As pandemic continues, CU leadership considers tuition, student aid ramifications[1]
[2]

The Board of Regents last week defeated a proposal calling for a 20% tuition reduction and waiver of some fees in spring 2021, action also opposed by faculty and staff leaders and President Mark Kennedy.

In the lead-up to the 6-3 vote during the Nov. 12 meeting[3], Kennedy announced new funding of $5 million via the CU Foundation to be made available to the campuses for emergency funding or mental health needs related to the coronavirus pandemic.

The amount results in a total $12 million in pandemic relief for students. The president previously requested $5 million for students facing financial hardship during the fall semester; the CU Foundation approved that, as well as $2 million for mental health needs.

Kennedy touted the merits of targeted relief funding over the notion of a 20% tuition reduction, which he said would result in deeper budget cuts and furloughs than those already stressing the university.

“I am highly appreciative of the extra effort and dedication our faculty and staff have expended to ensure we advance our students along their path to achieve their educational goals,” Kennedy said.

In a joint resolution[4] – said to be a first – by the Faculty Council and Staff Council, the governance groups formally voiced opposition to the tuition reduction proposal. Faculty Council Chair Joanne Addison said such a discount “would be devastating” to faculty and staff. Staff members already are expressing low morale, said Staff Council Chair Ryan Untisz.

During public comments, faculty members Neil Box of CU Anschutz, Michael Zinser of CU Denver, and UCCS’ David Weiss, who said he also spoke on behalf of CU Boulder faculty, all voiced opposition to the proposal. Regent Sue Sharkey, R-Castle Rock, also spoke against it; she said things have changed since she first expressed support of a tuition reduction in August.

Regent Heidi Ganahl, R-Lone Tree, introduced the resolution, and was joined by Regents John Carson, R-Highlands Ranch, and Chance Hill, R-Colorado Springs, in voting to support it. “Reducing tuition by 20% for students enrolled full-time during the Spring 2021 academic term is an appropriate means of recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to adversity for these students and families,” the motion read in part.

CU Boulder student Sophia Volk, on behalf of Too Much Tuition, CU[5], was the only student who appeared during public comment to express support for the proposal.

Kennedy noted the pandemic’s impact on CU’s costs, and stressed how the university has boosted financial aid for students in need.

“We have expended great resources to ensure the health and well-being of our students, faculty and staff and surrounding communities. And those costs have not been passed on to the students,” Kennedy said. “We are at our third year at the same tuition rate and face lower government funding.”

Because of increases to student aid, Kennedy said, a student’s out-of-pocket cost for a CU degree is lower in real terms today than it was seven years ago.

Increases in financial aid were detailed in a report to the board[6] by Todd Saliman, senior vice president for strategy, government relations and chief financial officer. He demonstrated an online estimator tool[7] that helps students and families calculate out-of-pocket costs for a CU education.

Regents pursue in-state tuition status for indigenous peoples[8]

The CU Board of Regents last week voted to direct university administration to work with state lawmakers in order to offer in-state tuition status for out-of-state Indigenous peoples whose tribal nations are historically tied to the lands that make up Colorado.

Introduced by Regent Irene Griego, D-Jefferson County, the resolution's intent is similar to steps the board previously took to offer in-state tuition to dependents of members of the military and veterans.

The vote during the Nov. 12 meeting[3] was 7-2, with no votes from Regents Chance Hill, R-Colorado Springs, and John Carson, R-Highlands Ranch, who expressed concerns about the cost, which was not specified. CU must have permission from state lawmakers before determining to make such an offer to eligible students.

CU campuses are located on historical homelands of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Ute, Apache, Comanche, Kiowa, Lakota, Pueblo and Shoshone Nations.

A related resolution, also introduced by Griego, affirmed that CU leadership will continue to engage Indigenous community members and leaders across the campuses in conversations on a variety of issues of importance to those communities, including periodically revisiting the CU systemwide Lands Recognition Statement. It passed 8-1, with Hill opposing.

