Criterion 5. Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

The institution’s resources, structures and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

5.A. The institution’s resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution’s resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution’s organization, resources and opportunities.
4. The institution’s staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

5.A.1. CU’s educational programs owe their high quality to a team of faculty and staff whose contributions make it possible to support fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure at the level appropriate to a world-class university.

Fiscal resources and the Financial Futures strategic initiative

Support for CU Boulder’s educational and research mission comes from diverse sources, including tuition and fees, state appropriations, research contracts and grants, private fundraising, and auxiliary operations. Diversification of funding, focused enrollment growth and development of the research enterprise have enabled the campus to increase its overall budget by 76% in less than a decade, from $922 million in fiscal year (FY) 2008–09 to $1.69 billion in FY 2017–18. The diversification and growth of revenue sources are demonstrated by increased revenue during this same time span from domestic and international non-resident student enrollment (92% increase), research funding (32% increase), and private giving (165% increase). State funding also increased by 14% from FY 2008–09 to FY 2017–18.
In fall 2018, the university launched the Financial Futures strategic initiative (see 1.A.3.). Through a universitywide diagnostic analysis, collaborative solution design and rigorous implementation, Financial Futures is ensuring that CU Boulder’s resources are in optimal alignment with its public teaching and research mission and is discovering and uncovering ways to support Academic Futures and other key strategic initiatives. The diagnostic phase of Financial Futures began in August 2018 with information requests and targeted interviews. The solution design phase has engaged faculty, staff and students in developing projects focused on alignment of resources to mission. Over 400 ideas have been generated from the community engagement process, and over 100 projects have been approved for implementation so far. As Financial Futures continues, additional ideas will be developed into projects reviewed for potential implementation.

**Advancement**

**CU Boulder Advancement** works with the University of Colorado (CU) Foundation, a separate 501c3 organization that manages and invests the assets given by private donors and grantors and provides a budget to support each campus’s advancement activities, and with Central CU Advancement, which provides support for all four University of Colorado campuses. The **CU Foundation’s Annual Report to Investors** reviews fundraising activity, investment performance and the financial condition of the foundation. The entire fundraising operation of the University of Colorado was restructured in 2013, moving some 200 advancement professionals to report to the individual campuses rather than to the CU Foundation. This restructuring, which corresponds with one of the recommendations resulting from CU Boulder’s 2010 comprehensive evaluation by the Higher Learning Commission, has not only led to more efficiency and accountability but also fostered significant growth in philanthropic giving at CU Boulder. Total gift, charitable grant and pledge results for CU Boulder have grown from $80.5 million in FY 2008–09 to $147.8 million in FY 2017–18. (For comparison purposes, see the 2008–09 CU Foundation Annual Report and the 2017–18 CU Foundation Annual Report.) Most of this growth has been experienced in the three most recent fiscal years, with results steadily improving from approximately $110 million in FY 2014–15.

**Human resources**

CU Boulder has seen its faculty and staff numbers rise significantly since 2010. The headcount of nonstudent employees (fall census numbers) rose from 7,260 in 2010 to 9,615 in 2018 (32%). Instructional faculty increased from 2,125 to 2,528 (19%) in this period, and research faculty increased from 1,773 to 2,211 (25%). Total staff headcount rose from 3,255 to 4,689 in this period (44%), and university officers increased from 25 to 36 (44%).

Hiring and retaining excellent faculty and staff hinge upon offering competitive salaries to new hires and compensating continuing employees fairly. The Office of Data Analytics provides faculty salary data to colleges/schools and to Academic Affairs to help identify equity problems and to aid in appropriate salary-setting for new hires and promotions. While salaries for assistant professors are, on average, higher than those in the comparison group of AAU public universities and salaries for associate professors are on par, salaries for full professors are significantly lower than the comparison group. The university recently devoted a separate raise pool toward faculty salary compression and is considering further solutions. For staff employees, Human Resources (HR) sets a competitive market salary range for each position based on the duties and requirements of the job at the time each employee is hired or promoted. Equity concerns are brought forward to HR for review, analysis and appropriate resolution.
In accordance with Board of Regents Policies 11B, “Faculty Salary,” and 11C, “University Staff Salary,” all compensation increases for faculty and university staff are based on merit. Compensation pools for these groups are recommended by each University of Colorado campus and approved by the regents. Compensation pools for state classified employees may include a cost of living adjustment and are generally determined by the Colorado Department of Personnel and Administration with approval from the Colorado General Assembly and the governor. In an annual merit review process, campus units determine faculty and staff performance ratings; recommend merit-based performance increases; and identify equity, retention and market issues for resolution. Academic Affairs (for faculty) or HR (for staff) reviews and approves merit and equity adjustment requests.

