

FLAGSHIP 2030
Outreach and Engagement Task Force Final Report
University of Colorado at Boulder
August 2008

Introduction

Task Force Membership: Members of the task force included Anne Heinz (Chair), Tom Riis (Co-Chair), Jeanne McDonald (Administrative Support), Cathy Comstock, Jane Curtis, Sona Dimidjian, Erica Ellingson, Daniel Epstein, Julie Graf, Andy Hoenger, Jeffrey Kidder, Patricia “Patty” Limerick, Sandy Pennington, Kayann Short and Tom Zeiler. See Appendix A.

Core and Flagship Initiatives: Our task force was assigned one core initiative and two Flagship initiatives. They included:

- Serving Colorado, the Community and our Graduates
- Colorado’s Research Diamond
- Creating University Villages

The task force name was changed from the ‘Outreach Task Force’ to the ‘Outreach and Engagement Task Force’ to more accurately portray the existing and envisioned breadth of the outreach and engagement activities of CU-Boulder faculty, students and staff. While task force members primarily focused on the core initiative ‘Serving Colorado, the Community and our Graduates’ they met with some of the other task force chairs; reviewed their interim reports, and considered ways the Outreach and Engagement Task Force could advance the broader goals of Flagship 2030.

Work Plan: Task force members met as a whole, in subcommittees, reviewed relevant literature and prepared recommendations. In order to address the breadth of its charge, task force members served on four subcommittees. These included the role of faculty in outreach; P-12 teachers and students; business, alumni and other constituencies; and lifelong and online learning.

Additional subcommittee members were recruited including Susan Buhr, Director of the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES) Education and Outreach Program; Marilyn Decalo, Alumni Association Membership Director; and Program Directors and Coordinators from the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies including Carol Drake, Silvie Kilworth, Cathy Murillo, Armando Parés, Ted Rockwell, Geoff Rubinstein and Mario Vidalon.

Task force members reviewed over 70 summaries of interviews conducted last summer with community and opinion leaders from Alamosa, Aurora, Colorado Springs, Denver, Durango, Fort Collins, Grand Junction, Greeley, La Junta, Lamar, Limon, Longmont, Pueblo, Steamboat Springs, Sterling and Vail. Outreach and engagement programs at peer and aspirant institutions were reviewed including Michigan State University, Pennsylvania State University, Syracuse University, University of Arizona, University of Michigan, University of Virginia, University of Washington and others.

To further inform recommendations, task force members met with various constituents including:

- Frank Bruno, Vice Chancellor of Administration and Dan Sher, Dean of the College of Music. Frank and Dean Sher presented the findings of the Flagship 2030 committee on the Relationship with the Boulder Community.
- Community members, faculty, students and staff involved in the CU-Boulder Outreach Committee and the Outreach Co-Op.

- Gerhard Fischer, Professor of Computer Science and Director of the Center for Lifelong Learning and Design (L3D); Hal Eden, L3D Research Associate and L3D Associate Director; Andy Gorman, L3D Research Associate and L3D students.
- Todd Gleeson, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and Stein Sture, Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean of the Graduate School.
- Leslie Leinwand, Professor of Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology and Director of the Colorado Initiative in Molecular Biotechnology.
- Keith Maskus, Professor of Economics and Robin Suits, Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Administration. Keith co-chaired the Flagship 2030 Facilities Task Force and Robin provided administrative support.
- Sallye McKee, Vice Chancellor of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement (ODECE) and Michael Warden, Associate Vice Chancellor for University Communications.
- Uriel Nauenberg, Professor of Physics and Boulder Faculty Assembly Chair and Barbara “Babs” Buttenfield, Professor of Geography. Uriel chaired and Babs co-chaired the Flagship 2030 Faculty Task Force.
- Patricia Rankin, Associate Vice Chancellor for ODECE who chaired the Flagship 2030 committee on the Relationship with the State of Colorado.
- Mary Ann Shea, Director of the Faculty Teaching Excellence Program.
- Peter Simons, Director of the Institute of Ethical and Civic Engagement.

Part One

The following “big ideas” have emerged from the work of the task force along with recommendations for implementation. Most of these recommendations can be implemented during the next five years except as noted below. Recommendations that are implemented should be evaluated to monitor their effectiveness, highlight best practices, identify areas for improvement and inform longer term planning for the university. The funding that will be needed to support these initiatives could be drawn from campus resources and private fund-raising. These ideas and action plans are important to advancing the Flagship 2030 strategic plan because they specifically address the core initiative of Serving Colorado, the Community and our Graduates while advancing other Flagship 2030 initiatives including Creating University Villages; Ensuring Access; Learning for a Diverse World; Experiential Learning; and Building a Global Crossroads. The “big ideas” include:

- A coordinated, coherent, deliberate campus strategy for outreach and engagement
- Faculty participation and the development of evaluation, recognition and reward systems for faculty outreach
- Lifelong learning, professional development and online learning activities

Recommendations for Implementation: A coordinated, coherent, deliberate campus strategy for outreach and engagement

- Adopt a clear and robust definition of outreach and engagement. The task force advocates a model of outreach and engagement that 1) complements and extends CU-Boulder’s role and mission as Colorado’s flagship institution and as a national comprehensive research university 2) articulates the role and participation of its faculty, staff and students; and 3) specifies the reciprocal nature of the relationship between the University and the public. Such a definition can draw upon CU-Boulder’s existing definition of outreach for faculty (see Appendix B); mission statements and successful practices from CU-Boulder units currently involved in outreach and engagement; and prevailing usage nationally from peer institutions.

