

MOOCs provide open-access online courses and programs to tens of thousands of people

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University of Colorado

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A Message from the President

April 2017

Dear eComm:

The University of Colorado embarked on a journey just over five years ago with only a vague idea of the destination.

We partnered with Coursera, at the time a fledgling company with a big idea, to deliver massive open online courses (MOOCs), taking CU far beyond campus boundaries. MOOCs provide open-access courses and programs delivered online to tens of thousands of people. We saw it as a great platform to pair the innovative work of our faculty with a new technology-based delivery system. MOOCs differed from traditional college courses, even those online. The content might have been similar but the delivery method was different, and they weren't for credit and didn't earn revenue. However, we were confident MOOCs would extend the university's strong academic brand and name around the world.

Today, our journey has led us to the forefront of the MOOC revolution, complete with twists and turns along the way that cause us to consider and reconsider the role of technology in educational delivery. CU has 29 MOOCs with online enrollments of 1.7 million. We're offering certificates to address real-world needs. We're soon to launch our first for-credit master's degree and graduate certificates delivered via MOOCs, which will produce revenue.

Our journey also led us to be a destination. Last week CU Boulder hosted Coursera's International Partners Conference, a gathering of several hundred of the best and brightest in the field from 27 countries who are guiding the latest MOOC evolution. MOOCs won't supplant the college experience. There's no replacement for being in a classroom with a great faculty member, engaging in debate and discussion with classmates. Also, a considerable amount of what we learn in college happens outside the classroom. Yet MOOCs are an important arrow in CU's quiver of delivering educational excellence.

Our MOOC offerings run the gamut of disciplines and campuses. For example, "Deciphering Secrets: Unlocking the Manuscripts of Medieval Spain" uses ancient languages and manuscripts to explore cultural and religious conflicts. It allowed the 17,000 students who took the course to understand documents in their cultural context and apply lessons to the world today. "Data Analytics for Businesses Boot Camp"

provided some 30,000 people with insight into a critical area for businesses everywhere. Our “Global Health Responders” MOOC drew students from around the world who deal with all manner of public health issues in every corner of the globe. And next month we will launch the “Electric Utilities: Fundamentals and Future” online course through the Business School at CU Denver, which will offer learners the opportunity to understand how the industries’ technical, regulatory and structural history shapes the electricity we all rely on today.

By this summer, we will have three cybersecurity MOOCs online that will offer certificates in this critical field. Many of our MOOCs generate revenue, which allows us to continue our experiments with learning at scale.

The Coursera Partners conference at CU Boulder in itself furthered the evolution of MOOCs. Faculty and researchers explored such varied topics as instructional design, research into the effectiveness of teaching and learning with MOOCs, and strategies for outreach to business and government, among others. A big topic of discussion was the role MOOCs can play in retraining in health care. Another was the use of artificial intelligence in MOOC delivery, with an eye on keeping learners on the platform longer and enhancing their learning.

When we started this journey just over five years ago, we didn’t quite know where it would lead us. What we’ve found is that MOOCs continually evolve in new and exciting directions. CU is deeply interested and involved in that evolution, and in some cases we are leading it. We’re not entirely sure where the road ahead will lead us, but we like what we’ve seen thus far.

For feedback, contact officeofthepresident@cu.edu

Sincerely,



Bruce Benson
President



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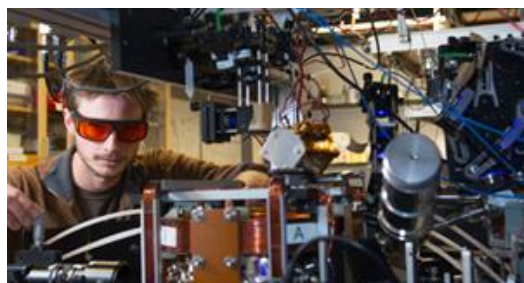
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IN THE NEWS



[CU delegation visits leaders and alumni in Middle East](#)

My wife Marcy and I joined [CU Denver](#) Chancellor Dorothy Horrell and a delegation from the campus that visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Qatar two weeks ago. It was a fascinating and productive trip. CU Denver has many alumni and friends in those countries, so the trip was an opportunity to nurture important relationships. We were hosted by Prime Minister Abdulla Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa Al Thani of Qatar, who had one son graduate from CU Denver last year and another now attends. In Saudi Arabia we were hosted by CU Boulder alumnus Zuhair Fayez, co-founder of Dar Al-Hekma University (DAH), a private institution of higher education for women in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Both were amazing hosts. We have never been treated better. We were welcomed warmly wherever we went and felt the deep esteem in which our alumni and friends hold the university. It was truly a memorable experience, which you can read more about [here](#).