**Physical infrastructure**

CU Boulder comprises 12,494,332 gross square feet in 372 buildings and 1,170 acres of land on five primary properties within or near the city of Boulder: Main Campus, Williams Village, East Campus, CU Boulder South Campus and the Mountain Research Station. The vice chancellor for infrastructure and sustainability oversees the divisions of Environmental Health and Safety; Facilities Operations and Services; Planning, Design and Construction; Real Estate Services; and Sustainability. Each division houses professional staff and building professionals with a variety of appropriate academic degrees and, when applicable, licenses to practice in the state of Colorado.

The [2011 CU Boulder Campus Master Plan](#), which was aligned with the 2007 CU Boulder educational master plan as approved by the Board of Regents, outlined physical infrastructure needs based on projected enrollment growth of 2,700 additional students, a projected annual growth in sponsored research of 3–5% and a projected 650 additional employees. The 2011 plan envisioned that Main Campus development would be limited in favor of the East and Williams Village campuses and also planned for new science facilities, repurposed vacated spaces, expanded utilities infrastructure and land banking of CU Boulder South. Subsequent facilities projects have in large part carried out the 2011 vision, although challenges remain in terms of state funding, with several high-priority building renovations delayed in the queue for years.

CU Boulder began in 2019 to develop the 2021 CU Boulder Campus Master Plan. The [Strategic Facilities Visioning](#) strategic initiative now underway is laying the foundations for that plan by aligning facilities development with the goals and objectives of the [Academic Futures](#), [Foundations of Excellence](#) and [IDEA Plan](#) strategic initiatives. In turn, the execution of the new master plan will be supported by the results of the [Financial Futures](#) strategic initiative (discussed above).

The capital construction process at CU Boulder is based on state and University of Colorado System policy, including capital policies of the University of Colorado [Office of Policy and Efficiency](#), the [Office of the State Architect](#) and the [Colorado Commission on Higher Education](#). Through this process, CU Boulder has completed many of the [projects listed in the 2011 master plan](#), including both construction and remodeling of significant instructional, research, athletics and student residence space as well as a major utilities system project. Projects are initiated when campus constituents work with the [Office of Facilities Management Campus Planning](#) to develop preliminary information, which is vetted through the Capital Governance Subcommittee, made up of a broad group of faculty and staff, before being presented to the Capital Governance Committee, comprising the provost and the EVC-COO. If the idea is approved, the proposal is further developed and presented to the same groups, and additional campus constituents are invited into the consensus-building process. If the project is approved and funding
identified, it proceeds to review and approval by the University of Colorado Design Review Board and the Board of Regents, and then to extensive design development and construction planning. The approved plan and budget request are then forwarded to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and the Office of the State Architect for consideration by the Colorado General Assembly for final state funding or cash spending authority.

CU Boulder is a leader in climate and energy research and education, interdisciplinary environmental studies and sustainability practices. CU Boulder had the first student-led campus recycling program in the country, the first student-led Environmental Center, and the first NCAA Division-I zero-waste athletics program, and was the first institution to achieve Gold status in the Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System (STARS) of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. Supporting efforts to achieve resource efficiency and further campus sustainability, the vice chancellor for infrastructure and sustainability recently formed a Space Optimization Office that has developed new space allocation guidelines. Efficiency of classroom use is codified in the campus Space Utilization Policy and managed through the Office of the Registrar’s Academic Scheduling unit.

**Technological infrastructure**

CU Boulder’s Office of Information Technology (OIT) partners with academic, research and administrative units to provide the university with core IT services and customer-focused IT support. Its security system analysts also provide guidance in implementing CU Boulder’s program to provide information security for the university’s communication and information systems. OIT is advised by a number of campuswide governance boards and develops regularly updated strategic plans.

OIT supports CU’s educational programs through a variety of services for all modes of teaching, whether face-to-face or online. OIT’s support of online courses, which are offered through Continuing Education (see 3.A.5.), includes integrating the campus learning management system, Canvas, with Kaltura rich media streaming and tailoring Coursera technology as a platform for CU Boulder’s new MOOC-based master’s degree in electrical engineering (see 3.B.4.). Information technology for educational programs is also provided and supported through the Office of the Registrar, which implements the student records system, CU-SIS, and integrates CU-SIS with tools to help students plan their education, including a robust degree audit system (u.Achieve), a degree planner tool (u.Achieve Planner) and a newly developed advanced class search and registration tool.

Among OIT’s current major multi-year initiatives, two that affect educational offerings and student support are (1) the Unified Student Experience project to create a new student portal; and (2) the creation of a platform to support online programs that will (a) allow students to learn about online programs, apply and enroll, add/drop courses, request transcripts, and complete payment transactions in a single online space, and (b) encompass student academic support such as degree audit and advising assistance. OIT also remains committed to physical classroom and learning space technology, including such innovations as Kubi remote presence technology to offer attendance and engagement options for students unable to physically attend classes.