- Establish appropriate infrastructure and oversight The task force endorses an Academic Affairs plan to establish an Office of Outreach and Engagement (OOE). The OOE will support, coordinate and communicate the outreach and engagement activities of the campus as a whole. This infrastructure presumes that the development of most outreach and engagement activities will continue to reside in home departments, schools, colleges and institutes. The OOE director should report to an associate vice chancellor or associate provost for outreach and engagement. The OOE director and avc/associate provost will facilitate multidisciplinary efforts and outreach activities consistent with school, college and campus plans. The campus-level position signals CU-Boulder's commitment and will be responsible for implementing the campus strategy for outreach and engagement.
- Foster student involvement CU-Boulder's outreach and engagement efforts are enhanced by the breadth, intelligence and energy of its students. Various CU-Boulder programs currently promote the participation of students in outreach and engagement activities including the President's Leadership Class, Student Ambassadors, Residential Academic Programs (RAPS), Volunteer Clearinghouse, the Institute for Ethical and Civic Engagement, Service Learning courses and others. These programs can provide models and test-beds for the expansion of outreach and engagement activities for students. For example, the RAPS could require a 1-3 credit hour outreach and engagement course for its first-year students. Sewall Hall currently requires a 1 credit civic engagement course that enables students to work with various constituencies related to the American West (environmental, Native American, ranching, farming, mining, mountain communities, etc.) The Smith Hall International Program (SHIP) could require a course for all students facilitating relationships with politics and government; business, NGOs or other organizations with international interests. The campus community should also consider making outreach and engagement a core requirement of its undergraduate curriculum, consistent with the Flagship 2030 recommendation on experiential learning.

Service learning is a teaching method that integrates academic instruction with community-based service. Faculty help students apply critical thinking skills to real world situations which foster civic responsibility and leadership. With further support and funding, service learning and civic engagement programs can expand their reach and 1) work with faculty to imbed the pedagogical benefits of service learning in appropriate courses; 2) assist faculty interested in structuring a research component in their service learning courses; 3) enable students to access service learning courses appropriate to their majors; and 4) facilitate community participation.

- Establish 'Welcoming Centers' on campus The size and complexity of CU-Boulder's campus can be intimidating and difficult to navigate for visitors. The task force recommends improved campus signage along with one or more welcoming centers located strategically on the perimeter of the campus since visitors arrive from various directions. These centers should provide information about the campus, maps and walking tour guides, parking tips, listings of CU-Boulder outreach and engagement activities and city of Boulder information. The proposed Hotel and Conference Center would serve as a logical welcome center. However, other existing locations that could serve as welcoming centers (with appropriate signage and information) include the Alumni Association, the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies, the libraries and museums, performing arts venues, the University Memorial Center, designated institutes and one or more buildings on the East Campus.

- Build and sustain community partnerships Outreach activities can apply the expert resources of the university to address community, state, national and international problems. Outreach and engagement activities should foster reciprocal relationships between the university and communities. Activities should be guided by listening to and obtaining input from the communities themselves. In order to truly partner, both the university and the community should be equal partners both contributing to and benefitting from the relationship. For example, while the communities should benefit from outreach and engagement activities, faculty should also accrue benefits to his/her research, teaching and/or creative work. These activities can attract a more diverse student body and faculty; garner public understanding and enhance support for the institution. The lack of a coordinated plan of outreach extends to the Colorado communities and external audiences that are served. As a result, some communities around the state of Colorado have been the recipients of multiple outreach programs while others have not been served at all.

Working in conjunction with the Office of Outreach and Engagement, the task force recommends the careful structuring of outreach and engagement initiatives with community stakeholders; business, arts and cultural leaders; alums and others even as we (simultaneously) reach beyond Colorado. Appropriate ‘in-reach’ efforts that bring external audiences to the campus should also be included. The reports prepared by the Flagship 2030 State of Colorado and Boulder Community committees contain various other specific suggestions.

- Support P-12 outreach and engagement activities P-12 outreach and engagement activities can enhance teacher effectiveness and strengthen the educational preparation of students. These activities can foster ‘continuity to college’ by exposing middle and high school students to higher education through focused learning experiences. These activities support recruitment efforts to provide broader access to CU-Boulder for a more diverse group of students. Emphasis should be given to P-12 programs for teachers that aid their professional development and strengthen connections to content areas at CU-Boulder. For example, over the next 12-18 months, the Boulder President’s Teaching Scholars will institute a series of seminars in the scholars’ disciplines for K-12 teachers. CU-Boulder outreach and engagement programs should also identify P-12 districts whose high schools are not able to provide the necessary prerequisites for CU admission and focus targeted, need-based programs that serve them directly. Participation in the Governor’s P-20 initiative may also yield other recommendations for consideration.

The humanities, performing and visual arts at CU-Boulder serve as a significant cultural resource for thousands of children and adults each year through the public performances and arts presentation of CU-Boulder students, faculty and guest professionals. They also provide a wide range of learning and enrichment experiences for the P-20 students and teachers throughout the state.

