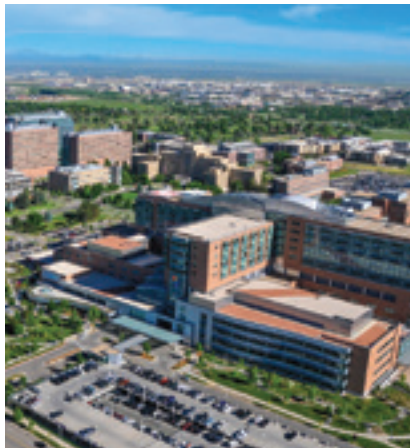




**CU BOARD OF REGENTS**

# Strategic Framework



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University of Colorado

Boulder | Colorado Springs | Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus



## LETTER FROM REGENTS

December 2017

Every day, in our roles as regents for the University of Colorado, we share ideas, questions, concerns and comments with our fellow board members. Decisions are never made by just one or two of us. We work together to address the issues facing our institution.

This collaborative process is critical to ensuring that the needs of all students, alumni, faculty and stakeholders are effectively met. Without conversation, compromise and even a bit of friendly debate, we would not be able to represent the voices of others. Without this discourse, we would not be a national and global leader in numerous academic fields, and we would not be attracting students from around the world to study at our four illustrious campuses. Without collaboration, we simply would not be strong enough to thrive.

We took this truth to heart in the development of this strategic vision. We knew when we began this process – nearly a year ago – that we would not be able to create a vision that would meet the needs of all parties involved if we did not take the time to gather input from many disparate sources. We knew that collaboration was the key, because we see it every day in our work on the board of regents. Divided, we fail. Together, we're strong.

This document includes the insight and wisdom of many individuals from many different groups and levels of seniority, representing all four University of Colorado campuses. For many months, we have held countless discussions and gone through numerous rounds of revisions to land on what you see in front of you today. One of our core university values is and has always been inclusivity. Only when we are capturing diverse voices from different backgrounds and experiences can we build a truly collaborative vision for our collective good.

The development of this strategic vision was a labor of love by hundreds of individuals deeply invested in the success and prosperity of our university. Each and every one of us is passionate about the University of Colorado, and you'll see and feel that passion reflected in our shared vision. In the document, you'll find five elements of excellence. As your board of regents, we're committed to upholding and pursuing these key elements on a daily basis, and we hope you'll join us in carrying these themes forward into the future.

We're very excited about the end result, and we feel confident that this vision will live on for years to come, guiding our footsteps toward a brighter tomorrow.



Top from left, Jack Kroll, John Carson, Stephen C. Ludwig, Heidi Ganahl, Kyle Hybl;  
bottom, Sue Sharkey, Irene Griego, Glen Gallegos and Linda Shoemaker

## LETTER FROM PRESIDENT BRUCE BENSON



Vision statements tend to be long and lofty, carried along by high-minded aspirations and soaring rhetoric. My vision for the University of Colorado is simple – I want CU to be among the top universities in the world.

The university's Board of Regents shares this goal and together, we are working to achieve that aim. A simple vision statement is the best way to provide direction for a complex university with four unique

campuses. It serves as a North Star that guides us in our service to our state and nation. The underpinnings of that vision are obviously many, and they manifest themselves in myriad ways on our campuses and in communities.

This strategic vision document takes steps to go beyond the simple aspiration to be among the best in the world, articulating who we are, what we do and why it matters. It identifies four strategic cornerstones that form the foundation of the university's work and provides a contextual framework for our activities.

Our rapidly changing world and society offer challenges that public universities such as ours are uniquely suited to address. In doing so, we will bring to bear all the excellence, commitment and collaboration necessary to meet our mission and achieve our vision.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The University of Colorado and the state whose name it proudly shares were founded in 1876, and their fortunes have intertwined since. As the state grew, so did the university, meeting the needs of Coloradans, their communities, business and industry and the nonprofit sector. Colorado is a state with diverse people and economic sectors, and CU meets the needs of both.

