



University of Colorado **Denver**

**Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor
for Academic and Student Affairs**

Leadership Profile

2020-21



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

The University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver) seeks an innovative, forward-looking, and inspirational leader to serve as its next provost and executive vice chancellor for academic and student affairs (provost).

Part of the University of Colorado System, CU Denver is a comprehensive urban research institution in metropolitan Denver. With eight schools and colleges, the university is home to more than 15,000 students and 1,138 faculty members and offers 110 degree programs both in-person and online.

Reporting to Chancellor Michelle Marks who joined the CU Denver community on July 1, 2020, the new provost will serve as chief academic and student affairs officer and will partner closely with the chancellor to help her lead and drive the university forward, together with the leadership team, deans, and faculty. The new provost will lead academic innovation for a campus that has a strong history in online education and in going beyond the traditional educational modes and boundaries, providing a strong education for students groups that have different needs. The provost will lead the advancement of a transformative academic, research, and student success agenda that stems from a new strategic plan, ensuring that CU Denver is able to optimize its spirit and history of innovation and is positioned as a leading, contemporary institution that is nimble and responsive to higher education's changing landscape and the social justice and public health events impacting its community.

The provost and executive vice chancellor for academic and student affairs has responsibility for faculty, academic, student affairs, and enrollment management, and oversees the deans of the College of Architecture and Planning, College of Arts & Media, Business School, School of Education & Human Development, College of Engineering, Design and Computing, Graduate School, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and School of Public Affairs as well as affiliated academic and research departments and the senior vice chancellor for strategic enrollment and student success. Together with the chancellor and executive leadership team, the provost will play a significant role in the implementation of the university's first comprehensive strategic plan and will oversee the development of a complementary academic and student success strategic plan taking into account the university's academic, research, scholarship and creative activity agendas and opportunities as well as the considerable opportunities across the student success arena.

CU Denver seeks a bold and nimble academic leader who will grasp and embrace the enormous potential of this distinctive and entrepreneurial institution and the students, faculty, and staff that find themselves drawn to it. The provost must be a seasoned academic and administrator who is able to create an equity-minded culture in the university's academic, research/creative works, and student success areas and who champions CU Denver's strong reputation as a university that excels in academics, research, and the student experience. Likewise, the provost must be able to articulate the importance and nuance of a public, urban research university that serves a diverse student population and acts as an economic driver for the Denver metropolitan community.

CU Denver is committed to an ethical foundation, sense of shared responsibility, and culture of trust, and the new provost must possess impeccable moral character and conviction in serving the greater good of the university. The provost will join a university in its next wave of evolution with an energetic new chancellor and strong executive team.

For information on how to apply or to submit nominations, please refer to the section, "Procedure for Candidacy" at the end of this document.

Role of the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

At the direction of and partnering closely with the chancellor, the provost is responsible for faculty, academic, and student affairs across the CU Denver campus. The provost oversees the academic management of the university's eight schools and colleges, division of strategic enrollment and student success, and affiliated academic and research departments to articulate the university's academic, scholarly, and co-curricular vision, and realize their successful implementation.

CU Denver is organized into eight schools and colleges, each of which provides students unique opportunities to develop and learn alongside exceptional faculty. The provost works to build strong relationships with the CU Denver [faculty assembly](#) and [student senate](#), approaching each partnership with an open mind and intent to listen and, together, ensuring that matters related to academic and student policy are ethical, relevant, and upheld.

The provost ensures that the university's innovative high-quality programs, resources, and services are designed to help faculty achieve rank and career advancement, and that research endeavors and opportunities to advance the university's academic and scholarly excellence are in place. It is also the provost's responsibility to assure that the university's pedagogical approach is appropriately reimaged in response to the pandemic. The provost should be a thought partner and leader with the deans in prioritizing student success and developing new and innovative programs, traditional degree programs, and non-credit bearing credentials.

Several of the areas of responsibility listed below, including the affiliated departments, support both the Denver and Anschutz campuses. Service level agreements with reporting lines are being established between CU Denver and CU Anschutz which define the services provided to both campuses. The provost oversees a comprehensive, \$60 million portfolio comprised of 622 staff and 1,194 faculty across schools, colleges, and academic and student affairs units.

Schools & Colleges

Together, CU Denver's eight schools and colleges offer 112 different academic degrees and hundreds of certificate and specialty programs.

