



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

# COURAGEOUS STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION

## University Planning Framework

### CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	2
Introduction to the Framework.....	2
Creation of the Framework.....	2
Process of inclusion and input.....	3
Timeline .....	3
FRAMEWORK.....	3
Preamble   History and Acknowledgment of Responsibility .....	3
Distinction   Our Difference .....	4
Colorado and Mountain West .....	4
State, Regional, National and Global Engagement.....	4
Health.....	4
Sustainability .....	5
Experiential Learning.....	5
Purpose   Our Mission.....	6
Institutional Values.....	6
Aspiration .....	7
Green: Our purpose is to drive bold solutions and strategies for a Sustainable, Thriving Planet.....	7
Gold: Our purpose is to drive bold solutions and strategies for a Flourishing Humanity. ....	7
Prerequisites   Transformation Building Blocks .....	7
Strategic Academic Innovation .....	7
Strategic Enrollment.....	8
Strategic Workforce Development, Support, and Wellness .....	8
Individual and Institutional Accountability .....	8
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice .....	8
Budget and Operational Reform .....	8
Principled Philanthropy .....	9
Strategic Branding and Marketing.....	9
Athletics.....	9

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction to the Framework

This framework builds on the work that precedes it and would not be possible without the strong position of the university in Fort Collins, Colorado, the nation, and the world. With that, we acknowledge that recent, predicted, and unpredicted disruptions nationally demand institutional agility to respond to the rapid pace of change. In context, this framework intentionally builds on the successes of the past and responds to new challenges.

The framework introduces a more specific preliminary plan included in the accompanying appendices and PowerPoint slides that include goals, key performance indicators, timeline, and accountability measures. This is the result of inclusive input from campus, but will not be fully implemented until after Board of Governors' feedback. After the June Board of Governors' meeting, the colleges and units will work with campus leadership to shape specific unit plans with timelines, key performance indicators, and accountability.

This framework is intentionally aspirational and serves to call the university community to action. The CSU community must courageously ask important questions that inspire innovation, entrepreneurship, interdisciplinarity, and collaboration such as:

1. What are our goals and how do we achieve them and involve the whole community?
2. How can we serve students, faculty and staff, Colorado, the nation, and world?
3. How can we best address the key challenges related to human, plant, and animal flourishing, recognizing these challenges inherently require the involvement of a broad range of actors to collaboratively create lasting impacts?
4. How can we best ensure a vibrant, sustainable future that balances our

economic, environmental, and social responsibilities?

5. How can we best address historical and current disparities and honor key values such as diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice?
6. How can we best build an organizational culture and structure at CSU that enables, inspires, and rewards excellence while ensuring CSU is a wonderful place to work and study, and all students, faculty, and staff are welcome and provided authentic opportunities to thrive?

This framework requires that our community think about these questions, as they relate to their roles, as we begin to transform our university. The transformation is reflected in our ability to see potential disruptions and opportunities, to boldly ask, "What if?" and to take risks and approach solutions with an entrepreneurial spirit and a focus on impact.

The framework situates our university within history and acknowledges the complexity of our origins, refines our university mission; sets out our purpose in terms of CSU green and gold; asserts the strengths that set us apart; reinforces our core values; and points at critical work we must embrace to achieve shared success.

### Creation of the Framework

This framework was developed by the Executive Leadership Team and Council of Deans over seven months of brainstorming workshops and facilitated conversations. These leaders have come together to consider myriad strengths, voices, priorities, and constituencies. We also referenced input from initial strategic planning outreach efforts that began in 2018. We intend this to be the first step of our shared journey toward a bold, vibrant strategic plan that will engage the entire CSU Community – faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors, community members and external partners.

## Process of inclusion and input

This revised draft reflects feedback from CSU community input. We received individual surveys, did more than 70 group meetings with over 2000 participants, and had listening sessions with faculty council, the Administrative Professional Council (APC), the Classified Personnel Council (CPC), deans, students, staff, alumni, donors, community members, and external partners. While this revised draft does not incorporate every suggested change or criticism, all of them were read and many will be adopted or addressed as the plan comes to fruition.