- Partner with campus administrators Key campus administrators play critical roles in fostering community relations and cultivating support for the university. This group includes top administrators; admissions; development staffs for the various schools and colleges; the CU Foundation; the Alumni Association; and others. While faculty are engaged in the here and now of educating current students, conducting innovative research, producing creative work and developing new technologies, these administrators must attend to the infrastructure of the university. They attract our top students, recruit and hire the best faculty and researchers, create statewide support and

attract funding, maintain and upgrade the physical plant. Many of these efforts can only be accomplished through the support of alumni, business, community groups, the state and other allies. Campus administrators must reach out to these external constituents and engage them effectively as partners in CU-Boulder's mission. The outreach and engagement activities of the faculty and students occur within this broader university context and the subcommittee report of the Business, Alumni and Other Constituents provides recommendations to promote dialogue and coordination in the university's broader external and community relations.

- Implement an integrated communication plan Working in conjunction with the schools, colleges, Alumni Association and institutes, the Director of the Office of Outreach and Engagement should develop and implement a comprehensive external communication plan over the next 12-15 months designed for a wide variety of constituents (alumni, community leaders, P-12 audiences, policy makers, students, and general audiences) about CU-Boulder's outreach and engagement projects. Campaign elements should include:
 - development of a centralized outreach website to increase the awareness, utility and appreciation of the university and its resources. It should feature CU-Boulder's diverse outreach programs offered throughout the state, highlight outreach success stories and serve as a means for constituents to directly connect with outreach providers. See Appendix C.
 - distribution of regular news releases and media advisories to metro-area and rural media outlets throughout Colorado.
 - development and distribution of collateral materials focused on CU-Boulder outreach highlights.
 - distribution of comprehensive outreach survey data.
 - dissemination of key success stories to community leaders throughout the state.
 - development of a comprehensive database of alumni, students, parents, key community leaders and policy makers.
 - development of on-line tools that enable faculty and administrators to download outreach information and graphics for use in presentations, grant proposals, fundraising, recruiting, public relations activities, arts events and other initiatives.
 - development and implementation of a long-term strategy for staying connected with rural communities in Colorado (e.g., the ongoing Faculty Community Lecture Series and related school programs).

Recommendations for Implementation: Faculty participation and the development of evaluation, recognition and reward systems for faculty outreach

- Clarify the role of faculty As Colorado's flagship comprehensive graduate research university with a residential campus, CU-Boulder's primary responsibility is to its on-campus teaching and research mission. Outreach and engagement activities should not detract from the university's central mission. However, outreach activities can align with the faculty's teaching, research and creative work while serving external audiences. This approach to faculty outreach and engagement requires the careful selection of activities that can both leverage faculty scholarship while engaging appropriate community partners. Outreach can be integrated with faculty research. In fact, federal research agencies such as NSF, NIH and NASA increasingly insist that investigators make the outreach component of their research explicit. In addition to applied research, other

examples of outreach activities include technical assistance, demonstration projects, impact evaluations, service learning, policy analysis, performances, lectures, and instruction. Outreach and engagement activities are also aligned, indeed, are central to the educational mission of CU-Boulder's creative activities in music, theatre, dance and the visual arts. However, it is also true that not all faculty members have the interest or ability to engage in meaningful outreach. Therefore, only some of our faculty will be involved in outreach and engagement activities. Further, the 'right time' for those faculty who want to be involved in outreach may need to be negotiated based on the individual faculty member's career path; departmental or campus needs; tenure status and work-life issues.

- Provide appropriate funding Much of CU-Boulder's outreach and engagement activities are funded through the initiatives of *individual* faculty, staff and students. The CU-Boulder Outreach Committee, for example, annually provides approximately 40 such individual grants. While these activities may be congruent with the individual faculty member's scholarship and creative activities and may ably serve the interests of external audiences, these activities have not been aligned in all cases with school or college strategic plans nor have they been deliberately chosen to advance campus areas of emphasis. As a result, the sustainability of these efforts can be at risk, particularly for those outreach and engagement activities that reflect the primary effort of one faculty champion.

Presently, the campus does not routinely provide funding at the *department, unit* or *campus level* that reflect larger teaching, research and creative work initiatives that have a corresponding outreach and engagement component. The task force recommends that the Outreach Committee increase its funding pool and extend meritorious grants at three levels: 1) individual faculty who may collaborate with staff and students; 2) the department or unit; and 3) campus initiatives. This tiered-funding strategy facilitates outreach and engagement initiatives of individuals while promoting areas of strength within departments and larger interdisciplinary campus initiatives.

For example, the CU-Boulder Colorado Initiative in Molecular Biotechnology represents one such campus initiative. The Initiative is designed to foster new research, teaching, and technology development at the interface of life sciences, physical sciences, mathematics and computational sciences, and engineering. However, the Initiative also envisions outreach and engagement activities consistent with its role and mission that serves various external audiences such as K-12 biotechnology programs for K-12 teachers and students; biotechnology lecture series for lay audiences; and graduate-level credit certificate programs for professional audiences.

- Examine and adopt appropriate guidelines for the evaluation, recognition and reward of faculty outreach Tenure policies for faculty involved in outreach and engagement were the subject of a two-year study culminating in a 2008 report involving faculty, provosts, chancellors and presidents from over 70 U.S. colleges and research universities entitled, "Scholarship in Public: Knowledge Creation and Tenure Policy in the Engaged University." See http://www.imagingamerica.org/IAPdfs/TTI_REPORT%20FINAL%205.2.08.pdf Various national higher education organizations were also involved including the American Council of Education, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the Modern Language Association, the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC), the Woodrow Wilson Foundation and others. Drawing upon a review of literature and their own research, the report

provides recommendations and resources to help universities assess the quality and impact of faculty engaged in outreach. In addition, Michigan State University, will issue a report this fall on over 250 tenure and promotion cases carried out under their guidelines for evaluating the quality and rigor of faculty outreach. The Outreach and Engagement Task Force recommends that the Provost charge appropriate CU-Boulder faculty groups to examine and evaluate the policies outlined in these and other reports; examine the practices at relevant peer institutions; and make recommendations regarding the evaluation, recognition and reward of faculty outreach.

