

STRATEGIC PLANNING | PHASE 2

VISION TEAM REPORTS

LEAD IN STUDENT SUCCESS



University of Colorado **Denver**

THEME

LEAD IN STUDENT SUCCESS

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What We Aspire To Look Like In 2030

At CU Denver, our commitment to student success goes beyond degree attainment — we partner with students to design pathways to their dreams. CU Denver faculty and staff work alongside students as mentors and coaches as they define their priorities and establish goals. They assist students in charting a customized course through diverse learning experiences to catalyze achievement toward those goals. Our commitment to success means meeting each student where they are with the support they need, when they need it. This begins in courses and learning experiences where strong faculty-student relationships and differentiated supports lay the foundation for students to take on rigorous coursework and achieve high levels of learning. It is further operationalized in a technology-enabled, integrative system of success supports that allows for on-demand and individualized attention for every student. Recognizing that students have uneven access to fundamental resources, CU Denver works alongside them, in and out of the classroom, to ensure access to the academic, financial, health, family, and professional resources that are the critical building blocks for success.

Diversity is our strength and generates our profound commitment to inclusivity and collective action. As CU Denver advances as a model equity-serving institution, we ensure the way to greater success for all students and, in particular, students who have borne the impact of structural inequality. We acknowledge the hard work and discomfort that dismantling oppression requires and will ensure that the entire Lynx community, faculty, staff, and students, is supported in developing the vision, tools, and courage to confront and transform inequity. In doing so, we write our institutional narrative as an equitable, diverse, and radically inclusive community; one where students of today and tomorrow can see their future and their success at CU Denver.

As Lynx, we draw upon our diversity, the vibrant power of the Colorado landscape, and the spirit of Colorado's people. We honor that which makes us strong as individuals as we lean into the collective, purpose-driven energy that makes us stronger as a community. As CU Denver students take their place in the Lynx community, they leverage this identity as a source of strength, knowing they are respected and valued as a part of the Lynx family. As a community, we rejoice in our creativity and the discovery and application of knowledge to foster both one another's growth and improvement of the larger human condition.



What We Aspire To Look Like In 2030

WHERE WE EXCEL

Our location in the city and our high-quality programs attract a student population rich in diversity. Current students and alumni communicate that they were attracted to CU Denver because we offer a CU education within their reach. Access is a priority for us and we create opportunities for prospective students through K12 partnerships and dual enrollment opportunities. We are a destination for transfer students as we maximize transfer credits and make higher education affordable.

Over the last decade, the university has taken important steps to establish the necessary systems and resources to support our students' success. This has included centralizing and coordinating frontline student services to increase clarity and ease of access. Lynx Central operates as a hub of services and information for students and Lynx Connect is a one-stop-shop that connects students to the many opportunities available to enrich their learning journey. Additionally, transition supports like new student orientations and transfer student infrastructures have both been significantly redesigned to provide a more seamless, supported entry to CU Denver.

CU Denver has also made important progress in designing supports that are proactive and responsive to student needs. Navigate brings together information around student progress in a central location to better track academic performance and address needs, and the early action system, which has seen a steady increase in use, anchors a process that connects students with important and timely support and resources. University-wide learning resources offered through the Learning Resource Center and school/college embedded support systems create an expanding network of support, allowing students multiple points of access. From a curricular perspective, a sustained effort over the last seven years has promoted the High Impact Practices (HIPS) that have a measurable impact on student success. HIPS are now integrated into coursework and include a robust set of first-year experiences. Finally, a number of ongoing success supports like the Center for Identity and Inclusion, Trio, and Pre-College programs offer important success supports for our diverse and first-generation student population.

WHERE WE STRUGGLE

While CU Denver has made important progress toward supporting student success, our retention and graduation rates demonstrate that we have a substantial way to go if we are to ensure our students' goals are fully realized. Structural inequality in our systems, processes, and policies, including lack of diversity in faculty, staff, and leadership roles, presents barriers for our diverse students, and uneven access to fundamental success resources jeopardizes the ability for many to continue to degree completion. While progress has been made in coordinating services and extending resources, students continue to communicate difficulty in navigating systems and finding help when needed. Overall, we are challenged to scale personalized holistic attention that meets each student where they are with the support they need, when they need it. In part, this challenge is grounded in insufficient resources in student-facing roles and the need to further integrate infrastructure and systems.