## Timeline

Once the final revision of this framework is reviewed by the Board of Governors, we will begin aligning specific division and college strategic plans with this overarching framework.

We know we will face difficult choices in the coming years, whether as the result of CSU's rapid growth, the urgency of our work in areas like sustainability and food security, the moral imperative we feel to address issues of equity in our community and COVID-19-related fiscal challenges. We believe that this framework, supported by local strategic plans, will help us make these choices. For example, it is our intention that the Budget and Operational Reform called out in this framework will lead to consistent linking of resource allocations across the university directly to our shared, forward-focused goals and purpose.

The next step in the process will be to receive input from the Board of Governors, then draft specific plans to be finished by year-end (Dec. 31, 2021). Communities will have the opportunity to weigh in on the plans in their areas. Implementing a bold, new strategic plan can – and should – take years to do right, especially for an institution as large and complex as CSU. Although some of this work has already begun, we envision implementation, including the collaborative work to align college and

division plans with the overarching plan, to start Jan. 1, 2022.

University leadership will evaluate progress and determine whether to further refine performance measures, reallocate key resources, and/or expand efforts in particular areas. CSU has a long history of adapting successfully and with tremendous positive impact. We will approach the implementation of our strategic plan the same way – not as a process to reach a certain “finish line,” but as an ongoing, community effort of constant quality improvement, progress, and growth. The specific initiatives detailed in this framework are intended to take place from now to 2026, the sesquicentennial of Colorado.

## FRAMEWORK

### Preamble | History and Acknowledgment of Responsibility

It is crucial to point out the history of the university and provide context and acknowledgment about our place in history. This acknowledges the work of President Tony Frank whose administration started the work of recognizing the Native American lands that form the foundation of all land-grant universities, including CSU. This section is an addition to the first draft of the framework, directly in response to feedback received.

Colorado State University is a public, land-grant university designated by the state of Colorado to receive the benefits of the federal Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862, which established the initial land-grant colleges to “teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts” without excluding “other scientific and classical studies.” There are four agencies of the state assigned to CSU: the Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station, Colorado State University Extension, the Colorado State Forest Service, and the Colorado Water Institute.

Land-grant colleges were established by the sale or occupation of federal land, most of it acquired after the systematic dispossession of Native Americans from their homelands. Colorado State University was established through the dispossession of the traditional homelands of the Cheyenne, Ute, and Arapaho Nations. As Colorado's flagship, land-grant university, Colorado State University recognizes its responsibility to be representative of the people of Colorado, particularly those historically marginalized; the nation; the world; and the sovereign Tribal Nations and their people, on whose lands this university is built, and from which the university continues to benefit.

The university acknowledges that as with our nation, there is significant work to be done to make real progress toward true diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. Colorado State University is obligated to advance bold solutions to discrimination and to champion diversity and inclusion. We will give meaningful attention to these issues and those historically marginalized, and incorporate solutions throughout our transformation.

To fulfill this responsibility, Colorado State University will be an exemplar for public research universities in ensuring access to education for all; provide inclusive and welcoming educational experiences for academic and post-graduation success; perform high-quality, high-impact basic and applied research, creative artistry and scholarship; and engage in authentic outreach and engagement at the local, state, tribal, national, and international levels.

### **Distinction | Our Difference**

Colorado State University distinguishes itself through its world-class sustainability curriculum, research, and engagement in a Mountain West location that supports innovation, entrepreneurship, and experiential learning. We have a unique focus on collaboration, inclusion, and community. We are dedicated to opportunity and success, including first-generation students

and accessibility to affordable higher education. Colorado State is committed to animal, plant, and human health and to the evolving needs of our students, Colorado, the nation, and the world. Two examples of this commitment are our Colorado Rural initiative and investment in CSU Spur, the new campus in North Denver.

### **Colorado and Mountain West**

Colorado is a top state in the nation (Forbes, Nov. 19) for innovation and entrepreneurship. In 2020 Market Watch placed Fort Collins at No. 1, "The Best Places to Live in America" (Oct. 2020). Through our land grant commitment, location in the Mountain West, and partnership with the unique communities of Colorado, particularly our urban and rural communities, we are building a resilient and prosperous future for the state.

