Chancellor Dorothy Horrell, PhD, was appointed to lead the University of Colorado Denver in January 2016. She embarked on a Listening Tour during her first 100 days to learn more about CU Denver from over 1000 students, faculty, staff, alumni and civic, university and business leaders. Over these rich conversations and dialogues, Chancellor Horrell heard ideas and issues about one or more areas relative to student success, access to higher education and persistence to and through graduation.

With an eye toward crafting proposals to enhance the student experience, Chancellor Horrell created four distinct working groups comprised of faculty or staff nominated by deans and other campus leaders. John Bennett and Regina Kilkenny were asked to support the work of these collaborative teams. These working groups were asked to address specific questions:

1. **Academic advising charge**: The single-most cited observation during the Listening Tour by students was the need to improve advising. Their comments focused on these perceptions of service: advising is inconsistent, inaccurate or incomplete, which often delays or discourages students in pursuing their degrees. How we can make a meaningful difference for our students’ experiences relative to advising? What would an “ideal” advising process look like at CU Denver? What will it take to bring that to fruition?

2. **K-12 pipeline development charge**: How do we become the “university of choice” for many more Denver-area high school graduates? What are the partnership efforts currently underway with school district? How do we coordinate and leverage those efforts to order to achieve maximum impact and results? What more can we do to assure high school graduates are college-ready?

3. **Community college pathways**: How do we become the “university of choice” for many more graduates from the 5 metro-area community colleges wishing to pursue a four-year degree? How do we simplify the transfer process? What is needed to foster a welcoming, inclusive climate for transfer students? and,

4. **Strategic use of scholarship and institutional aid resources**: We know that lack of financial resources is one of the top two reasons students don’t persist. Our ability to increase institutional aid is limited because of our current financial circumstances. How do we build the case for raising significant new resources for scholarships? How can we assure that the scholarship resources we do have are being strategically utilized to attract and retain the students who can most benefit from them? What “out-of-the-box” ideas should be considered in addressing affordability?
The working groups learned and applied design thinking principles (HBR June 08 Design Thinking Tim Brown) to create an action plan in less than eight weeks in order to define the desired “future state” and identify what it will take to achieve it. They received recent reports or data to commence information gathering, including task force reports, self-studies from the campus Administrative Prioritization Project and Student Government Association student surveys. The working groups were asked to be bold, ambitious and boundary-busting in their work.

Each working group, led by a talented chair to lead the ambitious effort in a short time, was assigned varied individuals to support this effort:

- a faculty member from Inworks to support the application of design thinking principles;
- a staff member from the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness;
- an executive assistant to handle meeting logistics;
- internal and external “validators” to serve as subject matter consultants; and
- “navigators” with special knowledge within the units or as users to assist with data and information gathering.

OVERARCHING THEMES AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

The four working groups identified several overarching themes and challenges. Many of these challenges reflect the growing pains of a young and dynamic institution that is transitioning from a primarily graduate campus to a primarily undergraduate campus. CU Denver has dedicated and talented faculty and staff, but regularly lacks the systems, processes, and tools needed for team members to do their jobs well. This results in a proliferation of “workarounds” that drain energy and time away from focusing on the mission. Some of the challenges are:

- Fragmentation and inconsistency of essential university functions;
- Central offices understaffed and overwhelmed;
- Heroic individual efforts that are unsustainable;
- Competing messages about priorities;
- Inability to draw on potential resources in a systematic way;
- Inconsistent information for employees and students; and,
- Information systems that are not robust enough to meet staff needs (e.g., a customer relationship management system that is able to be accessed by all stakeholders and provide rich and timely information).

Potential solutions are to:

- Create mechanisms to improve communications within and among units/areas;
- Centralize processes or units;
- Standardize common forms or processes;
- Move paper processes to electronic;
- Improve congruency of expectations with practices;
• Evaluate student experiences at the point of delivery; and,
• Clarify decision-making and authority, including communicating who is responsible, which unit is primarily accountable, and who owns the solution.

At the final meeting of all working groups on September 12, 2016, after reports were presented and discussed, participants were asked to anonymously respond to two prompts: “What I liked best that I heard” and “What I wish I heard”. A compilation of those responses are presented in the Appendix. The working group reports follow.
# Academic Advising Working Group

<table>
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<th>Representing</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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Academic Advising Working Group Report

**Working Group Charge**
How do we improve undergraduate advising with the primary goal of increasing student retention and graduation rates? The secondary goal is creating a structure that supports advisors and promotes advisor retention. Some evidence shows that continuity of advisors corresponds to student retention and graduation rates.

**Description of our Current State**
CU Denver currently has eight undergraduate advising offices (ASAC, CAM, Business School, CEAS, CAP, CLAS, SPA, and SEHD). Each college/school/center (aka units) has different advising models, different student-to-advisor ratios, and different processes. See attached "Current Advising Structure" sheet for more details.

As a result, CU Denver undergraduates can have radically different advising experiences depending on the major. Based on multiple interviews and surveys, most undergraduates appreciate their individual advisor but have become, at times, frustrated with wait times, structures, and being sent to multiple locations. Wait times are likely correlated to student-to-advisor ratios, which range from 125:1 to 750:1. Students report periodically being given conflicting or misinformation.

**Description of our Desired State**
CU Denver students are a unique group. Many are first generation, non-traditional, and/or members of traditionally under-represented minorities. About half of our students are transfers and half are first time first years, although a significant proportion of the latter enter with college credit earned in high school. These students need consistent advising.

The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) recommends student-to-advisor ratios of no more than 300 to 1. Universities such as Georgia State and CSU Fullerton, which have student populations similar to CU Denver, have seen significant increases in retention and enrollment after utilizing predictive analytics, inserting proactive advising, and increasing the number of advisors to reach the NACADA recommendations.

From the moment a student enrolls at CU Denver, every contact with an advisor should be helping to move that student through graduation. The institution needs to meet the student where the student is and not require the student to meet the institution where it is. To do this, CU Denver needs to approach as a standard 300:1 student-to-advisor ratio and have consistent messages and policies across all the units. All students should have mandatory advising at least through the first year of enrollment as well as the year before graduation, and CU Denver should use predictive analytics to drive intrusive advising. Ideally, the student would have one advisor throughout their time at the institution, but regardless, the student should get consistent information.

**Introduction**
The Working Group held a brief one-hour introductory strategy meeting and then met on four subsequent occasions in three-hour blocks. All listed participants were involved in
the in-person and additional email discussions. We began by interviewing current and/or recent alums about their advising experiences, exploring the advising structures of other peer institutions, collecting information about how each unit currently functions, as well as reviewing the extensive documents created by prior groups:

- Blueprinting Analysis Scorecard
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Advising Results
- CU Denver Student Government Association (SGA) Advising Survey Results
- Equity Scorecard Report for Retention and Completion

This Working Group is deeply grateful to these prior groups for their thoughtful assessments and extensive work. Many of their recommendations are re-iterated within this report.

**Key Themes**

CU Denver must decide if it is one university or multiple colleges/schools/units. This Working Group supports a more unified university approach to undergraduate education and advising.

We need common language, policies, and processes.

To succeed, we need cooperation, communication, and some mandates from higher administration.

**Recommendations for the Short Term**

**FOR IMMEDIATE AY 2016-17 CREATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

Parenthesis indicate which group is recommended to be empowered to undertake the action.