The university is a four-campus system with substantial strengths in teaching, research, community service and health and wellness. CU offers an array of undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees, all advancing the lives of individuals as well as the economy, health and culture of Colorado and beyond.

CU embraces its mission as a public university, one committed to improving the lives of Coloradans, the vibrant state of Colorado, the nation and world. The university continues to grow and evolve alongside the state it is proud to serve. And in doing so, it will live up to its promise as a leader in public higher education.

## The University of Colorado's Foundation: Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles

The University of Colorado's vision is to be one of the greatest university systems in the world; an engine of leading-edge teaching, discovery and inclusivity. This vision is aspirational, a North Star that guides it to the future. This document's foundation carries forward the University of Colorado's Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles adopted by the CU Board of Regents:

### MISSION

The University of Colorado is a public research university with multiple campuses serving Colorado, the nation and the world through leadership in high-quality education and professional training, public service, advancing research and knowledge, and state-of-the-art health care. Each campus has a distinct role and mission as provided by Colorado law.

### VISION

The University of Colorado will be a premier, accessible and transformative public university that provides a quality and affordable education with outstanding teaching, learning, research, service and health care. Through collaboration, innovation, technology and entrepreneurship, CU will expand student success, diversity and the economic foundation of the state of Colorado.

Each of CU's four campuses fulfills a unique role in serving Colorado. The overall University Mission and Vision complement and help guide each campus.

CU has four campuses: Boulder (1876), Colorado Springs (1965), Denver (1973) and the CU Anschutz Medical Campus (2006) in Aurora. CU has more than 63,000 students, some 7,800 faculty, and an annual budget of \$4.1 billion. CU researchers attracted more than \$1.05 billion in research funding in fiscal year 2016-17. Academic prestige is exemplified by five Nobel laureates, nine MacArthur "genius" Fellows, 20 astronauts and 19 Rhodes Scholars. The university plays a profound role in the lives of individuals, businesses and communities throughout Colorado, across the country and around the world. CU has nearly a half-million alumni who are leaders in business, science, the arts, health care, teaching and their communities. Approximately 15,000 new alumni join them each year.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To provide further operational guidance to university leadership, the Board of Regents adopted the University's Guiding Principles. The principles are specific enough to be meaningful yet broad enough to remain relevant in an evolving society.

Consistent with the legal obligations and responsibilities of the University of Colorado community, the university will:

- Encourage and provide access to all qualified students within the university's capacity.
- Maintain a commitment to excellence.
- Promote and uphold the principles of ethics, integrity, transparency and accountability.
- Be conscientious stewards of the university's human, physical, financial, information and natural resources.
- Encourage, honor and respect the teaching, learning and academic culture.
- Promote faculty, student and staff diversity to ensure the rich interchange of ideas in the pursuit of truth and learning, including diversity of race, culture, geography, and political, intellectual and philosophical perspectives.
- Encourage and support innovation and entrepreneurship at all levels of the university including research and creative activities.
- Meet the needs of the state of Colorado, including health care, technology, workforce training and civic literacy.
- Ensure that the university is an economic, social and cultural catalyst.
- Support and encourage collaboration among departments and campuses, and between the university and other educational institutions to improve our communities.
- Provide an outstanding, respectful and responsive living, learning, teaching and working environment.
- Focus on meaningful, measurable results.



# The Four Compass Points

The Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles provide a broad, long-term focus and operational framework for the University of Colorado system.

The Four Compass Points are areas of focus that will help the university address short- to mid-term challenges (three to five years) in a rapidly changing society and educational environment. Meeting these challenges is critical for the university to maximize its potential and to help Colorado thrive.

CU's four campuses have outstanding features that make each unique and competitive. Building on those features and refining and implementing programs of study are best driven at the campus level, as the campuses best understand the needs of their students and how to fulfill their missions.

The Four Compass Points provide direction across the CU community, where we align and focus our efforts. They are: enhancing student experience and faculty excellence, bolstering technological innovation, promoting healthy communities and fostering collaboration.

The Four Compass Points cross all campuses and, like the Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles, are specific enough to be meaningful yet broad enough to provide each campus flexibility to implement within their distinct mission framework.