### **State, Regional, National and Global Engagement**

Engagement drives service, extension, and experiential learning. It is collaborative and community focused. Through our land-grant commitment to and partnership with the unique communities of Colorado, we are building a resilient and prosperous future for the state, including our rural communities. Our connectedness, extension and engagement, and experiential education across the university, within Colorado, and around the world, are co-created with participants and stakeholders to be accessible and applicable toward informing, enriching, and accomplishing individual, organizational, and social outcomes.

### **Health**

We believe human, animal, environmental, and planetary health is an important future strategic trajectory for CSU regional and global impacts. Our strategic trajectory in health includes continued focused excellence in each of these areas while enhancing the integration of the relationships between them. Our strategic approach to health builds on a strong historic foundation of excellence in broad areas of

scholarship, research, engagement, and lifelong learning. Our strategy will incorporate important issues in community-engaged health, including mental health, nutrition, and food security, all critical components of healthy communities.

We recognize the importance of integrating our values of social justice and inclusion into our approach to health problems and the integration of social sciences, humanities, and ethics into sustaining healthy communities.

We have significant, globally recognized strategic assets in health and passionate scholars and researchers that will drive new discoveries and solutions in CSU's One Health Institute. Our future opportunities in health strategy have been greatly enhanced by our impactful institutional public health response during the pandemic. CSU was recognized as a top 10 university in the world for our response during the pandemic attracting and educating the next generation of leaders to provide new innovations and solutions in health.

### **Sustainability**

Colorado State has a deep commitment to addressing the grand challenges of global sustainability facing our world. We view sustainability through a triple-bottom-line lens that highlights the intersection of social, environmental, and economic systems.

CSU's sustainability agenda spans research, education, campus operations and infrastructure, and engagement, with a wide range of stakeholders beyond the university. We offer a broad array of coursework that includes sustainability concepts, along with interdisciplinary minors and majors that focus on sustainability. The university has made significant progress in greening its physical campus and infrastructure, with dedicated efforts in all facets of campus operations, including building efficiency, transportation, housing and dining, solar energy, and waste management, and has implemented initiatives that specifically address campus equity, justice,

and food security. Colorado State faculty and researchers have long demonstrated excellence in sustainability scholarship, with many teams, centers, departments, and collaborative projects dedicated to solving some of the most pressing social, environmental, and economic challenges of our time.

In 2020, the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education ranked CSU as its top overall performer in the category of Doctoral Institutions in its annual Sustainable Campus Index, besting Stanford University and Cornell University, among others. CSU also earned the top overall ranking in the category of Curriculum, with a perfect score.

The Sustainability Campus Index recognizes top-performing sustainable colleges and universities overall and in 17 categorical impact areas, as measured by the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System, also known as STARS. In all, CSU was recognized in eight of the 17 impact areas. In addition to the Doctoral Institutions and Curriculum categories, CSU received high rankings in Campus Engagement, Coordination and Planning, Investment and Finance, Public Engagement, Research, and Wellbeing and Work. In February 2020, the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education rated CSU at its highest level – Platinum – for a record third time. The independent program measures comprehensive sustainability efforts at 990 universities around the world.

Our goal is that every student who attends CSU is exposed to sustainability through coursework and has the opportunity to engage in sustainability through co-curricular experiences.

### **Experiential Learning**

Student learning drives CSU's teaching. It is student-focused and outcome-driven, measured by student success before and after graduation. Our instruction, experiential learning, and coaching, on our campuses and online, are grounded in supporting undergraduate,

graduate, and lifelong students through problem-solving, inquiry, and high-impact, inclusive practices that engage students simultaneously in meeting the challenges of society and in their own learning.

