Regents set tuition rates for 2021-22[1]
[2]

The CU Board of Regents on April 8 voted to approve recommendations on tuition, compensation and fees for the 2021-22 fiscal year. The plan calls for, in effect, a 0% tuition rate change for undergraduate students.

The latest round of federal relief funds makes this new approach possible compared to the initial budget proposed to the board in February[3], when administration had recommended a 3% tuition increase for students. As recommended to the board[4] at last week's meeting, held virtually, the 3% tuition increase will be "bought down" by the campuses' one-time use of relief funds for the coming fiscal year for undergraduate students.

Graduate students also will also see relief from the proposal.

Along with tuition being kept effectively flat this coming year, aid available to students will increase significantly due to the infusion of federal relief funds.

As CU President Mark Kennedy noted during last week's meeting[5], the action will keep undergraduate resident tuition flat for the fourth consecutive year. When adjusted for inflation, student out-of-pocket costs are 20% below what they were in 2014.

Highlights of what each campus is doing for student affordability:
University of Colorado Boulder provides a four-year tuition guarantee, which allows undergraduate students and their families to count on the same rate of tuition for four consecutive years. Due to the impacts of COVID-19, CU Boulder has extended the guarantee for one more year for all cohorts of current CU Boulder guarantee students. **University of Colorado Colorado Springs** offers the Chancellor Merit Scholarship, a four-year renewable scholarship at $2,500 per year encouraging on-time graduation. **University of Colorado Denver** has made a $5 million increase in annual institutional financial aid since the 2017-18 fiscal year. **University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus** offers the Charles J. Blackwood Memorial Endowed Scholarship fund, announced in February 2021, which will provide full scholarship funding and matching funds from President Kennedy for at least four medical students from underrepresented backgrounds who are committed to the African American community.
While potential base-building compensation percentage increases for faculty and staff remain in doubt until later in the year, Classified Staff will see a 3% increase beginning July 1 (as called for by the state), and faculty and exempt staff will receive a payment equal to 2% of their compensation from July 1 through December 31.

As presented by administration, the budget also allows for potential compensation increases for faculty and exempt staff – ranging between 1% and 3% – in the next calendar year. Revenue thresholds would need to be met in order for those increases to be granted; those thresholds will be determined based on fall enrollment figures, expected in September, with the increases potentially taking effect for a new Jan. 1-Dec. 31 compensation cycle. (CU Anschutz is the exception, as its compensation cycle will continue to match the fiscal year.)

The board voted 6-2 for the tuition proposal and related student fees proposal, with Regents Heidi Ganahl and Chance Hill against. The compensation proposal passed 5-3, with Regent Sue Sharkey joining Ganahl and Hill in voting no. Chair Glen Gallegos did not attend the meeting.

In total dollar amount of lost revenue and increased costs at higher education institutions across Colorado over the past 13 months, the CU system was hardest hit. Federal relief covered $163.9 million of the $420.8 million gap, leaving the CU system with a $256.9 million shortfall for the 2020-21 fiscal year. A hiring chill, furloughs, funding from reserves and other reductions were used to balance the budget.

Determining projected student enrollment has grown more challenging since the pandemic began over a year ago. If fall 2021 enrollment is lower than expected, campuses would again consider the use of hiring delays, furloughs, layoffs, budget reductions and other measures. If fall 2021 enrollment is higher than expected, campuses would consider increases in compensation or personnel, restoration of operating reductions and cuts, reserves replenishment and other investments.

In other business at last week's Board of Regents meeting:
The Board of Regents formally approved revisions to Policy 11.E: Leave Policies for Faculty and Staff as a result of the passage of Senate Bill 20-205 known as the "Healthy Families and Workplaces Act" which requires employers to provide paid sick leave to employees under various circumstances. The changes are approved retroactive to Jan. 1, 2021; see related story here: Sick leave will expand to all CU employees starting Jan. 1[6]. For more detailed information, go to https://www.cu.edu/regents/rlpreview#tabs-2[7]. Six of this year's 12 Distinguished Professors[8] – Terrance Boult, Penina Axelrad, Mitchell Begelman, Jeffrey Cox, Katharine Suding and Wendy Kohrt – appeared and were formally recognized by the board. Read more on the meeting in CU Boulder Today[9] and CU Denver News[10].

CU President Mark Kennedy, UMass President Marty Meehan to discuss bipartisanship, friendship in free virtual event [11]

CU system Coursera courses see exponential growth during pandemic[12]

By Jaimie Henthorn and Jill Lester

One sector of higher education that has experienced an unequivocal boom since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic is the MOOC (massive open online course). It seemed as though such courses already had peaked, troughed and plateaued on the hype cycle, however, the increase in re-skilling from home and the revolution in online course delivery on a global scale have created the perfect storm for a MOOC revival.

