

[Regents approve civics literacy initiative](#)[1]

The CU Board of Regents on Wednesday approved a slate of motions aimed at expanding civics education across the CU system.

The work was initiated in 2017 by Regent John Carson, R-Highlands Ranch, and brought to the board by its University Affairs Committee. During its Wednesday meeting at CU South Denver in Lone Tree, the board voted on four motions, each of which was passed, though none unanimously.

The resolutions reflected input from the Faculty Council, which requested that the regents not create additional barriers to student admission or graduation, that the wishes of the individual campuses be respected and that the curriculum be determined by faculty.

“I feel like we’ve reached a mutual agreement that this is an area we should all focus on,” said Carson, whose [presentation](#)[2] included background calling for improved civics literacy among Americans. “Nothing today is coming in the form of a mandate.”

The motions the regents approved call for the following:

That faculty be encouraged to launch a civics-focused certificate, with a fall 2019 announcement followed by courses beginning in 2020. (Passed 8-1, with Regent Linda Shoemaker, D-Boulder, opposing.) That the Regents Online Resolution already in place be amended to recommend that one of the courses focused on concurrent enrollment be a civics course, available in 2020 for CU and high school students in Colorado. (Passed 6-3, with Regents Shoemaker, Irene Griego, D-Lakewood, and Lesley Smith, D-Boulder, opposing.) That administration and faculty work to conduct a survey of a sampling of the incoming class of 2019 freshmen to determine a base level of civics knowledge among Colorado high school graduates. (Passed 5-4, with Regents Shoemaker, Griego, Smith and Jack Kroll, D-Denver, opposing.) That the campuses be challenged to propose options beyond certificates for enhancing civics education, with resource estimates included. (Passed 6-3, with Regents Griego, Shoemaker and Smith opposing.) In comments explaining their no votes, while supporting the need for civics literacy, some regents expressed concern over establishing a brief timeline for any required work to be completed by faculty and administration, as well as the possibility that faculty may not have had sufficient time to provide full input. Carson said there will be time for the specifics of the process to be worked on by the University Affairs Committee, with faculty and administration, at upcoming meetings.

[Budget proposal includes 3 percent increase for compensation](#)[3]

The Board of Regents on Wednesday reviewed the 2019-20 budget and fee proposal, which includes a 3 percent increase in compensation and benefits, as recommended in Gov. Jared Polis’ proposed state budget.

The [proposal as presented](#)[4] by Todd Saliman, vice president for budget and finance and chief financial officer, also incorporates flat tuition as required in the governor’s proposal.

The 3 percent merit pool totals \$36.4 million.

Because state leaders are discussing potential changes to the formula that determines the portion of funding that each higher education institutions receives from the state, Saliman said CU’s expected 14 percent funding increase might end up smaller. In that case, adjustments to some budget items would be necessary.

Read more on the budget in [CU Boulder Today](#). [5]

[Board of Regents approves diversity task force](#)^[6]

The CU Board of Regents on Wednesday voted to establish a diversity task force by March 15 led by Kathy Nesbitt, vice president of administration, to initially home in on two areas: diversity among faculty and diversity of thought.

The motion, presented by Regent John Carson, R-Highlands Ranch, was approved by eight regents with Regent Irene Griego, D-Lakewood, abstaining. Griego said she was concerned that focusing on only two areas limited the task force's effectiveness.

"I think it would be important for us to assess what two areas are the most important as we go through this process," Griego said. "Just picking two random areas concerns me. This is something that's very dear to me that I'd like to be able to support it."

Griego recommended determining the focus after evaluating the climate survey planned for spring, which might give greater insight on the areas of need.

Carson said he didn't care how many areas the task force focused on.

"If people wanted to study different topics, amend my motion. If you want three, pick three," Carson said. "The one I want is diversity of thought at the university, so any of the other ones, put it up in the air."

Nesbitt said diversity of thought and diversity among faculty were chosen because they were the concerns she heard most often from the university community.