From a curricular standpoint, many students communicate excellent experiences in courses and strong relationships with instructors and faculty, but this experience is uneven across students. Ensuring that faculty and instructors have the resources and tools needed to support their students' diverse needs as they engage with rigorous coursework to achieve high levels of learning is a critical foundation for student success. Finally, while we have made progress in creating a sense of belonging at CU Denver, this effort is never fully complete. We are a young institution and remain engaged in the process of creating community and developing a strong Lynx culture and identity.

Goal 1: Harness The Power Of An Equity-Serving Institution To Drive Student Success

Established as elite institutions, universities have long wrestled with the racist and classist beliefs, processes, and policies that are built in by design. An equitable and just society requires that institutions confront this history and dismantle structural inequality, white supremacy, racism, classism, and other forms of oppression to ensure that all people are able to access and benefit from the resources and experiences that support success.

As CU Denver takes up the responsibility of being recognized as an HSI and AANAPISI institution, we will advance as a model equity-serving institution, ensuring the way to greater success for all students, in particular students who have borne the impact of structural inequality.

CU Denver will elevate the visibility of our equity work and prioritize our commitment to it by formalizing structures that promote critical dialogue, ensure accountability, and allocate substantial resources to the effort. We will acknowledge the hard work and discomfort that dismantling oppression requires and ensure that the entire Lynx community, faculty, staff, and students, are supported in developing the vision, tools, and courage to confront and transform inequity. In doing so, we will become a microcosm of the larger world we are constructing together and write our institutional narrative as an equitable, diverse, and inclusive community so that students of today and tomorrow see their future and their success at CU Denver.

Success toward this goal will be measured by: retention and graduation rates for all student groups at 90% or above; percentage of BIPOC and first-generation students assuming leadership roles in diverse career fields; interactions and a supportive environment for all student groups as measured by disaggregated NSSE data; and an annual equity climate survey that indicates high levels of satisfaction and support from student, staff, and faculty.

Goal 1: Harness The Power Of An Equity-Serving Institution To Drive Student Success

STRATEGY 1.1

Equity by design.

CU Denver will identify and dismantle structural inequalities and design equitable infrastructures, systems, policies, and practices. This work will take place at every level of the university, from central structures to schools/colleges and from curriculum to language use.

INITIATIVES

- **Initiative 1.1.1** Campus-Wide Equity Curriculum Review.

Create a cross-college/school standing committee charged with helping faculty identify and transform unconscious and dysconscious, oppressive and biased content and pedagogies in order to build inclusive curriculum.

- **Initiative 1.1.2** Campus-Wide Policy And Procedures Review Through An Equity Lens.

Review all current policies, procedures, and practices to ensure equity. Train and develop faculty and staff to construct equitable policies, procedures, and practices moving forward.

- **Initiative 1.1.3** School/College Culture, Policy, And Procedure Review.

Review school/college culture, policies, procedures, and practices to ensure equity and inclusion in each unit and to ensure that all are responsible for creating a just and inclusive campus.

- **Initiative 1.1.4** Increase Diversity In Faculty And Staff.

Develop hiring practices and processes that ensure a more diverse faculty and staff. Identify and remove barriers to leadership positions for diverse faculty and staff.

- **Initiative 1.1.5** Inclusive Physical Spaces.

Review physical spaces on campus to make sure they are welcoming and inclusive of the needs of our diverse community, including but not limited to making facilities accessible to those in wheelchairs and with mobility needs, and creating lactation rooms, gender-neutral bathrooms, spaces for students who are parents, inclusive and welcoming environmental print and artifacts, and access to study rooms and technology.



Goal 1: Harness The Power Of An Equity-Serving Institution To Drive Student Success

STRATEGY 1.2

Support Every Step Of The Way.

The diversity of CU Denver's students is our greatest strength. Their pathways to us are equally diverse and their access to opportunities and resources is uneven. CU Denver expands access and opportunity to college-going success across the full arc of the Lynx journey to ensure that BIPOC, first-generation students, and all students who have borne the impact of structural inequality have what they need for success.

INITIATIVES

- **Initiative 1.2.1** Intentional Access Pathways.