The CU system experienced this exponential growth with a course enrollment increase of 460% from 2019 to 2020. Despite only 10% of Coursera learners paying for enrollment, there has been a 53% revenue increase across the same 12-month period.
[13]

MOOCs began at CU as an experiment in 2013 and now are seen as a respected course option in the current higher education landscape. To put this recent growth in context, a 2016 estimate had CU System Cousera someday generating $250,000 per year. In 2020, CU system courses generated $256,000 in a single quarter.

In this historical moment defined by COVID and stories of obstacles and loss, CU system MOOCs are yielding an unexpected impact on learners and rate of return.

Health care courses showed the most dramatic increase in learner engagement during the pandemic. Instructors from the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, as well as Denver Health and Children's Hospital Colorado, are now the authors of courses with some of the highest course completion rates seen on Coursera. These health care topics demonstrated an increase of over 750% in course completions since the start of 2020.

One such series of courses, Palliative Care: It's Not Just Hospice Anymore, covers a particularly timely health care topic.

"It is amazing to see 500 new people enrolling in the courses every week," said instructor Amos Bailey, M.D., professor of hospice and palliative care. "The number of students active in any week climbed to over 1,400 students, whereas before, we might have 200 to 300 active students. People are eager to learn."
[14]

This surge also is apparent in the specialization Become an EMT, which leads to qualification to sit for the National Registry EMT exam. Lead instructor Angela Wright, M.D., assistant professor of emergency medicine, has seen remarkable enrollment growth during the pandemic.

“Over 25,000 people have shown interest in joining the health care field by enrolling in our EMT courses,” Wright said. “It is heartwarming to see the doors opening to learners to gain the skills and certification needed to enter the health care workforce.”
[15]

The correlated revenue boost increased course revenue to campuses, departments and faculty. Participating faculty are free to accept these funds as royalties or invest them in their education programs and research.

Mary Kohn, M.D., associate professor of pediatrics and lead instructor of Coursera specialization Newborn Baby Care, said they are used for education in general pediatrics.

“Our first purchases will be patient education materials regarding the effects of marijuana during pregnancy and lactation,” Kohn said. “We will buy a dual-headed stethoscope for teaching about murmurs in the newborns. The increase in interest in the course during the pandemic is what is making this possible.”

Added Wright, “The additional Coursera revenue makes it possible to build out and strengthen our programs that work with the communities we serve through EMS outreach and education.”
[16]
[17]

So what’s next? More than ever, the CU system is working with Coursera to find the points of intersection between content areas predicted for success and faculty ready to author courses on these topics. Faculty or Coursera may initiate this process with CU Anschutz, UCCS and CU Denver by faculty pitching content ideas, or Coursera sharing what they have identified as high-demand topics with partner institutions. Coursera may then offer incentives to university partners to build courses on those topics.

Oxana Trotsenko, lecturer in the CU Denver School of Business, launched one such strategic partnership, the Agile Leadership courses, in August 2020. Responding to a Coursera request for proposals, Trotsenko was awarded a production advance for course creation on a Coursera-identified topic.

“The pandemic became the perfect use case for agility in today’s business environment that is already highly saturated with the fast-paced change that drives uncertainty,” Trotsenko said. “The tools offered to learners for navigating personal and career challenges are now more relevant than ever.”
[18]

Inspired by the success of Become an EMT, the Department of Emergency Medicine at CU Anschutz will add another set of courses to the platform on Wilderness Medicine that, similarly, can lead to nationally recognized certification in the U.S.

“The increasing popularity of health care on Coursera makes the prospect of launching courses more appealing,” said lead instructor Jay Lemery, professor of emergency medicine-wilderness and environmental medicine. “Seeing a significantly greater impact reflected in enrollment numbers as well as revenue brought into the university make the proposition of investing the time to build out this content more appealing.”

CU boosts Health Plan funding to reduce impact to faculty and staff[19]
[20]

University of Colorado faculty and staff will see modest increases to monthly CU Health Plan premiums for the 2021-22 plan year beginning July 1.

COVID-19 brought unprecedented increases in health care utilization, high-cost claims and unexpected usage patterns, all factors that affect the university’s plan premiums. In response, CU leadership substantially increased CU

Health Plan funding contributions for the coming plan year to alleviate the overall medical plan premium increases paid by faculty and staff.

CU contributes an average of 90% to employee health care premiums across its health plans.

“The University of Colorado’s investment demonstrates its commitment to the health and wellness of its faculty, staff and the university community,” said CU Health Plan Chief Administrator Tony DeCrosta. “The past year was historic and unprecedented, and it only emphasized the critical role of health care coverage.”