In addition, the task force recommends that three or four CU-Boulder faculty and administrators participate in the June 2009 Engagement Academy, an executive development program designed for University leaders responsible for outreach and engagement. Three national associations including NASULGC have worked with Virginia Polytechnic University to offer this program designed to link outreach and engagement strategies to a university's role, mission and strategic plan.

Recommendations for Implementation: Lifelong learning, professional development and online learning opportunities

- Bridge the development of programs between the university, alumni, business and the community Faculty and external constituent groups partner with the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies (CEPS) to develop CU-Boulder's lifelong learning, professional development and online learning opportunities. This collaborative relationship assures the quality of the program and the administrative infrastructure needed for program success. This model should be used in the development of additional programs that will serve workforce needs, the community and alumni locally, statewide and globally. The task force recommends:
 1. Over the next 12-18 months, CEPS staff should review local demographic and market trends relevant to providing lifelong learning and noncredit personal enrichment programs. Then, in consultation with faculty, students, parents, community members and staff, a longer term plan should be crafted to assure appropriate types and numbers of lifelong learning programs offered on campus, off campus and online.
 2. Professional development programs that serve both local and global workforce needs are typically developed in conjunction with CU-Boulder's professional schools. Over the next two years, CEPS should work with key business and industry groups to assess market opportunities in conjunction with appropriate academic units and recommend emerging program areas for longer-term development. The envisioned Conoco-Phillips training center in Louisville and the proposed biotechnology certificate program represent two such opportunities. CEPS should work with the Alumni Association to provide professional development programs to CU alumni.
 3. CU-Boulder faculty and staff, in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Higher Education and the Lumina Foundation for Education, are currently examining policy solutions for adult learners who have not completed their undergraduate degrees. CU-Boulder should assess the recommendations resulting from this study and examine the merits and feasibility of an online, undergraduate degree completion program.
 4. Over the next two years, a campus-appointed committee and representatives from business and industry should examine the academic and institutional feasibility of expanding the number of online professional master's degree and certificate programs. In the subsequent three to five years, the committee should establish a model for the development and

- evaluation of CU-Boulder online programs that is aligned with other Flagship 2030 recommendations on graduate education.
5. The faculty, researchers and students of the Center for Lifelong Learning and Design (L3D) have developed a research-based theoretical framework and created new media designed to enhance lifelong learning. Their innovations and systems (including modeling, simulation and collaborative tools) may be useful in the research and development of these various initiatives by informing, supporting and assessing complex issues and decision-making.

Part Two

These recommendations help advance CU-Boulder's mission as a comprehensive graduate research institution because the proposed outreach and engagement activities specifically complement the role and mission of the campus. Academic oversight of programs is provided by the schools and colleges; the role for faculty is outlined; and the reach of the campus is extended through the various programs and presentations offered on campus, off campus and through the use of technology. These recommendations build upon the good work of current programs and leverage campus resources in order to enhance the outreach and engagement programs of the campus. The task force reviewed relevant literature, considered the activities of peer institutions nationally and recommended areas for investment in order to strengthen and leverage its outreach and engagement activities. Recommendations support student learning and effective teaching because they draw upon the university's expert faculty and employ mechanisms for evaluation and improvement. These recommendations support the integration of outreach and engagement with the fundamental work of a university including the acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge. They promote a life of learning for faculty, staff and students as evidenced by the various recommendations and profile how internal and external constituencies can be served.

Conclusion

This task force developed a coordinated, targeted and expanded strategy for outreach and engagement that strengthens connections between the university, Colorado and the larger global community. But outreach and engagement are only abstract ideas unless enlivened by a sense that all 'engaged' parties can be substantially improved, even positively delighted, in the process. Absent a commitment to mutual benefit, bilateral sharing and respect, outreach can miss the mark and become an alienating experience. Faced by the practical challenges of the coming decades, the university cannot afford to be isolated and insensitive to its larger community. Effective outreach ought to be viewed as integral, not optional; an essential step in a communication process that helps us fulfill our mandate to discover, teach, serve and to disseminate new knowledge for the welfare of Coloradans and others. This plan depends upon clear expectations for faculty participation and the development of evaluation, recognition and reward systems for faculty outreach and engagement. Opportunities to provide experiential learning opportunities for our students, expand lifelong learning, professional development and online learning are described. These initiatives depend on CU-Boulder's ability to understand the needs of those who live beyond the boundaries of the campus. These initiatives can offer our graduates, business and community members access to the university's vast resources while enhancing understanding and support for CU-Boulder's role and mission.