Reiterate commitment to meeting Equity Scorecard Report for Retention and Completion’s goals (Advising offices, coordinated by the Academic Advising Administrator's Council (AAAC), and in consultation with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion):

- Develop a mandated module for new employees
- Distribute Equity Scorecard to all advisors

**Standardized undergraduate degree plan documents** (subcommittee composed of AAAC and Advising Network members):

1. There should be 3 forms or sheets: Core courses/curriculum, guided pathways for major, and advising checklist. Standardization applies to advising checklist and Core sheet for each college--standardized look. Ideally the guided pathways for the major should look similar for easy comparison and reference. Each sheet should be no more than one page of paper (front and back at most).
2. All forms should be available in single electronic location.
3. A recommended/suggested 4-year map of courses to graduation should be on all guided pathway sheets.
4. As a reference for guided pathway sheet the headers in BFA and Fine Arts are
nicely done--clear categories.
5. Include standard note (120 credit hours/2.0 GPA/type things/minimum grades) on Core and guided major pathways sheets.
6. Advising checklist and guided pathways to major sheets should include what to complete/when and supplemental information sheets (which tell you which options fulfill these obligations).
7. Editable advising checklist sheet in PDF (edited only by advisor) version.
8. Advising checklist sheet should have Check box/grade/Course #/term/credits.
9. If advisor wrote out checklist sheet manually, need to upload/update to Starfish.

Standard "85 credit hour near graduation" communication (Jeff Franklin, with help from Advisor Network, and then to Undergrad Working Group and deans): Starfish should send out a notification to every student in progress but after census date (prior to next registration).

University wide catalogue date for policy and degree changes (needs to be enforced by Registrar and higher administration): Because catalog changes regarding degree and policy changes usually affect the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS), this committee recommends that such changes be allowed only once per year, assuming that such policy and degree changes affect OARS. Individual student exceptions should be allowed at the college level.

Finish/revise centralized Academic Advising Website (committee work--IT and Cecilio Alvarez to complete plus fund a part-time web manager to maintain).

Create a timeline of what a student should do over the course of a year, broken down by semester, to be posted on Academic Advising website (committee of representatives from each advising unit).
This timeline might include or consider things such as:
• Service blueprinting as starting point
• Admission date
• Submit all transcripts and test scores (if not already done pre-admission)
• Meet with advisor for classes (time period by semester)
• Submit FAFSA (give dates)
• Meet with Financial Aid
• Should all offices do this and then have a master timeline shared with all?
• Look at master calendar for global awareness

Communication from Admissions office after admissions for recruitment should be consistent across colleges/schools. For example, all units should have follow up welcome letters from respective dean or director to new students, both 1-year and transfer students. We encourage those letters to include info about advising (respectively drafted by advising offices).

Admissions: Things-to-do-next website: Add advising link (Admissions office): Could loop student back to orientation for 1st years or send to main advising link for transfer students unless we have a mandatory transfer orientation. Perhaps send to link on advising
website "find my advisor" tab.

All schools and colleges should use the same process and deadlines to request add/drop/withdrawal (Existing committee, Sandy Mondragon & Linda Brooker co-chair): Recommend: consider how to make it easier for Title IX and Equity cases to avoid paperwork, perhaps allow Office of Equity to have the power to process such requests directly.

Standardize drop dates (An existing committee may be working on this. The Undergraduate Working Group will confirm and if one is not will commence the process, with approval authority from the Associate Deans & Academic Support Group): All units should have the same drop deadline and policies.

DARS fully functional on undergrad level on or before fall 2017 (support Registrar's office need for resources).

Administer the Advising Taskforce required post-advising satisfaction survey (Advisor Network subcommittee in consultation with AAAC will work to draft in consultation with IRB if needed): Each unit should send an automated survey to each student after each student appointment.

Holds: Recommend a committee to evaluate and assess student holds and to create a glossary of holds so that the student can understand what the hold is, how to move beyond it, and post that information on the student's portal. Ask registrar to do audit of current holds (active and inactive).

Create a glossary of advising terms (Advisor Network in conjunction with website team):
- Place on Academic Advising Website and be sure the language is standardized
- Work for consistency in language across offices

Improved services for international students (Office of International Affairs, college/school course management officers, and advising units): Given the late arrival and registration of international students, work to ensure adequate course space and advising times for this population.

Recommendations for the Longer Term
CU Denver has a growing number of online degree offerings meaning that some students may never step foot on campus. For these students, as well as tech-savvy students, we must create a comprehensive and accurate Advising App. This should be based on the Advising Website.

CU Denver must strive to approach the NACADA recommended 300:1 student-to-advisor ratio and must have a consistency of policy, messaging, and treatment no matter the student's major. Thus, this Working Group recommends an analysis of three possible models to explore as future advising structures. Please note that all three models presume the implantation of the shorter-term goals.
Under each of these models, an Advising CZAR/INA should be appointed. The Advising CZar/ina must have the ability, power, and authority to implement policy and enforce decisions. The CZar/ina should be a bridge between the deans in academic affairs and the directors in student services, but the CZar/ina should be independent from both colleges/schools and Student Affairs.

Centralized Success Team Advising Model: Using the one university model, all undergraduate advising would be located in one space (perhaps Student Commons) with the goal of one stop shopping where the student can get help (or at least a referral to another person in any office) for almost any problem. The Lynx Center would be the welcome/direction center and direct the student to that student’s success team.

The success team would be meta-disciplinary specialists based on proportion of students in the major.

- For example, one or more teams might be Education advising specialists working with students in SEHD and one or more teams might be CLAS Humanities advising specialists. Other teams might specialize in undeclared students.
- Each team should have a professional advisor, a graduation specialist, and a representative from a wide range of offices including Financial Aid and Scholarships, Career Services, Experiential Learning, Registrar’s Office, International Affairs, and others.
- Essentially this model asks that the non-advising offices carry portfolios of specific students with whom they work.
- Each team would have a faculty mentor (who would be a mentor rather than an academic advisor) in each of the majors in their meta-disciplinary areas. For example, the CLAS Humanities success team would have a faculty mentor in each of the Humanities majors.
- The goal of centralized success team-based advising is to reduce the silo-effect and show the student that their team of student services and academic affairs experts is working to help the student succeed and graduate.

Decentralized Unit Advising Model: This system continues our current structure but requires some change and resource investment.

- Attain NACADA recommended ratio for all offices (this means adding advisors to certain offices).
- Bring student services to the school/college/center (have unit-based Financial Aid, Career Services, Experiential Learning, Admissions, Registrar, Bursar, Student Life representatives--some units might need specific additional liaisons such as Vet Services or International Students etc. The centralized main offices would be transactional with the relational component in the college).
- Offer specialized career fairs. One example of how this would work from a career counseling standpoint is schools/collages would offer their own specialized career fairs, focused on what their students are studying, rather than a large-scale fair with multiple disciplines. Ex: Computer Science & Engineering Fair.
- Be mindful of large demographic of students who don't know major when enter and often change their major--create system that allows exploration but still graduate on time.
• Create and enforce common policies and procedures across units.
•Implementation of Starfish highlights the need for the Advising Czar/ina to implement and enforce standards and guidelines for users.
• Offer professional development budget for advisors in all units such as shadowing different offices or serve on different committees to learn how the university works. Create and maintain manageable caseloads and effective use support staff.
• Add support staff so advisors have time to advise and be available to students in urgent need of advising and during high volume advising periods such as at the beginning of the term and start of registration. If support staff or other offices are able to handle non-advising duties such as compiling data, tracking forms, graduation checks, probation notices, etc. that would free advisors to advise.