- [College of Architecture and Planning](#) is the only school in Colorado to offer accredited degrees in architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning and an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in planning and design as well as master's degrees in urban design and historic preservation and professional certificates.
- [College of Arts & Media](#) leverages Denver's thriving arts industry to produce graduates who are ready to inspire, lead, and create. The College of Arts and Media offers degrees and programs in film & television, media forensics, music & entertainment, and visual arts.

- **Business School** leverages Denver's downtown business community as a partner in education. AACSB global accreditation places the CU Denver Business School in the top five percent of business schools worldwide. Students learn from faculty who are experts in their field and leaders in their research.
- **School of Education & Human Development** is a statewide and national leader for educational quality, access, and equity across the education lifespan, birth through higher education. Its undergraduate and graduate programs prepare and inspire education and mental health leaders to have a profound impact in fostering student opportunity, achievement, and success in urban and diverse communities.
- **College of Engineering, Design and Computing** focuses on providing students with a comprehensive engineering education at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional level. Faculty conduct research that spans five disciplines of civil, electrical and mechanical engineering, bioengineering, and computer science and engineering.
- **College of Liberal Arts and Sciences** delivers a liberal arts and science education where high-level critical thinking and comprehensive learning is infused with practical, career-focused skills throughout the curriculum.
- **School of Public Affairs** offers degree programs in criminal justice and public affairs as well as professional certification and leadership training programs. The school is ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as the top public affairs school in Colorado and #25 in the nation.



- **[Graduate School](#)** administers and serves master's programs, doctoral programs, certificates, and non-degree courses throughout all thirteen schools and colleges across both the Denver and the Anschutz Medical Campuses.

Division of Strategic Enrollment and Student Success

- **Enrollment Management** oversees the university's enrollment strategy and associated offices including recruitment, enrollment marketing, recruitment technology, dual enrollment, pre-collegiate development, and K-12 partnerships.
- **Student Enrollment Operations and Compliance** includes the service offices of the registrar, compliance, digital strategies, [financial aid and scholarships](#), [Lynx Central](#), and the undergraduate admission non-recruiting operations.
- **Student and Community Engagement** includes: [disability resources & services](#), [veteran & military support services](#), [career center](#), housing and dining, [LynxConnect](#), [student life](#), and the McNair Scholars.
- **Academic Achievement** includes the [learning resource center](#), center for excellence in teaching and learning, undergraduate research and creative activities, university honors and leadership, and the office of student transitions and family engagement which includes new student orientation, the first year experience, transfer initiatives, and [undergraduate academic advising](#).
- **The Health and Wellness Advocacy and Support** area brings together the office of the [dean of students](#), student and community [counseling center](#), [health & wellness](#), and [wellness & recreation](#).
- **The Office of International Affairs** includes [international student & scholar services](#), [international admissions](#), [global education](#), international operations, China operations, international partnerships, and [international marketing and communications](#).
- **The [Auraria Library](#)** serves the three institutions on the Aurora campus: CU Denver, Community College of Denver, and Metropolitan State University of Denver.
- **The Student Success Initiatives** office connects staff and faculty to data analytical resources and administers the EAB Navigate resource.

Affiliated Departments

- **The [Office of Assessment](#)** provides support to faculty and administrators including assisting with outcomes assessment systems, leading faculty workshops, assessing the undergraduate general education program, supervising standardized testing, and other assessment-related accreditation activities.
- **The [Office of Academic Planning](#)** oversees and assists in the development of new academic programs, centers and institutes, as well as the periodic review of all departments, schools and colleges, and centers and institutes. The office also incorporates the [Office of Institutional Research](#)

[and Effectiveness \(OIRE\)](#), the processes involved in preparing and maintaining institutional accreditation, and serving as liaison with the institutional accrediting agency, the [Higher Learning Commission \(HLC\)](#).