Increase opportunities and access for historically underserved students across multiple access points including P-12 early college settings, concurrent enrollment, well-designed transfer processes, re-entry pathways for students who stop-out, and post-traditional adult learner pathways.

- **Initiative 1.2.2** Opportunities and Barriers Audit.

Audit the opportunities and barriers that students experience in accessing the full range of curricular and co-curricular opportunities on campus to ensure that all students have access. This includes understanding the opportunities and barriers that exist around early experiences, access to health and mental health services, financial resources, technology, study abroad, research, paid internships, academic support services, services beyond normal working hours, on-campus living experiences, physical access to spaces, transportation, orientations programming, events, student organizations, etc.

- **Initiative 1.2.3** Extend Opportunities To Create The CU Denver Promise.

Remove the barriers identified in the audit to create the CU Denver Promise — an opportunity ecosystem that supports thriving, accomplishment, and success for all students, including those who attend virtually.



Goal 2: Partner With Students To Design And Pursue Customized Paths To Their Success

Today's political, educational and workforce environment is rapidly reshaping the context of higher education and the role it will play in the future. Students of today will hold many jobs across multiple careers and the rich diversity in CU Denver's student body means that students enter the university with different goals. Some are exploring possibilities for their future and seeking experiences that allow them to discover their dreams. Others are adding degrees to already existing careers and looking for experiences that will help them extend their professional networks, while still others are changing careers and looking to gain entry-level experiences in a new field. As powerful social movements gain momentum, many students are seeking lives of meaning and civic engagement, eager to make an impact on the world and motivated to give back to their communities.

CU Denver recognizes the diverse goals and dreams that our students hold. We don't just help them pursue a degree, we partner with them to design their lives and their futures. CU Denver faculty and staff work alongside students as mentors and coaches, assisting them as they examine and define their values and priorities and explore possibilities for their future. We partner with them to establish their goals and chart a customized course through diverse learning experiences that catalyze achievement toward those goals. Students pursue varied academic and professional experiences, establish strong social and professional networks, and build future-forward skills. In partnering with students to design their lives, we help them launch their dreams and pursue lives of personal, professional, and social meaning.

Success toward this goal will be measured in a number of ways: retention and graduation rates for all students at 90% or above; high-quality interactions and a supportive environment for all students as measured by NSSE data; high numbers of students engaging in HIPs as measured by NSSE data; and students' electronic Impact Portfolios and customized plans showing high levels of engagement in multiple and diverse experiences.



Goal 2: Partner With Students To Design And Pursue Customized Paths To Their Success

STRATEGY 2.1

Integrate Design Your Life Principles across student success services and academic coursework at the university.

CU Denver integrates life design principles in structures, roles, and processes across student services and coursework as an overarching, organizing construct. Staff and faculty use specifically designed tools in well-defined processes as they partner with students to examine and identify their values and priorities, explore possibilities for their future, establish goals, and create plans that catalyze achievement toward those goals.

INITIATIVES

- **Initiative 2.1.1** Design Your Life Coaching System, Processes And Tools.

Create tools and processes in a life design coaching system that support students in partnering with faculty and staff to explore their values and priorities and design and pursue their goals in supported reflective iterative cycles, and that can support the paradigm shift by providing an integrated foundation for life design for every student.

- **Initiative 2.1.2** Capacity Development Across People And Contexts.

Build capacity in staff, faculty, and student and alumni mentors to operate in coaching roles as they partner with students to design experiences and pursue goals. Create stand-alone Design Your Life courses and integrate experiences to work with life design principles across existing courses.

STRATEGY 2.2

Create a portfolio of exciting learning experiences that afford boundless possibilities for students in designing and pursuing their goals.

CU Denver offers students the ingredients they need to explore and achieve their goals and build lives of meaning and success far into the future. Students encounter opportunities to pursue varied academic and professional experiences, establish strong social and professional networks, and build future-forward skills. These experiences build a foundation that allows students to pursue their interests and passions and grow and develop in leadership and service as they build lives of meaning and engagement in a rapidly changing local, national and global context.

INITIATIVES

- **Initiative 2.2.1** Defined Experience Clusters.

Identify, grow, organize and name different clusters of experiences, including apprenticeships, paid internships, study abroad, interest- and mission-driven research, leadership, activism, and service, to ensure visibility and access for students and coaches as they design customized learning pathways.