**Hybrid of Centralized/Decentralized Advising Models:** Use a central system of advising until the student reaches 45-credit hours and/or declares a major at which point the advising moves to the college/school. This system might allow consistency of onboarding students to the university while allowing the student to connect to the college/school after they have made a major decision.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College/School</th>
<th>Brief summary of services office provides</th>
<th>Type of Advisor</th>
<th>Required # of student contacts</th>
<th>Rough Student:Advisor Ratio</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Architecture &amp; Planning</td>
<td>Work with all majors</td>
<td>both professional advisors but no assigned advisors (each student meets with whomever)</td>
<td>1x as 1st year and 1x before studio 2</td>
<td>250 to 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASAC</td>
<td>Guide all undeclared students and those who have not yet been admitted to school of choice. All CAM 1st year students</td>
<td>All professional advisors but no assigned advisors (each student meets with whomever)</td>
<td>Each student must come in each semester (hold)</td>
<td>400 to 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Work with all majors</td>
<td>Professional advisors plus one grad student peer advisor -- No assigned advisors; each student meets with whomever is available</td>
<td>1x 1st year with capstone course space limited to last term and for those students who apply for graduation</td>
<td>400 to 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAM</td>
<td>Work with all majors</td>
<td>All professional advisors with no assigned advisors (each student meets with whomever)</td>
<td>Mandatory 1x advising for incoming and returning students</td>
<td>550 to 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEAS</td>
<td>Currently the ESSC (Engineering Student Services Center) has four faculty advisors for each department. Faculty advisors are 1/2 time advisors, 1/2 time teaching. One dept has two full-time program managers serving as advisors.</td>
<td>Faculty advisors for each major. Full-time faculty also serve in mandatory advising.</td>
<td>1x 1st year 1x each semester (mandatory hold) 130-hour check, 1 graduation check</td>
<td>360 to 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLAS</td>
<td>Work with all declared CLAS majors and pre-CEAS but does not do major advising</td>
<td>All professional advisors with randomly assigned advisees &amp; faculty advise majors</td>
<td>1x at beginning of CU Denver career</td>
<td>750 to 1</td>
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<td>SEHD</td>
<td>Work with all declared SEHD majors and CLAS secondary licensure students</td>
<td>2 professional advisors assigned to specific undergrad tracks in the major</td>
<td>1x 1st year</td>
<td>250 to 1, undergrad program new, growing</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPA</td>
<td>Work with all SPA undergraduate students both academic advising and program coordination-including career related events, catalog changes, curriculum development.</td>
<td>Professional advisor assigned by program. One advisor for criminal justice; one advisor for public service.</td>
<td>1x before student first registers.</td>
<td>250 to 1</td>
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# K-12 Pipeline Development Working Group

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K-12 Pipeline Development Working Group Charge: How do we become the “university of choice” for many more Denver-area high school graduates? What are the partnership efforts currently underway with school districts? How do we coordinate and leverage those efforts in order to achieve maximum impact and results? What more can we do to assure high school graduates are college-ready?

Description of Our Ideal State: CU Denver is widely perceived as offering a high-quality, affordable college education that takes full advantage of our location in the heart of Denver, our status as a CU campus, the quality of our faculty, and our diverse and talented student body. We have engaging degree programs that address a variety of needs and interests and we market them effectively. We actively recruit prospective students in an individualized way that highlights our unique programs, the availability of scholarships and other financial support, and provides exposure to CU Denver faculty and staff and our campus. We give every prospective student the information they need to know why CU Denver is a good fit for them, and we make admissions and enrollment easy and exciting for them.

Many of our prospective students are very familiar with CU Denver, having engaged with our faculty, staff, and campus multiple times during their K-12 education. We serve Denver through strong and long-lasting community partnerships with school districts, schools, and nonprofits serving school-age youth, and these partnerships help us understand the needs of our communities and our prospective students. The schools, districts, and other community partners we work with know why CU Denver is a good option for their students, know that we care deeply about their students and their outcomes, and believe that our partnerships add significant value to their students both in terms of enriching their current lives and in preparing them to be college students. Our current students and alumni appreciate the practical and relevant education they receive and serve as our best ambassadors to the larger metro-area community, both formally and informally.

Description of Our Current State: We found that our biggest challenges to attracting more Denver-area students tended to fall into three categories:

- Failure to communicate compelling reasons to choose CU Denver
- Financial support issues
- Institutional barriers to effective recruiting, outreach, admissions, financial support, and key student services processes

Our current state in each of these areas is described below. We want to emphasize that there are a lot of individuals working very hard in each area (indeed, the talent and commitment of our employees is one of our greatest strengths), and the last few years have seen significant improvements. However, if we want to achieve ambitious goals, we also need to be honest about how far we still need to go.
Failure to Communicate Compelling Reasons to Choose CU Denver

CU Denver has not yet set up the communications strategies we need to persuade Denver-area students that CU Denver should be a top choice school for them. For example, we found that many users don’t really understand what CU Denver is all about or what it has to offer, and perceive other institutions as having much stronger brand identity and community presence.

In particular, CU Denver is put at a disadvantage by what we are calling the “Auraria Blob” phenomenon, in which all Auraria institutions blend together in users’ minds. Depending on the user’s background, this is interpreted in different ways. For lower-income students, the perception that the Auraria institutions are equivalent leads them to select Metro or CCD as cheaper and more accessible options. For students from wealthier families, this leads them to believe that Auraria institutions are equivalent in terms of prestige, or in other words, not prestigious enough.

We also encountered these common misperceptions: CU Denver is only a commuter campus, CU Denver only serves working adults, there is no residential housing, it’s not a “real” college experience, it’s not friendly to first generation students, it’s too expensive, it’s too hard to get into, it’s for people who are not like me.

We discovered that despite tremendous improvements over the past few years, our recruiting and admissions processes are not set up to provide the “why” for undergraduate students. While our freshman applications are up dramatically (11,833 in 2016), our yield rate is down – 20 percent in 2016 compared to 42 percent in 2012. The national average yield for higher education institutions is 33.6 percent. (Worth noting is that extremely high-performing students (index score 25 or above) comprised 20 percent of CU Denver’s 2016 applications but just 11 percent (146) of these students enrolled in the fall semester.)

We believe this is happening in part because communications with prospective and admitted students tend to be generic, and are not tailored to be responsive to demographics or personal interests. The Admissions Office had no communications plan until fall 2013. While applications have dramatically increased, staffing has remained the same. Staff have been consumed with processing applications, and while the office sends out over 1 million emails per year to prospective, admitted, and current students, they have been unable to dedicate time to more personalized communications.

Academic units tend to have their own small recruiting/admitted student communications efforts in units, but these are self-initiated, typically not well-resourced, and not coordinated with the university. Similarly, while there are numerous large and small K-12 outreach programs across the university (and the offices of K-12 Outreach and Admissions brought 10,000 prospective students to campus last year), there is no institutional strategy guiding all of them. Individuals trying to do recruiting and K-12 outreach within academic units are often maxed out, and the need to scale up these programs and coordinate them is critical.
In addition to recommending that we articulate our strengths in more detailed and personalized ways and better coordinate our limited resources, our group also came up with ideas for new programs that specifically target key user subgroups: high-achieving students, students interested in working while attending college, and first generation students. We see these as additional strategic selling points that fit well with our mission, and feedback from our users was positive.

**Financial support issues**

Cost is a real barrier for many prospective (and current) CU Denver students. We expect that the Scholarship working group will have more detailed information about this. For purposes of our working group, we note simply that issues of financial aid and scholarships came up frequently. We have a limited amount of institutional merit-based scholarships, which hinders our ability to recruit higher-achieving students. And while we are able to put together solid financial aid packages for lower-income students, understaffing in the Financial Aid office leads to information about financial aid arriving too late to be useful in the college decision process. It can also be very challenging for admitted students to get individual financial aid counseling if they are not already part of a program that provides this.

**Institutional barriers to effective recruiting, outreach, admissions, financial support, and key student services processes**

We believe that many of the challenges we heard reflect the growing pains of a young and dynamic institution that is transitioning with limited resources from a primarily graduate campus to a primarily undergraduate campus. Our working group felt strongly that we have dedicated and talented faculty and staff, but that people regularly lack the systems, processes, and tools they need to do their jobs well. This results in a proliferation of “workarounds” that drain energy and time away from focusing on the mission.

