

# Healthy Campus Initiative

## Spring 2026 Website FAQs

### General Overview

#### **What is the Healthy Campus Initiative?**

The Healthy Campus Initiative is UCCS's multi-year effort to stabilize our financial foundation, address the structural budget deficit, and position the university for long-term sustainability, growth, and investment in our people, mission, and academic excellence.

#### **Why is UCCS taking this action now?**

Higher education has experienced lasting financial shifts, and UCCS has relied on one-time funds and reserves for many years to bridge budget gaps. Expenses have outpaced revenue growth, creating an unsustainable path. To build a stable and healthy future, we must address this structural deficit now rather than rely on short-term fixes.

#### **What does this mean for the future of UCCS?**

This initiative is about creating a stronger, more resilient university, one that can invest in students, faculty, staff, and the campus environment. The work is challenging, but it is designed to ensure UCCS remains a stable, thriving academic community for future generations of students.

#### **What role does Culture of Care have in the Healthy Campus Initiative?**

The Healthy Campus Initiative provides the strategic and financial framework for long-term sustainability. UCCS's Culture of Care provides the foundational values and behaviors that guide how that work is carried out. Together, they ensure that UCCS moves forward in a way that is strategic, responsible, and deeply centered on people and mission.

#### **Campus wide, what is the breakdown of the different groups faculty-tenured and non-tenured; non tenure track faculty (instructors) and adjunct lecturers, classified staff, and university staff by year that can be compared to enrollments?**

UCCS reports official employee data through IPEDS, which is the most reliable and standardized source for looking at faculty and staff trends over time—including tenured/tenure-track faculty, instructors, lecturers, classified staff, and university staff. These reports are available at the [Institutional Data website](#) under the IPEDS section, where you can access the past five years of submissions, feedback reports, and direct links to IPEDS for deeper exploration.

A few key things to know:

- IPEDS uses a fixed census date of November 1, so data reflect employees active on that date.
- Employee classifications follow federal Standard Occupational Classification guidelines, which means roles are categorized by their primary function (e.g., deans are reported as management, not faculty).
- A classification update in 2018 combined with campus reporting inconsistencies led to several years of misclassified positions. These issues were corrected for one year, but earlier years cannot be retroactively changed. IDEA also completed a comparison in Spring 2024 to clarify what Fall 2023 should have looked like relative to 2021–2022.
- Overall employee totals did not change, but some positions shifted between administrative and staff categories.

For additional context and comparison to enrollment, UCCS offers an [IPEDS Benchmarking Dashboard](#), which includes the student-faculty ratio and other metrics using full-time-equivalent calculations. Updates to this dashboard are underway and expected in the coming months. The CU System also provides related reporting through its Faculty & Staff dashboards on the [CU Data site](#).

## **Budget Context & Key Terms**

### **Why does UCCS have a budget gap?**

Like many universities, UCCS has been affected by national changes in enrollment, rising costs, and limits on state funding. For several years, the campus used reserves and one-time funds to cover shortfalls, but that approach is no longer sustainable. The Healthy Campus Initiative is a long-term plan to fix that.

### **How large is the current budget gap?**

At this time, campus is facing a \$27.7 million gap that we will address over a five-year period. However, this figure reflects current projections and will be refined as enrollment, revenue strategies, and expense reductions evolve.

### **What is the difference between general funds and auxiliary funds?**

General Funds are the primary, unrestricted operating budget supported by state appropriations, tuition, and educational fees. The deficits being considered in the Healthy Campus Initiative are in the general fund only.

Auxiliary Funds are self-generated through the sale of goods and services or generated through student fees. These funds are legally restricted to the operations that generate them and generally cannot be redirected to cover general fund deficits. By the same token, general fund sources are not intended to cover deficits in auxiliaries.

**What does “structural budget deficit” mean?**

Structural deficits in universities occur when what is considered "ongoing revenue" is less than what is considered ongoing operational expenses. Permanent revenue in public universities has traditionally been considered to be tuition revenue and state appropriations. For example, using one-time reserves to pay ongoing salaries creates a structural imbalance.

**Can you provide a breakdown of those employees across college and divisions (VC) over the past 5 years? Both numbers of people and percentage of overall UCCS employees would be helpful.**

Academic programs, administrative units, and funding sources have shifted frequently over the past several years—such as offices moving between vice chancellor areas, academic departments changing colleges, and positions transitioning between Auxiliary and General Fund support. These organizational changes, along with periodic reclassification of positions, mean that year-to-year comparisons at the college or division level would appear inconsistent or misleading. What we can provide is a single-year snapshot: after each IPEDS cycle is completed, the Provost and Deans receive an annual summary of faculty and staff for their respective units. The IDEA office will share the IPEDS summary data in late Spring and can be found on the [Institutional Data, Effectiveness, and Analytics webpage](#).