Goal 2: Partner With Students To Design And Pursue Customized Paths To Their Success

- **Initiative 2.2.2** Paid Experiential Internships.

Provide every undergraduate student the opportunity for paid experiential placement. These experiences are supervised, relevant, compensated work experiences that are connected to and in some cases integrated into their academic program.

- **Initiative 2.2.3** Recognitions For Growth And Accomplishments.

Credential students' experiences to celebrate quick wins along the way and toward goals, such as completion of a first-year course, completion of the core curriculum, skill attainment, certification as a peer mentor, completion of an academic certificate or badge, or the development of Impact Portfolios. Locate these opportunities in courses and co-curricular experiences.

Goal 3: Our Diversity Lynx Us Together

Diversity is our strength and generates our profound commitment to inclusivity and collective action. As Lynx, we draw upon our diversity, the vibrant power of the Colorado landscape, and the spirit of Colorado's people. We honor that which makes us strong as individuals as we lean into the collective, purpose-driven energy that makes us stronger as a community.

Our diverse students, staff, and faculty hold many different dreams, goals, purposes, passions, interests, and experiences. CU Denver leverages this diversity to create and elevate many “communities of belonging,” creating an ecosystem that fosters connections and relationships and that operates as a foundation for student success. We ensure that all students find a place at CU Denver where they can learn, grow, and thrive, and where individual and cultural identities are sustained and valued.

We build on our diversity and the trailblazing, innovative spirit of our young institution to co-construct and distinguish with our students, staff, and faculty what it means to be a Lynx. As our students take their place in the Lynx community, they leverage this identity as a source of strength, knowing they are respected and valued as a part of the Lynx family. We rejoice in the creativity of our community and in the discovery and application of knowledge to foster both one another's growth and to improve the larger human condition. Together, we are engaged in building a network of past, present and future students, staff and faculty that celebrates our diversity and individuality, while sharing our common identity that “Lynx” us together.

Success toward this goal will be measured by: high-quality interactions and a supportive environment for all students as measured by NSSE data; annual equity climate surveys that indicate high levels of satisfaction, sense of belonging, and connection to Lynx identity; and annual alumni surveys that indicate high level of satisfaction, sense of belonging, and connection to Lynx identity.

Goal 3: Our Diversity Lynx Us Together

STRATEGY 3.1

Elevate and make accessible the many ways to connect and belong at CU Denver.

CU Denver creates an inclusive community where our students, on campus and online, easily find communities that support their passions, interests, and growth. Students, staff and faculty are engaged in communities that are mission-driven and inspired by diverse purposes, interest-based communities framed around passions and hobbies, subject-driven and activity-based communities, mentoring and leadership spaces, culture, language, and identity-based communities, and many others.

INITIATIVES

- **Initiative 3.1.1** Map And Build Diverse Communities Of Belonging.

Create an iterative process for auditing existing spaces of community and canvassing students to identify areas for further development. Identify necessary infrastructure and resources needed to support our many communities of belonging.

- **Initiative 3.1.2** Build Visibility To Create A Culture Of Engagement.

Create opportunities for these communities to promote and share their purpose, foci, and collective efforts through events, environmental print and artifacts, and purposeful celebrations.

- **Initiative 3.1.3** Leverage Technology To Develop Community.

Identify technology tools and methods that develop and sustain on-campus and online communities.

STRATEGY 3.2

Co-Construct, brand, and celebrate a strong Lynx culture and identity.

CU Denver builds on the trailblazing, innovative spirit of our young institution to co-construct and distinguish what it means to be a Lynx with our students, staff and faculty. As our students take their place in the Lynx community, they leverage this identity as a source of strength, knowing they are respected and valued as a part of the Lynx family culture, language, and identity-based communities, and many others.

INITIATIVES

- **Initiative 3.2.1** The Lynx Identity.

Organize a campus campaign to identify the strengths and characteristics of the Lynx culture and identity with our students, staff and faculty.

- **Initiative 3.2.2** The Lynx Tradition.

Build programming, traditions, and rituals and celebrate achievements to form deep connections to CU Denver and create a Lynx culture and identity.

- **Initiative 3.2.3** Increase Visibility And Brand Our Identity.

Work with University Communications to brand and distinguish the Lynx identity.