Particularly relevant to our group’s topic are the following institutional challenges:

- Fragmentation and inconsistency of essential university functions
- Lack of awareness of university and unit initiatives
- Central offices understaffed and overwhelmed
- Heroic individual efforts that are unsustainable
- Competing messages about institutional and unit priorities
- Inability to draw on potential resources like alumni engagement in a systematic way
- Inconsistent information for employees and students
- Information systems that are not robust enough to meet staff needs (relevant to our group, a customer relationship management system that is able to be accessed by all stakeholders and provide rich and timely information)
Our Recommendations

Our recommendations fall into five main areas, each with recommended strategies and ideas. More details about ideas and strategies in each area are available on request.

1. Develop compelling messaging that specifically defines the meaning of Learn with Purpose
   - Expressly promote our strengths: we are Colorado’s only public urban research university; we’re in the heart of Denver; we have prestigious programs and high-quality faculty; we’re affordable; we offer flexibility; our students are diverse; our alumni go on to amazing careers.
   - Embrace our identity as CU in the City to emphasize both our CU affiliation and our urban campus and increase visibility and presence across the city.
   - Dispel misconceptions so that students know we have opportunities to live on campus and that we are not just for working adults.
   - Develop effective ways to differentiate ourselves from the other Auraria institutions and the other CU institutions.
   - Differentiate messaging to be responsive to a wide variety of prospective students across income levels, family educational backgrounds, academic performance, and other demographics.
   - Make sure that employees, current students, and alumni are trained in key messages so they can be effective ambassadors.

2. Target recruiting efforts
   - Develop segmented recruiting initiatives that use information about prospective student interests to tailor communications and outreach to subgroups and individuals, including involving specific programs and/or academic units early in the recruitment process.
   - Develop and coordinate program-specific recruitment initiatives through partnerships between Admissions, K-12 Outreach, and academic units/programs that emphasize sharing information about prospective students and coordinating outreach activities.
   - Ensure that information about CU Denver is easy to access and that application, admissions, and financial aid procedures are simple and user-friendly.

3. Create new unique and prestigious programs and better market existing ones
   - Attract high-performing students through an expanded Honors College that provides honors courses, faculty mentors, a living and learning community, and full scholarships for low-income students.
   - Attract students who want to make a difference through a new CU in the City Scholars program, in which students live in learning communities based in Denver neighborhoods that are focused...
on interdisciplinary themes and include hands-on projects and learning experiences that benefit the community.

- Use new and existing #CU Denver Works programs providing guaranteed work-study and paid internship positions to attract students who are interested in obtaining an education that shows immediate practical benefits and who want to begin working in their fields while completing their degrees.

- Expand Guaranteed Professional Program Admission programs for qualified freshmen who are interested in graduate professional programs at the Downtown and Anschutz campuses.

- Attract first generation college students through scholarships and the support of the First Gen Network of faculty, staff, and current students.

4. **Provide timely financial support that makes a difference for students.**

   - Support academic units in fundraising for discipline-specific scholarships to use in recruiting key prospects.

   - Fund targeted scholarships to attract specific groups of students, such as Honors College scholarships, CU in the City Scholars funding, and First Gen Network scholarships.

   - Create work-study jobs for students that also help accomplish high priority university goals such as recruiting, staffing community events, and student academic support.

   - Identify work-study jobs and paid internship opportunities for #CU Denver Works programs.

   - Ensure that students have access to financial aid information and counseling in a timely way.

5. **Strategically develop and coordinate K-12 outreach programs across the university**

   - Create a K-12 Outreach Steering Committee consisting of representatives from the Office of K-12 Outreach, the Office of Admissions, and academic unit and program liaisons, with the Office of K-12 Outreach serving as the lead unit.

   - Build on previous planning efforts by developing a university-wide strategic plan for K-12 outreach consisting of at least the following components:

     - Minimum levels of CU Denver presence in all area high schools consisting of admission counselor communication and visits, CU Denver information, and presence at college events

     - Plans for expanded levels of CU Denver presence with targeted districts and schools, including CU Succeed partnerships that go beyond coursework

     - Establishment of process for developing and coordinating academic unit-based K-12 workshops, outreach programs, and discipline-specific campus visits
- Expanded opportunities for campus visits by K-12 students, teachers, counselors, and administrators
- Expanded involvement by CU Denver faculty, staff, and student in campus visits
- Professional development for K-12 teachers and counselors
- Involvement of CU Denver students in service learning opportunities with K-12 schools and nonprofits serving K-12 youth
- Expanded visibility of CU Denver at youth-oriented events
- Expanded on-campus programming for K-12 students and families
- Resources to assist schools with campus visits, such as funds for school buses and substitute teachers

- Give the Steering Committee the authority to set standards and provide resources for programs and units that want to engage in K-12 outreach. Give the Office of K-12 Outreach authority to make final decisions on how best to conduct outreach programs.

- Require each academic unit to designate one individual to serve as the point of contact for K-12 outreach and campus visits. Coordinate campus visit programming to provide opportunities to showcase each unit.

**Initiatives to Launch Immediately**

- **Messaging:**
  - Build new messaging insights into expanded Learn with Purpose campaign
  - Develop and implement CU in the City strategy for expanded visibility in the community
  - Train employees in messages and talking points

- **Recruiting and admissions:**
  - Develop segmented communications plans for targeted prospective student subgroups: high-achievers, first generation students, students who need/want to work, etc.
  - Partner with academic units to develop communications plans for students interested in specific disciplines and programs, to be carried out in a coordinated way
  - Review website for information accessibility and accuracy
  - Form working group to recommend ways to improve capacity of Office of Financial Aid
  - Commit to finding a robust CRM system that will meet multiple needs
• Programming:
  o Set parameters for Guaranteed Professional Program Admission and #CU Denver Works programs, solicit program participation, develop and implement marketing campaigns
  o Develop feasibility plans for expanded Honors College and CU in the City Scholars, including scholarships
  o Establish First Gen Student Services Office in Office of Diversity and Inclusion and support the First Gen Network

• Financial support:
  o Undertake review of existing work-study positions and develop plan to optimize available positions to achieve university goals and to provide relevant work for students in #CU Denver Works programs
  o Calculate costs of recommended additional financial aid and scholarships and develop fundraising plans
  o Work with academic units to identify scholarship needs for recruiting, develop fundraising plans

• K-12 Outreach
  o Create K-12 Outreach Program Steering Committee to develop enhanced strategic plan and oversee coordination for K-12 outreach programs
  o Coordinate and expand K-12 outreach programs across the university for maximum impact in achieving strategic plan goals
  o Continue plans for expanded CU Succeed partnerships with metro districts

Short-term and Long-term Goals

Short term goals (1-3 years):

• **Messaging** to prospective students and influencers is clear, compelling, and consistent, and employees report being familiar with and excited about key messages

• CU Denver has a **visible presence** in every metro area high school that includes at a minimum regular counselor communication and visits and CU Denver banners and information

• CU Denver has **coherent strategies** in place and **implementation plans** underway for segmented recruiting communications, K-12 outreach, community presence, and fundraising to support student scholarships and new programs
• Academic units feel **supported** in recruiting and outreach programs

• Central administrative units receive **cooperation** from academic units in recruiting and K-12 outreach, and each unit participates in campus visits, school visits, and other outreach activities

• At least three major Denver-area school districts have **comprehensive CU Succeed partnerships** with CU Denver that in addition to coursework include in-school workshops and information sessions, campus visits for students and staff, discipline-specific events, and staff professional development

• A **robust CRM system** meeting the needs of the university has been selected and implemented

• #CU Denver Works and **Guaranteed Professional Program Admission** programs are underway