For over 10 years, the CU Health Plan has managed the university’s self-funded medical plans to provide faculty and staff the best possible health plans with the most flexible choice and prices. In its first decade, the self-funded model saved CU and its employees over $75 million compared to the university’s previous insurance model.

In 2021-22, the university will offer four medical plans with no substantial changes to plan design. Plans emphasize preventative care by covering these services at no cost.

Monthly premium increases will vary by plan and coverage level. CU Health Plan – Extended will see the highest premium increases, driven by higher-than-expected service utilization and a significant number of high-cost claims compared to CU’s three other medical plans.

Dental, vision, life insurance and disability insurance monthly premiums will not increase.

For individual coverage, monthly premiums for the High Deductible medical plan and the Essential dental plan will remain $0.

Please visit www.cu.edu/rates [21]to view your rate sheet.

How well is your current medical plan working for you?

Open Enrollment, beginning Monday and continuing through May 7, is your opportunity to consider your health plan options and choose plans for the coming year. As an employee covered under a medical CU Health Plan, you have options: CU offers four health plans to meet the needs of its diverse faculty and staff population.

The Basics of CU Health Plans and Pretax Savings[22] digital course can help you evaluate your plan options and learn how to lower your health care cost through pretax savings plans. Consider your annual health care costs and how you use your health benefits year-to-year to help determine which CU Health Plan would best serve your needs.

Watch now: https://www.cusys.edu/plans/2021/basics_cu-health-plans/story.html[23]

Watch now: https://www.cusys.edu/plans/2021/basics_cu-health-plans_en-espanol/story_html5.html[24]

Start exploring your options today to make informed decisions during Open Enrollment. Visit the Open Enrollment website, attend live webinars with our health plan vendors, stop by the virtual fair, then pick the best plans for your needs.

Employee Services’ benefits professionals are available to answer additional questions at 303-860-4200, option 3, or benefits@cu.edu[25].

Cyberattack notifications deliver this week[26]
[27]

CU students, employees and affiliates whose personal information may have been compromised in the cyberattack on

university vendor Accellion will begin receiving notification this week alerting them to what data was involved and what steps to take. The notifications will be a combination of email and U.S. Mail.

The university's Office of Information Security has largely completed its forensic investigation of the attack, according to a memo sent systemwide on Monday from Chief Information Security Officer Dan Jones. He wrote that "CU will provide credit monitoring, identity monitoring, fraud consultation and identity theft restoration to those affected. Our analysis shows that the attack involved more than 310,000 individual records with varying levels of personal identifiable information." The letter notes that if students or employees do not receive a communication, their data was not affected. The bulk of the data was from the Boulder campus with some from the Denver campus.

A web page[28] provides more detail and an FAQ section. Information involved includes grades and transcript data, student ID numbers, race/ethnicity, veteran status, visa status, disability status and limited donor information. It also includes some medical treatment, diagnosis and prescription information and, in some limited cases, Social Security numbers and CU financial account information, according to Jones. CU's internal systems – such as finance, human capital management, Advancement and student information systems – were not affected.

The cyberattack was on Accellion, a third-party vendor whose software facilitates the transfer of large (and sometimes sensitive) files on campuses and among campuses and system. CU first learned of the attack in late January and information security teams have spent the time since to unravel the nature of the files involved. A portion of the work had to be done manually. CU was among at least 10 universities involved. More than 50 of Accellion's clients were affected.

Soon after the attack was discovered, individuals and departments at CU and elsewhere began receiving extortion emails from the attackers, who demanded payment. They said if they were not paid, they would post the stolen information on the dark web, a network of sites not indexed by search engines and accessible only with special software.

Jones noted that "CU consulted with law enforcement and does not intend to pay. Doing so would not guarantee information would not be posted or that there would not be additional demands." Some information already has been posted on the dark web, and security officials say they expect more will be. They advise individuals who receive the extortion emails to delete them.

Changes to two systemwide administrative policy statements approved[29]

The Office of Policy and Efficiency (OPE) announces changes to the following administrative policy statements (APSs):

Revisions:
5062-Leave Adds section for paid sick leave during a public health emergency and revises the university sick leave policy as a result of the passage of Senate Bill 20-205, known as the "Healthy Families and Workplaces Act," which requires employers to provide paid sick leave to employees under various circumstances. See related story: Sick leave will expand to all CU employees starting Jan. 1[6].
Rescission:
5063-Leave for Faculty Serving in Elected Office Moving into APS 5062-Leave with no changes.
These changes were reviewed by the campus chancellors and approved by President Mark Kennedy on April 1, 2021. The changes are made retroactive to Jan. 1, 2021, in conjunction with the changes to Regent Policy 11.E: Leave Policies for Faculty and Staff.

For more detailed information, go to https://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/latest-changes[30]. For additional information on systemwide APSs, go to: http://www.cu.edu/ope[31].