Goal 3: Our Diversity Lynx Us Together

STRATEGY 3.3

Build alumni community across the life cycle.

Our alumni are a part of the Lynx family and we partner together across the arc of their careers and lives in a mutually beneficial relationship. We value the strong connections we have with them and recognize the way in which we enrich one another's lives in a cycle of belonging, giving, and receiving.

INITIATIVES

- **Initiative 3.3.1** Robust Alumni System.

Create a robust alumni system with coordinated centralized efforts and school/college targeted efforts that allow alumni to extend relationships with the people who supported their success as students. Create multiple traditions and opportunities for alumni to return to campus as a Lynx (i.e. homecoming, alum recognitions).

- **Initiative 3.3.2** Alumni Giving Back.

Extend ways alumni can be involved in campus activities and connect them with current students in mentoring roles.

- **Initiative 3.3.3** Ongoing Value-Add Alumni Relations.

Provide incentives for alumni to engage with us across the arc of their professional lives. Create multiple credentialing opportunities through micro-credentials, certificates, and relevant degree pathways to make CU Denver their first and last choice for building their personal and professional lives.



Goal 4: Every Student. Every Support. Every Time.

At CU Denver, student success is everyone's responsibility. Our student success culture guarantees that every student receives the support needed, at the time needed. This culture is synergized through a collaborative network of faculty, student success professionals, and peers who provide services and resources that wrap around the whole student. It is grounded in the classroom where strong faculty-student relationships, an asset-based approach, and differentiated supports lay the foundation for students to take on rigorous coursework and achieve high levels of learning. It is further operationalized in a technology-enabled, integrative system of success supports that allow for on-demand and individualized attention for every student.

Powered by an agile, data-informed infrastructure, this system enables us to anticipate students' academic and personal needs and provide seamless and timely services and resources to carry them forward on their learning journey. Our Lynx guarantee means that all students have access to an affordable education and fundamental resources so that no student leaves the university because of unmet need.

Success toward this goal will be measured by: retention and graduation rates for all student groups at 90% or above; high-quality interactions and a supportive environment for all student groups as measured by NSSE data; annual student service and resource surveys indicating students are receiving needed fundamental resources; mobile app downloads and usage statistics demonstrating that students are using and benefiting from integrated service/resource; integrated data analysis from multiple systems that identifies success and challenges in the student support system (i.e. Navigate, MyLynx, NSSE, school, college and business units).



Goal 4: Every Student. Every Support. Every Time.

STRATEGY 4.1

Build a culture of student success.

CU Denver exemplifies a culture of student success. This culture begins in the classroom with strong faculty-student relationships and a well-scaffolded curriculum that provides differentiated opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and demonstrate competency. Classroom embedded systems connect students to a web of coordinated learning resources, delivered in a high touch, relational approach that makes it easy for students to seek and receive support for academic success.

INITIATIVES

- **Initiative 4.1.1** Faculty Success Tools.

Identify and build the resources faculty need in order to develop strong relationships with students and engage asset-based, scaffolded and differentiated pedagogical approaches.

- **Initiative 4.1.2** Student Success Teams For Every Student.

Create student success teams that include faculty and student success professionals in a high touch, relational approach to student success.

- **Initiative 4.1.3** Targeted Curricular And Co-Curricular Learning Supports.

Extend and formalize proven success practices like High Impact Practices, evidence-based transfer practices, and supports for international students and non-traditional adult learners, with special attention to first- and second-year students.

STRATEGY 4.2

Implement an integrated system that places services and resources at students' fingertips.

Systems at CU Denver are designed for ease of access and provide high touch, low effort access to services and resources. Our integrated proactive system anticipates students' needs, provides targeted, relational support, and reduces the number of people and offices students must interact with to access services and resources.

INITIATIVES

- **Initiative 4.2.1** High Touch, Low Effort Access To Services And Resources.

Assess the student experience in navigating business systems and accessing resources and create an integrated and proactive system that anticipates students' needs, provides high touch, relational support, and reduces the number of people students interact with in the process.

- **Initiative 4.2.2** Agile Systems Built On Student Needs.

Generate actionable data to track students' progress and needs to continually enhance coherence, efficiency, ease of use, and productiveness of our student success systems to CU Denver and create a Lynx culture and identity.

- **Initiative 4.2.3** One-Stop App.