• Feasibility and implementation plans for the Honors College and CU in the City Scholars are completed

• Initial **CU in the City Scholars** community service learning activities are underway, and properties for living/learning communities have been identified

• The **First Gen Student Services Office** has been established in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion

• The **First Gen Network** is well-established and integrated into recruiting and K-12 outreach activities

• **Alumni** feel connected to CU Denver through opportunities to help with recruiting students, providing work-study and internship opportunities, and fundraising for student scholarships

• Final **financial aid packages** are available to students in March

**Long term goals (3-5 years):**

• Surveys of high school students and influencers demonstrate **consistent positive and accurate perceptions** of CU Denver characteristics and programs

• CU Denver has a **visible presence** in every metro area high school and middle school

• CU Denver has a **visible presence** at major community events on campus and across the metro area

• **Diverse and substantive partnerships** with K-12 schools, districts, and youth-serving nonprofits are thriving in every metro area district, and partners report that they and their students receive meaningful benefits from the partnerships

• CU Denver is known as a **welcoming place for first generation students**
• CU Denver’s Honors College is known as a prestigious destination for high-performing area high school students and welcomes 100+ students each year while maintaining rigor and a close-knit community

• Five CU in the City Scholar living and learning communities are underway in Denver

• CU Denver financial aid and scholarship packages are competitive with other Colorado institutions and public urban research universities for students from all backgrounds

• #CU Denver Works programs are well-known as an affordable and practical way to attend college by combining relevant employment with degree programs

• At least 35 percent of admitted freshmen enroll at CU Denver, and yield rates are consistent across demographic groups

• CU Denver employees report having the systems, tools, and resources they need to do their work effectively

*Available on request: survey and interview results, complete inventory of ideas generated, additional detail on recommendations and strategies, and complete inventory of current K-12 outreach programs*
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Community College Pathways Working Group Report

Committee Charge

How do we become the “university of choice” for many more graduates of the 5 metro-area community colleges wishing to pursue a four-year degree? How do we simplify the transfer process? What is needed for foster a welcoming, inclusive climate for transfer students?

Description of our Current State

Our current investment in staffing, infrastructure, policies, scholarships and reputation with community college stakeholders and students have not yet evolved to meet the spirit of the project charge referenced above. While strides have been made, gaps exist that prevent CU Denver’s desires from becoming reality.

Description of our Desired State

To be the university of choice for students at all 15 Colorado community colleges through offering a seamless pathway supported by easy to use tools, transparent processes and accessible staff who provide a welcoming, stress less and mentor rich relationship.

Introduction

The Committee worked its way through the 5 modes of Design Thinking from July 26th-September 8th. Meeting weekly, the group utilized a variety of mechanisms to inform and forward the process including:

- Identifying and interacting with user groups
- Developing a point of view (a guiding statement that focuses on specific users, insights and needs) stating that “CU Denver provides a seamless pathway supported by easy to use tools, transparent processes and accessible staff to help navigate the journey.”
- Select readings
- Analysis of transfer student data
- Generation of ideas and possibilities
- Creation of a prototype and seeking user input and feedback
- Reviewing a sampling of peer institutions practices

Key Themes

1. Transfer process

Major institutional opportunities/gaps include web site re-configuration, functionality, applicability of transfer credit and better availability of information.
Key take-a-ways from user feedback-

All Types of Advisors

- Need to better understand and navigate the transfer process
- Need better resources and tools for prospective students
- Need better communication between institutions
- Need more human & financial resources for transfer advising Students
- Need direct communication about requirements
- CU has too many variations in transfer rules
- Services are too decentralized
- CU has multiple/varied transfer programs/agreements/policies and they are confusing
- Dissemination of information needs to be better Transfer Admission Center Walk-Ins
- Need better transparency of processes regarding transferability and applicability of credits
- Consistency of information
  a. Need comprehensive web site Course applicability vital
  b. Transfer policies/agreements Simplify language
  c. Prospective portal needs to be easier to navigate
  d. Approaches need to be streamlined across all schools & colleges

2. Conflicting stakeholder goals

Major institutional opportunities/gaps include better understanding and aligning CU Denver enrollment desires, community college performance metrics and statewide policies around 2-year to 4-year transfer.

Key take-a-ways-

- These can often operate in conflict with each other. For example, an important part of a Colorado community college’s assessment is likely based on how many students it graduates. In addition, CU Denver agreements such as Admissions Promise build in an AA/AS assumption. However, in fall of 2015 only 99 students were admitted from Colorado Community Colleges with an AA or AS degree. Furthermore statewide 60+60 agreements through CDHE reinforce disconnect between perceived transfer patterns and actual transfer patterns.
3. Relationship building/on-boarding

Major institutional opportunities/gaps include minimizing unintended consequences throughout the transfer process by creating more institutional centralization and standardization, adherence to the Catalog and major advisor availability throughout the summer months.

Key take-a-ways-

- Need consistent applicability of CC Core classes into CU Denver Core categories across all schools and colleges.
- Need consistency in transfer rules and polices across all academic areas.
- Need to treat equivalencies for native and transfer students the same.
- Need to minimize our academic policies lists of school and college variations.

Congruency-Expectations and practices have to be in agreement.

- The bulk of transfer applications arrive between April and August. However we don’t have consistent representation of faculty advisors during that time frame.
- DARS-our group learned that DARS is not the layer where the gaps exist. Rather it’s the decentralization of interpretation and practice relative to the Catalog and curriculum management and curriculum requirements. For example, courses being submitted throughout the calendar year.

Recommendations for the Short Term

*Blow-up and re-invent the current transfer web site.* This recommendation if embraced by our institution, could be a managed project with time sensitive deliverables, feedback loops and user tracking to measure effectiveness.

To include all key features & topics on the main page such as:

1. Simple design and navigation for admission, financial aid and registration
2. Clean (not cluttered)
3. Pathways identified by community college
4. Comprehensive by state
5. Staff resources clear and direct
6. Links to degree plans
7. Holistic
8. Applicability details
9. Public facing

10. Multiple course search

11. Can request course review

*Re-invent basic transfer policies and clarify/ improve basic resources.* This recommendation if embraced by our institution, would require a cooperative effort between Admissions, Registrar and our Schools & Colleges working together to create a new paradigm to identify how effectiveness and impact will be measured.

1. Established equivalencies honored across all majors/programs. (example: X course at ACC=X course at CU Denver)

2. Treat equivalencies for native and transfer students the same.

3. Every office must provide accurate contact information (with a picture) on the web. Take ownership of transfer (transfer ambassadors & peers).

4. Course evaluations done before application for admission to allow prospective transfer decisions to be informed.

5. CU Denver uniformity regarding longevity of courses eligible for transfer consideration. (Core & major taken in the last 10 years)

6. Universal Core/GT Pathway applicability rules across all CU Denver Schools & Colleges.

**Recommendations for the Longer Term**

1. Create a joint admission program that leverages the Admissions Promise and pilot it with CCD to offer prospective transfers concurrent admission to and enrollment at CU Denver, engagement opportunities at all events and convocation, with renewable scholarship opportunities and clubs, organizations and mentor resources specifically geared at helping CCD transfer students acclimate to CU Denver’s culture, resources and lifestyle.

2. Re-brand and expand the Transfer Admissions Center to become a well-defined and understood branch of the Lynx Center and function as a fully resourced, staffed, positioned and marketed “One Stop Shop” for everything transfer student related. This could include areas such as general and major advising, student engagement, admission, financial aid & scholarship screening, housing assistance and registration.
## Strategic Use of Scholarships/Aid Resources Working Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Representing</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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### VALIDATORS:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td><a href="mailto:Grecia.Portillo@ucdenver.edu">Grecia.Portillo@ucdenver.edu</a></td>
</tr>
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</table>

### NAVIGATORS:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
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### InWorks Facilitator:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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### Institutional Research Contact:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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### Staffing Contact:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tammy Wilson</td>
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</tr>
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</table>
Working Group Charge:

The lack of financial resources is one of the top two reasons that students don’t persist. These recommendations make the case for raising significant new resources for scholarships and assure that scholarship resources that we do have are being strategically used to attract and retain students who can most benefit from them. In short we focus on improving our ability to meet the financial needs of CU Denver students through scholarships and financial aid.