Enhancing Student Experience  
and Faculty Excellence

Fostering Collaboration

Promoting Healthy Communities

Bolstering Technological Innovation

## ENHANCING STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND FACULTY EXCELLENCE

To remain competitive and ensure we serve our students and the people of Colorado, CU must continue to focus both on improving the student experience and attracting the best faculty and staff. We must also support each campus's ability to pursue research and creative work that will advance knowledge and generate demand for our graduates.

Beyond attracting and retaining premier teachers and researchers, CU must support a meaningful and accessible learning experience. We must make navigating our systems easier, ensure students feel welcomed and encouraged to engage, and provide learning experiences that extend beyond the classrooms.

We can create high-touch outreach to potential students and easier interactions throughout the admission, registration, financial aid and payment processes, and advising all the way through graduation. We want students to know they are wanted at our institutions.

We must also attract and retain top faculty. We must recognize that our faculty should reflect the diversity of our society and span the range of the intellectual spectrum. We should create a culture that rewards creativity, diversity and innovation.

Substantial areas of excellence exist across the university and serve as models for success. Additionally, we must further efforts to:

- Create accountability structures across all student touch points.
- Provide incentives and resources to encourage and promote best practices in recruitment, enrollment, student advising and career services.
- Ensure transparent and smooth transfer processes.
- Ensure access to required classes for timely graduation.
- Develop incentives and resources to encourage and promote hiring and retaining a diverse complement of extraordinary faculty and staff.
- Continue to support the generation of new knowledge and creative works.
- Develop policies and procedures that make it easier to quickly address and improve any inefficiencies/problems that staff encounter in meeting student needs.



## FOSTERING COLLABORATION

Higher education is sometimes viewed as disconnected from the communities it serves. While CU stands committed to its vision of being a world-class teaching and research institution, we are equally committed to being accessible to the people we serve. CU must provide support and be a resource for our communities.

CU faces internal and external challenges, including increased costs, rapidly changing workforce needs and diminishing perceptions of the value of higher education. We must confront those challenges head on and work collaboratively with our partners to improve outcomes and solve problems.



To help address these issues, the university should increase collaboration in six distinct areas:

- Better prepare our students and increase the pipeline of students qualified to enter CU and other higher education institutions with our K-12 partners.
- Continue consolidating administration functions, limiting program duplication, and increasing concurrent enrollment across our campuses.
- Maximize the opportunity to develop CU South Denver, harnessing the knowledge and intersection of all campuses.
- Develop greater ties to community colleges to ensure smooth transfer experiences; work with other institutions on research opportunities that directly impact Colorado; and keep low-enrollment majors possible by combining students from various institutions.
- Build business partnerships for research, workforce development opportunities and internships.
- Bolster relationships for CU and hospitals/health care providers for research, workforce development and clinical opportunities.

Substantial areas of excellence exist across the university and serve as models for success. Additionally, we must further efforts to:

- Develop policies that reward faculty for cross-campus and cross-institutional collaboration.
- Provide incentives and resources to encourage and promote collaboration.
- Develop policies and procedures that make it easier to partner with outside entities without compromising academic integrity.
- Develop support systems for collaboration with industry and governmental entities.

## PROMOTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Health is generally understood to encompass physical health, mental health and community health. It has a special meaning to each person and to the communities in which they live. Physical health enables people to live productive lives. Mental health provides people with the best opportunity to enjoy their lives and fulfill their aspirations. Without health, people cannot fully participate in their communities, engage with their families and friends, or create knowledge. Healthy communities prosper in immeasurable ways. CU supports enhancing the health of communities in all of its dimensions – from improving behavioral and physical health to enhancing the quality of life through sciences, urban planning, transportation and other emerging issues in our neighborhoods and in regions across the globe.

With health care costs increasing, shortages of nurses and doctors expected to continue, an aging population and rural communities struggling for access, the health care crisis in the United States is palpable. In addition to physical disease, across the country, mental health issues are having a larger impact on our student populations.