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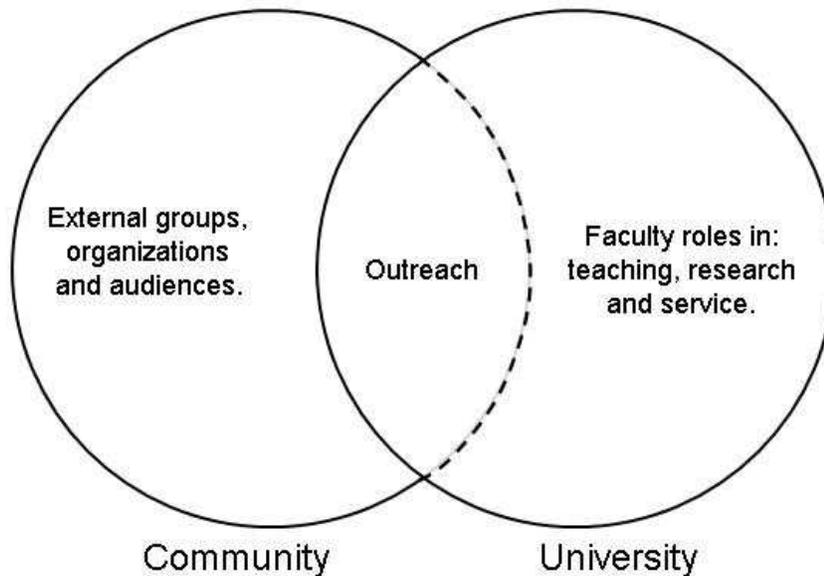
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Outreach at the University of Colorado at Boulder

Faculty have core responsibilities for teaching, research and service on campus. Outreach can be an important and valued aspect of these responsibilities. It extends a faculty member’s scholarship and is an integral part of CU-Boulder’s mission. This document defines outreach within the context of our research university and demonstrates various applications of outreach.

The University of Colorado at Boulder uses the term “outreach” to describe the various ways in which the University extends its expertise for the direct benefit of Colorado communities and other external audiences. The University’s exceptional resources of knowledge lie in the strengths of its faculty, research institutes, student body and academic programs.

Outreach has traditionally been considered a service activity. However, within a research university, outreach can occur as scholarship that cuts across the University’s teaching, research and service missions. Successful outreach is rooted in scholarship and highlights faculty expertise. It draws on knowledge developed through other forms of scholarship and contributes to the knowledge base. Further, federal research agencies such as NSF and NASA increasingly insist that investigators make the outreach component of their research explicit. Outreach activities provide reciprocal benefits to both the community and the academy. For example, a community may receive valuable consultation from a faculty member that helps them solve a water contamination problem, while the faculty member obtains valuable insights about contamination that help shape plans for a subsequent research project.



Outreach activities extend and enhance a faculty member's scholarship in the following ways:

Teaching

- Faculty teaching traditional and nontraditional students credit or noncredit courses off-campus, including service learning.
- Faculty conducting noncredit seminars, workshops, consultation or technical assistance, available to students either in-person or through the use of technology.

Research

- Faculty conducting research intended to respond to pressing problems or issues identified by external constituencies, such as local communities, state, national or international agencies, business, citizen groups, schools, hospitals, arts or other public and nonprofit organizations.

Service

- Faculty drawing on scholarly knowledge to provide medical, educational or therapeutic services, testify before the legislature or Congress, serve on state, national or international commissions or advisory groups, or work through professional societies to prepare studies and reports on significant societal or global problems.
- Faculty applying professional expertise in volunteer situations.

SPECIFIC EXAMPLES:

Service

A food bank asks CU-Boulder business students to develop a marketing plan for next year's food drive. The students ask one of their business professors for assistance on the project. *Service with an outreach component:* The professor meets with the food bank staff, and then reviews and critiques the students' marketing plan.

A group of CU-Boulder business students decide to host a canned food drive on campus for the local food bank through their fraternity. A biology professor who serves on a student affairs committee reviews and endorses the project. *This service activity does not incorporate a university outreach component.*

Teaching

The food bank's marketing project becomes more involved and results in the faculty member's teaching a series of workshops for the board of directors of the food bank. *This extension of the faculty member's expertise is an example of university outreach.*

The following semester, the professor uses his/her experience at the food bank to explain marketing concepts to their class. *This application to the course curriculum is not an example of university outreach.*

Research

A group of biology graduate students and faculty hear about the canned food drive. They know that local human service organizations have been worried about the nutritional values in the canned-food meals the clients routinely eat. The group begins work with the local food bank to test and analyze the nutritional value of the meals and to develop some recommendations for the organizations that distribute the donations. *The extension of faculty expertise directly as well as through the graduate students is an example of research that incorporates university outreach.*

A faculty member decides to conduct a research project that further investigates whether certain types of genetically modified fruit retain their original nutritional values, regardless of whether they are eaten when fresh or canned. Research findings are published in a refereed journal and presented at a national biology conference. *This contribution to the knowledge base does not incorporate university outreach.*

University of Colorado at Boulder
Outreach Web Site Action Plan

Outreach serves as the clear link among our institution's mission, our exceptional faculty resources, and the citizens of Colorado. It empowers the campus to tell the many stories of how Coloradoans benefit through relationships with CU-Boulder's faculty, students, and programs. Outreach activities make salient the positive contributions of CU-Boulder's faculty and academic programs to a wider community. Throughout this document, the term "outreach" is used to describe the various ways in which the university extends its expertise for the direct benefit of Colorado communities and other external audiences.

The Need

The idea for a centralized and staff supported website that will serve as a hub for all of the University of Colorado at Boulder's (UCB) outreach has been circulating among the administration, outreach providers, and their audiences for more than a decade. Faculty, outreach providers, and external audiences have expressed the need for UCB to establish a vital hub for communicating among and about these important activities. In the last 15 years "outreach" has become an integral mission for faculty, centers, and institutes of the university to promote research, education, products, and services. This Action Plan documents the discussion, research, and rationale behind the following recommendations.

