

[Regents to faculty: Critical weeks ahead](#)[1]

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Editor's Note: In the original version of this story, President Kennedy was quoted referencing a "trail of tears" ahead if a revamp of online education doesn't succeed. Faculty Council leadership shared that the phrase was offensive. The president replied to Faculty Council: "I apologize for my poor choice of words. I have asked that the phrase be deleted from the electronic version of CU Connections and that we add an editor's note with my apology. I'm committed to fostering an inclusive environment at CU, where everyone feels that they belong. I recognize that words matter in doing that." The original quote has been deleted.

Updated story:

Faculty Council welcomed the chair and vice chair of the Board of Regents to the governance group's first meeting of the 2020-21 academic year, undeniably a time of uncertainty at CU and beyond.

"We are in a pandemic," Chair Glen Gallegos said during the meeting, held virtually via Zoom. "We've started school and found enough money to operate this year, but I don't think we're out of the woods yet. Our goal for the next year or so, maybe longer, is for us to survive.

"We've been around 144 years, but I think there is a great threat to how much longer we will be around if we cannot navigate" such challenges as diminished revenue and student retention, he said. "I don't think we'll be able to sell students and parents the model we have now. ... I think we'll be looking at different financial models. I don't think we can do the dance where we wait for the state to tell us they'll give us 3% or 4% (of our budget) every year."

Gallegos and Vice Chair Lesley Smith said the next few weeks are critical as final enrollment numbers for the fall will be tallied, determining whether budget cuts will be required beyond those already made for the current year.

Gallegos said it's important for faculty and staff to feel they're part of the university's plan for moving forward, all the more so given the moment's civil rights challenges.

"If we're going to do anything, we're going to need to work together," Gallegos said. "Otherwise, we won't make it to the 145th year."

Gallegos is encouraged by work on the university's strategic planning process, well underway when the coronavirus pandemic led to a pause earlier this year. Critical work in online education also will be a pivotal part of CU's next steps.

Speaking later in the meeting, President Mark Kennedy answered questions about CU Online, emphasizing the importance of the endeavor as well as its challenges. He said CU's market share of campus-delivered degrees is three and a half times as great as its share of online degrees, while demand for the former is falling and growing for the latter.

"All of us need to get this right if we're going to continue to be a very meaningful contributor to the prosperity of our students and state," Kennedy said.

Development of CU Online [paused recently](#)[3] in order to firm up a financial model that's sustainable.

"There's not a lot of cases where you've gotten four campuses to come together in a similar way," Kennedy said. "It's not an easy lift. But that is the path we remain on."

While CU Denver and UCCS "are furthest along online," Kennedy said, some of their program offerings overlap each other. "That doesn't work in the world we're operating in. They will continue to be very significant pieces of whatever assortment we put together."

Also during last week's Faculty Council meeting:

Regent Jack Kroll, CU Boulder Chancellor Phil DiStefano, UCCS Chancellor Venkat Reddy and others took part in a discussion on the economics of athletics at the two campuses. Kroll noted his previous criticism of athletics, citing moral and ethical objections, and said he'd like to see less university investment in sports. Stephen Hartnett, CU Denver communication professor, described the efforts of the university's Colorado Correctional Industries (CCI) working group, which [advanced a recommendation](#)[4] to President Kennedy. "This is kind of the best when we come together," said Faculty Council Chair Joanne Addison. "The students start something, we pick up the ball, the administration and regents join us, and now we're moving to something real that will make a difference. This kind of thing can be a model for more things we can all do and get behind." Representatives of United Campus Workers Colorado discussed their efforts to grow membership across the university. "We are not endorsing (the union), but we are saying some of our priorities align," Addison said. "This conversation is useful."

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[Election 2020: University guidelines affect campaign activity, expression](#)[7]
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With November's general election approaching, the University of Colorado reminds employees of guidelines regarding political campaign-related activity and expression.

A variety of state and federal laws and regulations govern political expression, activity and conduct in the university workplace. Application of the law depends on the particular facts of the situation, and legal counsel should be consulted when questions arise. However, the following guidelines may be used when trying to determine whether particular conduct is appropriate in the university setting.

General principles:

Employees have the right as private citizens to freedom of expression and participation in the political process. When expressing personal political views, university employees should be clear that they are not representing a university position and endeavor to maintain the principle of university impartiality in political campaigns. Private political activities must be conducted on personal time and without using university resources (computers, copiers, email addresses, promotional materials).

Employees should refrain from the following activities while at work:

Sending or forwarding emails from university-hosted email accounts in support of or in opposition to candidates or ballot initiatives. Using university office supplies (including computers, copiers and fax machines) to create or disseminate campaign materials. Making calls on university phones in support of or opposition to a political candidate or ballot initiatives. Using university computers to make monetary contributions to political campaigns. Placing campaign materials in locations not designated for general signage.

In general, employees may engage in the following activities while at work:

Discussing political issues and political campaigns with one another while on break. Wearing buttons or clothing promoting a particular candidate or issue, provided that the employee does not regularly interact with the public as part of their job duties. Placing a bumper sticker on a personal vehicle. Participating in campaign-related activities on personal time.

Because university email addresses are generally public and published on various websites, employees may receive electronic mail messages on their university-hosted email accounts from candidates and campaigns. Such emails are not illegal. The university cannot know or block every campaign- or candidate-related email account. Installing restrictive "spam" filters would have limited success with such messages, which originate from many different sources.

It is important to remember, however, that the transmission of such emails to you does not constitute University of Colorado endorsement of any candidate or campaign. Employees should refrain from using university email accounts to forward candidate or campaign-related messages for the purpose of expressing opposition to or support for the relevant candidate or campaign issue.

University employees should always be aware that, as public employees, their activities may be subject to heightened scrutiny by the media and members of the public. Accordingly, they should take care to ensure that their private activities do not compromise their ability to carry out their official duties.

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