In other business at the Nov. 12 board meeting, held remotely, the board voted to bestow Regent Emeritus titles to the three members who will leave in early January at the conclusion of their terms. Regents Griego, Carson and Linda Shoemaker, D-Boulder, did not seek reelection this year. After hearing tributes from fellow board members and administrators, the three noted the valuable friendships they developed with one another while serving on the board and supporting the university.
[9]

Earlier in the meeting, Board Chair Glen Gallegos welcomed the three regents-elect[10] - Callie Rennison, Ilana Spiegel and Nolbert Chavez - who will take their oaths of office on Jan. 7 as part of the board's winter retreat, expected to be held virtually.

Regents approve revisions to policies affecting administrator, officer searches[11]

The Board of Regents last week formally approved revisions to Regent Policy 3.E: Searches for Administrators and Guidelines for the Appointment of Chief Officers of the University and approved renumbering the policy to Regent Policy 3.C: Searches for Administrators and Guidelines for the Appointment of Chief Officers of the University.

The changes took effect Nov. 12, the day of the board meeting.

The approved revisions affect the makeup of the search committees for campus chancellors and for the deans of the law, engineering and business schools or colleges.

For more detailed information, go to https://www.cu.edu/regents/rlpreview#tabs-2[12].

Faculty Council Committee Corner: Racial and Ethnic Equity[13]
[14]

The CU system Faculty Council Committee on Racial and Ethnic Equity (CREE)[15] considers the needs and priorities of students and faculty of color. The scope of this committee includes racially and ethnically minoritized faculty, including international faculty of color and indigenous faculty.

CREE is tasked with assessing the cultural climate, fostering academic success, ensuring fair recruitment and retention, developing support networks, and recommending policy that supports faculty and students of color across the CU system.

In this vein, a key component of the work of CREE is helping to create and maintain a campus community and culture that is committed to inclusion, ensuring access and opportunity for faculty and students of color, and equity, ensuring the fair treatment of faculty and students of color. This focus means identifying sources of inequities, recognizing the value that differences bring to our campus community, and providing and maintaining the structures to support meaningful access and opportunity for all.

Over the past year, CREE has spoken out against racism and the disparate health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on marginalized communities (CREE pandemic video[16]); the need for CU to address racial justice and equity (CREE BLM letter[17]); and helped make Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access a key pillar of the CU system Strategic Plan [18].

The committee's focus for the 2020-2021 senate year includes reviewing and revising our charge; continuing to advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion in the CU System Strategic Plan; advising the CU system on a plan for recruitment, retention and advancement of faculty of color; and continuing to build and maintain a climate of diversity, equity and inclusion by speaking out against racism and fostering networks and systems of support for faculty and students of color.

CREE recognizes the diversity across the CU system, and we are interested in learning more about the challenges, efforts and opportunities that you see across the campuses. If you or your team, group, office or committee also incorporates racial and ethnic diversity in your mission, we would love to connect with you: We would like to put together an informal directory that lists individuals or groups that currently work to advance the university's racial and ethnic diversity goals. Who are you, what are you (or your team) working on, what kind of support are you looking for, what opportunities for partnerships do you have, and how can we get in touch with you? To that purpose, we have prepared a Qualtrics poll: https://cuboulder.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ezZNYuyYtO01IBD[19]

Here are our representatives from each campus. Feel free to contact any of us:

Jorge Chavez, Chair

CU Denver, Education and Human Development

Naomi Nishi, Vice Chair

CU Denver, Ethnic Studies

Cerian Gibbes, Secretary

CU Colorado Springs, Geography and Environmental Studies

Debbie Carter

CU Anschutz, Medicine

Regina Richards

CU Anschutz, Medicine

Mileidis Gort

CU Boulder, Education

Linds Roberts

CU Boulder, University Libraries

Kathy Prue-Owens

CU Colorado Springs, Nursing

Lei “Frank” Zhang

CU Colorado Springs, Sociology

Adriana Alvarez

CU Denver, Education and Human Development

Areione Hubbart

CU Denver, Student

Carlos Reali

CU Denver, Sociology

CU faculty researchers invited to apply for Boettcher Investigator status[20]

The University of Colorado and the Boettcher Foundation announce the 2021 Boettcher Webb-Waring Biomedical Research Awards[21] program.