5.A.2. Through its resource review and budget allocation processes, the Office of Budget and Fiscal Planning (BFP) coordinates CU Boulder’s budget cycle and model, stewards its financial assets and liabilities, and facilitates the allocation of resources necessary for CU Boulder to fulfill its mission and excel as a major educational and research university.
All operating revenues are earned and collected at the campus level, meaning that while CU Boulder is a part of the University of Colorado System, its revenue is not disbursed to that superordinate entity. The University of Colorado System office, comprising the Office of the President and numerous shared services such as treasury and procurement, allocates its costs of operation to CU Boulder and the other campuses via a cost allocation formula. Apart from this cost-sharing requirement, resource allocation at CU Boulder is independent and unencumbered.

CU Boulder’s resource allocation paradigm is best described as a modified incremental budget model. The General Fund comprises tuition revenue, indirect cost recoveries from sponsored activity, and state appropriations. When these revenue streams increase, they are allocated in three stages. The first stage is to fund enterprise-wide mandatory commitments such as merit-based salary increases, financial aid, insurance, utilities, etc. The second stage is to fund any prevailing formula-based allocations, including the undergraduate enrollment growth allocations, tuition revenue sharing and research activity-based allocations. The undergraduate enrollment growth and tuition revenue sharing allocations allow schools and colleges to receive additional funding for enrollment increases, thereby aligning financial incentives with activities, reducing financial barriers to interdisciplinary instruction, and allowing all schools and colleges an opportunity for additional funding. The third stage for allocating new revenues is to fund new mission-enhancing initiatives focused on student success, research development, infrastructure sustainability, etc. BFP annually creates a variance report on the total yearly budget as a check of how well CU Boulder is adhering to revenue and spending plans and as an alert to potential issues.

CU Boulder engages in an annual series of strategic budget meetings with all academic and administrative senior leadership and faculty governance, which assist the provost and EVC-COO in forming a comprehensive picture of the overall financial status and needs of the university. The dean or director of a unit presents to the provost and EVC-COO information on the unit’s finances and its challenges, successes and strategic visions for the future, including funding requests.

5.A.3. Following its strategic imperatives, CU Boulder incorporates its mission into all strategic planning activities to align that mission with practical realities. These values and strategic imperatives are also built into the strategic plans of operational units such as, for example, the Division of Student Affairs. CU Boulder’s five strategic initiatives, including Academic Futures, the Inclusion, Diversity and Excellence in Academics (IDEA) Plan, and Strategic Facilities Visioning, are explicitly guided by the university’s strategic vision to be a leader in addressing the humanitarian, social and technological challenges of the 21st century. As described in 5.A.1., the Financial Futures project is enabling CU Boulder to make investments aligned with its vision and strategic initiatives.

CU Boulder’s statutory mission as the state’s flagship university for research and graduate education is borne out specifically in its achievements in research and creative work. One of the most publicly prominent faces of that work is CU Boulder’s connection with federal laboratories, entrepreneurs and industry. In fact, three of CU Boulder’s 12 research institutes are joint institutes with federal agencies: JILA with the National Institute for Standards and Technology; the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Studies (CIRES) with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Renewable and Sustainable Energy Institute (RASEI) with the National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL). According to a 2017 study, federal laboratories and institutes injected $2.6 billion annually into the Colorado economy, including $1.1 billion in Boulder County alone. The Colorado Energy Research Collaboratory, comprising NREL, CU Boulder, Colorado State University and the Colorado School of Mines, netted the Colorado economy $194 million, per a 2016 economic impact report. CU Boulder’s
mission to further the public good is also reflected in its contributing nearly $2.6 billion annually in local economic activity and nearly $3.9 billion to the state and in the economic contribution of startup companies that were founded on CU Boulder technology (see 1.D.1.).

5.A.4. The high caliber of CU Boulder’s faculty and staff is aided by processes that extend from recruitment and hiring through ongoing evaluation and professional development.

Recruitment, hiring and onboarding

The CU Boulder recruiting model starts with a rigorous review of position descriptions, proceeds through analysis to ensure that compensation is appropriate and competitive for the recruitment area, and then posts positions through a variety of recruiting websites, including sites that focus on areas of diversity and inclusion. A professional recruiter from HR is assigned to work with each hiring manager and search committee throughout the recruiting and selection process and provides guidance related to increasing diversity and mitigating bias in hiring. In addition to these practices, faculty hiring and faculty qualifications are governed by policies and procedures specific to the schools and colleges and overseen by the Office of Faculty Affairs (see 3.C.2.). Hiring for research faculty positions is jointly managed by HR and the Research and Innovation Office (RIO), whereas hiring for postdoctoral fellowship holders and other nonfaculty research personnel is managed directly by HR. Onboarding of new employees is conducted by the hiring manager, department HR liaison and HR. New tenure-track, tenured and instructor-track faculty are also required to attend a daylong orientation that covers onboarding issues. HR creates an affirmative action plan annually that includes statistical analyses and assessment of affirmative action efforts and identifies employment goals and potential barriers to equal employment opportunities. The report is used to examine areas where women and ethnic minorities are underrepresented by comparing our workforce against estimates in relevant labor markets and internal advancement opportunities.