Method:

Design thinking principles guide this work. While the CU Denver student is the primary user, we also carefully consider the impact on staff, faculty, and donors as we strive to meet the goals of the institution. We conducted interviews with our principal users (graduate and undergraduate students) and got information from parents, veterans services staff, campus staff and administrators from financial aid and scholarship offices at other institutions, and CU Denver faculty and staff. This committee received substantial guidance from members and navigators from the advancement, financial aid and scholarship offices. Reports from previous financial aid and scholarship studies, enrollment profiles, retention reports and financial aid and scholarship studies conducted by other institutions and organizations also informed these recommendations.

Description of our Current State:

CU Denver serves a student population that is distinctive in the state and nationwide. At CU Denver, 30% of students are graduate students, there are equal numbers of new freshman and transfer students who enter each year, 40% of the freshmen class identifies as minority, and 1/3 of students attend part time.

Comparison of CU Denver’s cost and aid data with that of its 11 peers reveals that although the cost of attendance is the second highest of the peer group our performance in providing scholarships and aid drops to the bottom 1/3 in all categories. Specifically, CU Denver provides 54% of its federal, state, local and institutional grant aid to its students. This is compared to an average of 79% of students receiving aid at our peer institutions. In addition, the average amount per award ($6,030) is lower than all but one of the CU Denver peers. On a more positive note (and perhaps reflective of the high proportion of students who work), the average proportion awarded loans and the average amount of loans is in the bottom third of the peer group. CU Denver loan amounts are slightly higher than other CU campuses, but default rates appear to be well below the national average at all CU campuses.

Applications for some scholarships are handled through the portal managed by the Financial Aid and Scholarship Office, but many are overseen entirely by schools, colleges or programs. This results in irregular, unorthodox and uneven application and award practices. Consequently, in many cases, lapses in awards and accumulating balances in scholarship funds occur.

Student users interviewed for this report frequently applied for Financial Aid. In general they were largely complimentary of the application process, however many indicated that it was more difficult to find and apply for scholarships. The interviewees cited a lack of clarity regarding the process, they perceived many documents would be required – often unique to each application -- and that the mid-spring deadline for applications made
it difficult to apply. Students often expressed confusion regarding the award of work study funding and work opportunities. Significant assistance from programs such as TRIO were credited with substantially improving the scholarship application experience. Information from a small number of parents suggested frustration at the lack of timely admissions acceptance notification. Parents also indicated the negative impact late acceptance for admission has on scholarship offers. In addition information from graduate school applicants suggest that a substantial portion of accepted students decline offers from CU Denver programs because they have offers from other schools that include stipends and/or assistantships with tuition waivers.

The current systems with which we manage financial accounts, Financial Aid, HR processes, and registration and billing, as well as communicate with prospective students, enrolled students and alumni are cumbersome. These systems do not seamlessly interface with one another so a tremendous amount of faculty, staff and student time is required to successfully navigate these systems and communicate important information in an efficient and effective manner. For example, communication at many phases of the scholarship process is fragmented and inefficient. Departments do not always communicate available scholarships to eligible students in a timely fashion, award decision communications are delayed by decision committees and unclear responsibilities, and finally, awards are not always communicated in a timely fashion to the parties responsible for applying awards to accounts. Often these lapses in communication are due to inefficient systems and murky responsibilities. This causes confusion for staff tasked with processing and awarding scholarships but also students. One aspect of scholarship communication that confuses students is that they are not able to see their scholarship in their student portal until after census date when it posts to their account. Students must just trust that their scholarship will be applied in time and their bill will “work out.” Troubleshooting these systems may need to take priority over substantial investments in this recommendation where appropriate.

**Description of our ideal state:**

How do we recruit target students, address their financial needs, help them succeed and stay at CU Denver, and graduate on a schedule that achieves their goals?

Imagine that students who visit the CU Denver website understand the menu of scholarships and financial aid available to them, complete a basic financial aid information form and are contacted immediately about scholarships and aid for which they are eligible to apply. After application, they are notified of the award of aid and scholarships in time to influence their decision to accept admission or return for the next academic year. These scholarships are competitive with in-state and peer institutions and are strategically designed to meet institutional goals and help students continue successfully by flexibly meeting financial needs as they arise and by rewarding students who successfully progress through their programs. All of this happens in a world where the transmission of data is seamless and available as appropriate to student applicants, faculty and staff award committees, the staff who process awards and notify students, and the donors who generously support these students. We are able to effectively communicate with prospective donors and make the case for additional support. Support services for students are seamlessly integrated to provide financial assistance, financial education and employment from the time they set foot on campus until they enter their professional positions post-graduation as needed.
To achieve this ideal, we focus on more detailed desired outcomes in three areas. Our recommendations are to make our financial aid and scholarships BETTER, SMARTER and BIGGER. Specific goals include:

**BETTER:** CU Denver should implement processes for more efficient administration, information dissemination, application, review, award, and delivery of scholarships and financial aid that include:

- Comprehensive and centrally-housed, managed, and maintained database of all scholarships.
- Information about aid, eligibility, application and deadlines provided to students via internet available easily by mobile device.
- A single university-wide application that enables students to apply for multiple scholarships online through the portal to minimize student and staff time. Minimal supplemental material is required.
- Streamlined application collection, review and award decisions.
- Clear communication of selection criteria to applicants and clear and consistently applied selection criteria to selection committees to ensure transparent and unbiased awards.
- Synchronization of admissions, financial aid, and scholarship application deadlines and timing scholarship/aid award notifications with admissions decisions to maximize recruitment potential.
- Improving timeliness of award notifications by providing clarity with respect to what office is responsible for notifying students
- Posting awards to student accounts in a timely manner – address when students can see on bills.
- Deepening the relationship between the donor and student—ultimately strengthening the relationship between the donor and the University—facilitating thank you letters from recipients to donors as part of the system.

Measurables: Number of scholarship applications; amount of time between application, award decision, and posting; total amount(s) awarded; number of awards posted by start of term.

**SMARTER:** Design scholarship and financial aid packages that maximize the total resources awarded to students and that are strategically designed to meet the recruitment, retention and graduation goals of the institution. CU Denver’s strategic plan calls for an undergraduate population of 14,000-16,000 students by 2020. The assumption is that the undergraduate/graduate population mix will be 75%/25% eventually. There is a goal to increase non-resident enrollment. International enrollment is targeted at 10% of the overall population but is currently at approximately 6%. In order to reach enrollment targets, we need to be more competitive in the timing, deployment, and size of our financial support packages. Additionally, we need to improve our graduation rates so that students who attend CU Denver graduate in a timely fashion with a minimum of debt. Scholarships that incentivize timely progression to graduation may be one tactic to help shape positive student behavior to meet institutional goals.

- **Improve recruitment:**
  - Automatic scholarships for undergraduates if students meet merit criteria. Notification goes out with admission letters.
  - Pool of funds for undergraduate and graduate programs at the time of admission for out-of-state/international students.
Evaluating our recent experience and pilot new plans to identify threshold for inadequate support – amounts and GPA/ACT?
- Synchronizing the scholarship application process with the admissions process.

