University Counsel advises CU community on impact of Supreme Court decision[1]
[2]

A U.S. Supreme Court decision earlier this summer prohibits universities from considering race as a factor in college admissions, but it does not affect the University of Colorado's pursuit of a diverse student body, university leadership says.

The Office of University Counsel in CU system administration is providing guidance to the CU community following the Court's announcement of the opinion [3]in June. The Court determined that admissions programs at Harvard and the University of North Carolina violated anti discrimination laws because they: (1) lacked sufficiently measurable objectives; (2) lacked meaningful end points; and (3) resulted in racial stereotyping.

A memo[4] to the CU community from University Counsel emphasizes that the opinion was limited to admissions decisions and does not affect key practices used to promote diversity in student populations: administration of financial aid, recruitment and outreach, pipeline programs and employment of faculty and staff.

The University Counsel memo notes that the university does not use race as a positive or negative factor in undergraduate admissions, so the Supreme Court's decision should not impact the process. Graduate academic units that employ decentralized admissions practices will continue to be advised and counseled to ensure compliance with the Supreme Court decision.

A June statement from President Todd Saliman and the four campus chancellors following the Supreme Court's decision focused on the continued belief in campus diversity, stating, "We are steadfast in our belief that a vibrant and inclusive community leads to a richer educational experience for all, contributes to a positive society, and prepares our graduates to excel in an increasingly interconnected and diverse world."

The University of Colorado and its four campuses are proud to support and celebrate key programs that create a diverse campus environment. Initiatives like the Precollegiate Development Program, an academic enhancement program for first-generation students and families from targeted middle and high schools, are vital to helping students on their path to higher education. Through extensive advising and engagement with families, this program ensures that students are prepared academically, personally and socially to enroll in and succeed at the postsecondary institution of their choice.

At CU Boulder, we are expanding tuition and fee-free programs for Colorado residents, specifically the CU Promise and the Southern Ute partnership. CU Boulder also is building on longstanding support services and programs for first-generation and other students after they arrive on campus and seek communities to support their well-being and success. CU Denver formed teams of students, faculty, staff and community members who identified obstacles to equity and inclusion, then launched initiatives to make the campus a more welcoming place for all. The campus also offers scholarships for undocumented and DACA students to help with their higher education aspirations. UCCS commemorated heritage and awareness months throughout the year and launched the Inclusive Excellence and Belonging (IEB) action plan. The campus also has formed the Council on Inclusive Belonging to engage students, staff and faculty across the UCCS community to foster a greater culture of access. CU Anschutz has established the Department of Medicine Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Pilot Grant Program in an effort to conduct research, provide education, conduct advocacy, lead community engagement programs, or host events in underrepresented communities. The medical campus also is connecting to the greater Denver and Aurora areas through the Career Exploration and Science Exposure Opportunities program.

Further guidance on the matter is available from the Department of Education and Department[5]of Justice [5]and from the White House[6].

What's in the forecast for COVID-19? [7]

Scholars, leaders from CU campuses discuss university's public and community-engaged scholarship [8]

NSF grants CU Boulder nearly $2 million for climate communication by and for kids [9]

Regents University Affairs Committee advances proposals for new degree, two department designations[10]

A new degree at CU Boulder and designation of two UCCS programs as departments were among the proposals the Regents University Affairs Committee[11] advanced during its Sept. 1 meeting.

The items are scheduled to be voted on by the full Board of Regents during its meeting today and Friday at CU Denver.

At last week's committee meeting, held via Zoom, Kathy Schultz, dean of the School of Education at CU Boulder, presented plans for a new degree. As proposed, students majoring in a content area, such as physics or history, would be allowed to double major and earn a bachelor's degree in middle and high school teaching from the School of Education. She said the aim is to attract more students to careers in middle and high school teaching, addressing the shortage of educators in the state.

Proposals at UCCS would change two current academic programs – Technical Communication and Information Design (TCID) and Women's and Ethnic Studies (WEST) – into departments.

Unlike a program, a department can be a tenure home for tenure-track faculty. Michael Lightner, vice president for academic affairs, said department status also is likely to attract greater interest from faculty and students.

Alex Ilyasova, professor and interim director of TCID, said the change is an appropriate response to growing enrollment and industry demand for technical communication and information design.

Heather Albanesi, professor and director of WEST, said the program is home to a unique aggregation of topics that would benefit students by being available in one degree and one department.

The committee also approved its work plan for the coming year, advancing it to the full board for approval at this week's meeting.

The committee heard two presentations on artificial intelligence (AI). Sidney D'Mello, professor, Institute of Cognitive Science, Department of Computer Science and Department of Psychology and Neuroscience at CU Boulder, discussed the NSF AI Institute for Student AI-Teaming[12]. Beth Rudden, founder of Bast.ai and keynote speaker[13] at the recent COLTT conference, spoke on how people can be augmented by trusted AI.

Regents Finance Committee advances projects at CU Boulder, UCCS for full board consideration[14]

The Regents Finance Committee[11] recently advanced two construction-related matters and one finance item for consideration by the full Board of Regents at its meeting today and Friday at CU Denver.

The committee took action during its Aug. 28 meeting held via Zoom.

If approved, a proposal from CU Boulder would give 88 square feet of land from the campus to the city of Boulder for its improvements to the 30th Street corridor. The strip runs along the east edge of the 30th Street right-of-way, north of Colorado Avenue, on the edge of CU Boulder's East Campus.