[Graduate programs at University of Colorado earn national accolades](#)

We are proud that the University of Colorado's four campuses earned dozens of rankings in recently released lists of graduate programs compiled by U.S. News & World Report, which annually



[Nobel laureate Tom Cech wins 2017 Hazel Barnes Prize](#)

Congratulations to CU Boulder Distinguished Professor Tom Cech, Colorado's first Nobel Prize winner, who was chosen the 2017 Hazel Barnes Prize

highlights the best in research and teaching across the country.

winner – the most distinguished award a faculty member can receive from the university.



[CU Denver graduates reign at DBJ's leadership accolades](#)

Eight of the Denver Business Journal's 2017 class of "40 Under 40" winners earned degrees or entrepreneurial certificates, or are current students, at the [University of Colorado Denver](#). The group illustrates CU Denver's significant contribution to training the leaders of tomorrow in Colorado.

ALL FOUR:COLORADO



[CU Anschutz program helps needy communities get a step up](#)

The tall, slender man in a careworn bomber jacket surveyed the CU students and faculty who were cautiously working on the bare feet of seven or so men and women in the room. As he headed out of the Denver Rescue Mission chapel, he patted [Jamaluddin Molloo](#), M.D., on the shoulder and said quietly, "Thanks, man."

ALL FOUR:VIDEO



CU provides health care to the people who need it
ALLFOUR:HEALING
Access to basic health care is not only a privilege, but a right. That's why the University of Colorado provides donated care throughout Colorado and around the globe.



CU puts quality education within reach
ALL FOUR: OPPORTUNITY
The University of Colorado believes everyone deserves a quality education. The Karen Possehl Women's Endowment helps female non-traditional students overcome the barriers between them and graduation.

SPOTLIGHT ON **ALUMNI**



[Larger disasters 'inevitable,' says new Natural Hazards Center director](#)

CU Boulder alumna Lori Peek, who in January returned to Boulder to direct the [Natural Hazards Center](#), has amassed a unique body of research on how disasters – from terrorist attacks to tornadoes – impact the lives of the vulnerable and marginalized in the days and years that follow.

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MAY 18
CU Scoop: CU Boulder's Architecture "Body and Soul" and walking tour with Campus Architect Bill Haverly

MAY 24
CU Lunch and Learn: Impact of Personalized Medicine with Dr. Kathleen Barnes, Director of CU's Center for Personalized Medicine, CU Anschutz Medical Campus

College Friday
April 21, 2017
LET'S START A CONVERSATION ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION
Wear your best CU gear to show your support for higher education

NEWS FROM OUR **CAMPUSES**

CU BOULDER

[Listening in on the early universe from the far side of the moon](#): CU Boulder has entered into a five-year agreement with NASA to be part of a virtual institute to pursue the construction of astronomical observatories on the moon.

CU DENVER

[CU in the City research highlights wildlife with focus on education, conservation](#): As city planners grapple with the fallout of explosive growth, one graduate student hopes her recently launched master's project can make a difference.

CU COLORADO SPRINGS

[Veterans clinic uses eye-movement therapy to address PTSD](#): A treatment aimed at assisting veterans with military trauma has shown successful outcomes at a UCCS clinic, instilling positive reflections where the worst of trauma once lived.

CU ANSCHUTZ

[Geneticist still pushes limits in lab and in life](#): Geneticist Richard Spritz, M.D., likes to be on the edge. Spritz, the director of the [CU School of Medicine's Human Medical Genetics and Genomics Program](#), loves the rush he gets from pushing his vintage Porsche 911 around a racetrack.

Message sent by:

Office of the President, University of Colorado

1800 Grant Street, Suite 800, Denver, CO 80203

p: 303 860 5600 | f: 303 860 5610 | www.cu.edu | officeofthepresident@cu.edu

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