- **Incentivize retention/graduation/employment in Colorado**
  - Renewable scholarships that increase each year in which students meet credit hour expectations
  - Emergency aid if short-term finances prevent continuation
  - Loan repayment or graduation bonus for 4-year and 6-year graduation.
  - Participation-based scholarships (mentoring, activities, work-study, travel study, research)
  - Summer scholarship program to help students progress through degree
  - Work study funding that links students to professional positions/grad students to research
  - Sponsored internships/employment through connections with Denver businesses and agencies.

- **Provide support to improve optimal composition** of the student body -- informed by the strategic plan or current strategic enrollment management efforts
  - Competitive Graduate Student support at admission
  - Tuition waiver/scholarship for Graduate TAs and RA/work study for graduate students
  - Underrepresented and First generation students
  - Target students most likely to be affected by funding (parents, first-gen, lower merit groups, part-time students)
  - International/out-of-state recruitment for diversity

- **Provide Financial Literacy Training**
  - Orientation – include first gen families
  - First-year seminar

Measurables: yield rate from non-resident applications with and without offers; non-resident graduate student acceptance; Literacy evaluation; proportion with loans; FAFSA completion rates;

**BIGGER:** Maximize funding available for student support. CU Denver must effectively utilize existing pools of funds and identify strategies to increase financial resources for students from state, federal and institutional aid; donor provided internal scholarships; external scholarships and other available financial resources.

**UTILIZING EXISTING FUNDS:** Funding from all sources must not go unused.

- Review currently available scholarships and aid to **ensure full utilization** of available funds. Someone (centrally and working in contact with school/college) must be assigned responsibility for ensuring that all funds are utilized to the fullest extent possible.
- ‘**Caseworker**’ reviews student award packages to ensure that institutional/donor funds are not reducing other state and federal aid. Institutional funds should come in earlier to maximize effectiveness of this review.
- **Better utilize work study awards** and link them to students’ career paths. Explore graduate student eligibility. Additional money is often available from the state to supplement our existing allocation.
- **Link student recipients to donors.** Assure that recipients acknowledge donors to assure ongoing support.
Measurables: Award amounts; unawarded funds; number of work study recipients; quality of work study jobs; donor contacts by students;

INCREASING FUNDS: CU Denver must increase need-based and particularly merit-based aid to be competitive with our peers and in-state competitors.

- **Identify groups of students with unmet need** to approach donors and designate institutional aid. Know our students and tell their stories.
- **(Re-)establish clear criteria for awarding donor-funded scholarships** to maximize awardability while honoring donor intent, collaboration with advancement and scholarships.
- **Develop a case for use of scholarships** – engage leadership and the campus community in fundraising with the same message, including:
  - Supporting the CU Denver student with student-focused institutional change;
  - Changing the face of the Denver workforce;
  - Clearly articulating a plan for strategic use of new scholarship resources based on institutional priorities;
- **Return of a portion of additional tuition/tuition increases earmarked for scholarships.**
- **Explore innovative/underused funding mechanisms**, such as:
  - Business ‘adopt-a-scholar’ program
  - Crowdfunding
  - Alum donors as mentors programs
  - Inform current students to promote future donations – pay-it-forward
  - Participation-based funding; behavior-based incentives
- **Provide funding to attract international and out-of-state applicants to graduate programs.** Implement a revolving pool that reinvests a percentage of revenue earned from additional students into scholarships for new students.
- **Provide tuition waiver/scholarships for graduate students working as Teaching and Research Assistants.**

Measurables: Donor contributions to scholarships; Total institutional support; graduate students supported;

**Initiatives to launch immediately**

**BETTER:**

- **Create scholarship database and assign responsibility** -- Provide one-time funds for staff to gather all information about all scholarship opportunities, requirements, funding sources, awarding processes, etc. and available resource, restrictions, and use of in one place. Create system so that information is maintained on an ongoing-basis.
- **Develop uniform scholarship application** that searches scholarship database and notifies students of the scholarships for which s/he is (potentially) eligible. Keep supplemental application material to a minimum.
- **Establish and meet timelines.** Convene a strategic group with representatives from admissions, financial aid, scholarships, faculty award committees and student government to determine the most effective timelines. Set and meet review, award, notification and posting deadlines – for maximum student information and efficiency in avoiding late fees. Appropriate awards should be made early in the spring.
semester to incentivize admission acceptances and retention of continuing students. All of this should be done with information about what our competitors are doing.

- **Staff up to develop all services and oversight of performance/participation based scholarships.** Invest one-time funds to hire three additional personnel to reinforce FA/Scholarship Resource Office with top priority on scholarship side. Focus on expanding personnel in SRO to a staff of 5 to include four scholarship advisors. Immediate need on scholarships side to develop wrap-around service, build scholarship community, student development, and more personalized experience for student.

**SMARTER:**

- **Evaluate Academic Achievement Award** for students based on GPA and ACT/SAT. Determine the appropriate target amounts and academic requirements to conduct additional pilots or make permanent.
- **Assign responsibility for locating work study employment within career paths.** This could be accompanied by increases in paid internship opportunities. Discussions should include Student Employment, Career Services and Experiential Learning.
- **Pilot recruitment scholarships for out-of-state/international graduate (and undergraduate) students** to increase yield in programs with capacity.
- **Pilot retention scholarships** – (i.e. summer scholarships for students 1-2 courses below expected CH
- **Pilot incentives for 4-year and/or 6-year graduation** (i.e. graduation bonus, loan repayment)
- **Expand financial aid literacy** in the first year (orientation or first-year-seminar). Make it available to families of first gen students. Such a program would be a likely target for donor support.
- **Evaluate all new programs and pilots through measurable outcomes.** Understanding the effect of these programs should inform long-term permanent investments. Use these data to understand which students are affected and the necessary threshold amounts to use scholarships and aid to better serve our students with financial need, change outcomes and create additional revenue. Should be combined with a system of academic analytics.

**BIGGER**

- **Develop a system and process for updating/maintaining database and ensuring awards.** Assign responsibility to ensure full award of all scholarships and aid.
- **Leverage work study funding and provide employment services** for work study recipients. Request additional state funds as appropriate.
- **Begin to create case for donor support** and work with creative/communications partners to build a long-term scholarship fundraising campaign. Examples would be CU at Work (work study, paid internships and career-linked student sponsorship).
- **Develop a confirmation process for incoming students** who have been awarded scholarships so that unused funds can be awarded earlier in the admissions/recruiting cycle. Ideally, incoming students with financial aid/scholarship offers would be asked to confirm their attendance as early in the admissions process as possible.
- **Designate a proportion of additional tuition to scholarships and aid** to reach award levels that are commensurate with our peers.
Larger/longer-term Investments

BETTER

- **Create or invest in a dedicated scholarship portal** that houses all the scholarships available, a simple scholarship application for students, online scholarship review for faculty committees, and notifications to award recipients.

- **Organize student services groups to provide “one stop shopping” for students** where they can access advising, financial aid counseling, scholarship advising, and other support services seamlessly. Maybe that’s a technology solution with a remote team or a collocated team.

- **Make one-time staff permanent.** Additional staff in the scholarship office should be made permanent. This would allow intended growth in the scholarship cohort community concept.

SMARTER

- **Look to donors to expand comprehensive financial literacy education** for to help students and families understand the value of their education, cost repayment options and lifelong financial management skills.

- **Coordinate activities with dedicated new staff** for a program to increase work study opportunities, add paid internships and leverage donor opportunities linking businesses to student support.

- **Invest in most successful piloted program** reinvest substantial new revenues as aid/scholarships

BIGGER

- **Increase institutional aid** available so that a greater number of CU Denver students receive institutional aid and/or receive larger awards so we are competitive with our peer institutions.