"We just need to start somewhere," Nesbitt told the board. "Once we get the survey going and we get the survey back, then we'll have some room to adjust."

Nesbitt said she will begin determining the composition of the task force's members.

The University Affairs committee will constitute a task force appropriate to the areas chosen by the board and generate detailed background to support the discussion of these areas at the board's summer retreat.

[Five questions for Alexander 'Sandy' Bracken](#)^[7]

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Given the many ways in which he has provided leadership for decades at the University of Colorado, it's not surprising that Alexander "Sandy" Bracken voices some ambivalence when congratulated on his recent retirement from CU.

"I guess congratulations is appropriate," he said, smiling. "I've always kind of shunned that word. 'Retirement' sounds like you're literally going off in the sunset, never to be heard or seen again, but obviously it's not the case. I think this is a good time to transition – so I'll use that word."

Though his official retirement – or transition – came at the end of 2018, Bracken has continued to help with the lead-up to the next installment of the Leo Hill Distinguished Leadership Speaker Series, which he launched in his most recent role as the Quigg and Virginia S. Newton Endowed Chair in Leadership at CU Boulder. [The March 5 event](#)^[9] features Abigail Posner, head of strategy for Google's Brand Unit.

Besides leadership roles at CU Boulder and CU Denver, Bracken notably served as CU's 19th president, in 2000, between the departure of John Buechner and the arrival of Betsy Hoffman.

"To serve as president was an incredible opportunity of a lifetime, indeed brief, but just terribly exciting and an experience I'll never forget," Bracken said. "I really appreciate that opportunity very much. It was a time when things

were relatively tranquil at CU and, especially, on the Boulder campus (where the Office of the President then was located). There weren't raging issues during that time, other than the decreasing level of state funding for higher education, which has been a constant. A highlight was having the Law School approved by the CCHE (Colorado Commission on Higher Education) and being able to see that come to pass. The entire experience was terrific."

He later took on the Newton chair from founding chair holder and another past CU president, Hank Brown. The chair, which now is held by Chancellor Philip P. DiStefano, serves as a clearinghouse for campuswide leadership programs. The chair supports the activities of other programs, including the Presidents Leadership Class, INVST Community Leadership Program, CU Gold, ROTC units, Leeds Business Leadership Certificate Program, CU Athletics Leadership Development Program, Multicultural Leadership Scholars Program and the Engineering Leadership Program.

"It's been a great opportunity to work across academic disciplines, schools and colleges, and the athletic department," Bracken said. "Having the chair tied to the chancellor's title now gives even more visibility to its mission, which is to enhance and increase leadership development at CU Boulder."

1. You mentioned the word 'transition,' and your career has involved transitions from higher education into industry and then back again into higher ed. How did those changes come about?

My passion has always been higher ed. That's where I started and that's really what I've been most interested in and passionate about in terms of work and career. My first major job was teaching American history at Anderson College, a small liberal arts college in Anderson, Indiana, beginning in the mid-1970s until 1982. It was an exciting and special experience for my wife, Sally, and me, and we enjoyed our time there very much.

In the early 1980s we started thinking about relocating to a different part of the country. So I looked for teaching jobs in areas that would be attractive places to live and really didn't find anything that seemed too appealing.

I grew up in Muncie, Indiana, where Ball Corporation was then headquartered; the corporate headquarters relocated to Colorado in 1998. I had an opportunity to take a job with Ball here in Colorado – that and being able to move to Boulder became a very attractive combination of things. We moved out here in '82 and I was with Ball until 2000.

The job was tied to one of Ball's operating groups, Ball Technical Products, which included several divisions, one of which was Ball Aerospace. I managed the public relations and public affairs work for the group. That involved a variety of functions including internal and external communications, government relations, publications, marketing communications, etc. Maybe it's a stretch, but you could say, in a skill sets sense, there's a relationship between teaching and those activities.