- **The [Office of Academic Operations](#)** oversees a range of matters relating to policy development, compliance, project management and issue resolution, and advocacy on behalf of staff and faculty. The office includes policy reviews and resources, the Ombuds office, the Office of Equity and Affirmative Action, and Title IX investigations and compliance.
- **The [Office of Faculty Affairs](#)** provides a wide variety of assistance to faculty, associate deans, deans, chairs, and other constituents on matters related to faculty processes, academic policies, awards and events, and related issues.
- **The [Center for Faculty Development and Advancement \(CFDA\)](#)** provides funding to support tenure-track faculty members, a faculty mentoring program, tenure and promotion sessions, dossier development support, a library of successful dossier models, professional development programs, and communities of practice.
- **The [Office of Research Services \(ORS\)](#)** is the overarching faculty development component of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research. ORS provides faculty development resources that enhance faculty research and creative work, proposal support for sponsored project grant and contract applications, and helps publicize research and creative work. The Office of Research Development and Education (ORDE) and The Creative Research Collaborative (CRC) are housed within ORS. ORDE focuses services on supporting faculty success in external funding while CRC fosters interdisciplinary research.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The university is launching a comprehensive strategic planning process in January 2021, to conclude in June 2021. In close collaboration with the chancellor and other university leaders, the provost will have a significant role in its implementation, measurement, and ongoing refinement.

Concurrently, the provost will lead the development of an academic and student success strategic planning process to drive the university's next set of priorities for teaching, scholarship, research, creative activity, and the optimal student experience.

The following critical priorities should be incorporated into the plan. They are presented here in no particular order.

- **Champion Academic Quality, Relevance, Innovation, Research, and Graduate Education**

The new strategic plan is likely to consider questions of how the university should best educate the students of the future to meet the needs of humanity, and the new provost will be expected to advance this plan. Both faculty and students at CU Denver profess a clear desire to improve the student learning experience through advances in pedagogy, a focus on faculty development, and flexible modalities that meet the needs of adult and working learners. Doing so will require support of

faculty to build new education models and work with employers and leaders outside CU Denver to ensure the university has programs that align with the economic demands of Denver and Colorado.

The provost will be asked to work with the deans and faculty to position the university as a problem solver on behalf of its community and world, locating a thriving and forward-thinking research engine at the center of CU Denver, advancing its graduate education, and creating an entrepreneurial ecology within which the university's research, scholarship, and creative activities flourish. Research, scholarly, and creative activities is an essential aspect of CU Denver's role and mission and accounts for 40% of the tenure/tenure-track faculty workload. The new provost will be asked to structure a system that encourages and incentivizes faculty to bring more research funding from federal agencies, foundations, and companies to the university, motivates collaboration amongst the campus' researchers and scholars, and enhances the university's reputation in research and creative activities.

This will require encouraging a culture and implementing policies that prioritize and catalyze research, enhancing start-up packages, better resourcing the university's research administration, expanding laboratory and other spaces, better supporting graduate students, and more vigorously pursuing funding for endowed positions and named spaces to help subsidize the growth of the research enterprise. Graduate programs also require attention and funding so as to provide state-of-field training. There is opportunity for growth in some of the university's graduate programs, and places where additional resources for graduate education could enhance the ability to draw funded research in the future.

■ **A New "Virtual" Reality**

The plan will evaluate and strengthen an already robust digital pedagogy at the undergraduate and graduate levels. At present, CU Denver offers 31 degree programs online, including 14 bachelor's, 16 master's, and one doctoral program, providing a high-quality education with maximum flexibility for students, many of whom are working adults.

However, given the current environment and challenges, the provost must lead an expansion of the university's virtual footprint, expanding online programs, digital pedagogy, and the use of technology to add value in the classroom. This will require collaboration with key partners at the system level and the public and private sector to design virtual education and credentialing that meets the needs of this next era of workforce.

While the university will celebrate the significant 2020 accomplishments made while adapting to delivering curriculum virtually, the provost must continue to invest in the technology and digital infrastructure necessary to support a high-quality educational experience for CU Denver students in the immediate and long term.

■ **A Diverse Community**

CU Denver is a diverse academic community that attracts students of all ages and backgrounds. It is home to 49% first-generation college students and 42% students of color. The university is focused on creating a welcoming and respectful learning environment where a culture of inclusion can flourish and diversity enriches the educational experience for all.

During Chancellor Marks' first ten days in office, she embarked on an extensive listening tour dedicated to hearing from the community about how equity and racial justice impacts their personal and professional lives. In October 2020, she announced the formation of *The CU Denver Equity Task Force* charged with leading a collective effort to address touch, systemic issues that have hindered a sense of a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.

In the chancellor's charge to the task force she states:

I charge this task force with developing and recommending an action plan to ensure all members of the university community have the opportunity to experience what CU Denver has to offer equitably, focusing on structural and environmental barriers to success of students, faculty, and staff.

