

# ABOUT CU BOULDER

## General Information

As one of only 38 U.S. public research institutions in the Association for American Universities (AAU), the University of Colorado Boulder is all about realizing the positive impacts of new knowledge. From offering dozens of exciting programs in a range of academic fields, to serving as one of the world's most dynamic research and innovation hubs, to working closely through hundreds of public outreach efforts with communities across Colorado and the world, we take pride in helping our students, faculty, staff and partners turn new ideas into productive outcomes that change lives.

## Students

With an enrollment of more than 38,000 students, CU Boulder is the largest of the four-campus University of Colorado system. The student population comes from every state in the nation and almost 100 foreign countries. Many different ethnic, religious, academic and social backgrounds are represented, fostering the development of a multicultural academic community that enriches each student's educational experience.

## Faculty

CU Boulder has more than 1,200 tenured and tenure-track faculty, with 97% holding doctorates or appropriate terminal degrees. The faculty includes nationally and internationally recognized scholars with many academic honors and awards:

- David Wineland won the 2012 Nobel Prize in physics.
- Several CU Boulder research faculty from the National Snow and Ice Data Center shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with former Vice President Al Gore for their contributions to the international report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.
- John Hall won the 2005 Nobel Prize in physics.
- Carl Wieman and Eric Cornell won the 2001 Nobel Prize in physics.
- Tom Cech won the 1989 Nobel Prize in chemistry.
- Nine faculty have received MacArthur Fellowships.
- Twenty-six active or retired faculty are members of the National Academy of Sciences, all of whom are included in the membership of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.
- Fifteen faculty are members of the National Academy of Engineering.
- Six faculty are members of the National Academy of Education.

Most faculty members, including full professors, teach both undergraduate and graduate classes. Faculty members incorporate their research and creative activities directly into instructional programs. Faculty participate in campus governance through the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Assembly. Students participate through the University of Colorado Student Government (CUSG) and the United Government of Graduate Students (UGGS).

## Academic Offerings

The Boulder campus offers approximately 4,600 different courses in approximately 160 distinct fields of study and 241 degree programs across the baccalaureate, master's, doctoral and professional levels. These courses represent a full range of disciplines in the humanities, the social sciences, the physical and biological sciences, engineering, the fine and performing arts, and the professions.

## Research

CU Boulder is home to more than 2,400 nationally and internationally recognized research faculty who have earned a global reputation for outstanding teaching, research and creative work across more than 160 academic disciplines. While the classroom is the location for most instructional activities, laboratories, seminars and field work also are important features of the undergraduate and graduate experience. Students can become involved in research and creative work as early as their first year.

CU Boulder's sponsored research portfolio continues to grow. Since fiscal year 2015, CU Boulder has experienced 74 percent growth in research awards. Federal agency funding remains the mainstay of CU research, with 67 percent of awards coming directly from those sources. Five federal agencies are consistently the largest funding sources for CU Boulder awards:

- NASA
- National Science Foundation
- Department of Commerce
- National Institutes of Health
- Department of Defense

CU Boulder remains the No. 1 public university recipient of NASA research awards, and continues to be a national leader in aerospace and space research. Additionally, university researchers are expanding their impact through collaborative projects with industry, other universities, nonprofits and international partners.

CU Boulder's research institutes and research centers significantly contribute to the university's research and education missions, as well as the regional economy. Research faculty in academic departments, institutes and centers are continually expanding CU Boulder's research capabilities and collaborations, resulting in new knowledge, technologies and creative work for the benefit of Colorado, the nation and the world.

For more information, see the Research (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/about-cu-boulder/research/>) section.

## Statutory Mission

CU Boulder's vision is grounded in its statutory mission as a national public research university. In Colorado statute, the university is defined as the "comprehensive graduate research university with selective admissions standards . . . offer(ing) a comprehensive array of undergraduate, master and doctoral degree programs" of what is now designated the University of Colorado system.