Performance evaluation

Evaluations for classified staff and university staff occur annually based on job-specific criteria as well as core competencies, updated in 2019 to be explicitly aligned with university values and the Colorado Creed, including integrity/responsibility/ethics, inclusive excellence, innovation and collaboration (see 1.A.1.). In 2019, a new tool, Cornerstone, was introduced to streamline and regularize performance management processes, facilitate conversations between employees and managers about performance and employee development and better align work in support of unit goals and the chancellor’s strategic imperatives (see 1.A.1.). Evaluations for faculty also occur annually and are based on each individual faculty member’s workload, which is distributed across teaching, research and service components (see 3.C.4.).

Professional development

Open enrollment employee courses offered by HR address professional development areas such as skills for difficult conversations, maximizing professional productivity, and diversity and inclusion. Several courses focus on leadership, management and supervision. Organizational training includes training in communication, conflict resolution and building teams, as well as assessments to improve team process, dynamics or skills. Training for targeted employee populations includes, for example, the CU Employee
English Program, Career Development for Frontline Service Employees and the Faculty Diversity Search and Hiring online course.

CU Boulder provides opportunities for employees to complete academic degrees including the Leadership and Management Graduate Certificate and discounted tuition or scholarships for the Master of Science in Organizational Leadership and the Leeds School of Business Evening MBA. The Employee Tuition Benefit provides a tuition waiver for up to nine credit hours per year.

Offices across campus provide employee training on topics including skills in dealing with discrimination and harassment such as effective bystander intervention, skills related to accommodations, service animals and disability access, and skills related to diversity, inclusion and equity such as supporting student resiliency, the Intercultural Development Inventory, reducing unconscious bias and LGBTQ+ safe zone training. Programs for personal and career growth and development include a Faculty and Staff Assistance Program (FSAP) providing one-on-one counseling as well as support groups and the Staff Career Development Program. The Ombuds Office offers confidential assistance to employees who wish to explore options to resolve disputes, conflicts and concerns.

Development opportunities specific to faculty include the Leadership Education for Advancement and Promotion program for development at all stages of a faculty member’s career; the Academic Leadership Institute series for faculty planning to enter leadership roles; inclusive pedagogy workshops; and the Faculty Teaching Excellence Program (in the process of being incorporated into the new Center for Teaching and Learning, discussed in 3.D.4.). Academic units are required by university policy (APS 1021) to have mentoring programs for untenured faculty; these programs are assessed in the program review (ARPAC) process (see 3.A.1. and 3.A.2.). Services offered by the Office of Faculty Relations help faculty and academic administrators develop and maintain positive and productive working relationships, and include individual consultation, mediation, assessment of unit dynamics, and investigations of allegations of unprofessional behavior. The Ombuds Office houses three ombudspersons who are professors emeriti and who assist faculty.

5.A.5. CU Boulder uses the full fiscal year approach to plan, review, monitor and allocate budget across the campus. Each unit maintains its base budget each year, and new funding is awarded based on needs identified during the preparation of the new fiscal year budget. In addition, funding is allocated for inflationary needs such as utilities and salary increases and utilities and mission-critical needs such as financial aid.

Campus administration works directly with campus units to understand and evaluate existing budget levels and communicate thoughtfully about new funding needs. Additionally, both administration and campus units use a variety of reports to monitor and evaluate financial health. Campus administration provides a set of reporting tools monthly enabling early detection of variances, deficits or any other financial details that may need attention.

All new employees with fiscal roles must complete a financial training class presented by the Campus Controller’s Office and the Office of Budget and Fiscal Planning. This class helps new employees understand the mechanics of the financial system, including how to perform budget journal entries. The entries are always approved by a different user to ensure separation of duties. Expenses are further monitored by internal and external audit as described in 2.A.
5.B. The institution’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution’s financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—in the institution’s governance.

3. Administration, faculty, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

5.B.1. As referenced in 2.C., Colorado’s Constitution establishes the University of Colorado’s governance, the Board of Regents. Its nine members, one elected from each of Colorado’s seven congressional districts and two from the state at large, serve staggered six-year terms. The regents meet regularly in public session, typically on one of the University of Colorado System’s four campuses. Board meeting announcements, agendas and minutes are posted on its public website.

As described in 2.A., the Board of Regents delegates day-to-day operations to the president of the University of Colorado System and to the campus chancellors, each of whom reports directly to the president. Campus policy must accord with University of Colorado System policy, which in turn must accord with the Laws and policies of the regents. Regular academic, financial and other reporting from each campus to the University of Colorado System (as described in 2.A.) facilitates the regents’ oversight.

5.B.2. The University of Colorado’s system-wide faculty governance body, the Faculty Council, comprises representatives from each of the four campuses. Its primary function is to ensure that faculty governance plays a significant role in the decision-making processes of the university as a whole. Within the limits of its jurisdiction, the Faculty Council assumes the right to initiate advice and to make recommendations to administrative officials regarding educational policy and university operations. The present structure of the Faculty Council gives equal authority to each of the four campuses, despite their considerable differences in size.