Past investments, initiatives, and work by many have attempted to help CU Denver become more equitable and inclusive. That said, this progress has been slow. The charge of the task force includes reviewing the current state of equity on campus, as well as past and present initiatives designed to support more equitable experiences and opportunities across the campus. The task force is also charged with evaluating whether past initiatives remain the right ones while simultaneously recommending new or alternate strategies that will make CU Denver a more equitable institution.

An important take away from Chancellor Marks' investment is that the current faculty and administrative body's demographic and lived experiences do not align with that of the student body. Chancellor Marks has charged university leaders with outlining and taking intentional steps toward becoming an even more socially and racially just academic institution. The provost must set a measureable plan in place to increase diversity in the university's academic hiring, promotion, and retention process to ensure the faculty and administration reflects the demographic and cultural richness of the student body. In addition, the faculty and administration must ensure that the student experience, curriculum, and support processes are organized and executed in a way that is inclusive and effective, inside and outside of the classroom.

■ **A Voice for Equity**

Diversity, equity, and inclusion is a top priority for CU Denver. Foundational to the university's success, the provost must inspire a more cohesive, collaborative, and inclusive culture, ensuring that all who learn, teach, research, and work at the university feel that they belong.

The provost will encourage and normalize conversations about race, identity, socioeconomic status, culture, and other current issues at CU Denver and continue to champion issues of equity and racial justice impacting the CU Denver community in a proactive, empathic, and transparent matter.

The provost must ensure that the voices of underrepresented faculty, researchers, and students as well as champions for equity, social, and racial justice are amplified. These efforts must make certain that CU Denver is doing everything possible to adopt meaningful change and oppose prejudice and racist actions in all their forms, particularly as the university is granted HSI and AANAPISI status and strives to be an equity-serving institution in its actions and policies. This work should include

development of a curriculum that reflects a commitment to social justice and to diversity, equity, and inclusion; support and resources for DEI research; and promoting and facilitating respectful discourse that engages all members of the community and respects the university's commitment to freedom of speech and expression.

The provost will work closely with the vice chancellor of diversity, equity, and inclusion and other university champions to establish the expectation that results are a non-negotiable, ensuring that this work remains visible as a university priority, is integrated into every strategic initiative, and realizes its goals.

■ **Supporting Denver's Post-COVID Economy**

CU Denver is an economic driver for the broader Denver community and it will be important that the university leadership team create a strategy for engaging with the city in more meaningful ways. This will include relevant education to support a new era of workforce in industries and environments that are changing rapidly, growing, and aligning professional and continuing education programs with the needs of employers and the region. Currently, the university contributes \$802 million to the Colorado economy and has graduated more than 100,000 alumni.

As part of the post-COVID economy, the provost must support both CU Denver's students as well as the public, nonprofit, and private sector employers that have played such an important role in launching many of CU Denver's most talented alumni into their professional careers.

With the City Center as the university's front door, physically and virtually, successful collaborations like [CU in the City](#) should be just the beginning, as the university determines how to be more accessible and navigable by the community and makes its contribution of research, solutions, and leadership to serve Denver in a post-COVID economy.

■ **Grow CU Denver's Collaboration with Anschutz**

The University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus is the academic health sciences campus of the University of Colorado. It is located in Aurora, Colorado (20 minute drive) and houses the University of Colorado's six health science schools and colleges including the School of Medicine, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, College of Nursing, School of Dental Medicine, and School of Public Health, as well as a graduate school focused on biological and biomedical sciences. In addition, it is home to two of the nation's top hospitals – UCHHealth University of Colorado Hospital, a teaching hospital, and Children's Hospital Colorado.

CU Denver and the Anschutz Medical Campus [share accreditation](#) and are administratively linked in the sharing of many services including financial aid, registrar, finance/budget, research administration, and legal services. In addition, there is strong collaboration in research and degree programs. There are currently six pathways and joint/dual degree programs for students to receive bachelor's and advanced degrees through this close partnership and about 30% of the undergraduate students are pursuing health-related degrees.

Both institutions are thriving and the opportunity to leverage one another's strengths brings enormous possibility. The new provost will be asked to partner with Anschutz leadership and scholars

to identify additional opportunities for research partnerships, collaborative degree offerings, internships, and supporting a growing population of historically underrepresented medical and health sciences students.

