



2025-2026 Divisional Strategic Plan



Dean of the Faculty

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Dean of the Faculty Overview

Message from the Dean of the Faculty

In a time when higher education faces intensifying pressures—shifts in public funding and legislative attempts to shape academic priorities, skepticism about its public value, pressures of cost and access, and global uncertainties that impede collaboration and exchange—our commitment to academic excellence has never been more vital. The liberal arts are not a luxury but a necessity: cultivating habits of independent thought, creativity, and ethical leadership that prepare students to navigate complexity and contribute meaningfully to a changing world.

One of the clearest statements of a college's purpose comes from the Kalven Report: "A university faithful to its mission will provide enduring challenges to social values, policies, practices, and institutions. By design and by effect, it is the institution which creates discontent with the existing social arrangements and proposes new ones." At Colorado College, we embrace this responsibility. Our faculty and librarians invite students to confront assumptions, ask difficult questions, and imagine more just and sustainable futures. Through immersive teaching and learning, relationship building and mentorship, and scholarship, we bring intellectual rigor and imagination both to the urgent challenges of society and to the timeless inquiries that expand knowledge and meaning.

The 2025-26 Strategic Plan continues this work to cultivate independence of thought, the curiosity and courage to question prevailing norms, and the willingness both to speak with conviction and to listen with care. Our priorities highlight ways to redouble our commitment to the liberal arts approach, to faculty and staff expertise, academic success, and to the transformative power of high-impact education.

Organized around three themes—Faculty Academic Excellence, the Student Academic Journey to Excellence, and Learning and Impact Beyond the Campus—this plan provides both focus and direction. It reminds us that the strength of our academic mission lies in the creativity and dedication of our faculty and staff, and in the transformative education they make possible for our students.

Emily Chan

Dean of the Faculty



Dean of the Faculty Strategic & Operational Plan

Overview

Our imperative is to create a transformative four-year experience so that our students and graduates—the diverse leaders and changemakers of the future—will flourish and grow to be ready for life, work, and citizenship. Our goal is to invest in the thriving of the faculty and library/academic professionals to achieve this through our teaching, research, and mentoring. As we actualize our values, priorities, and goals, we also support and respond to the aspirations, needs, and concerns of our faculty and staff. Through sustaining collaborative relationships, cultivating a readiness for change, and aligning long-term priorities and strategies, we elevate student access and success here at CC and beyond, amplify academic visibility, and foster community.

Strategic Themes

- **Faculty Academic Excellence:** We aim to attract and support outstanding faculty through robust hiring and targeted professional development that advances research, teaching, leadership, and service, and through our support of sustainable career pathways. Our recent RCU (Research College and University) designation—a Carnegie Classification awarded only to institutions investing over \$2.5 million annually in research—underscores our distinctive position among liberal arts colleges. Additionally, we seek to elevate the visibility of faculty achievements and the Block Plan, both within Colorado College and in the broader academic community.
- **Student Academic Journey to Excellence:** We aim to advance student learning and success through rigorous curricula paired with effective pedagogies. Robust review and assessment processes will ensure we meet outcomes and support student thriving. Faculty and students will explore the role of generative AI in education and its broader societal, ethical, and intellectual implications. To support our bold vision for the future of science education, we are making preparations for a new science building. We will strengthen the effectiveness of advising, as faculty and staff advisors mentor students to discover their passions, set goals, and make progress toward graduation.
- **Learning and Impact Beyond the Campus:** Learning at CC is neither bound by geography nor time—there is an opportunity to expand our reach beyond the four-year experience as a student on our campus. By strategically exploring opportunities to extend the learning opportunity, we can strengthen our relationship with alumni, increase our impact and public presence, and partner with others who share our educational mission. We will support faculty initiatives in public scholarship, develop pipelines to postgraduate programs, build educational partnerships with high schools and community colleges, and partner with the Alumni Office to broaden academic connections with alumni.

Topline Priorities & Goals

- **Faculty Excellence and Visibility:** robust hiring, professional development, and recognition of faculty achievements within and beyond CC.
- **Student Success and World-Readiness:** rigorous curricula, effective pedagogy, strong advising, and preparation for a future-focused science building.
- **Learning Beyond the Campus:** alumni partnerships, public scholarship, and educational pathways that



extend CC's impact outward.