CU Boulder communicates with the University of Colorado’s president and Board of Regents through the chancellor and the chancellor’s two chief officers, the provost and the executive vice chancellor and chief operating officer (EVC-COO). Together, the chancellor, provost and EVC-COO form the Chancellor’s Cabinet, the campus’s top decision-making body. The provost and the EVC-COO regularly meet with their own respective cabinets. To discuss initiatives and policies with a wide range of campus leadership, the Chancellor’s Cabinet meets approximately biweekly with the University Executive Leadership Team, consisting of the provost’s and the EVC-COO’s direct reports, and monthly with the Shared Governance Group, consisting of the leaders of the CU Boulder faculty, staff, and undergraduate and graduate student governance groups (described below). The chancellor is also advised by four standing committees on diversity and inclusion matters, each of which has faculty, staff and student membership: the Chancellor’s Accessibility Committee, the Chancellor’s Committee for Women, the Chancellor’s Committee on Race and Ethnicity and the Chancellor’s Standing Committee on Gender and Sexuality.
Other ways in which leadership engages internal constituencies include the chancellor’s annual **State of the Campus Address**, monthly meetings held by the EVC-COO for all employees within her organization and regular town halls held by the provost in each school and college. The campus maintains a **faculty information web site** that includes updates on administrative leadership’s meetings and initiatives, including **minutes of the provost’s meetings with chairs and directors and with the Council of Deans** and **updates on ongoing and ad hoc campus committees**. Campus communications to faculty, staff and students are coordinated by **Strategic Relations and Communications**, whose Strategic Messaging Alliance (SMA) working group has recently developed an **integrated strategy to coordinate communications across the campus**. The campus news digest, **CU Boulder Today**, is distributed to the campus community in several editions. The student edition, focusing on items of interest to students, and the faculty-staff edition, which contains more research, training and transactional information, come out daily during the academic year and on a limited schedule during breaks and holidays.

The **Boulder Faculty Assembly (BFA)** is the representative body of all CU Boulder faculty. The BFA informs and engages the faculty in issues of importance, and its guiding principle is that the faculty and the administration shall collaborate in decisions that affect the welfare of the University of Colorado and of CU Boulder in particular. The BFA has primary responsibility for recommending academic policy and advises the administration on other policies. Similar faculty organizations on the Boulder campus serve the College of Arts and Sciences (**Arts and Sciences Council**) and the College of Media, Communication and Information (**CMCI Faculty Council**). These two assemblies meet regularly with their deans to provide counsel and advice, and they are responsible for curricular affairs in their colleges. The leadership of the BFA, Arts and Sciences Council and CMCI Faculty Council serve as ex officio members of one another’s executive committees. The **Academic Futures strategic initiative** recommended that the campus strengthen faculty governance by making sure that each school and college has a representative governance group body; the provost accepted that recommendation and in April 2019 directed that the schools and colleges lacking an appropriate faculty governance structure begin to design one.

Faculty governance is also integral to decision-making at the provost’s level of the administration. The provost is advised by faculty committees on budget (**Academic Affairs Budget Advising Committee**), program review (**Academic Review and Planning Advising Committee**), reappointment, tenure and promotion of faculty (**Vice Chancellor’s Advisory Committee**), faculty salary equity (**Salary Equity Appeals Committee**), and faculty grievance (**Provost’s Advisory Committee**). The vice provost for undergraduate education and the dean of the Graduate School are advised on policy and curriculum by their respective faculty advisory committees. The vice chancellor for research and innovation is advised by the faculty **Research and Innovation Office Advisory Board**.

The elected **CU Student Government (CUSG)** represents students across CU Boulder, with a focus on undergraduate students. Graduate and professional students at CU Boulder have their own elected governance body, the **United Government of Graduate Students (UGGS)**. The interests of CU Boulder staff employees are addressed by representatives elected to **Staff Council**. Together, the leadership of these three groups make up the chancellor’s Shared Governance Group, mentioned above, which is the conduit through which all shared governance on campus interacts with the top leadership of the campus: the chancellor, provost and EVC-COO.

Student governance groups within several of the schools and colleges are advisory to the relevant dean: the **University of Colorado Engineering Council (UCEC)** for undergraduate engineering students, the
Leeds Student Government (LSG) for undergraduate students in the Leeds School of Business, the CMCI Student Government for students in the College of Media, Communication and Information and the Student Bar Association for students in the law school.

5.B.3. Article 5.E of the Laws of the Regents assigns the faculty the principal role “for originating academic policy and standards, including initial authorization and direction of all courses, curricula, and degrees offered, admissions criteria, regulation of student academic conduct and activities, and determination of candidates for degrees” and “for originating scholastic policy, including scholastic standards for admission, grading, . . . continuation, graduation, and honors.” Article 5.E also specifies that “the deans of the colleges and schools shall have responsibility for enforcement of admissions standards and requirements.” Each school and college at CU Boulder has its own faculty curriculum committee to review and approve new and revised courses and curricula. The CU Boulder Honor Code specifies that faculty have the sole authority to levy grade penalties for academic dishonesty.