■ **Understanding the CU Denver Student**

CU Denver has a diverse student body of nearly 11,000 undergraduate and over 4,500 graduate students who are both traditional age and adult learners. Over 60% of the fall 2020 entering class are students of color and first generation college goers. It is anticipated that the campus will receive formal Hispanic-Serving Institution classification in 2021.



The next provost should pay particular attention to closing the equity gap for traditionally underrepresented, underserved students and those who work full time and balance a demanding course load with complex personal lives.

In addition to academic services and support, the provost will be asked to focus on developing academic degrees, articulation agreements, micro-credentialing, stackable credentials, and life-long learning opportunities that take into account these student populations. The provost will be charged with thinking creatively, pushing boundaries, and taking calculated risks in order to lead the nation in contemporary higher education initiatives and outcomes.

The provost will address these opportunities in a robust way to ensure that the needs of the entire student community are achieved in this next era of CU Denver's bright future.

■ **Redefining Student Success**

Together with the senior vice chancellor for strategic enrollment and student success, the provost will work with key university stakeholders to reimagine, develop, and drive a holistic student experience from pre-enrollment through graduation, providing strategic, visionary, and over-arching leadership that promotes a culture of seamless student support and engagement across the university. A core component of, and embedded within, the academic and student success strategic plan will be a comprehensive enrollment management plan focused on bolstering recruitment, retention,

graduation, and student success outcomes. This plan must serve all students with particular focus on those with socioeconomic barriers to advanced education, first generation, online and adult learners, and those from historically marginalized communities.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

The provost will be a close partner to Chancellor Marks and to Chief Financial Officer/Senior Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance Jennifer Sobanet, leading a cohort of strong deans and taking full advantage of their strengths as academic and administrative leaders.

The provost will demonstrate most, if not all, of the following professional qualifications and personal qualities:

- **Fit with mission:** A deep resonance with the mission and possibilities of a CU Denver education, including a drive that is constantly student centered, belief in opportunity and the transformative power of education, and commitment to community; demonstrated impact in enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence; a strong understanding of faculty work and the faculty world; and an eagerness to tie in to the academic and intellectual enterprise of the university, setting a high bar for academic excellence and the quality of the university's academic endeavors, with an understanding and appreciation of shared governance and the student experience, and a genuine and demonstrated commitment to collaboration.
- **Transformational reach:** A bold, optimistic approach to creative thinking, change management, and the possibilities for a university community that is working together for the greater good; an innovative mindset and an accompanying ability to galvanize free thinking in others and novel approaches, positioning the university as an impactful and positive force for the students and world of tomorrow; a visionary champion and driver toward institutional leadership in innovative educational approaches with demonstrated experience growing and sustaining innovations; a champion of growing mutually beneficial partnerships with industry leaders, employers, and community organizations, within and beyond Denver, Colorado, and the U.S., as a means of amplifying and accelerating the university's educational mission and opportunities for students, faculty, staff, programs, and the campus overall; the ability to provide an elevating leadership that enhances a culture that reaches beyond standard methods, policies, practices, and approaches to achieve a transforming educational experience for all, including a deep understanding of the experiences of and challenges faced by people of color and other underrepresented communities and demonstrated commitment to removing systems and structures that negatively impact underrepresented faculty, staff, and students.
- **Leadership skills:** A compassionate and ethical leader committed to making principle-based decisions with integrity and transparency; successful experience leading strategic planning, substantive and decisive evaluation of academic programs, learning outcomes assessment and accreditation, developing interdisciplinary programs, the application of new technologies, and a background and success in teaching and learning; demonstrated impact in increasing diversity and inclusion among faculty, staff, and students, and supporting recruitment and retention initiatives of diverse faculty, staff, and students across the inclusion spectrum; a successful record of creative leadership in generating external resources including such activities as successful grant development,

partnership development, constituency building, and fundraising; ability to coalesce institutional priorities and achieve transformative results; an embrace of flexibility; ability to lead the harnessing of institutional research and data analytics to good effect; a strong and informed commitment to shared governance, discussion, and solutions; the ability to reflect and inspire a sense of belonging and enthusiasm for all that has been accomplished, a bright future ahead, and the ability to take action and overcome challenges; the inclination to find joy in the journey and inspire that in others.