The web site will promote outreach events, activities, products, and services to multiple audiences and recruit the participation of campus-wide outreach providers. This proposal identifies the need for support personnel to oversee and manage a dynamic, interactive web site, to provide the necessary technical support for the web site and the databases it will house, and to serve as a point of contact for the multiple audiences this web site will serve.

The outreach web site will include broad audiences encompassing Colorado K-12 educators and students, the general public and even UCB faculty, students, and administrators, as well as, legislators, members of the media, and Colorado communities and beyond.

Outreach Communications Initiative (OCI)

The Outreach Communications Initiative (OCI) is a workgroup that was formed to address the need for a central outreach communication web presence. Initially organized by the Office for University Outreach, individuals from UCB were invited to participate in the workgroup. The OCI members represent the Division of Continuing Education and Professional Studies, UCB's Research Institutes and Centers, and the College of Art and Sciences. While examining the possibilities of a centralized web site, the need for more than just a web presence surfaced. The OCI agreed that in addition to the web site, a point of contact working on behalf of all campus outreach providers and their audiences would further improve the communication between these two audiences.

Mission

CU's outreach web site will increase the awareness, utility, and appreciation of the university and its resources. It will promote and highlight outreach activities, events, offerings, success stories, and serve as a means for audiences to connect directly with outreach providers. This will increase visibility and provide a comprehensive hub for the university's outreach efforts.

Goals

1. Provide a flexible technological structure, featuring a central database serving dynamic content that will allow for UCB outreach providers to edit and manage their own content for timely communication.
2. Allow various audiences the ability to efficiently search and find the information that is relevant to their needs and discover additional possibilities.
3. Build databases to archive information of UCB's contributions to the communities, the state, and specific audiences it serves.

Outcomes of this web site are to:

- identify campus-wide outreach providers to the UCB community and beyond.
- provide a unified voice for campus-wide outreach providers.
- promote the use of the university's resources more effectively and prudently.
- serve as a conduit for collaborative and synergistic efforts.
- generate a communication tool for timely communication of current and upcoming outreach activities and events.
- report about the university's presence and contributions to the communities it serves, constituents, and societal issues.

Examples of outcomes are to provide:

- smaller outreach programs, individual faculty, and newly awarded outreach programs a web presence.
- a resource to communicate to individuals and groups, both on campus and off, about UCB's outreach programs, products, and services.
- a means to facilitate audiences finding an appropriate outreach activity/program for their needs.
- a means to showcase outreach provider achievements and highlights.

Survey and Review

The OCI conducted a survey of more than 60 peer institutions that are community-serving organizations and maintain centralized outreach web sites with educational components. Review efforts were focused on 15 of these institutions and organizations that represented a wide spectrum of web-based outreach communication. The reviewers identified the most

effective examples of effective features, such as user-friendly navigation and search engines, service to a variety of audiences, and an inviting and aesthetic appeal. This information was compiled to formulate a site plan for the new outreach web site. (Reference: Appendix A-1)

Synopsis of Peer Review

The most effective surveyed web sites contained an easily searchable page for self-identified users, a variety of ways to search, and a cohesive quality so that the user is not directed off site. These sites were current and appeared to be continually maintained with timely and updated information.

It was determined that some web sites contained inadequate features, in particular, a static list of web links that are neither aesthetic, easily searchable, nor conducive to reaching various audiences with ease. Additionally, the static list lacked cohesiveness since the user was sent to a new website upon clicking on a link. Some sites reviewed appeared as though they were not maintained on a regular basis, with stale, outdated information that lacked relevancy. As a result, the OCI recommends that the UCB outreach web site has a convenient way for outreach providers to update their information and that there are dedicated personnel actively maintaining the site.

UCB Outreach Web Site

Potential audiences were identified through analyzing those currently and actively being served by UCB's outreach providers. These potential audiences include: administration, legislators, media, community groups, individuals, educators, students of all grades and ages, and faculty.

Web Site Structure (Reference: Appendix A-2)