An education at CSU is an opportunity for students to enjoy rigorous engagement with people and ideas in an environment built on a foundation of intellectual diversity and the free exchange of ideas that are at the heart of academic and intellectual freedom and oriented toward the common good. The pursuit of learning is rooted in our fundamental commitment to diverse viewpoints, open inquiry, and constructive disagreement in pursuit of scholarship and learning. The consistent pursuit of environmental sustainability, multidisciplinary approaches to human, animal, and plant health, and our sustained commitment to equity and inclusive excellence is oriented toward expanding educational opportunity and building collaborative communities that apply and adapt knowledge to pursue solutions to the complex problems that impact the citizens of Colorado, the United States, and the world.

Our specific commitment to experiential learning drives us to build into our curriculum positive, intentional, and engaged experiential learning opportunities for students in all disciplines and at all levels, to promote both excellence and opportunities.

### **Purpose | Our Mission**

CSU is a public, land-grant, student-centric, research-focused, engaged university committed to providing access and developing diverse leaders for Colorado and the world through excellence in interdisciplinary, experiential, and global learning and research. Our university colors are green and gold, selected originally to capture our agricultural history by representing alfalfa and wheat. Today, we continue to cultivate the green – a sustainable, thriving planet – and the gold – a flourishing humanity – in all we do.

### **Institutional Values**

With our principles of community, our institutional values are what we live by every day, as individuals and as a community committed to learning; discovery, innovation, ingenuity, creativity; and engagement. We are:

1. Innovative, agile, and entrepreneurial – reflected in our strategic plan to position CSU as a university committed to staying relevant to the demands of the now and the future.
2. Committed to access and success – reflected in our land-grant mission to make excellent education available to launch students into a lifetime of professional success and leadership and to create and serve lifelong learners.
3. Collaborative and interdisciplinary – reflected in our willingness to build partnerships among disciplines, with and among students, staff, faculty, alumni, and external partners.
4. Committed to academic and scholarly excellence – reflected in our rigorous standards for the caliber of the education we deliver to all students; the scope, brilliance and impact of the research, scholarly and creative work we conduct; and the potent real-world applications and innovations of our engagement. The university is committed to basic, long-term, foundational research in the sciences, arts, and social sciences to be used both for the sake of applied and engaged learning and to solve economic, social and physical problems across the globe.
5. Committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice – reflected in our commitment to building a welcoming community of diverse, faculty, staff, and students; our policies and practices that promote equity in the classroom and the workplace; our understanding of inclusion as extending

broadly to include all peoples, cultures, and ideas.

6. Guided by an international perspective – reflected in our shared understanding that CSU is inextricably connected to our larger world, and that we all engage in meaningful and collaborative impact through global learning, scholarship, and service.

## Aspiration

CSU will be a premier university to study, research, and engage on global and local issues, sustainability, and sustainable development focused on water, soil, food, air, climate, and energy, in a holistic approach that integrates environmental, economic, and societal sustainability with a focus on inclusion, justice and well-being.

**Green: Our purpose is to drive bold solutions and strategies for a Sustainable, Thriving Planet.**

Areas of targeted impact:

1. Environmental health and climate change.
2. Animal, plant, and human health.
3. Safe and secure state and global food systems and access to nutrition.
4. Sustainable ecosystems and water resources.
5. Clean and sustainable energy.
6. Lifelong learning for students, the CSU community, and greater community.

**Gold: Our purpose is to drive bold solutions and strategies for a Flourishing Humanity.**

Areas of targeted impact:

1. Scholarly and artistic creation.
2. Individual and community strength and prosperity.
3. Equity and social justice.
4. Civic engagement.

5. Dialogue that ethically engages difference.
6. Lifelong learning for students, the CSU community, and greater community.

## Prerequisites | Transformation Building Blocks

To lay a solid foundation for the successful transformation of CSU, the university community will chart a path for achievement of the Green and Gold aims for a sustainable, thriving planet and flourishing humanity. We will:

1. Develop courageous and focused targeted impacts,
2. Identify CSU assets and interdisciplinary networks, and
3. Mobilize resources.

