Unprecedented times, unprecedented board meeting[1]
[2]

Unprecedented times led to an unprecedented meeting of the Board of Regents, which gathered not in person but virtually from their homes across the state.

The April 2 meeting – which brought together board members, President Mark Kennedy and university leaders via Zoom video conferencing – also was livestreamed[3]. The abbreviated agenda was dominated by expressions of appreciation for students, faculty, staff and medical care providers during the current pandemic, and by discussion of anticipated financial ramifications of the coronavirus outbreak. CU's COVID-19 costs so far are estimated at $44 million systemwide.
[4]

The April meeting typically includes votes by the Board of Regents on tuition, fees and compensation. As the public portion of the meeting began, Kennedy announced in an email communication to the CU community that university leadership had recommended the votes be postponed.

"Delaying the vote until one of the next scheduled meetings (May or June) will provide us with a clearer picture of revenue from the state, federal stimulus/relief funds and enrollment," Kennedy said. "As you may know, the state has delayed its budgeting process. By waiting, we will also learn more about the potential enrollment impacts on the summer and fall terms."

Kennedy also noted that a previously proposed compensation and merit increase pool for July, the start of the new fiscal year, no longer is feasible given the change in circumstances. "We will defer that decision until campus enrollment census is complete, likely in November."

The meeting featured a budget update[5] from Todd Saliman, vice president of budget and finance and chief financial officer, who noted that state revenue forecasts have declined and are expected to continue to do so. A new CU forecast shows that revenue would fall some $2 billion short of funding the governor's 2020-21 fiscal year budget request, though federal relief funds could help mitigate that.

President Kennedy brought together 20 leaders of Colorado higher education institutions, who signed a letter to the state's congressional delegation[6] requesting federal relief funding. The national $2 trillion relief package already signed into law includes a $14.2 billion appropriation for higher education, but institution leaders say more is needed. Congress is considering another round of relief funding.

Just as uncertainty clouds timelines for how the health crisis plays out in the population, the unknown makes difficult projecting enrollment and revenue changes, leadership said during the April 2 meeting.

"Regents want to know where the money is and where it isn't," said Chair Glen Gallegos. "We don't know how long this (downturn) is going to last or where it's going to go."

CU Denver Chancellor Dorothy Horrell said "there's just a lot of uncertainty right now. We're still early on in this. … All of us are in this together and really working well across the system and the four campuses to learn from each other, borrow the good ideas and try to have some consistency in the way we're approaching this."

UCCS Chancellor Venkat Reddy acknowledged immediate financial challenges, but cast an optimistic eye to the future.

"I feel like, students are not going to stop going to college," he said. "We are going to come out stronger."

CU Boulder Chancellor Phil DiStefano said the nature of the crisis requires responses that defy the slow-to-change stereotype of higher education.

"We learned very quickly that we had to make decisions quickly," he said. "That starts to change the culture of how we work with faculty and staff in moving forward. We have opportunities to make things better for the future."

CU Anschutz Chancellor Don Elliman echoed Horrell's assessment of the campuses and system being drawn closer together by the crisis. He also cautioned that greater challenges remain.

"Don't be fooled by the projections," he said. "The latest stories are that (the outbreak) should peak sometime in mid- to late April. But we're going to be dealing with the tail of this thing for a long time to come. We need to plan for that."

In other business at the April 2 meeting:
The board approved changes to regent and administrative policies, including some revisions and reorganization of leave policies. Read more here[7]. The board approved name changes for several degrees at CU Boulder. Read more in CU Boulder Today[8]. UCCS added new degrees and certificates after receiving approval from the board. The campus is launching Colorado's first Executive Doctor of Business Administration in Cybersecurity Management[9]. The Technical Communication and Information Design degree also is the first of its kind in the state[10]. A new graduate certificate focuses on sport management[11], while two new certificate options in cybersecurity concepts and technologies are aimed at aspiring professionals[12]. Read more in Communique[13].

Reorganized university staff and faculty leave policies now in effect[7]

A comprehensive review of university staff and faculty leave policies resulted in some revisions and reorganization of leave policies at the regent and administrative policy levels.

At the regent level, the Board of Regents on April 2 approved changes to Policy 11.E: Leave Policies for University Staff and 12-Month Faculty, which moved most of the administrative detail from the previous regent policies to administrative policy statements.

The new APS 5062-Leave was approved earlier, but officially became effective April 2 to coincide with the rollout of regent policy 11.E. The new APS will contain most of the detail previously contained in regent policy and creates an all-inclusive suite of leave policies provided to university staff and 12-month faculty.