I always wanted to stay connected to higher ed, and during my time with Ball I had the opportunity to be on several statewide commissions that were related to education. I was on the CCHE for eight years, which works with all the state institutions in Colorado. That experience allowed me to become much closer to CU, specifically, the Board of Regents and CU leadership.

2. After your time serving as CU president, you became executive director of the Bard Center for Entrepreneurship at the University of Colorado Denver's School of Business. What was that experience like?

I was there for six years starting in 2001. That was really fun, definitely a learning opportunity for me, and a very worthwhile experience of running the entrepreneurship center, which is now named the Jake Jabs Center. To be directly involved in the entrepreneurial world was exciting and very rewarding. The center offered courses in various areas of entrepreneurship and also housed an incubator for startup companies. Additionally, the center was the location for CU Denver's 11-month MBA program, so it was a great confluence of entrepreneurial activity.

3. While Hank Brown was the inaugural Newton chair, he relied on his experience as a past U.S. senator in connecting students with Washington, D.C. When you took on the role, how did things change?

When I came into it, I certainly didn't have the type of contact base that he had. My initial focus was to bring the existing leadership programs on the Boulder campus together. Those programs had never come together and talked

with one another, which was a surprise. It was really an opportunity for them to share their respective leadership program focus and aspects of each program in terms of courses and co-curricular leadership activities.

From those initial discussions came the seed for what has become [the leadership studies minor](#)^[10], which is a new academic degree program. It has really gained momentum since the first course was offered in the fall semester of 2014 to now having nearly 600 students enrolled.

We also created a leadership speaker series a couple of years ago. By bringing recognized and outstanding leaders to campus to share their “stories” of leadership growth and what they believe are the key factors to be an effective leader is an important aspect of leadership development. Secretary of Defense and Central Intelligence Agency Director Robert Gates was the initial speaker for that series. Mae Jamison, the first woman of color in space, was the second speaker. In March, we’ll have Abigail Posner from Google. The address in Macky Auditorium is open to the campus and the Boulder and Denver communities. The feedback we’ve gotten from students is that it’s really valuable in getting exposed to accomplished and exciting leaders who are recognized as being at the top of their respective fields.

The third leg of this stool, in addition to the academic program and exposure to outstanding leaders, is expanding experiential opportunities for students through internships and work experiences. It’s important for students to actually practice leadership in a job or internship situation. Creating more opportunities for students to “do” leadership is key.

4. How do you define leadership in today’s world?

The general notion of leadership has really changed over time. The style and character of leadership, the approach to leadership, has taken on more of a holistic nature. This is true whether it’s leadership in for-profit entities, nonprofits, higher ed, government or elsewhere. Whatever the field, effective leadership needs to be inclusive between leaders and followers.

In the past, you would think of the typical hierarchal, top-down approach. In a corporate sense, the CEO would say, “We’re going down this road, so get with the program.” The military obviously comes to mind in that sense, too. Maybe less so in a nonprofit community, but still there was that kind of top-down command and control.

Over time, leadership has become less top-down, less hierarchal, and much more of a relationship. It’s more about a leader being a team member, being a follower, in the sense that anyone who becomes a CEO of a corporation or a university has been a follower at some point in their career. To be an effective leader, you need to know how to work with and what it takes to motivate followers and to empower them.

The model of collaborative or servant leadership is an example of this. It means you’re really assuming the role of your employees in many ways. You’re understanding where they’re coming from. You’re understanding their motivations, what their aspirations are, how they can be a part of this great entity to make it the best it can be from where they sit and what they do.

It’s an exciting time in leadership development and what it can mean for organizations. And, the need for effective leadership is always a top priority.

5. So what’s next for you?

We’re definitely not moving anywhere. Beyond that, I honestly don’t know. I certainly want to stay engaged. I’ve been privileged over a lot of years to be engaged in the Boulder community in a number of nonprofits. I have been and am involved with boards and institutions that are very meaningful to Sally and me and our family, including Boulder Community Health, the Boulder Community Foundation, the United Way, the Boulder Chamber and others. We’ll see what may come along. I’ve been very fortunate and very blessed and privileged since we moved to Boulder. It’s hard to imagine it’s been 37 years.