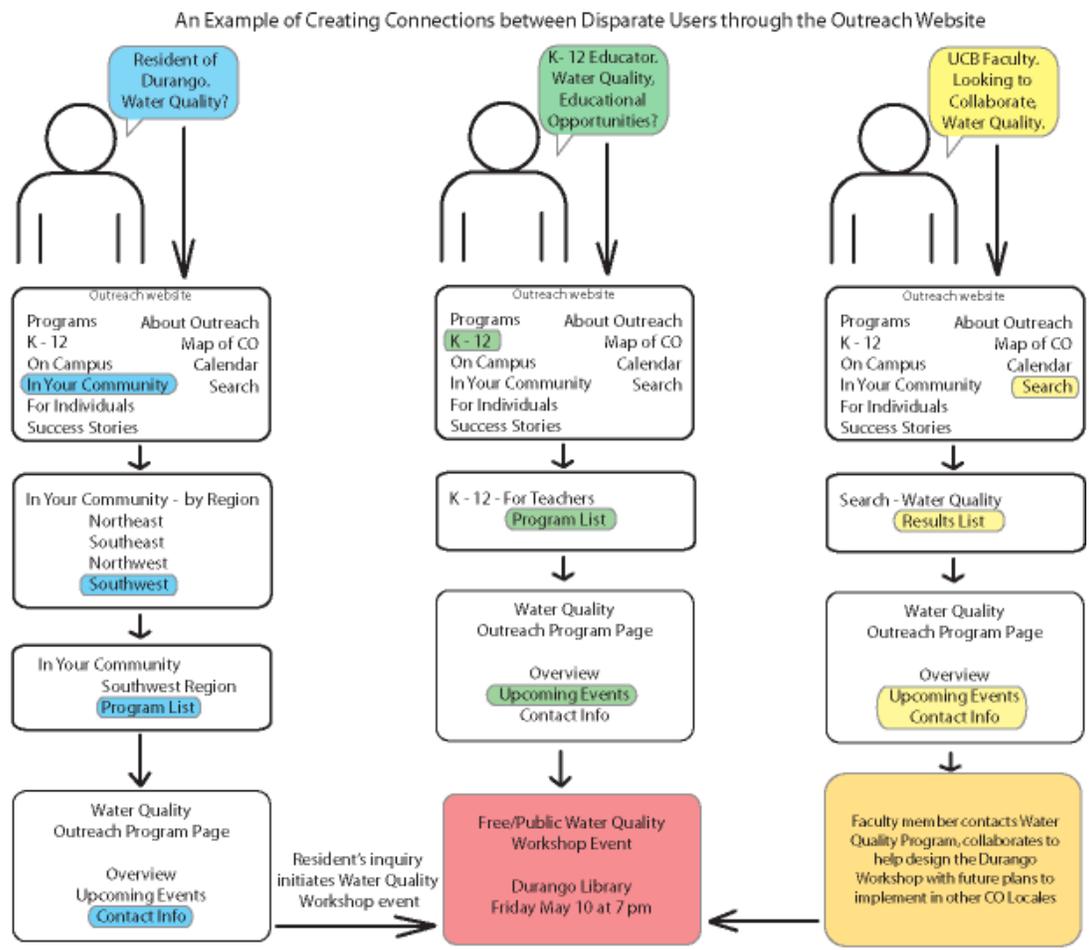
To be a successful means for communication, the UCB outreach web site will have a flexible technological structure, featuring a central database serving dynamic content, that will allow for outreach providers to edit and manage content on the site in real time. This structure will also allow for the site to contain and display information that is relevant to multiple audiences.

Some functions (e.g., adding/editing events for the calendar) will be performed in real time. For descriptive content (e.g., programs descriptions, program information), the providers would submit content, which would be checked for edits, then posted in a timely fashion.

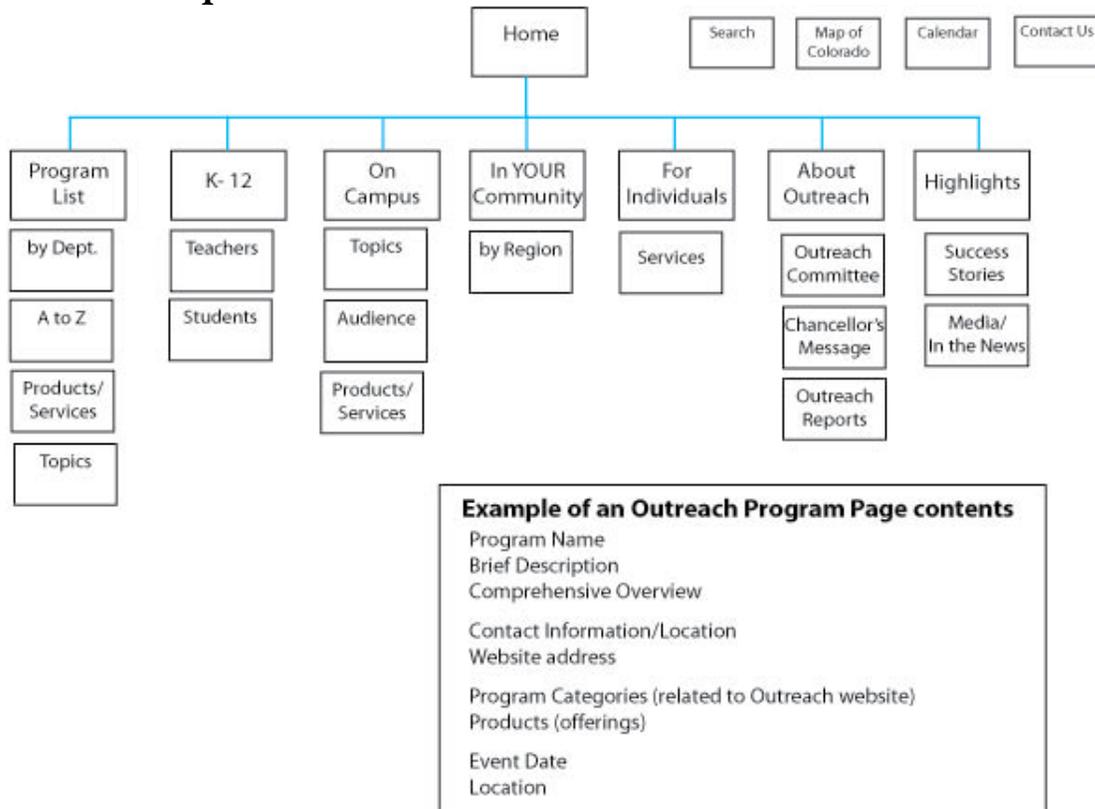
Information would be contained in a central database. Predetermined criteria/menus will allow the audience to make selections to access information based on their interests. These criteria/menus will overlap, allowing multiple paths to the same set of information. Intuitive navigation will help various audiences find the information that is relevant to them quickly.