Improvements, including bike paths, wider sidewalks and improved bus stops, will better connect the main campus and East Campus. The project also will help reduce the perceived negative travel distance between the two, said Derek Silva, associate vice chancellor for business strategy, CU Boulder. Construction is slated to run from October through next August.

At UCCS, the campus asked for approval to enter into $17.5 million of contractual agreements to address several energy savings and deferred maintenance projects. The cost would be repaid over time via energy savings, estimated at $929,000 annually.

The 28 small projects will contribute to achieving campus strategic plan sustainability goals[15], said Mark Ferguson, associate vice chancellor for administration and finance. Sustainability also is a key area of the Fiscal Strength pillar of the CU system's strategic plan[16], which includes tracking of Energy Use Intensity and Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

Among the planned improvements at UCCS are retrofitting older lighting with LED systems and replacing end-of-life HVAC and electrical equipment. The efforts will reduce campus greenhouse gas emissions by 3,736 metric tons annually and will help UCCS achieve an overall reduction of 18% in total greenhouse gas emissions from its audit baseline year (2005).

The committee also advanced the extension of lines of credit for the campuses. The previously approved treasury pool loans are available to the campuses for Board of Regents-approved capital construction projects.

Faculty Council discusses membership requirements[17]

Faculty Council[18] leadership is considering whether non-tenure-track faculty – including Instructional, Research and Clinical (IRC) faculty and lecturers – could be made eligible for membership in the Faculty Senate, the systemwide governance group composed of faculty with 50% or more appointments.

During Faculty Council's first meeting of the academic year, held Aug. 31 via Zoom, Chair Alastair Norcross called IRC faculty and lecturers "the most vulnerable of our colleagues."

The Faculty Senate Constitution[19] requires that members have a 50% or more appointment as faculty.

Jeffrey Schrader, chair of the council's Personnel and Benefits Committee[20], said the committee will take steps to determine what course of action the Faculty Senate might be able to take to pursue potential changes to membership requirements.

Norcross also asked the council to consider gathering in person for a retreat at some point during the year. A planned in-person retreat had been scheduled for last year but was postponed.

Also at last week's meeting, Cindy O'Bryant, immediate past chair of Faculty Council, said the Committee for the Revision of Faculty Council Bylaws continued its ongoing work over the summer. Potential changes to language will make the documents more efficient, she said. Updated documents are expected to be distributed for comment and approval by the end of the academic year.

The next Faculty Council meeting is scheduled for Sept. 28.

August Town Hall: Interim Chancellor Sobanet's priorities, fall enrollment, summer successes and more [21]

Campus and Workplace Climate pulse survey to track DEI progress [22]

CPAP: A first-line sleep apnea therapy fit for a president [23]

Fouts named new dean of the Graduate School[24]

Lovenduski named interim director of INSTAAR [25]

Jones announces plans to retire [26]

Can higher education help solve Eagle County's workforce challenges?[27]

Excluded: Denver's unhoused transgender population faces barriers to housing, added violence[28]

UCCS Economic Forum this week with new director at the helm[29]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/university-counsel-advises-cu-community-impact-supreme-court-decision[2] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/ussc_new_feat.jpg[3] https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/22pdf/20-1199_l6gn.pdf[4] https://image.communications.cu.edu/lib/fe8713737763027473/m/1/894145f6-1e8a-44ef-9f4c-c551a5cb003e.pdf[5] https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-20230814.pdf?utm_content&utm_medium=email&ut

m_name&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term[6] https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/06/29/fact-sheet-president-biden-announces-actions-to-promote-educational-opportunity-and-diversity-in-colleges-and-universities/[7] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/what-s-forecast-covid-19[8] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/scholars-leaders-cu-campuses-discuss-university-s-public-and-community-engaged-scholarship[9] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/nsf-grants-cu-boulder-nearly-2-million-climate-communication-and-kids[10] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/regents-university-affairs-committee-advances-proposals-new-degree-two-department[11] https://regents.cu.edu/committees[12] https://www.colorado.edu/research/ai-institute/[13] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/five-questions-beth-rudden[14] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/regents-finance-committee-advances-projects-cu-boulder-uccs-full-board-consideration[15] https://sustain.uccs.edu/sustain-plan[16] https://www.cu.edu/strategic-metrics[17] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/faculty-council-discusses-membership-requirements[18] https://www.cu.edu/faculty-senate-faculty-council[19] https://www.cu.edu/faculty-council/faculty-senate-constitution-0[20] https://www.cu.edu/faculty-council/faculty-council-personnel-and-benefits-committee-0[21] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/august-town-hall-interim-chancellor-sobanet-s-priorities-fall-enrollment-summer-successes[22] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/campus-and-workplace-climate-pulse-survey-track-dei-progress[23] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/cpap-first-line-sleep-apnea-therapy-fit-president[24] https://connections.cu.edu/people/fouts-named-new-dean-graduate-school[25] https://connections.cu.edu/people/lovenduski-named-interim-director-instaar[26] https://connections.cu.edu/people/jones-announces-plans-retire[27] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/can-higher-education-help-solve-eagle-county-s-workforce-challenges[28] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/excluded-denver-s-unhoused-transgender-population-faces-barriers-housing-added-violence[29] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/uccs-economic-forum-week-new-director-helm