- **Knowledge of contemporary issues in higher education:** Understanding of academic and research/creative affairs, institutional research, student services administration, and strategic enrollment management; ability to recognize, appreciate, and be curious and conversant across a broad range of disciplines, including professional disciplines such as engineering and business; understanding of the role of libraries, academic technology support, and emerging technologies; capacity to lead campus-wide student success with the goal of increasing retention and graduation rates among all students to ensure these remain above the state and national average and to close the equity gap; a proven and astute connection to the local, regional, and national higher education community regarding current economic and political realities from various perspectives and familiarity with current research and emerging trends as well as an involvement with national professional societies and organizations; demonstrated understanding of online degree and certificate programs and their application at a research university; unrelenting commitment to undergraduate and graduate education including experience developing student success initiatives, using data to measure outcomes and success, and allocating resources appropriately to improve student performance including graduation rates, time to completion and retention; firm commitment to ensuring the success of the university's traditional students while advancing its ability to grow, serve, and ensure the success of underrepresented students and career professional seeking flexibility, new credentials, and educational offering that advance their careers throughout their lifetime; and an understanding of the opportunities and challenges attendant with being part of a large multi-campus system.
- **Management skills:** Demonstrated success in managing complex projects, groups, and organizations; ability to work with and supervise others, manage significant budgets and financial projections, plan and organize work, work effectively with colleagues across divisions, make decisions aligned with strategic priorities, and hold oneself and others accountable toward progress and results; success providing effective support across the faculty lifespan and diversity of roles and backgrounds including retaining, promoting and valuing instructional, research and clinical faculty; significant experience in an academic administrative position in higher education, that includes: team building and collaboration, transparency in decision-making, respect for the opinions and voices of others, an understanding of shared governance in the academy and the exercise of creativity, vision, and an entrepreneurial spirit in developing and achieving goals; strong and informed fiscal resourcefulness; the vision, commitment, and execution skills to enhance and grow the research, scholarship, and creative work of faculty; capacity to provide outstanding leadership to institutional research, sharing data analysis and related information institution-wide; and experience ensuring adherence to state, system and institutional accreditation expectations and requirements and those of other relevant professional or programmatic accreditation agencies.

- **Communications skills:** Exemplary communication skills, ability to present information effectively and respond to questions from internal and external audiences with grace and finesse, both orally and in writing, including the capacity to persuade a wide range of audiences around a shared vision; demonstrated skill in listening with care and working with others collaboratively to reach critical decisions, and the ability and commitment to communicate effectively about issues, decisions, and developments large and small; and a style of communication that builds trust and mutual respect.
- **Personal qualities:** A demonstrated confidence and ability as a senior leader with the humility to be an effective part of a collaborative and collegial senior team; a lack of ego and self-promotion, together with the desire to partner with others in service of the strongest possible effort; an ability to listen and hear ideas and thoughts from a variety of interested parties and partners and to integrate the thinking and views of others into one's own; integrity and trustworthiness; flexibility, adaptation, and resilience; optimism; and a sense of humor.
- **Credentials:** A record of outstanding scholarship and teaching that inspires the respect of the academic community; an earned doctorate or other terminal degree and eligibility for an appointment at the rank of full professor with tenure.

About University of Colorado Denver

Overview

Nestled in the center of one of America's most vibrant and fastest growing cities, the University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver) is Denver's public urban research university. It educates a diverse student body through quality academics, ambitious research, creative work, and civic engagement in the city it calls home. Leveraging its proximity to and partnership with so many public, nonprofit and private sector employers, CU Denver graduates gain the powerful combination of immersive classroom and real world



applied experiences that are in demand today. CU Denver provides well-educated top talent and a new generation of knowledge to fuel the future of Denver and the region.

CU Denver offers more than 100 academic degree programs, from bachelor's to doctoral level, in the heart of downtown. Here, more than 15,000 students pursue academic programs that range from business, health, engineering, and global energy management to music industry studies to criminal justice. As part of the state's largest public university system, CU Denver is a major contributor to the Colorado economy, with nearly 2,500 employees and annual economic impact exceeding \$800 million.

