The Four Vision Compass Points [1]

The Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles [2] provide a broad, long-term focus and operational framework for the University of Colorado system.

The Four Vision 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 Vision 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 Vision 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.

CU students, faculty and staff exemplify this vision in many ways. Examples of CU’s visionaries are embedded in each compass point below.

1. ENHANCING STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND FACULTY EXCELLENCE
CU VISIONARIES

Enhancing cities one parking space and trail at a time

Anna Rose Cunningham was one of nearly 200 students who worked alongside CU faculty and City of Arvada staff on public welfare projects through the Hometown Colorado Initiative, which celebrated the culmination of a two-year partnership at Arvada City Hall.

Read more [3]

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.

2. 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.

3. PROMOTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
CU VISIONARIES

Each Tuesday brings a new DAWN for patients throughout Aurora

Each Tuesday, about 30 University of Colorado students and their faculty mentors gear up for just about anything when they enter the free Dawn Clinic in Aurora – a student-run initiative
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.

4. BOLSTERING TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION
Pushing Boundaries: Students develop eye-activated controller for people of all abilities

With the blink of an eye, users of a hands-free device can control an electric wheelchair, operate a drone or lock the front door, regardless of their physical capacities. Six CU Boulder students are developing a product that lets users control devices by using their eyes.

Read more [6]
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.

**Groups audience:**
Strategic Vision

**Source URL:** https://www.cu.edu/strategicvision/four-vision-compass-points

**Links**
[1] https://www.cu.edu/strategicvision/four-vision-compass-points
[3] https://www.cudenvertoday.org/students-gain-hands-on-experience-through-hometown-colorado/