**What is the difference between shared services and outsourcing?**

Shared services and outsourcing are distinct approaches to delivering campus or system-level support.

Shared Services refer to internal cost-sharing arrangements—primarily within auxiliary units—to support campuswide functions such as facilities maintenance, IT services, and other operational needs. These services remain within the university but are funded collaboratively by the units that use them.

Outsourcing involves contracting with an external provider to perform services that are currently delivered by the university. This may be considered when external providers can deliver the service more efficiently, with better quality, or at lower cost.

## **How will quality, cost, and campus culture be considered before any outsourcing decisions are made?**

For Dining and Hospitality Services, the RFP process explicitly evaluates vendors on quality of service, cost and financial sustainability, and alignment with campus culture and expectations. These factors will be central to any final decision. More broadly, EMSA is reviewing its operations with the goal of achieving cost efficiencies that do not diminish student-facing support. Any outsourcing proposal would undergo careful evaluation to ensure it meets community expectations and maintains the character of the student experience at UCCS.

## **Why isn't TABOR repeal part of the university's budget strategy?**

TABOR is a state constitutional framework that the university cannot change independently. Our financial planning must be grounded in current law and known funding rather than potential policy shifts. While broader advocacy may occur at the system or state level, institutional budgets must be based on reliable revenues we can count on within the budget cycle.

What we can do is:

- Plan using conservative state-funding scenarios that reflect current statute.
- Diversify revenues (enrollment, partnerships, philanthropy, auxiliaries) to reduce exposure to any single source.
- Engage through appropriate channels (e.g., system-level government relations) while maintaining campus budgets that are viable without assuming changes to TABOR or other statewide policies.

We will participate in discussions where appropriate, but our structural budget cannot rely on uncertain legislative or statewide ballot outcomes.

## **When will we see the framework for how decisions will be made?**

Given campus feedback through our December survey, we heard that the campus does not want us to assign across-the-board expense reduction targets, nor does the campus want specific dollar or percentage targets given to the divisions and colleges given the non-strategic nature of these methods. Therefore, in the January 29th UBAC retreat and January 30th UBAC meeting, we were evaluating the use of a rubric to assist us in an allocation of expense reductions. Based on extensive feedback, we learned from the campus community that it's too complicated for a rubric to capture the nuances of all aspects of the university. Therefore, after thoughtful consideration, the Senior Leadership Team is

engaging in a collaborative, iterative, multi-step process to evaluate all aspects of each division and college's expenses. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is currently reviewing unallocated base budgets, vacancies, and operational budgets together. We are seeking duplications, areas we can consolidate, areas that we need to stop efforts and challenging one another to make the best decisions for our campus. We will also have to consider filled positions which includes positions in academic programs. Decisions will evolve dynamically as the SLT moves through this process, while also adhering to the shared governance practices of the colleges. No specific numbers or percentages will be assigned to units instead this iterative process will allow for strategic decisions to be made.

**When will we see the framework for how decisions will be made?**

Decision-making is occurring through a collaborative, iterative, multi-step process. As Chancellor Sobanet outlined at the Town Hall on March 9, the process starts with a review of areas for expense reduction with the least impact on people as possible. Once those steps are exhausted, areas with greater impact on people will be reviewed; these include both filled positions and academic and non-academic programs.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) began this process in February by reviewing un-allocated base, then position vacancies, and then operational budgets. Only after reviewing these areas has the SLT begun to review filled at-will positions. It is the SLT's hope that through these processes, we will be able to meet the \$11.7 million needed for the FY 2027 budget. Vice Chancellors and Deans are working with their divisions and colleges to collect and review data that are informing decisions. Decisions are evolving as the SLT completes their reviews.

**When will the campus receive clear, detailed budget numbers?**

While this multi-year, dynamic model will change continuously throughout the years, we expect to have more defined inputs to the FY27 revenue and expense projections after the Colorado Legislature's Joint Budget Committee completes its initial development of the State's budget. This should be completed by the end of March/early April. We also anticipate we will receive the system office mandatory cost increases by the end of March or early April. That will allow us to update the FY27 revenue and expense estimates. This timing is consistent year-over-year.

Additionally, here is the timeline of what has occurred so far this year:

On January 29, 2026, the campus received written information through the [January 29th Budget Update](#) about our need to close the gap between revenue and expenses. The multi-

year scenario is an estimated \$27-28m gap with the need to cut expenses this year by an estimated \$11.7m. On January 30, 2026, the all-campus [UBAC meeting](#) provided more details about the 5-year, dynamic model.

