At the first session of Colorado's territorial legislature in 1861, a bill was passed providing for a university at Boulder. Boulder residents donated land south of town and made gifts to match the $15,000 appropriated by the legislature for construction of the university. The university opened its doors on September 5, 1877, with 44 students, one instructor, and a president.

Today the University is composed of campuses at Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver and the Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora. Each of the four campuses of the University has a distinct role and mission. The role and mission for each campus is recorded in Colorado Statutes (C.R.S. §23-20-101, 1997).

The University is governed by an elected board of nine regents. There is a secretary of the Board of Regents and of the University. The Regents elect the president of the University of Colorado, who is the principal executive officer of the University. The offices of the president are sometimes referred to as "system administration." There is a chancellor of each campus, who is the chief academic and administrative officer responsible to the president for the conduct of the affairs of the campus. The dean of each college or school is the principal administrative officer for the college or school. The colleges and schools are composed of one or more units. The Board of Regents has approved other academic or research units, including numerous research centers, institutes, bureaus and laboratories.

The University is composed of the following colleges and schools:

**CU Boulder**

- College of Arts and Sciences [4]
- College of Engineering and Applied Science [5]
- College of Music [6]
- Graduate School [7]
-
Leeds School of Business [8]

- School of Education [9]

- College of Media, Communication and Information [10]

- School of Law [11]

- Program in Environmental Design [12]

UCCS

- Beth El College of Nursing and Health Sciences and Beth El Graduate School of Nursing [13]

- College of Business and Administration and Graduate School of Business Administration [14]

- College of Education [15]

- College of Engineering and Applied Science [16]

- College of Letters, Arts and Sciences [17]

- Graduate School [18]

- School of Public Affairs [19]

CU Denver

- College of Architecture and Planning [20]

- College of Arts and Media [21]

- Business School [22]

- College of Engineering and Applied Science [23]