CU Boulder recognizes the exceptional opportunities associated with its role as a research university, and values the unique strength and character research achievements bring to undergraduate education. It is keenly aware of its responsibility for educating the next generation of citizens and leaders, and for fostering the spirit of discovery through research. Indeed, CU Boulder believes that its students, both graduate and undergraduate, benefit from the comprehensive mix of programs and research excellence that characterize a flagship university. Thus, CU Boulder's statutory mission is relevant today and will remain relevant tomorrow.

Since 2007, CU Boulder's strategic plan, *Flagship 2030*, has been guiding near-term actions and investments that will sustain CU's quality

and competitiveness and, through visionary "flagship initiatives," will transform the university.

## University of Colorado History

At its first session in 1861, Colorado's territorial legislature passed an act providing for a university in Boulder. Between 1861 and 1876, Boulder residents donated land south of town and made gifts from \$15 to \$1,000 to match the \$15,000 the state legislature appropriated for the university's construction. In 1875, Colorado residents laid the cornerstone for the university's first building, Old Main, and officially founded CU in 1876, the same year Colorado joined the Union. The university opened its doors the following year with 44 students, a president, and one instructor.

Today, the University of Colorado is a four-campus system that includes the University of Colorado Boulder, the University of Colorado Colorado Springs, the University of Colorado Denver and the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. The campuses have a combined enrollment of more than 67,000 students. To meet the needs of its students, the university system offers an extensive number of undergraduate, graduate and professional degree programs, as well as opportunities to study abroad, engage in public service and conduct research.

CU Boulder has a strong sponsored research portfolio, and the university also relies on revenues from tuition and fees, contracts and grants, investments and interest income, health services and the generous support of private foundations and donors.

An elected nine-member Board of Regents governs CU and is charged by the state constitution with the general supervision of the university and the exclusive control and direction of all its funds and appropriations, unless otherwise provided by law. The board conducts its business at regular meetings open to the public and through committees. The president is the chief administrative officer and is responsible for providing leadership to the university.

For more information, visit the CU Board of Regents (<http://www.cu.edu/regents/>) webpage, or the CU system (<http://www.cu.edu>) website.

## Enrollment and Graduation Rates

CU Boulder's fall 2024 enrollment was 38,428. The undergraduate enrollment was 31,939 of which 7,432 were entering first-year students. The number of new undergraduate transfer students who enrolled in fall 2024 was 1,608.

Among the undergraduates, 47.3 percent identified as female, 57.2 percent as residents of Colorado and 29.2 percent as racially/ethnically diverse (Black/African American, Asian Americans, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian and Pacific Islander). Forty-four percent enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences, 20 percent in the College of Engineering and Applied Science, 13 percent in the Leeds School of Business, 12 percent in the Program in Exploratory Studies, and 11 percent, combined, enrolled in the College of Media, Communication and Information, the Program in Environmental Design, the College of Music and the School of Education.

Of the first-year students entering in summer or fall 2018 who enrolled full time, 59.2 percent had graduated within four years; 71.4 percent graduated within five years; and 74.1 percent graduated within six years. Of the students who entered in fall 2023, 90.2 percent returned for their second fall semester.

CU Boulder enrolled 6,489 graduate and professional students in master's, doctoral, law and graduate certificate programs in fall 2024.

Of these, 43% were females. The five most enrolled majors for masters students were Computer Science, Aerospace Engineering Sciences, Electrical Engineering, Data Science and Master of the Environment. The most enrolled doctorate majors were Physics, Aerospace Engineering Sciences, Computer Science, Chemistry and Mechanical Engineering.

## CU Boulder Accreditation and Affiliation

Since 1913, CU Boulder has been accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (<http://www.hlcommission.org/>) (HLC) (800-621-7440 or 312-263-0456). In addition, several academic programs have specialized and programmatic accreditation (<https://www.colorado.edu/accreditation/>).

As one of 35 U.S. public research institutions belonging to the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU), a goal at CU Boulder is to directly affect Colorado communities through collaborative research, innovation and entrepreneurship. CU Boulder faculty, staff and students work with the broader community to establish unique connections that have lasting outcomes across Colorado and around the world.