Article 4 of the Laws of the Regents and Regent Policy 4 specify that new degree programs and academic units, as well as degree program and academic unit discontinuance, must be approved by the Board of Regents. At CU Boulder, proposals for new degree programs and academic units originate with the faculty and are developed and reviewed according to campus review procedure guidelines (see 3.A.1. and 3.A.2.). Requests for degree program discontinuance or academic unit discontinuance may originate from a number of sources (a dean, the campus program review committee [ARPAC], the provost, the chancellor, the University of Colorado president, the Board of Regents or a department or a chair with concurrence of the dean) and are reviewed according to the CU Boulder Academic Program Discontinuance policy.

Campus policy is developed according to the Policy Proposal and Adoption policy, which specifies review by faculty, staff and student governance bodies and by the Council of Deans and the University Executive Leadership Team. The Division of Academic Affairs follows a similar review process for academic policy. Cross-campus advisory committees for the Office of Information Technology (as described in 5.A.1.), the Research and Innovation Office (as described in 5.B.2.), and Strategic Relations and Communications review and advise on policy and processes for those offices.

5.C. The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution’s sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts and globalization.

5.C.1. Planning and resource management at CU Boulder are guided by the university’s statutory mission as the state’s graduate and research institution, as well as by the chancellor’s strategic
imperatives: shape tomorrow’s leaders, be the top university for innovation and positively impact humanity (1.A.1.). This mission and these imperatives explicitly guide the ambitious campuswide strategic planning exercise in which CU Boulder is engaged. CU Boulder’s five strategic initiatives, described in 1.A.3., represent CU Boulder’s commitment not only to engage in planning but also to align current and future resources to those plans. The Financial Futures strategic initiative is explicitly tasked with locating savings and revenue opportunities that conform to the campus mission while also freeing up financial resources for that mission (see 5.A.1. and 5.A.2.). It is through Financial Futures’ planning efforts that CU Boulder is able to move forward on the recommendations of the Academic Futures strategic initiative, which is guiding academic priorities; the Foundations of Excellence strategic initiative, which is guiding priorities specifically in first-year education; the IDEA Plan strategic initiative, which will guide plans for faculty, student, and staff climate and inclusiveness; and the Strategic Facilities Visioning initiative, which will guide infrastructure projects (see 5.A.1.).

In addition to the strategic initiatives, CU Boulder’s longstanding planning processes ensure continuous attention to how resources should be aligned with the university’s mission and priorities. The academic program review process (3.A.1. and 3.A.2.) ensures that academic units examine all facets of their programs and processes, and plan for the future in concert with units similar to themselves. The annual budget allocation process (5.A.2.) addresses the academic and nonacademic priorities developed through program review, as well as priorities developed on the campus and the college/school levels.

5.C.2. Through its program review process, CU Boulder links together assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting within the context of a regular evaluation of every academic program as well as every unit within Academic Affairs, including the Division of Student Affairs. We have emphasized the program review process throughout this assurance review because of its robustness: the provost has empowered program review with making recommendations that lead to change. These changes include linking the allocation of resources to effective planning.

As discussed in 3.A.1. and 3.A.2., academic programs and the divisions within Academic Affairs are reviewed on a seven-year rolling basis by the provost’s Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee (ARPAC), with annual follow-ups to review units’ accomplishments and ongoing needs. ARPAC also conducts a comprehensive review of each college and school (or, for the College of Arts and Sciences, divisions within the college: life and earth sciences; physical sciences and mathematics; social sciences; and arts and humanities). The review process includes criteria for every unit’s assessment of student learning (see 4.B.2.), its budget allocation process, and its resource needs in conjunction with its strategic plan and its support of CU Boulder’s academic mission. The Division of Student Affairs, which houses many co-curricular programs, is also evaluated by ARPAC, thus bringing the assessment of student success for co-curricular programs within the purview of program review. ARPAC’s recommendations to units, deans and the provost frequently carry resource implications, and the fact that cognate units are reviewed together allows for strategic prioritization of resources to groups of units that share the same needs.

The ARPAC committee, in addition to undertaking regular program review, also supervises one other process that links planning, resources and evaluation of an academic unit’s success. In 2013, the Board of Regents directed each of the campuses in the University of Colorado System to develop prioritization constructs that could provide insights into how individual academic and administrative units contribute to the core mission of the university and to the missions of the individual campuses. CU Boulder developed a two-part Academic Prioritization process that involves (1) an algorithmic quantification of
each unit’s costs and contributions to both research/creative work and student success, and (2) a qualitative evaluation by ARPAC, based on the program review process, of each unit’s merit and efforts to improve. CU Boulder has found Academic Prioritization helpful to its academic planning and regularly updates this information to assist in campus decision-making and inform the Board of Regents.