Adopt a student-facing, intelligent application that integrates with other university systems and allows students to easily navigate business operations and access resources in a single place.

Goal 4: Every Student. Every Support. Every Time.

STRATEGY 4.3

Provide holistic support and resources.

We recognize the rich and complex lives of our students and the uneven access to fundamental success resources across our student community. We partner with them to ensure that they have the resources needed to pursue their goals.

INITIATIVES

- **Initiative 4.3.1** Affordable Education.

Develop a suite of strategies that ensures all students can finance their education and that no student leaves the university due to financial need barriers. This includes individualized financial coaching to develop financial plans, recruitment and retention scholarships, emergency short-term student loans, and in-state tuition rates for targeted communities.

- **Initiative 4.3.2** Fundamental Success Resources.

Identify the needs of our students and provide multiple ways to provide resources scaled to income, including health and well-being resources, access to food and housing, transportation, health insurance and child-care.



Interactions

We anticipate several themes will have important, critical overlap and connection with the Lead in Student Success theme.

Empowered By Our Inclusive Excellence – Success for all students, and particularly students who have borne the impact of oppression, hinges on equitable access to opportunities, experiences, resources and services. Identifying and dismantling structural inequality to eliminate barriers is a goal within our Lead in Student Success work. We identify multiple goals, strategies and initiatives that will move us in the direction of an equity-serving institution. It is likely and desirable that similar goals and strategies will appear in the Empowered by Our Inclusive Excellence Vision team report.

Educate For The Future – As a learning organization, student success is a whole university effort. How the learning endeavor is organized and supported in courses, degree programs, and other credentialing experiences is critical to student success. We anticipate important overlap with the goals of the Educate for the Future team around increased flexibility, customization, and student supports.

Put Our People At The Center – The quality of the student experience is directly tied to the quality of life of the people who teach and support them. Ensuring that our staff and faculty have the resources they need to support students and that they experience high levels of satisfaction and efficacy in their roles is an important step to ensuring our students' success.

ABOUT THE PROCESS



ABOUT THE PROCESS

LETTER FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIR

Dear Chancellor Marks,

When you charged our strategic planning steering committee you told us that CU Denver has built incredible momentum in the last 50 years and that there is great pride among our community about our progress. I was also struck by your comment that across your 100 Days of Listening tour nobody told you that we were done, but rather, our community is ready to capitalize on our unique strengths to become the type of university our city, state, and nation need.

During Phase 2 of our strategic plan, we brought together a team of 130+ exceptional students, faculty, staff, and friends that broadly represented the university community. They were organized in eight Vision Teams and a Steering Committee and asked to engage in an inclusive, innovative process to envision our future.

In the following pages you will find their work – the ideas conceptualized, articulated, and conveyed by our own community. These are dreams of what CU Denver can become by 2030 and high-level strategies for how we might get there. The work is phenomenal and I could not be prouder of our team!

I am immensely impressed by, and grateful for, the work of our Vision Teams, Steering Committee, and the Comcast Media Technology Center/Inworks Design Innovation team that facilitated this process with creativity, flexibility, and unmatched professionalism. I am confident that their work delivers on your charge to dream big and determine how we can carve out our unique and impactful future.

I look forward to working with you over the next several weeks to take these ideas and shape our community's very best thinking into a cohesive strategy for CU Denver that will guide us over the next decade. I could not be more excited for our future, and truly believe we will be the university the world needs in 2030!

Sincerely,

Marty Dunn

*Dean, College of Engineering, Design and Computing
Chair, Strategic Planning Steering Committee*



ABOUT THE PROCESS

BACKGROUND

CU Denver embarked on an ambitious [strategic planning process](#) in January 2021 to create a bold, exciting vision and strategy that will differentiate CU Denver by 2030.

After Chancellor Michelle Marks' [100 Days of Listening](#) tour, it was clear that our university community has tremendous pride and momentum, as well as a strong desire to launch CU Denver to national recognition as a leading public urban research university.

In January 2021, Chancellor Marks charged a team of faculty, staff, and students with collaborating on the development of a refreshed outlook for CU Denver, one that would capture a vision for 2030, strengthen and differentiate the university. The process was human-centered and inclusive by design and engaged hundreds of participants and generated thousands of ideas.