Boettcher Webb-Waring Biomedical Research Awards[22] from Boettcher Foundation[23] on Vimeo[24].

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Boettcher Foundation has established the Boettcher Webb-Waring Biomedical Research Awards program, which will provide up to five grants of $235,000 each covering up to three years of research activity with the intent to provide independent research opportunities to promising and talented early career investigators. Awardees will carry the title of Boettcher Investigator in acknowledgement of the prestige of the award.

The biomedical research, supported pursuant to this grant program, will be designed to find ways to prevent disease and improve human health through basic and applied biomedical research. The intent of the program is to fund meritorious research that has the potential for new discoveries or advances a discovery to the proof of its potential value as an application to improve human health. This research will improve the understanding, treatment and prevention of human disease.

Since the first awards granted in July 2010, the Boettcher Foundation has awarded CU’s 49 current Boettcher

Investigators[25] more than $11.3 million.

PRE-SUBMISSION WEBINAR

Potential applicants can get more information about the award program, what's new in 2021, the application and selection process, application tips, and participate in a Q&A with the chair and vice chair of the 2021 selection panel.

REGISTER HERE[26]

HOW TO APPLY

Eligible faculty researchers from all four CU campuses are encouraged to apply. For purposes of this program, an eligible early career investigator (ECI):
Is within four years of appointment to their career-track academic position (i.e., whose career-track appointments began no earlier than Jan. 1, 2016); Has not previously received a major independent research award; Has received a terminal degree or completed their medical residency within the 10 years preceding the application (i.e., on or after Jan. 1, 2010); and Is either a U.S. Citizen or a Permanent Resident.
For more details, go to: http://www.cu.edu/bfww/eligibility[27]

Applications must be submitted to your campus Grants office by the deadlines included in the following campus-specific instructions:
University of Colorado Boulder[28]University of Colorado Colorado Springs[29]University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus[30]
Do not contact the Boettcher Foundation directly.

Claim your health care expense savings for 2021 – and beyond[31]

Unexpected expenses can come as a surprise. According to Optum Bank, nearly six out of every 10 consumers[32] struggle to pay medical bills. A Health Savings Account (HSA) can build a nest egg to ease your mind.

During this year's HSA Open Enrollment, CU Health Plan – High Deductible plan members can enroll in or adjust contributions for this tax-free savings account for 2021 in the employee portal until Dec. 4.
What exactly is a Health Savings Account?
A Health Savings Account (HSA) allows you to pay for qualified health care expenses[33] now or in the future. HSAs offer three tax benefits: tax-free saving, growth and spending on qualified health care expenses anytime from today throughout your retirement. Money in your account also can be invested to maximize and grow savings. This account stays with you every year, even if you leave CU or retire.

Here are just a few expenses[33] account holders can cover with an HSA:
prescription and over-the-counter drugs office visits, exams and lab fees deductible costs not covered by insurance medical equipment **Open Enrollment**
Health Savings Account enrollment for 2021 runs Nov. 16-Dec. 4 for CU Health Plan – High Deductible members to enroll in a Health Savings Account or update their contributions in the employee portal.[34]

Contributions selected will begin Jan. 1, 2021. However, contributions can be adjusted or designated at any time. Determining contributions at the start of each year makes it simple to determine your monthly paycheck deductions.

In 2021, individuals can contribute up to $3,600, and families can save up to $7,200. Those 55 or older can catch up on their savings and contribute an additional $1,000. CU's HSA is administered by Optum Bank.