CU Police Department pledges to advance women in policing[32]

ALTEC summer language classes start in May[33]
[34]

ALTEC's summer series of language classes is just around the bend and is all about travel. Enter to win a free class [35] in American Sign Language, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese or Spanish.

The May and June sessions feature remote, non-credit language classes that are four weeks in length and meet three hours per week. Students gain beginning-level exposure to the language and culture. You'll feel comfortable talking with a hotel receptionist, ordering at a restaurant, asking for directions and much more. Cap off your tour by cooking a cultural dish.

Visit us online[36] to view the class schedule and discover the ALTEC advantage[37].

New spaces, new faces: MOSAIC and LGBTQ+ Resource Center celebrate expansion [38]

Understanding vaccine hesitancy: Q&A with CU Denver sociology professor Jennifer Reich[39]

$3 million NIH grant for Colorado School of Public Health worker health study [40]

'Supporting Women Leaders' webinar set for May 4[41]

An upcoming webinar, "Supporting Women Leaders: An Anti-racist, Intersectional Dialogue," will bring together thought leaders to discuss issues facing women leaders in the academy, including structural racism and sexism, social justice practices, building intersectional networks and mentoring opportunities.

The event is set for 3 p.m.-5 p.m. May 4.

Faculty and administration from the CU Anschutz Medical Campus, CU Denver and the CU system are slated to take part.

For more information, click here[42].

To register, click here[43].

Bright, Hutchison receive 2020 Distinguished Research Lectureships [44]

Peffer named Writer in Residence for library district [45]

Manson earns prestigious Fries Award for excellence in health education [46]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/regents-set-tuition-rates-2021-22[2] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/reg_tuition_feat.jpg[3] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/annual-budget-anticipates-dips-enrollment-revenue[4] https://go.boarddocs.com/co/cu/Board.nsf/files/BZVSX974AFE1/$file/FY%202021-22%20Tuition%20Fee%20and%20Comp%20Rates%20-%20Short%20(final).pdf[5] https://cu.new.swagit.com/videos/118329[6] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/sick-leave-will-expand-all-cu-employees-starting-jan-1[7] https://www.cu.edu/regents/rlpreview#tabs-2[8] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/distinguished-professors-meet-cu-s-12-newly-honored-faculty-members[9] https://www.colorado.edu/today/2021/04/08/regents-approve-tuition-fees-compensation-adjustments?utm_campaign=admin_update&utm_source=organic_social&utm_medium=tw&utm_content=bor_update_04082021[10] https://news.ucdenver.edu/board-of-regents-approve-tuition-compensation-adjustments/[11] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-president-mark-kennedy-umass-president-marty-meehan-discuss-bipartisanship-friendship[12] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-system-coursera-courses-see-exponential-growth-during-pandemic[13] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/coursera_g1.png[14] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/coursera_g-pall.png[15] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/coursera_g-emt.png[16] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/coursera_g2_0.jpg[17] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/coursera_g3.jpg[18] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/coursera_g4.jpg[19] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-boosts-health-plan-funding-reduce-impact-faculty-and-staff[20] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/oe_top_1.jpg[21] http://www.cu.edu/rates[22] http://www.cu.edu/node/285185[23] https://www.cusys.edu/plans/2021/basics_cu-health-plans/story.html[24] https://www.cusys.edu/plans/2021/basics_cu-health-plans_en-espanol/story_html5.html[25] mailto:benefits@cu.edu[26] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cyberattack-notifications-deliver-week[27] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/cyberattack_feat_0.jpg[28] https://www.cu.edu/accellion-cyberattack[29] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/changes-two-systemwide-administrative-policy-statements-approved[30] https://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/latest-changes[31] http://www.cu.edu/ope[32] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-police-department-pledges-advance-women-policing[33] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/altec-summer-language-classes-start-may[34] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/altec_top.png[35]

[36] https://www.colorado.edu/center/altec/altec-language-classes[37] https://www.colorado.edu/center/altec/language-classes/altec-advantage[38] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/new-spaces-new-faces-mosaic-and-lgbtq-resource-center-celebrate-expansion[39] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/understanding-vaccine-hesitancy-qa-cu-denver-sociology-professor-jennifer-reich[40] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/3-million-nih-grant-colorado-school-public-health-worker-health-study[41] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/supporting-women-leaders-webinar-set-may-4[42]

https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/physical-therapy-program/supporting-women-leaders[43]
https://ucdenver.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_AbaO6Ue2RieyDakoLbrv4w[44]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/bright-hutchison-receive-2020-distinguished-research-lectureships[45]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/peffer-named-writer-residence-library-district[46]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/manson-earns-prestigious-fries-award-excellence-health-education