In addition to these regular processes of program review, the Financial Futures strategic initiative includes a workstream specifically devoted to student retention whose projects will also link the budget and planning process to student success and the assessment of learning.

5.C.3. CU Boulder’s five strategic initiatives for campus planning encompass faculty, student, staff and, when applicable, external constituent groups. Town halls, listening sessions and invitations to submit white papers and feedback have garnered the participation of over a thousand participants across these initiatives so far, with more to come (see 1.A.3.). Other campus efforts discussed in this assurance review, such as, for example, the Unified Student Experience project to create a new online/mobile student portal, involve similar constituent involvement and participation. The chancellor is advised by an external advisory council, as are the deans of all the schools and colleges and many of the chairs and directors of departments, programs, centers and institutes—such as the Department of Geological Sciences, the College of Music and the Center of the American West, to name just three disparate examples. Student boards advise many academic units as well as student support and auxiliary units, such as, for example, Medical Services, the University Memorial Center and the Student Recreation Center.

To ensure campus input on budgeting, the provost is advised by the Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Committee (AABAC), composed of faculty and co-chaired by the deputy chief financial officer and the senior vice provost for academic resource management, and by the Budget and Planning Committee of the Boulder Faculty Assembly (BFA) (see 5.B.2.). The EVC-COO, the leadership of the Office of Budget and Fiscal Planning, and the senior vice provost for academic resource management make regular presentations to the BFA Budget and Planning Committee to learn their thoughts about budgeting decisions and processes.

5.C.4. and 5.C.5. As described in 5.A.1. and 5.A.2., CU Boulder takes enrollment projections and levels of state support (4.8% of the university’s FY 2019–20 operating budget) into account in its multi-year and longer-term budget planning. When CU Boulder and the University of Colorado System as a whole recommend tuition rates to the Board of Regents, they similarly take into account regional and national economic conditions, student demographics, fluctuations in state support and Board of Regents directives. The campus plans for contingencies based on likely final decisions on tuition from the Colorado General Assembly. CU Boulder’s chancellor, provost and EVC-COO maintain active relations with state government, including the General Assembly, the governor and the Colorado Department of Higher Education. To cushion the university against future economic downturns and possible declines in tuition revenue, the Board of Regents in 2018 directed each campus to build an Emergency Tuition Stabilization reserve equaling 4% of annual operating budget. CU Boulder’s current reserve funds stand at 3.4% of annual operating budget, and the university has planned its FY 2019–20 budget to build more reserves toward the 4% target.

The Office of Enrollment Management predicts long-term enrollment trends based on Colorado, national and international student demographics, and social and geopolitical trends. Anticipating that first-year student enrollments will level off or decline whereas transfer student enrollments will
continue to increase, the provost in 2018 appointed an Advisory Committee on Transfer Student Success to consider how CU Boulder might better recruit, retain, and support transfer students. Many of the committee’s recommendations are now being funded and implemented through the Financial Futures strategic initiative. CU Boulder is also planning for a future in which students seek alternative modes of earning a high-quality degree from a top research institution. The Online Strategy Working Group, a collaborative project of Academic Futures and Financial Futures, is creating a comprehensive strategy for online education that is specific to CU Boulder’s mission (see 3.A.3.) and derives from the provost’s philosophy statement on online education. The Office for Academic Innovation provides centralized support for faculty and staff who seek to develop large-scale programs or partnerships driven by education innovation, including large-scale (MOOC) courses (see 3.B.4.). The role of the Office of Information Technology in anticipating and implementing new technological contributions to research, creative work and education is described in 5.A.1.

5.D. The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

5.D.1. and 5.D.2. The University of Colorado Board of Regents assesses the performance of CU Boulder in the context of the University of Colorado System. The Board of Regents has set metrics for each of the University of Colorado campuses in the areas of affordability and access, student success, financial sustainability, and reputation and impact, and receives reports annually on all four campuses’ achievements and assessment in these areas.

As the flagship of the University of Colorado with a unique statutory mission as a graduate research institution, CU Boulder has developed three strategic imperatives to further that mission (see 1.A.1.). In support of those strategic imperatives, and as detailed below, CU Boulder employs a robust array of performance measures by which it documents its effectiveness in teaching, research and creative work and public impact and that it uses in regular evaluation processes designed to plan, benchmark and assess improvement.

Strategic Imperative 1 has to do with student success: Recruit, retain and graduate students who are committed to the common good, to engaging diverse perspectives, to the productive use of critical thinking and creative problem-solving, and to the application of intellectual curiosity, rigor and collaboration to complex issues and opportunities. Understanding and improving student success has led CU Boulder to engage in a number of efforts:

- Improving student retention and degree completion is a major focus and goal of three of CU Boulder’s five strategic initiatives—Academic Futures, Foundations of Excellence (for first-year students) and the IDEA Plan (see 1.A.3., 1.C., 3.B., 3.D. and 4.C.4.). The Provost’s Advisory Committee on Transfer Student Success also created a planning framework for student success. The Financial Futures initiative has funded the implementation of a number of projects having to do with the Transfer Committee’s recommendations, with more in the queue for review. Another set of projects having to do with student retention overall is about to be reviewed for feasibility and implementation. As detailed in 4.C.1., 4.C.2. and 4.C.3., measures of
undergraduate student completion and retention rates are used to monitor and assess CU Boulder’s efforts to improve student success. These measures include detailed analysis of student demographics including gender, ethnicity, residency status, residence hall, etc. as well as the results of student surveys.