Each outreach provider will have a complete description, which will include the communities that program is currently serving, contact information, associated web links, and a link to their own website, if available. Information will be listed in the same format throughout the outreach web site, to add to the cohesiveness of the site.

An online calendar will be available to outreach providers to input their events and activities. This calendar will help advertise the various activities, helping audiences identify events within their needs, region, and interests. The audience will be able to search for events based upon a set of criteria available to them. Individual outreach providers will be responsible for updating the calendar. The calendar will also serve as an outreach diary to provide specific data about UCB outreach activity levels in specific parts of Colorado to specific audiences.



Proposed Site Map Features



- Programs: Outreach providers will be listed and accessible to be searched by department, topic, or product/service types, and also arranged alphabetically.
- K-12: Events, products, services, and activities focused on a K-12 audience
- On Campus: Events, products, services, and activities occurring on the UCB campus
- In YOUR Community: Events, services, and activities occurring in locales outside of the UCB campus
- For Individuals or CU 4 You: Events, products, services, and activities targeted to individuals
- About Outreach: The campus outreach mission, including a message from the Chancellor and information about the CU-Boulder Outreach Committee and supported programs
- Highlights: Outreach program success stories, press releases, and media links
- Calendar: Continually updated calendar featuring programs and upcoming events
- Search: Key word search of outreach web database
- Map of Colorado: Pre-determined regions that highlight any outreach being conducted and the audience served (Reference: Appendix A-2)
- Contact us: A central point of contact (phone, email, mailing address) for those with unique situations or requests that may not be listed on the web site. For example, the contact person could work to find the appropriate campus resource.

Areas of Focus for Implementation

- Site development, hardware, design, content, and funding resources identified
- Time line and basic site structure established
- Website workgroup established and consulted on a continuing basis
- Construction of the actual site
- Site development and design
- Populate site with content and site training (creation of on-going training document for future training)
- Focus group testing and refinement prior to public launch
- On-going web site maintenance by soliciting outreach providers on a continual basis for updates
- On-going assessment, adjustments, and refinement based on outreach provider feedback, audience needs, and developer evaluations
- Regular promotion of the outreach web site to both internal and external audiences

Staffing Recommendations

To ensure that the outreach web content remains dynamic and current, with relevant and meaningful information, the OCI strongly recommends that at least one staff member be dedicated to the content maintenance of the site. This would require an individual who is knowledgeable about UCB's outreach providers, campus events, activities, products, and services. This individual should be able to update the web site content as needed, assist with public relations, and make recommendations on future updates/changes.

Appendix A-1
Peer Institute Outreach Web Site Research Results

Institution	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects	Comments
Pennsylvania State University http://www.outreach.psu.edu/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to various pages • Has a consistent template 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal use of color 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stark • Uninviting • Vast
University of Illinois – Urbana http://www.oc.uiuc.edu/engagement/index.html	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left hand menu is the same on every page • Individual outreach programs’ websites open in new window for easy navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No drop-down menus • No contact information for programs 	
University of Nebraska – Lincoln Http://extended.unl.edu/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear audience delineation • Right hand navigation bar is the same on every page 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy site to navigate • Message from the Chancellor is important feature
American Museum of Natural History www.amnh.org/education/?src=h_	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear audience delineation • Up to date event listing • Effective use of mixed media that highlights upcoming offerings 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not too busy, filled with information that is easy to access and pleasing to the eye
University of Virginia http://www.virginia.edu/publicservice/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective search feature • Evidence of all outreach efforts across the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pages provided as a list that is not searchable by audience, topic (i.e., teachers, science) 	
University of Notre Dame http://communityrelations.nd.edu/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upcoming events list • Compelling vision statement 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VERY easy site to navigate
University of Washington http://www.outreach.washinton.edu/uweo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-organized navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many layers to get to specific information the user is seeking (i.e. contact info for program) 	
University of Wisconsin – Madison http://www.wisc.edu/outreach/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good idea to have a speakers’ bureau/podcasts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No search function • No easy way to return to outreach page after going to a program 	

Institution	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects	Comments
University of Kansas http://www.ku.edu/outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page gives a good overview of programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizations in lists that are not searchable by programming, audience, or topic Pages did not have a consistent look 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looks staid and boring Outreach mission unclear
University of Rhode Island http://www.uri.edu/outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition/mission of outreach program clearly defined on page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No search function Not navigable by subject /interests Not user friendly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Outreach programs for A-Z” are all listed on one page
University of Arizona http://www.arizona.edu/community/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent news, upcoming events very visible on page Good navigation by audience type and need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific areas in large list separated by audience and category 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> it’s easier to find information than other list-structured websites reviewed.
Michigan State University http://outreach.msu.edu/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Services” and “Awards” links are very nice features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of information on the home page is overwhelming No search feature available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Engaged Scholar" magazine is a nice way to highlight and archive outreach programs
Natural History Museum of Los Angeles http://www.nhm.org/education/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent graphics from page to page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cramped information/busy/distraction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not seem like a useable format for a large university
Tufts University http://www.tufts.edu/home/community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Featured News/events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Layout in long columns Too much text on one page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represents a university with a smaller outreach program than CU’s
City Slicker Farm http://www.cityslickerfarms.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graphically interesting and inviting Mission statement on page is effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navigation is not intuitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good structure but will be too simple for CU

Appendix A-2

Map of Colorado

Pre-determined regions that highlight any outreach being conducted and the audience served.