Key Challenges

- Increased cost of academic activities (direct research expenses; conference attendance; faculty start-ups resources; costs of fieldwork and field teaching; cost of access to software, compute resources and databases).
- Uncertainty in higher education sector-wide environment with national leadership changes: compliance and regulatory changes, reduction in research funding, intrusion into academic independence.
- Initiative and assessment fatigue from multiple rounds of listening-planning.
- Rapid changes in student educational preparation from secondary education, uneven student knowledge and interest for college level curricular choices, rapid changes in the popular understanding of the purpose and demand of different areas of study.
- Increased competitiveness for our students' graduate school admissions due to national changes in funding.

Institutional Goal Alignment

Each division plays a unique and vital role in shaping Colorado College's future. As an enhancement to our strategic planning process, divisional goals are now aligned with the College's institutional priorities to facilitate collaboration across the campus, ensure a shared trajectory, and reinforce our continued commitment to advancing the College together.

The chart below illustrates how the Dean of the Faculty Academic goals connect to CC's broader priorities and thematic areas of focus. Throughout this document, you will find references to the numbers noted that indicate the divisional goal corresponds to an institutional priority as shared here.

DoF Academics Goal Alignment	
Priorities	Themes
Institutional Strength (1)	Financial sustainability, stewardship, and revenue generation (2)
	Brand & Visibility (4)
Reclaiming the Liberal Arts (2)	Student Experience (1)
	Faculty Development & Scholarship (2)
	Community Engagement (3)



Priorities

Strategic Theme: Faculty Academic Excellence

We aim to attract and support outstanding faculty through robust hiring and targeted professional development that advances research, teaching, leadership, and service, and through our support of sustainable career pathways. Our recent RCU (Research College and University) designation—a Carnegie Classification awarded only to institutions investing over \$2.5 million annually in research—underscores our distinctive position among liberal arts colleges. Additionally, we seek to elevate the visibility of faculty achievements and the Block Plan, both within Colorado College and in the broader academic community.

Goal: Strengthen academic programs and faculty support structures to enhance educational quality and faculty satisfaction. (*ref. 2.2*)

- **Objective:** Hire and develop an outstanding faculty that will create and sustain excellence in teaching, research and leadership.
 - *Tactics:*
 - Continue to evolve a strong faculty on-boarding program with start-up support, post-offer outreach, formal orientations, networked mentoring, and instructional coaching.
 - Examine flexible ways of accruing and using sabbatical and research time.
 - Deepen the integration of Creativity and Innovation programming in the Crown Center as a core program of faculty professional development.
 - Explore and expand reach of development opportunities for career growth and renewal, such as for teaching abroad or teaching a Catalyst Block.
 - See *sustain excellence in research section below*.
- **Objective:** Modernize faculty structures to support contemporary academic work.
 - *Tactics:*
 - Explore vertical and horizontal flexibility in faculty duties to allow for changes in the balance of scholarship, leadership, and teaching responsibilities.
 - Recruit distinguished professionals as visiting faculty to enhance our educational offerings.
 - Strengthen and sustain a holistic mid-career and chair leadership development program, participate in consortial leadership programs (e.g., through ACM, CIC) and joint staff-faculty workshops with Human Resources.
 - Create more teaching-release grants to support faculty scholarship.
 - Explore multiple pathways for faculty to engage in leadership roles (e.g., leadership fellows, coaching).



Goal: Sustain excellence in research. (*ref. 2.1, 2.2, 1.2*)

- **Objective:** Support active faculty scholarly activity in research and creativity, promote student engagement in faculty-mentored and independent research, and advance the academic reputation of CC faculty.
 - *Tactics:*
 - Support faculty in seeking external grants by enhancing grant-seeking, proposal preparation, and post-award support.
 - Create more internal research grants of research funds or research time to incentivize investment and success in scholarship.
 - Reactivate the CC Press overseen by the Library to publish more open scholarship from CC authors.
 - Develop tracking mechanisms for faculty-student research collaboration presentations and publications.

Goal: Increase academic visibility. (*ref. 1.4, 2.2*)

- **Objective:** Enhance communication internal to CC to share academic success stories in teaching and scholarship; enhance external visibility of CC's academic reputation to scholarly and general audiences.
 - *Tactics:*
 - Develop an academic visibility plan for internal communications.
 - Enhance our book-launch program.
 - Partner with Marketing and Communications for strategic external communications.
 - Re-energize departmental communications with targeted alumni.
 - Amplify open scholarship from CC authors published via the CC Press.
 - Support public scholarship with internal grants.
 - Support and elevate scholarship of teaching projects and publications.
 - Develop a national presence as the expert in intensive teaching using the Block Plan. Specific tactics could include developing a repository of CC teaching practices and creating short teaching-related videos and/or podcasts.