- As detailed in 4.B.1., 4.B.2. and 4.B.3., measures of student success are used to assess and improve the effectiveness of both academic programs and co-curricular programs.
- Student success is the focus and goal of targeted projects such as a pilot program using predictive analytics (see 3.D.2.) and the soon-to-be-launched “BuffPortal” created by the Unified Student Experience project, designed to give students seamless access to support services (see 3.D.1. and 4.C.3.).
- As discussed in 3.A.1., 3.A.2. and 5.C.2., the ARPAC program review process is the primary method by which academic programs are assessed and improved. Both undergraduate and graduate student success is one metric of program review (4.B.1.), and unit-level student satisfaction surveys are conducted as a part of this program review process.
- The Academic Prioritization process serves to reinforce program review in the area of student success by focusing on undergraduate student satisfaction as part of its metrics (see 5.C.2.).
- As part of a new Strategic Planning process to be launched in AY 2019–20, the Graduate School plans to develop new campuswide metrics of graduate student success.

Strategic Imperative 2 has to do with innovation through collaboration: *Serve as the nexus for innovation by facilitating collaboration and the sharing of diverse perspectives between universities, industry, laboratories and communities.* CU Boulder tracks its achievements and implements improvement in this area in several ways:

- The Research and Innovation Office facilitates research partnerships with industry, laboratories and communities, tracks results, and identifies opportunities for increased engagement (see 1.D.1.). It also jumpstarts and encourages innovation through such opportunities as the RIO Faculty Fellows leadership program and travel funding for faculty to meet with extramural sponsors.
- Faculty outreach activities are tracked via the Faculty Information System, whose public face is CU Experts, an online resource for identifying faculty expertise and accomplishments. Outreach activities are an assessment measure in the ARPAC program review and improvement process as described above (5.C.2.). See 1.D.3. for more details about outreach.

Strategic Imperative 3 has to do with the production and impact of new knowledge and artistic works: *Broaden and expand research, scholarship and creative work and articulate the positive societal outcomes they advance.* The campus tracks achievements in this area and strives for improvement through a number of means:

- The Faculty Information System and the Office of Contracts and Grants collection of data on sponsored research track faculty achievements and funding in research, scholarship and creative work.
- Faculty members whose responsibilities include research, scholarship and creative work (tenured and tenure-track faculty and research faculty) are assessed for contributions to research, scholarship and creative work in the annual merit review process and in reappointment reviews (for untenured faculty and research faculty), tenure and promotion reviews (for tenure-track or tenured faculty), and post-tenure reviews (for tenured faculty).
Needed faculty improvement in research, scholarship and creative work is addressed at the unit level in case of research faculty, department/unit and college/school levels in the case of tenured faculty who undergo faculty post-tenure review, and also at the provost level in the case of tenured/tenure-track faculty who undergo reappointment, promotion and tenure reviews (see 3.C.3. and 3.C.4.).

- Academic units are assessed for their faculty's achievements and funding in research, scholarship and creative work in the ARPAC and Academic Prioritization review processes as described above (5.C.2.).
- **CU Boulder holds a master license with Academic Analytics**, a private firm providing data on faculty scholarly and research activity to PhD-granting universities in the U.S. and U.K., and uses those data as part of ARPAC program review and the Academic Prioritization process (see 5.C.2.) as well as academic decision-making at the college/school and campus levels.
- Research is a workstream of the Financial Futures initiative, and projects are being developed for analysis and implementation.

### 5. Summary

CU Boulder supports its scholarly, educational and outreach enterprise with sufficient resources that are shepherded through prudent and forward-looking fiscal, infrastructural, human resource and academic planning. The university makes decisions regarding planning and resource allocation through processes that are explicitly aligned with CU Boulder’s mission and strategic imperatives and that involve faculty, staff, students and external constituents in advisory and shared-governance roles. Through its strategic initiatives and its longstanding and effective program review process, CU Boulder has engaged the entire community of faculty, students and staff in planning the university’s future and in making those plans come to pass. Past performance and explicit goals in research and creative-work excellence, student success and employee and student well-being help the university make its planning and resource allocation decisions responsibly. It is also important to make those decisions collaboratively, which requires that information and opinion flow freely between the university’s leadership and the entire CU Boulder community as well as the residents of Colorado. To this end, CU Boulder has worked diligently to improve its communication strategies to match the magnitude and complexity of the university’s enterprise and achievements.