With the right vision, plan, execution, CU Denver can become a model university that truly meets the needs of all.

THE PROCESS

The strategic planning process used a unique method called design innovation (see page 5) that encourages big, bold idea generation, and the participation of the entire campus community. The process was divided into three phases:

Phase	Timing	Goal of Work	Format
PHASE 1 Our Vision for 2030	January 2021	Set the Vision	Broad community input was invited via multiple channels; 3,674+ ideas generated.
PHASE 2 Strengthen and Differentiate	February – April 2021	Develop the Themes	Eight multidisciplinary, cross-functional “Vision Teams” were charged to focus on themes informed by the 100 Days of Listening tour; they imagined, distilled, and recommended 4,000+ bold ideas.
PHASE 3 Synthesize & Deliver Our Strategic Plan	April – June 2021	Build the Strategy	Based on Vision Team reports and community input, a cogent and integrated strategic plan will be developed and released.

ABOUT THE PROCESS

PHASE 1: OUR VISION FOR 2030

Phase 1 consisted of foundational work around CU Denver's purpose, vision, values, and graduate characteristics. This began with gathering input from the CU Denver community through a series of community sessions and an online survey. The information-gathering process was rooted in appreciative inquiry – an inclusive, strengths-based approach to identify the most important attributes of our identity and ambitions — and served as a “north star” for the rest of our strategic planning work.

PHASE 2: STRENGTHEN AND DIFFERENTIATE CU DENVER — CURRENT PHASE

Phase 2 brought our community together to think big, dream, and strategize to determine how we can take CU Denver to the next level by 2030. This phase launched eight Vision Teams, organized around major themes informed by Chancellor Marks' 100 Days of Listening tour. These multidisciplinary, cross-functional teams were diverse and represented all corners of the university, bringing tremendous institutional knowledge to the table. They were charged with digging deep into our institution in order to develop goals, strategies, and initiatives to strengthen and differentiate CU Denver around their theme. A team of faculty, staff, and students from CU Denver's Comcast Media Technology Center/ InWorks, facilitated their work by co-creating a customized design innovation process with each of the Vision Teams.

The Phase 2 work represents the culmination of significant thought, discussion, data collection, and research that will inform the strategic plan for the future of CU Denver. The Vision Team reports are featured in this document.

PHASE 3: SYNTHESIZE AND DELIVER OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

In Phase 3, the Vision Teams' work is being reviewed, synthesized, and distilled into a bold, exciting, integrated, cohesive strategic plan for CU Denver in 2030. We will present working drafts of this strategic plan through a series of community feedback sessions in early- to mid-May 2021. Following these sessions, we will begin the process of writing the final report, which will be a top-line synthesis of the community's work focused on high-level goals and strategies. The report is expected to be delivered to the CU Board of Regents in June 2021 and shared with the community shortly thereafter. Operationalizing the plan will follow in Fall 2021.



ABOUT THE PROCESS

HOW WE DID IT: PHASE 2

Phase 2 Participation



2,000+
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS



8
VISION TEAMS



130
VISION TEAM MEMBERS



4,000+
STORIES, IDEAS, AND
ASPIRATIONS GENERATED
BY VISION TEAMS

ABOUT DESIGN INNOVATION

[Design innovation](#) (DI) is a human-centered approach that blends the mindsets, methods, and languages of design thinking, systems thinking, engineering design, and business innovation to discover, define, develop, and deliver innovative solutions to complex problems. The process centers the concepts of creativity, openness, mindfulness, adaptability, empathy, and freedom to explore radical and impactful ideas about our future.

A team of faculty, staff, and students from CU Denver's Comcast Media Technology Center/InWorks, co-led by Professor Kristin Wood and Lauren Hebert, facilitated the VisionT Teams' work. At a high-level, the teams:

- Kicked off their work by broadly engaging our community to understand individual points of view related to their theme.
- Analyzed what they heard to identify the opportunities where CU Denver could make the greatest impact.
- Generated initial ideas about how we could best make that impact and tested those ideas again with our community.
- Incorporated the community's feedback and created bold, differentiating ideas to take CU Denver to the next level by 2030.

This process was built around four sessions that intentionally brought together all eight Vision Teams in order to facilitate cross-collaboration and inspire new and bold ideas at the intersection of the distinct teams.