For more detailed information on the changes to regent policy 11.E, go to https://www.cu.edu/regents/rlpreview#tabs-2 [14].

For more detailed information on the changes to the administrative policy statements, go to https://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/latest-changes[15].

Changes to Regent Policy 3.F – approved and effective April 2

The Board of Regents also approved changes to Policy 3.F: Search for Other University Staff, which will be renamed Policy 6.B: Staff Recruitment.

For more detailed information, go to https://www.cu.edu/regents/rlpreview#tabs-2[14].

With Open Enrollment set to begin April 20, here's what's changing[16]
[17]

Mark your calendar for Open Enrollment, which begins at 8 a.m. April 20 and ends at 5 p.m. May 8.

This is your chance to keep, waive or enroll in the University of Colorado's medical, dental, vision, life and disability insurance as well as savings plans.

Take a little time to determine if your coverage is just what the doctor ordered or if you need to make a few adjustments.

Here are the top five things you need to know:

1) Pharmacy benefits move to CVS

Pharmacy benefits for Anthem medical plans (Exclusive, Extended or High Deductible) will be managed by CVS Pharmacy, starting July 1. UCHealth will continue to fill mail order prescriptions, and prescription coverage will remain the same.

Details on this transition will be shared with faculty and staff throughout Open Enrollment and in the lead up to the new plan year.

2) New Medical and Pharmacy ID Cards

Faculty and staff enrolled in an Anthem plan (Exclusive, Extended or High Deductible) will receive separate identification cards for their medical and pharmacy benefits: one from Anthem and one from CVS. Digital identification cards will still be an option.

3) A streamlined, mobile-friendly benefits enrollment tool debuts

A new, mobile-responsive online tool will debut this Open Enrollment. You can now make changes on the go and get at-a-glance details on your coverage choices.

Please note: The new enrollment tool will require you to authenticate your identity. See how to verify if your information is up to date, and how to get assistance if it is not.[18]

4) Out-of-pocket maximums increase for some plans

The out-of-pocket maximums for CU Health Plans – Exclusive, Extended and Kaiser will increase from $7,900 to $8,150 for individuals and $15,800 to $16,300 for families.

5) Rates will increase for some plans

There will be a monthly rate increase for some medical and dental plans – most increasing by less than $5. Full rates will be available on Employee Services' Open Enrollment website[19] starting April 20.

Action required: Re-enroll in Flexible Spending Account

If you're enrolled in a Health Care Flexible Spending Account or Dependents Care Flexible Spending Account, you must re-enroll if you want to keep these plans.

If you'd like to keep your other benefits choices, no action is required and you and your dependents will be automatically re-enrolled for the new plan year, which begins July 1.

Planning to adjust your benefits selections? We're here to help

In-person Open Enrollment Sessions have been canceled this year, but virtual options will be available.

Employee Services, Anthem, Kaiser, Delta Dental and others have created online sessions to provide comprehensive overviews of available plans. Access them starting April 20 on Employee Services' Open Enrollment website[20].

Questions?

Visit the Open Enrollment website[20] or contact a benefits professional at 303-860-4200, option 3, or email benefits@cu.edu[21]. We're happy to help guide you through the decision-making process.

Boettcher launches COVID Biomedical Research Innovation Fund[22]

The Boettcher Foundation on Wednesday announced the creation of a $1 million biomedical research fund to fight COVID-19 and potentially curtail future pandemic outbreaks.

Called the COVID Biomedical Research Innovation Fund, the Fund's Request for Proposals (RFP) asks Colorado-based researchers and investigators to complete grant applications by the close of business on Friday, April 17. The rapid response strategy is both a short- and long-term approach.

"We wanted to be strategic in our COVID-19 response by supporting scientific innovation to fight the pandemic immediately and help impact Coloradans in the future," said Board of Trustee Chair Kenzo Kawanabe. "We know the good work being done in Colorado's biomedical research and this represents an effort to accelerate support and prioritize public health."

The Boettcher Foundation has a long history of supporting biomedical research in Colorado dating back to the 1940s. More recently since 2008, these investments have included nearly $15 million in biomedical research grants through its Webb-Waring Biomedical Research Awards[23]. The awards have supported 68 Boettcher Investigators to establish their bioscience and biomedical research, ensuring that Colorado's top scientific minds remain in-state.

The RFP for the fund can be found at boettcherfoundation.org/innovationfund[24]. A review panel of biomedical experts will review applications in early May before funding is disbursed. Grants will likely range between $25,000 and $250,000. For more information, visit boettcherfoundation.org/innovationfundfaqs[25].