Strategic Theme: Student Academic Journey to Excellence

We aim to advance student learning and success through rigorous curricula paired with effective pedagogies. Robust review and assessment processes will ensure we meet outcomes and support student thriving. Faculty and students will explore the role of generative AI in education and its broader societal, ethical, and intellectual implications. To support our bold vision for the future of science education, we are making preparations for a new science building. We will strengthen the effectiveness of advising, as faculty and staff advisors mentor students to discover their passions, set goals, and make progress toward graduation.

Goal: Promote curricular and pedagogical strengths to enhance learning. (*ref. 2.1, 2.2*)

- **Objective:** Sustained and strategic development of curricula.
 - *Tactics:*
 - Support robust departmental program external reviews and multi-department strategic planning (e.g., Languages@CC, STEM@CC, Humanities Initiative)
 - Engage in assessment of student learning outcomes and program evaluation to inform improvements for the general education program and academic programs/activities.
 - Explore and implement pilot initiatives to prepare students for generative AI engaged futures, such as by hosting Crown Center workshops about AI, continuing the work with national institutes in higher education (e.g., AAC&U institute on AI), and offering critical AI literacy course development grants.
 - Achieve 100% departmental engagement with Career Center programming.
 - Increase the availability and use of Open Education Resources.
- **Objective:** Increase visibility of High Impact Experiences and Core Competencies through curriculum mapping.
 - *Tactics:*
 - Faculty will tag their courses with merged HIP and Core Competency categories.
 - Partner with ITS, Registrar, faculty and staff advisors to implement the use of the tagged courses and pathways in Banner, Coursedog, and Stellic as an advising resource.

Goal: Continued enhancement of academic advising. (*ref. 2.1, 2.2*)

- **Objective:** Improve 6-year graduation rate via promoting coordinated and holistic academic advising.
 - *Tactics:*
 - Robust coordination between staff advisors and faculty advisors for effective support of a broad range of student academic advising needs.
 - Leverage the investment of a newly established Faculty Advising Working Group to improve visibility and quality of faculty academic advising.
 - Continue improvement of faculty advisor training program and professional development resources.



- Staff and faculty will collaborate to enhance advising of new students during orientation.

Strategic Theme: Learning and Impact Beyond the Campus

Learning at CC is not bound by geography or time—there is an opportunity to expand our reach beyond the four-year experience as a student on our campus. By strategically exploring opportunities to extend the learning opportunity, we can strengthen our relationship with alumni, increase our impact and public presence, and partner with others who share our educational mission. We will support faculty initiatives in public scholarship, develop pipelines to postgraduate programs, build educational partnerships with high schools and community colleges, and partner with the Alumni Office to broaden academic connections with alumni.

Goal: Support academic engagement with CC alumni. (*ref. 2.3*)

- **Objective:** Feedback from alumni often reflect a desire to continue to participate in educational opportunities from CC. The popularity of recent faculty-led alumni trips, regional events, and mini blocks during homecoming suggests opportunities for enhancing academic outreach to alumni via these Academic + Alumni Office partnerships:
 - *Tactics:*
 - A robust offering of alumni trips on a range of topics and geographic locations.
 - Faculty-led alumni gatherings to coincide with faculty research travel and off-campus courses.
 - Expanded options for micro-blocks for Homecoming, Family Weekend, and other campus event opportunities.

Goal: Support academic engagement beyond CC students and campus. (*ref. 2.1, 2.2, 2.3*)

- **Objective:** Strategic connections and initiatives can enhance CC's educational impact regionally and nationally:
 - *Tactics:*
 - Support faculty initiatives in public scholarship with internal grants.
 - Develop recruitment pipelines with graduate programs for CC students.
 - Build educational partnerships with local high schools and community colleges.



Summary

This plan sets out a focused agenda to strengthen Colorado College’s academic mission. With three central themes— Faculty Academic Excellence, Student Academic Journey to Excellence, and Learning and Impact Beyond the Campus—the plan highlights both the vitality of our faculty and the transformative experiences they create for students. A particular emphasis is placed on the student journey: pairing rigorous curricula with effective pedagogies, strengthening advising, and engaging critically with today’s grand questions and challenges. Complementing this work, the plan invests in faculty excellence through professional development for teaching and support for scholarship, and extends CC’s impact through alumni partnerships, public scholarship, and educational collaborations. Together these priorities affirm the role of faculty and academic staff in preparing our students for purposeful lives of inquiry, leadership, and impact.