In 2004, the Denver and Anschutz campuses were consolidated to realize enhanced mission outcomes with greater academic, administrative, and operational efficiencies. The University of Colorado president announced in 2014 that the CU Denver campus and the CU Anschutz Medical Campus would each be led by its own chancellor, reporting to the president; in 2020, the chancellors of the two institutions decided that each campus would also have its own academic and student affairs leader. The institution would continue to be consolidated, and the structure would provide dedicated leadership on each campus to address their respective unique opportunities and challenges. A number of units and programs continue to be consolidated including academic and student affairs, human resources, information technology, finance, and facilities. The consolidated services for the two campuses preserve the unity of the academic and administrative areas and allow ongoing-shared services and efficiencies. The arrangement allows the CU Denver chancellor and provost the ability to direct the academic focus while benefiting from a close relationship with the region's premier medical campus. Given that several academic and student affairs departments and services support both the Denver and Anschutz campuses, and having two academic and student affairs leaders – one for each campus – is new, conversation around how best to disentangle or keep together the supports and departments for each area within academic and student affairs are in progress, and will be completed sometime in the spring of 2021. In partnership, the executive vice chancellor for academic and student affairs at CU Anschutz and the CU Denver provost will ensure the effective provision of shared services to their respective campuses. The two campuses remain a single academic entity, accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, and are an integral part of the four-campus University of Colorado system. Chancellors represent their respective campus to the external community and to the board of regents.

CU Denver has a diverse student body of nearly 11,000 undergraduate and over 4,000 graduate students. Over 60% of the fall 2019 entering class are students of color; the campus is an emerging Hispanic-Serving Institution and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution. Many students are first generation and most work while pursuing their studies. Over 30% of the undergraduate students are pursuing health-related degrees. The campus employs 1,800 faculty and staff and has an annual budget of \$330 million. CU Denver is located in downtown Denver, Colorado and shares the Auraria campus, which is the largest campus in the state, with two other distinct and separate institutions: Community College of Denver and Metropolitan State University of Denver. Each institution has its own neighborhood, and the three institutions maintain and manage the campus with a shared governance model through the Auraria Higher Education Center (AHEC). In addition to shared facilities (e.g., classrooms, labs, student union, library, health center) on the Auraria Campus, CU Denver owns and operates three academic and administrative buildings in the downtown's urban core.

Strategic Priorities

CU Denver is a diverse teaching and learning community that creates, discovers, and applies knowledge to improve the health and well-being of Colorado and the world. In 2016, the university established five strategic priorities to guide its ongoing success as Colorado's public, urban research university. The strategic priorities include:

- **Student Success**: Elevate student success through increased enrollment, retention, and graduation rates.
- **Scholarly Excellence**: Advance scholarly excellence and innovation in teaching, research and creative work.
- **Community Asset**: Strengthen the university's position and impact as a vital community asset.
- **Inclusive Culture**: Create a more cohesive, collaborative, and inclusive culture.
- **Financial Sustainability**: Achieve long-term financial sustainability and stability.

Safe Return: COVID-19

The University of Colorado Denver gradually returned to campus in fall 2020 with a firm commitment to providing a [flexible plan](#) designed to keep the community safe, ensure its students ongoing success, and innovate for the future. The university posts [weekly updates](#) with related news and resources and a commitment to transparency and the wellbeing of its campus community. While at the time of this publication a firm decision has not been made yet, it is anticipated that a hybrid academic experience and on-going alternative work arrangements will continue into the spring of 2021.

A testament to CU Denver's proactive efforts, it has very promising metrics relative to the infection rate more broadly. The university continues to work with Denver Public Health and community partners to provide a safe and proactive pathway for its students, faculty, staff, and those impacted directly or indirectly by the virus.

Leadership

Dr. Michelle A. Marks, Ph.D., Chancellor, University of Colorado Denver



Michelle Marks has been chancellor of CU Denver since July 1, 2020. A longtime leader in higher education, Dr. Marks has the business acumen of an experienced senior administrator as well as the spirit of an academic. She is known for developing innovative programs that help students succeed, attract new student populations, facilitate research opportunities, and drive new revenue growth.

Prior to being named CU Denver's next chancellor, Dr. Marks served as vice president for academic innovation and new ventures at George Mason University. She led strategic partnerships designed to deliver online

programming at scale, create pathway programming for international students, and support adult degree completion. She also forged critical relationships with businesses, government, and education institutions to support the university's mission.

Dr. Marks has extensive experience in the academic arena, having previously served as Mason's vice-provost for academic affairs and associate provost for graduate education. As a professor of management in Mason's School of Business, Dr. Marks' research focused on organizational leadership development and teamwork. She has published studies illustrating the dynamic nature of the collaborative processes used by organizational teams and the critical roles of team leaders. Among the numerous awards she's received are the George Mason University Alumni of the Year Award (2017), Executive MBA Professor of the Year award (2008 and 2011), and Teaching Excellence Award (2006).