Serving as president was certainly the greatest privilege and greatest experience in an obvious sense, but all the experiences have been terrific. They have been opportunities to really work with people, work with students, work with faculty and staff across academic disciplines.

Serving as the Newton Chair has been great, in that you're involved in something that has the breadth of application, if you will, and the opportunity to add to a student's development through their experience at CU and beyond as they go into their career. Leadership is an important aspect of that. Ending with this, for me, is an exciting way to close the door.

[Board of Regents February meeting coverage](#)[11]

Regents approve civics literacy initiative

Board approves motions encouraging new certificate, online effort, more

[Read more](#)[1]

Budget proposal includes 3 percent increase for compensation

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[Read more](#)[3]

Board of Regents approves diversity task force

Committee will focus initially on diversity among faculty, diversity of thought

[Read more](#)[6]

Regents look inward to gauge board effectiveness

The CU Board of Regents will evaluate its efficiency with a scaled-down questionnaire versus the last evaluation conducted in 2014.

[Read more](#)[12]

Board will continue exploring stipend option for future regents

The CU Board of Regents on Wednesday voted 5-3 to continue researching the feasibility of allowing incoming board members to be paid stipends for their work on the board.

[Read more](#)[13]

Tenure list: February 2019

The CU Board of Regents on Wednesday approved three appointments of tenure.

[Read more](#)[14]

[2019 President's Diversity Award recipients announced](#)[15]

The University of Colorado [President's Diversity Award](#)[16] selection committee has announced its 2019 award and commendation recipients, who will be recognized at a reception at 3 p.m. March 21 at 1800 Grant St., Denver. All members of the CU community are invited to attend. [Click here for event details and registration.](#)[17]

The award recognizes significant achievements of university community members in developing a culturally and intellectually diverse university community reflective of inclusive excellence. Awardees, each of whom receives \$2,000, engage in meaningful diversity activities beyond their primary CU responsibilities.

The 2019 CU President's Diversity Awardees are:

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Stephanie Nwagwu, Marcus Marable and Simon Feseha, School of Medicine (SOM), CU Anschutz Medical Campus

Nwagwu, Marable and Feseha – second-year medical students at CU Anschutz – developed the "What Happened and Why?" co-curriculum for incoming medical students. Second- and fourth-year SOM students and faculty facilitate educational sessions on identifying and addressing bias and discrimination. Overall, 98 percent of students reported having a positive experience in this learning opportunity. As noted in the nomination, "The impact of this project has been significant on many levels, and has been a transformative force for students. All 184 incoming students to the CUSOM took the course; students reported this project helped them to focus on humanity as they enter medical school and expand their awareness of and commitment to issues facing underserved, diverse populations." The campus has praised Nwagwu, Marable and Feseha for starting the conversation and educating new members of the university community to contribute towards equity and inclusion on campus, in medicine and elsewhere.

Jesse Perez, assistant director of the Multicultural Office for Student Access, Inclusiveness and Community (MOSAIC) and LGBT+ program director, UCCS

Perez's longstanding commitment to achieving excellence in diversity and inclusion – as a UCCS undergraduate and graduate student, and now, a staff member – has had a great impact on the Colorado Springs campus and the larger community. Within CU, he has helped create and maintain bridges between various campus departments, administrative committees, groups and initiatives aiming to enhance equity and social justice. Beyond CU, he has worked with nonprofit organizations to provide resources for underprivileged and marginalized communities of Southern Colorado. The following sentiment is echoed throughout the nomination: "Jesse is one of the most significant leaders on our campus and is looked to by departments for guidance on some of the most complex and controversial aspects of creating an inclusive environment. He is able to bring people together, listen with compassion, and then provide feedback in a way others can really hear it and act upon it."