Discover more about this savings account and learn how to make changes on the Employee Services website.[35]

Colorado economy shows more signs of recovery, filings indicate [36]

'Let's Talk GRIT!' free online training promotes resilience, connectivity during COVID-19 and beyond [37]

Marks leads first virtual State of the Campus address[38]

Can time-restricted eating prevent you from overindulging on Thanksgiving?[39]

Arjomandi named 2019-20 Faculty Mentor of the Year [40]

Four CU Boulder staff members honored as Employees of the Year [41]

In memoriam: Lisa Herman-Worley[42]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/pandemic-continues-cu-leadership-considers-tuition-student-aid-ramifications [2] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/reg_feat_1.jpg[3] https://cu.new.swagit.com/videos/102701[4] https://go.boarddocs.com/co/cu/Board.nsf/files/BV9U2879E665/$file/FINAL%20FC-UCSC%20Joint%20Resolution%20JA%20(Fully%20Executed).pdf[5] https://www.toomuchtuitioncu.com/[6] https://go.boarddocs.com/co/cu/Board.nsf/files/BVATHH768C9E/$file/Financial%20Aid%20and%20Debt%20Presentation%20Final%20-%20short%20version.pdf[7] https://costestimator.cu.edu/[8] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/regents-pursue-state-tuition-status-indigenous-peoples[9] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/reg_new.jpg[10] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/voters-send-rennison-spiegel-chavez-board-regents[11] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/regents-approve-revisions-policies-affecting-administrator-officer-searches[12] https://www.cu.edu/regents/rlpreview#tabs-2[13] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/faculty-council-committee-corner-racial-and-ethnic-equity-0[14] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/fcc_cree_top.jpg[15] https://www.cu.edu/faculty-council/committees/committee-on-racial-and-ethnic-equity[16] https://youtu.be/JTYKUl5he1o[17]

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1lbqsiVrssDBIkQY5cidkWFPxJDZthp0G/view?usp=sharin[18]
https://www.cu.edu/strategic-planning/process/strategic-pillars-focus-areas/pillar-3-diversity-inclusion-equity-access[19]
https://cuboulder.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ezZNYuyYtO01IBD[20] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cu-faculty-researchers-invited-apply-boettcher-investigator-status-2[21] http://www.cu.edu/bfww[22]
https://vimeo.com/189663981[23] https://vimeo.com/boettcherfoundation[24] https://vimeo.com[25]
https://www.cu.edu/bfww/cu-investigators[26]
https://cusystem.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_b6tktxHcRHa18uWNLDn4vQ[27] http://www.cu.edu/bfww/eligibility[28]
https://www.cu.edu/doc/bfww-applicantinstructions-cu-boulder.pdf[29] https://www.cu.edu/doc/bfww-applicantinstructions-uccs.pdf[30] https://www.cu.edu/doc/bfww-applicantinstructions-cu-denver-amc.pdf[31]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/claim-your-health-care-expense-savings-2021-and-beyond[32] https://www.optumbank.com/content/dam/optum3/optumbank3/resources/Whitepapers/The%20Marriage%20of%20Health%20and%20Money.pdf[33] https://www.optumbank.com/resources/medical-expenses.html[34] https://my.cu.edu/[35]
https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/benefits-wellness/current-employee/hsa-fsa/health-savings-account[36]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/colorado-economy-shows-more-signs-recovery-filings-indicate[37] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/let-s-talk-grit-free-online-training-promotes-resilience-connectivity-during-covid-19-and[38]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/marks-leads-first-virtual-state-campus-address[39]
https://connections.cu.edu/stories/can-time-restricted-eating-prevent-you-overindulging-thanksgiving[40]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/arjomandi-named-2019-20-faculty-mentor-year[41]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/four-cu-boulder-staff-members-honored-employees-year[42]
https://connections.cu.edu/people/memoriam-lisa-herman-worley