She holds a BS in psychology from James Madison University and an MA and PhD in industrial/organizational psychology from George Mason University.

In addition to her chancellor role, Dr. Marks is also a tenured professor in CU Denver's Business School.

University of Colorado System

The University of Colorado is a public research university system with four campuses: University of Colorado Boulder, University of Colorado - Colorado Springs, University of Colorado Denver and University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. It is led by a president, and governed by a nine-member elected Board of Regents. With more than 67,000 degree seeking students and an additional 8,000 taking courses for credit, nearly 6,500 students taking online courses exclusively, over 6,200 full-time instructional faculty and an additional 1,700 research faculty members, CU is the largest institution of higher education in Colorado and has an annual budget of \$4.8 billion. CU researchers attracted more than \$1.2 billion in sponsored research funding in fiscal year 2018-19. Academic prestige is evidenced by the university's five Nobel laureates, 10 MacArthur "genius" Fellows, 20 astronauts and 20 Rhodes Scholars. For more information about the entire CU system, go to www.cu.edu.

The University of Colorado System has four distinct campuses and is led from a [system office](#) by [President Mark Kennedy](#). The three campuses in addition to CU Denver are [CU Boulder](#), [CU Colorado Springs](#), and [CU Anschutz Medical Campus](#). CU Denver's relationship with Anschutz, a world-class R1 university with six health professional schools offering over 40 degree programs, is a close one, and Anschutz contracts with CU Denver for some of its student services.

The [board of regents](#) comprises nine members serving staggered six-year terms, one elected from each of Colorado's seven congressional districts and two from the state at large. The board is charged constitutionally with the general supervision of the university and the exclusive control and direction of all funds of and appropriations to the university, unless otherwise provided by law.



Denver, Colorado

Denver has established itself as a great city on many accounts. In fact, *U.S. News & World Report* awarded it the 2020 – 2021 #2 spot for [Best Places to Live](#) - second only to Boulder, Colorado. Fort Collins and Colorado Springs took 4th and 5th place making the State a sought after destination for high-quality of life including job market, housing affordability, and more.

Set at the front range of the Rocky Mountains and known as the Mile High City, it is geographically stunning. Denver has a reputation for being extremely dynamic for business and livable for individuals and families. Many consider the Denver Metro area to have the perfect blend of outdoor adventure and metropolitan sophistication. It is one of the nation's fastest growing cities and in 2016 was named the best place to live in the USA by U.S. News & World Report.

While the city itself has fewer than 700,000 residents, the six-county metro area has a population approaching three million. The state of Colorado is ranked annually as one of the best states in which to do business, and Denver is known for its blend of large corporations and manufacturers as well as vibrant small business environment.

Denver has a mild, dry, mostly sunny climate (whereas the mountains receive the majority of the snow). The Denver metro area receives eight to fifteen inches of precipitation a year. As such, parks and outdoor activities are abundant in Denver. The city itself has over 200 parks, and of course, Denver is in close proximity to many prominent ski, golf, and recreation resorts.

Culture thrives in Denver. The city's diverse population supports culture through the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). This cultural district is home to many popular attractions like The Denver Performing Arts Complex, the second-largest arts center in the nation. SCFD also offers the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, The Denver Art Museum, The Denver Zoo, and well-known Botanic Gardens. Denver is one of only a few cities to offer eight professional sports teams, and has built new stadiums in recent years. Excellent shopping and restaurants are found throughout the city, from Cherry Creek Shopping Center to downtown's pedestrian-friendly 16th Street Mall.

As might be expected of a thriving, vibrant city, Denver is home to exceptional public and private schools, colleges and universities, religious institutions, and vibrant neighborhoods.

For more information visit www.denver.org or www.denverchamber.org.

Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting the University of Colorado Denver in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by **February 22, 2021**.

Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#).

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Robin Mamlet, Melissa Fincher and Sarah Miller
CUDenverProvost@wittkieffer.com

University of Colorado Denver is committed to recruiting and supporting a diverse student body, faculty and administrative staff. The university strives to promote a culture of inclusiveness, respect, communication and understanding. We encourage applications from women, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities and all veterans. The University of Colorado is committed to diversity and equality in education and employment.