These building blocks will help to fulfill our key purpose areas of learning, research, and engagement and incorporate and consider national and international implications recognizing that our world is interconnected. At the heart of the building blocks is the commitment to the CSU community which is reflected in the pride our campus holds for the *CSU Principles of Community*: Inclusion, Integrity, Respect, Service, and Social Justice.

## Strategic Academic Innovation

CSU will invest resources toward our educational mission, including closing equity gaps, which is central to our ability to recruit, retain, and train a diverse student body that can be equipped to be successful lifelong learners and can contribute to society in a variety of innovative ways. This includes the investment of time, attention, and resources focused on student success, including curricular innovation; discipline-specific interventions for optimal student learning; and fostering faculty development in pursuit of excellence in teaching. The CSU community will:

1. Create a campus-wide academic master plan,

2. Close the student equity gaps,
3. Collaboratively develop strategic and interdisciplinary curricular innovations, and
4. Foster faculty development in pursuit of excellence in teaching.

### **Strategic Enrollment**

The CSU community will co-create a holistic strategy for the composition of a diverse and inclusive on-campus and online student body through:

1. Strategies and targets for program-level enrollment growth,
2. Targeted student enrollment growth in strategic categories,
3. A unified enrollment process, and
4. Comprehensive and intentional curricular innovation to meet student needs.

### **Strategic Workforce Development, Support, and Wellness**

The CSU community is comprised of a strong, vibrant, collaborative workforce. CSU will support faculty and staff through:

1. Implementation of strategic, forward-thinking approach to positions, organizations, and shape of work,
2. Facilities investments that support the recruitment and retention of excellent faculty and staff, and
3. Expansion of employee learning and professional development opportunities and positive performance incentives for employees in all areas of the university.
4. Support employee mental and physical health and wellness through supportive programs, HR policies, and culture.

### **Individual and Institutional Accountability**

The CSU community will create systems to promote both individual and institutional accountability, ensuring that faculty, staff, and

leaders are supported and ensure leaders are supported and accountable to achievement through:

1. Establishing unit plans as a significant factor in evaluations,
2. Articulating unit-level planning to university plans, and
3. Creating cycles of learning and improvement toward university success.

### **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice**

The CSU community will build on its current efforts to make progress to address racism, inequity, and discrimination, and ensure the success and inclusion of historically marginalized students, faculty and staff through:

1. Review and reform of university and unit policies, practices and systems,
2. Intentional work toward inclusive culture and climate, and coordinated approaches to diversity efforts across campus, and
3. Continued inclusive investments in the physical and virtual environment.

### **Budget and Operational Reform**

The CSU community will create a sustainable operational model through:

1. Reform of core budget to align with strategic priorities,
2. Diversification of revenue sources,
3. Establishing a strategic financial aid and scholarship model,
4. Reform and/or reorganization of HR systems, including hiring and promotion processes, and
5. Reform and/or expansion of existing OEO systems to address the changing needs of the workforce.

## Principled Philanthropy

The CSU community will create a sustainable and sustaining philanthropic enterprise that both supports the land-grant mission and advances the university's strategic priorities, mobilizing new approaches to donor and alumni relationships, driven by our sense of the urgency and value of our purpose and aims, that inspire donors at all levels to step forward to help us achieve them through:

1. Cultivating a philanthropic culture focused on the impact of giving,
2. Achieving annual goals of \$225M in philanthropic support for university priorities by 2025,
3. Designing, planning, and implementation of CSU's next comprehensive campaign effort, and
4. Aligning philanthropy goal with university priorities.

## Strategic Branding and Marketing

The CSU Community will elevate the value and perception of the CSU brand statewide and nationally by:

1. Conceiving and implementing a new brand structure and visual identity guidelines,
2. Establishing a coordinated communications structure to ensure campus-wide adoption of new brand element, and
3. Leveraging brand to increase Top of Mind awareness among target constituencies.

## Athletics

The CSU community will create a model Division I intercollegiate athletics department that upholds and strengthens the university's land-grant mission by:

1. Reflecting and enhancing the institution's efforts, particularly in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion, strategic enrollment, strategic branding and marketing, fundraising and development, and
2. Achieving academic and competitive excellence, with the utmost integrity.