Across our four campuses, CU is well positioned to provide leadership in addressing these major public health issues and worker shortages through degree programs, certificates, outreach, clinics and research. We seek to be a medical destination of such breadth and quality that no one from the Rocky Mountain region should ever have to travel beyond the CU Anschutz Medical Campus to receive the finest care in the world. Therefore, the university should continue to build and expand on those areas to:

- Provide opportunities and advancement in personalized medicine.
- Promote initiatives that address disease prevention.
- Expand research capabilities and competitiveness for research funding.
- Increase focus on wellness and health management.
- Find solutions for providing viable options for affordable health care while maintaining superior care.

Substantial areas of excellence exist across the university and serve as models for success. Additionally, we must further efforts to:

- Expand our ability and our capacity to train the health care workforce.
- Support the design and development of degrees, certificates and programs that anticipate needs in health, wellness and mental health fields.
- Provide incentives and resources to encourage health and wellness.
- Promote collaboration with health care partners on the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, across Colorado and across the region to offer more patients access to the benefits of a world-class academic medical center.
- Develop the research infrastructure that will allow scientists to work effectively and efficiently with third parties to develop new medical technologies.



## BOLSTERING TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

The university must be mindful that in some cases, it needs to prepare students for careers that do not yet exist. In an age dominated by the ubiquitous presence of information and communication technology, new skill sets and new mindsets will also be necessary. In addition to the ability to adopt new ways of thinking, students will need to:

- Learn to think critically and creatively to integrate and transform information.
- Develop solutions when the problems themselves are not well defined.
- Embrace innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Analyze and synthesize vast amounts of information.
- Have substantial qualitative and quantitative skills.
- Have both a global perspective and an eye for detail.
- Collaborate effectively in interdisciplinary teams.
- Lead when leadership is called for.

Technology is disrupting higher education, but it remains unclear exactly how this disruption will change the way institutions of higher education function and improve their services. What is clear is that geography is no longer destiny – students do not have to set foot on a campus to get a world-class education. Research shows that many students learn as much through an online course as in a traditional classroom setting.

While the traditional model of students attending classes remains a valuable and proven model of education, as well as one of CU's core strengths, there is an opportunity for CU to challenge traditional modes of thought, harness new technology and recognize that tomorrow's students will learn differently from yesterday's students.

Developing new teaching modalities and expanding CU's reach will:

- Use the technology available to us to provide access to Coloradans who can be successful at CU but cannot attend classes in person because of distance, work, family obligations, military service or disability.
- Help our traditional students, working students and student athletes to graduate on time, reduce their student debt and get them into the workforce or graduate school more quickly.
- Provide scalability that can help lower the cost of education.
- Transmit knowledge beyond our borders, both across the United States and around the world.

Therefore, the university must remain attentive to opportunities that leverage new technology and advance CU's core mission of teaching, research and service to:

- Develop centers of excellence in emerging areas.
- Expand our certificates, undergraduate and master's online programs.
- Use massive open online courses to expand CU's reach and create new sources of revenue.
- Develop technologies across the university that respond to society's emerging needs.
- Implement new degree programs that provide students with the knowledge and ability to understand and advance new technology.
- Employ new models for delivering instruction – including blended and flipped classrooms – that evolve with our students.

While CU has invested resources in these efforts and many of our brightest minds are employing new technology in effective ways, CU can do more to develop policies and incentive models that reward faculty for new models of instruction, as well as new programs that respond to emerging technologies. To meet employer demands in a timely way, the university must develop a streamlined and accelerated approval process for online certificates. It also must recognize and respond to the fact that online learners require different kinds of support services. The university should support advancing programs and initiatives that are disrupting their industries.

We don't know what precisely lies ahead, but we do know that CU will play a significant role in creating a better future.

## CONCLUSION

CU's Strategic Framework is a reflection of the desire and hope the regents have for the future of the university. The four campuses of the university educate the people of Colorado; they teach its teachers and prepare its healers; they produce new artistic expression and new technologies; they create new business; they bring new populations to the state; and they teach these populations to embrace and learn from one another.

When the university succeeds, Colorado succeeds.



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