In addition to creating the Boettcher COVID Biomedical Research Innovation Fund, the Foundation's Board of Trustees has approved $50,000 to support Help Colorado Now[26], the state's COVID Relief Fund, announced by Gov. Jared Polis last month. The statewide relief effort is being hosted by the state of Colorado and Mile High United Way.

"At Boettcher, we understand the significance of bioscience and biomedical research and innovation in Colorado," said President and CEO Katie Kramer. "Our approach in initiating our own fund and supporting the state's efforts aligns with our core strategies to achieve transformational impact for Coloradans."

Buffs Together aims to rally CU Boulder community while we're apart [27]

How to watch the two remaining CWA virtual sessions live[28]

Martínez-Dávila launches free, 10-week lecture series 'Medieval Plague, Modern Pandemic'[29]

Business School Zooms into action[30]

Clinical trial for patients hospitalized with COVID-19 opens at CU Anschutz[31]

What is the Study Monitoring Committee and how can it help you?[32]

Vidler named dean of the College of Letters, Arts and Sciences[33]

Spain Bradley elected to Council on Foreign Relations[34]
[35]

Anna Spain Bradley, assistant vice provost for faculty development and diversity and professor at the University of Colorado Law School at CU Boulder, has been elected as a Life Member to the Council on Foreign Relations[36] (CFR).

The CFR is an independent, nonpartisan membership organization, think tank and publisher dedicated to being a resource for its 5,000 members, government officials, business executives, journalists, educators and students, civic and religious leaders, and other interested citizens in order to help them better understand the world and the foreign policy choices facing the United States and other countries. The group's goal is to start a conversation in this country about the need for Americans to better understand the world.

Criteria for membership include intellectual achievement and expertise; degree of experience, interest, and current involvement in international affairs; promise of future achievement and service in foreign relations; potential contributions to CFR's work; desire and ability to participate in CFR activities; and standing among peers.

Butler-Dawson on her passion for environmental health [37]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/unprecedented-times-unprecedented-board-meeting[2] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/bor_feat.jpg[3] https://cu.new.swagit.com/videos/51484[4] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/bor_jk.jpg[5] https://go.boarddocs.com/co/cu/Board.nsf/files/BNARZ36FEB6A/$file/April%20Budget%20Update%20FY%202020-21%20(Final%204-2-20).pdf[6] https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qKVdngjJBbHkPEd_Vrcsi5d9pYXacg78/view[7] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/reorganized-university-staff-and-faculty-leave-policies-now-effect[8]

https://www.colorado.edu/today/2020/04/02/regents-address-covid-19-impacts-university-budget-more[9] https://communique.uccs.edu/?p=120754[10] https://communique.uccs.edu/?p=120798[11] https://communique.uccs.edu/?p=120757[12] https://communique.uccs.edu/?p=120766[13] https://communique.uccs.edu/[14] https://www.cu.edu/regents/rlpreview#tabs-2[15] https://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/latest-changes[16] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/open-enrollment-set-begin-april-20-here-s-what-s-changing[17] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/oe_top_0.jpg[18] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/it-takes-two-portal-security-strengthened-new-tool[19] https://www.cu.edu/employee-services/open-enrollment[20] http://www.cu.edu/oe[21] mailto:benefits@cu.edu[22] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/boettcher-launches-covid-biomedical-research-innovation-fund[23] https://www.cu.edu/boettcher-foundation-webb-waring-biomedical-research-awards[24] https://boettcherfoundation.org/innovationfund/[25] https://boettcherfoundation.org/innovationfundfaqs/[26] https://covrn.com/[27] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/buffs-together-aims-rally-cu-boulder-community-while-we-re-apart[28] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/how-watch-two-remaining-cwa-virtual-sessions-live[29] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/mart-nez-d-vila-launches-free-10-week-lecture-series-medieval-plague-modern-pandemic[30] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/business-school-zooms-action[31] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/clinical-trial-patients-hospitalized-covid-19-opens-cu-anschutz[32] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/what-study-monitoring-committee-and-how-can-it-help-you[33] https://connections.cu.edu/people/vidler-named-dean-college-letters-arts-and-sciences[34] https://connections.cu.edu/people/spain-bradley-elected-council-foreign-relations[35] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/p_bradley_1.jpg[36] https://www.cfr.org/[37] https://connections.cu.edu/people/butler-dawson-her-passion-environmental-health