part-time map for this degree runs **8 semesters (3 years), summers included** – which is where the plan's honest pacing comes from.

- AS-CS catalog page (see section 1)
- Campus locations (Westminster, Longmont, Fort Collins) – footer of every page:
<https://www.frontrange.edu/>

CCD — the online-flexibility pick

Downtown on the Auraria campus, with a deep online/hybrid catalog.

- Program page (verified Aug 12, 2026) – Computer Science (Transfer) AS listed at 60–62 credits under “Colorado Guaranteed Transfer,” and per the page, **24–73% of the program is available online or hybrid**: <https://www.ccd.edu/program/information-technology>

RRCC — the networking pick

The strongest lane for network and systems work – the curriculum runs alongside tracks in networking, cybersecurity, and secure software development, with classroom, hybrid, and online formats.

- Computer Technology program page: <https://www.rrcc.edu/academic-programs/computer-technology>

ACC — the cyber-credential pick

The strongest credential brand of the four.

- NSA/DHS Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense – ACC’s own program page states it has “met rigorous requirements outlined by the NSA”: <https://www.arapahoe.edu/academics-programs/programs/cybersecurity>
- NSA’s own announcement listing Arapahoe Community College among designated schools: <https://www.nsa.gov/Press-Room/News-Highlights/Article/Article/2040081/nsa-congratulates-centers-of-academic-excellence-cae/>
- The Lockheed Martin hiring pipeline (Software Associate Degree Program / SWAP) – ACC news: <https://www.arapahoe.edu/news/acc-and-lockheed-martin-developing-tech-workforce>
- Independent write-up on ACC’s apprenticeship and employer pipeline work (New America, 2026): <https://www.newamerica.org/insights/community-colleges-and-apprenticeship-the-promise-the-challenge/community-college-intermediaries-in-cybersecurity-and-technology/>

One fact that shrinks the campus question

Online sections are **pooled across the CCCS system** (“CO Online @ Consortium”) – a student enrolled at any of the four can take online sections taught at the others. So “which campus” is a question about lanes and logistics, not about access to online courses.

- ACC’s course-schedule page describing the pooled consortium: <https://www.arapahoe.edu/academics-programs/course-schedules-0>

4. Getting in

Claim: Open enrollment at all four – apply online, take the math placement test, enroll. No essays, no transcripts, no rejection letters.

- The placement test is the College Board Accuplacer NextGen – untimed, adaptive, by appointment. AAF subtest ≥ 280 places above College Algebra (skips MAT 1340 entirely). CCCS course catalogs document the cut scores: <https://catalog.pikespeak.edu/courses/mat/>
- The one step that belongs between applying and enrolling: **meet an advisor to map all 60 credits against real section offerings**. That’s the mechanism that keeps the schedule honest.

5. The calendar (verified Aug 13, 2026)

Claim: Classes start **Monday, August 17, 2026** – systemwide. This week is the real deadline week.

- FRCC Fall 2026 academic calendar – classes begin Mon Aug 17 · last day to drop 15-week classes with refund Wed Sep 2 · classes end Mon Dec 7 · grades posted Thu Dec 10: <https://www.frontrange.edu/programs-courses/academic-calendars/index.html>
- CCD’s academic calendar shows the same Aug 17 start: <https://www.ccd.edu/academic-calendar>

- Placement-test logistics differ by campus (appointment-only at FRCC and RRCC; ACC charges a fee and enforces a 24-hour retake wait) – which is why “book the test today” is step one.
- December’s grades are the plan’s first real decision point: that’s when the finish date gets set out loud, with data.

6. What got ruled out

- **WGU / SNHU-style online programs** – competency-based, no campus, no local network. Judgment call: the whole point is a real, recognizable, accredited credential with actual humans and tutoring nearby.
- **Bootcamps (Turing et al.)** – no accredited degree at the end. A certificate isn’t the goal; the credential is.

7. The weekly rhythm and the honest pacing

Claim: School fits inside a 24-hour weekly cap – 13 hours of classwork, 6 hours of projects, 5 hours of buffer.

- The cap is the plan’s own number – built around newborn life, with the buffer doing the honest work.
- At two courses a semester (what the cap allows), 60 credits takes **eight semesters** – this matches FRCC’s official part-time map exactly. One summer course a year and a placement score that skips College Algebra pull the finish toward 2029.
- One scheduling rule from the math department, baked into the plan: **math in consecutive semesters, no gaps** – retention drops when the ladder gets paused.

Companion files

FILE	WHAT IT IS
two-year-plan/The Two-Year Degree – Deck.pdf	The 12-slide deck, presentation form
two-year-plan/The Two-Year Degree – Slideshow.html	Same deck as a self-playing slideshow
one-pager/The Two-Year Degree – One-Pager.pdf	The family discussion page
This report	Every claim, linked

Verified August 12-13, 2026. If a link ever rots, the claim it supports is quoted right next to it.