Jamie Newton, graduate student, CU Denver

Newton is lauded for creating "[That's What She Said \(TWSS\)](#),"[19] a live storytelling event that engages men to read stories submitted anonymously by women. These stories capture women's experiences based on gender. TWSS "provides a unique opportunity for members of the CU Denver community to engage in conversations about gender and justice." The best-attended TWSS event included more than 450 participants. In addition to her work on TWSS, Newton has secured scholarship funds for students engaged in diversity work, and plans to make health-related resources accessible via vending machines on the Auraria Campus. As stated in her nomination, "She has continuously demonstrated that she is a leader in diversity and inclusion work through her use of inclusive language, advocating for the needs of marginalized students, and her commitment to changing the culture that perpetuates their marginalization."

Martin Garnar, dean of the library and professor of library administration, UCCS

Kraemer Family Library Dean Martin Garnar is the 2019 faculty recipient. Among notable service endeavors, Dean Garnar has made significant contributions to CU and beyond with his "[Just Talk](#)"[20] programming, a dialogue series regarding power, privilege, equity and inclusion – on campus, in the community and society at large. He has created campus-wide momentum with various constituents and departments by providing programming for more than 50 events since 2016. The dialogue series has included topics such as Transgender Issues, Diversity of Thought, Queer Voices, Civic Power, Democracy in Action, Suicide Awareness, #MeToo, Religious Freedom in America and Academic Freedom. As summarized in the nomination, "Dean Garnar's activities demonstrate his leadership and commitment to the enhancement, development and sustainability of diversity and inclusive excellence."

Commendations

Sandy Ho, director of the Languages Excel Center, UCCS Jose Silva, graduate student, CU Denver United Government of Graduate Students, CU Boulder

[Tenure list: February 2019](#)[14]

The CU Board of Regents on Wednesday approved three appointments of tenure.

CU Boulder

[Appointments with Tenure \(2\)](#)[21]

David Cook-Martin, Sociology, College of Arts and Sciences, Effective Aug. 19, 2019 **Zhien Wang**, Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, Effective Feb. 14, 2019 **CU Denver**

[Appointment with Tenure \(1\)](#)[22]

Keith Neeves, Bioengineering, College of Engineering and Applied Science, Effective March 1, 2019

[Regents look inward to gauge board effectiveness](#)[12]

The CU Board of Regents will evaluate its efficiency with a scaled-down questionnaire versus the last evaluation conducted in 2014.

Patrick O'Rourke, vice president, university counsel and secretary to the board, said the 2014 survey was insightful, but might have had seen clearer results if it had been simplified – that survey was 65 questions.

"In retrospect, I believe the survey tried to measure too much and didn't provide us with enough guidance about the key areas where the Board of Regents could improve," said O'Rourke, whose office will provide the regents with a 10-question survey for their self-evaluation.

The regents will also evaluate the revised board committee design structure adopted in 2016, which consolidated the board's eight committees and subcommittees into four committees with no subcommittees. The board will include its constituents in the survey to assess the efficiency of the streamlined committee process and to seek input for any further changes to that structure.

[Board will continue exploring stipend option for future regents](#)[13]

The CU Board of Regents on Wednesday voted 5-3 to continue researching the feasibility of allowing incoming board members to be paid stipends for their work on the board. Although most board members stressed they would not have taken compensation if offered, they said it doesn't hurt to look into.

The initiative was brought to the board in November by Regent Linda Shoemaker, D-Boulder, and outgoing regent Stephen Ludwig, who said he was concerned the out-of-pocket cost would discourage outstanding candidates from running for the position. The stipends would go into effect after all current regents are no longer sitting board members.

Patrick O'Rourke, vice president, university counsel and secretary of the Board of Regents, explained that no peer institutions compensate their boards, but that doesn't mean it can't be done. He said, however, board compensation could make regents accountable to the university's general statutory and ethics standards. However, any violation of those ethics by the board could jeopardize the university's tax-exempt status.

Chair Sue Sharkey, R-Castle Rock, Vice Chair Jack Kroll, D-Denver, and Regent John Carson, R-Highlands Ranch, were opposed to further exploring the initiative.

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