- **Create a tuition program so that all graduate students who are employed** as Teaching Assistants receive a stipend and a tuition waiver to be more competitive attracting top level graduate candidates.
Appendix: Responses to Prompts of Working Group Members at the Final Meeting

**What I liked best that I heard:**

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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The expressive desire to create change on campus.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Emphasis on need to work across units. Move centralization of processes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I liked that I heard change is coming – our students deserve better. I also liked that I heard accountability and responsibility – it’s needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I appreciated the cross cutting themes – that everyone identified the interrelatedness of the issues we are addressing.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>An effort to centralize academic advising efforts. A student centric, student focused approach. Concerted effort for coordinated outreach to the community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Increase scholarships available for recruitment. Increase communication with community colleges. Greater presence in high schools. More marketing to high schools.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>The best part of what I heard was to develop a more meaningful message in terms of identity and branding around CU in the City. In addition, the idea of a more centralized accounting of what we are doing in scholarships, K-12 outreach, large data, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I liked best that folks who can affect change are able to talk together and come to a strong conclusion. I liked that a group of strong folks are excited about CU Denver.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Commitment and collaboration spirit. Great ideas. Liked the short term and the long term approach.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td><strong>Advising:</strong> Advising website and advising app. Predictive analytics and proactive, targeted advising. <strong>K-12:</strong> Target key user groups; CU in the City; learning communities; internships; 1st generation networks. <strong>Community College:</strong> Transfer website. <strong>Scholarships:</strong> The “imagine” statement → do that; do everything under “better”; retention and emergency scholarships.</td>
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<td>PERSON</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>A collective <strong>vision</strong> that we need to look at some centralized processes. The message that there will be <strong>action</strong> and next steps from these recommendations. A project that allowed for cross-section, cross-department and cross-campus idea generation. It takes a village!</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The calls for centralization, communication and cooperation. One University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>-- Recognition of the interconnectedness of these 4 areas and ideas that address more than one at a time. -- Promise for assigning/clarifying responsibility for implementation of outcomes. -- Creative ideas for well-articulated programs (i.e.: CU in the City Scholars, CU at Work) -- Enthusiasm!</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I was impressed with the theme of collaboration units/departments across campus. This will need to happen in order to make any of these ideas move forward.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>That we can look at new ways of doing things. Commitment from Chancellor to take action! Please do not waste this excellent effort by standing still. We need to work on our Community College relationships and agreements. We need consistencies between schools and colleges to benefit our students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>-- A lot of common themes revolving around central/decentral/hybrid approaches. -- Innovative approaches that considered who our students are and our key constituents. -- Team/case worker approach. -- CU in the City. -- Transfer – reverse transfer credit to confer associate degrees. -- Participate in career related scholarships. -- Bring transfer credits before admission is complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Short term realistic goals Get them done! Excited to get them done!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td><strong>Advising:</strong> -- Standardizing advising practices/processes through a centralized or hybrid model. -- Easier to message students (admission &amp; website). -- More seamless handoffs with “Student Success Teams”.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Community College Pathways:
-- Universal acceptance of credits at all schools/colleges.
-- Easier to message students (admissions and websites).
-- Reduced workload for advisors – don’t need to spend time correcting or clarifying info.

Scholarships:
– EVERYTHING (better, smarter, bigger)
-- Move toward tuition discounting with guaranteed scholarships for meeting specified criteria – key for recruitment (“pots” of money) doesn’t work effectively in recruitment.

Focus on students.
Short and long term goals.
Clarity on focus.

Lots of great ideas and honesty!
Loved the process -- bringing cross sector teams together.
Chancellor’s commitment to action.

In general, I really enjoyed meeting everyone in the working group. I made some great connections. These people will be great resources for me, and my students, in the future! We have some wonderful people working here at CU Denver!

I thought each working group did a great job putting together some visionary statements and ideas.

I am particularly glad the Chancellor is thoughtful enough to put these groups together to help her form her vision. It may not coalesce immediately into action, but it should give her some food for thought.

What I wish I heard:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSON</th>
<th>COMMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>External support issues. We can want to do a lot, but to what extent does the system support it? It’s clear we are the least valued part of the CU System – Will that change?</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Deeper dive concerning the “problems” or “challenges” the committees were tasked to address. A lot of assumptions were made based on personal frame of references. Fact check bold assumptions before conducting explanation of problems.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>More about actual resource possibilities. What are thoughts about what we actually can accomplish?</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>I was hoping to hear a firm commitment to moving away from decentralization and fragmentation. Pulling resources together will improve services, create/leverage efficiencies and place helping students as the highest common goal.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Maybe more Really Big ideas? Mostly just really impressed!</td>
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</table>
| 6      | -- That we’d still be involved and would continue our work  
-- A need for better administrative staff support  
-- A need to overhaul system (processes, policies) and infrastructure (technologies, software, etc.) |
| 7      | More discussion of what these recommendations may cost. Some may cost less than initially thought if done well. More discussion of advising options that increase flexibility between colleges, not channel everyone into same format. |
| 8      | More concrete next steps. |
| 9      | More centralization.  
These are areas that should be outside of the “political” world of the academic units.  
Wish we had come to that conclusion more strongly and clearly. |
| 10     | More about diversifying our student population.  
First generation students outreach. |
| 11     | Implement the short-term recommendation in all four areas.  
**Advising:** Requires fully articulated degree audit system  
**K-12:** They said it all  
**Community College:** More attention to institutional relationships and communication;  
**Scholarships:** Tuition incentive “scholarships” (for ≥ 15 credit hour registration, “free” tuition for college success course) |
| 12     | Special thanks to the super-stars:  
Laura Argys  
Chancellor Horrell  
Regina Kilkenny |
| 13     | Take over Metro. I have a whole plan.  
Turn CU Denver into Honors College w/research focus.  
Put tuition at 80% (50%?) of CU Denver rate.  
Have full time/TTF/teaching or research faculty.  
Keep CU Denver name and mascot. |
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<td>14</td>
<td>-- Cost of implementation prioritization…but I expect these are to come! -- Feedback from Chancellor Horrell re: things we didn’t get to that she hoped to hear. -- More discussion of the need for a comprehensive Customer Relationship Management tool for student info.</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>That resources (financial) will be found and/or attempted to be found. Help changing policies on campus to make the situation for students better - need Chancellors help DARS needs to work at U6 level! Soon!</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Feasibility to hire/correct state of the budget Priorities -- there were lots of good ideas - how would they cost &amp; what are the priorities?</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>$ - Hopeful 😊 Loved meeting everyone!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 19     | 1) Technology Infrastructure – investment in solid systems that will make us less “MacGyveresque” … access that makes it possible for student success teams to ALL have access to info that facilitates recruitment, retention, and graduation. (CRM & SIS w/fewer access restriction)  
2) What will the trade-offs be? Which programs are least effective & can be killed in order to create capacity for these new initiatives? We lose our best people when we burn them out asking them to do more with less. Strategic prioritization of these initiatives is key.  
3) Following #2 – investment in our people (“talented investment”) - the better our faculty, staff and administration are trained/prepared to facilitate student success, the more successful our students are likely to be.  
*Center for Learning and Professional Development. |
<p>| 20     | Implementation discussion |
| 21     | How to require cooperation between Academic Affairs/academic units and Student Affairs when it’s in the best interest of students! We don’t seem to have common goals. |</p>
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<td>22</td>
<td>I would have liked a one-page or paragraph quick summary from each group on their biggest impacts (short-term and long-term). This could have listed their highest priorities. I thought the K-12 group should have focused more on the items within the schools that could make an impact, such as K-12 teacher continuing education and K-12 education/camps. Getting both educators and students here on campus can make them considering CU Denver for educational purposes in the future. We have this wonderful campus that goes mostly unutilized in the summer – let’s use it. At the end of the presentations, I wanted more of an action plan – where do we go from here, what do we do, how do we fund it, etc.?</td>
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