At the February 18 UBAC meeting, the chancellor explained that for the development of the FY27 budget, we will employ a similar expense reduction process that we used for the past two years and added that the process will be more collaborative and iterative following specific steps. The specific steps were described in the [February 18 UBAC meeting](#) and the [March 9 Town Hall](#).

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT – Deans and Vice Chancellors) has been working diligently together to follow the collaborative, iterative process to determine proposals for expense reductions including specific budget amounts that could be cut in unallocated base, vacancies, operating, cross-campus expense reductions, “at-will positions” and academic programs that would go through the academic discontinuance policy process.

On March 18, the SLT conducted a final review of expense reduction options, resulting in recommendations that were reviewed and discussed on March 19 with the University Leadership Team (ULT – Deans, Vice Chancellors, and leaders of Shared Governance). The ULT provided feedback and co-created updated recommendations will be taken to UBAC for review and feedback on March 30. Given that this UBAC meeting is the day we return from Spring Break and the need for UBAC representatives to have time to study the proposals and receive stakeholder feedback, we will hold an additional UBAC meeting on April 8 for UBAC representatives to provide stakeholder feedback.

Our goal is to know the expense reductions we will take for the FY27 budget by April 8th. Since the finalized budget will likely include some eliminations of filled positions leading to individuals separating from the university, we need to begin the HR and legal processes to prepare for separation meetings/notification in late April and/or early May.

**What accountability or cost-sharing measures will ELT take, including salary reductions, position cuts, and turnover explanations.**

Over the past two years, the ELT has reduced in size (via position eliminations) from 8 Vice Chancellors to 6 Vice Chancellors, a 25% reduction in positions. For the FY2026-27 budget year, the chancellor is reducing her compensation by \$75,000. Both proposals for salary reductions in FY 2026-27 have higher percentage impacts on the senior leadership team. As for turnover, it is not unusual for a cabinet/Executive Leadership Team to evolve with new leadership. Along with turnover, retirements (two members of the ELT have chosen to retire with over 20 and 30 years of service to UCCS) are a natural course of change. Interim leadership helps stabilize the cabinet during the transitions. Interim

employees are selected for their skills and have the university's best interest in mind and are dedicated employees.

**Can the university achieve the required budget reductions without cutting people or programs?**

As the university works toward closing the gap between its revenue and expenses, we have to consider all options.

**What data was provided by the Budget and Controller Office to the Senior Leadership Team (Deans & Vice Chancellors) to inform budget decisions?**

The Budget and Controller Offices have provided the following:

1. List of On-going expenses being funded by one-time reserves or system funds.
2. List of Current Reserve Balances categorized as restricted, committed, and planned, and fully uncommitted/unplanned.
3. List of anticipated mandatory cost increases
4. 10 years of history of expense reductions and reinvestments
5. Annual enrollment for 10 years
6. IDEA visualizations for every college department/academic program.
7. List of FY26 Detailed Operating Budgets for each college and division by speedtype
8. List of Current Unallocated Base Budget
9. List of Current Vacant Positions by job title including position salary
10. List of "Additional Pays" (stipends, etc.) for the last three months
11. Master Personnel List of currently filled positions as of February 6, 2026. The position list includes speedtype, employee filling the position, job title and current salary.
12. Economic Indicator worksheet included estimated instructional revenue and faculty teaching costs, along with a campus overhead factor to approximate institutional support costs. It did not include all direct or program-specific expenses and it provided a structural view of instructional activity rather than a full financial accounting.

**How accurate and reliable is UCCS data, and how will the new multi-year budget model ensure better data and accountability moving forward?**

UCCS leaders rely on institutional data to guide budgeting, enrollment, and academic decisions. We have confidence in the accuracy of the data used within the colleges and divisions. The SLT acknowledges that data interpretation can be complex and that apparent discrepancies often reflect differences in context, such as cross-listed courses, faculty teaching across units, timing of data pulls, or differences between state-reportable data and internal planning data, rather than errors. During this budget process, unprecedented collaboration among Academic Affairs including the Colleges, the Budget Office, Institutional Research, Human Resources, and the Controller's Office have strengthened shared understanding, reconciled inconsistencies, and increased confidence in common data sources.

The new multi-year budget model does not ensure better data. That is not the purpose of the multi-year budget model. The multi-year budget model is a planning tool that gives us a lens into the future and allows us to make strategic decisions now that take into consideration different future scenarios. Later this spring, we will embark on a project with the CU System Office that will help us improve the data we collect, analyze, and use for our daily operations and decision making. This effort builds on the work we have already accomplished this semester by emphasizing clearer data standards, consistent definitions, shared protocols, and improved systems. These changes will involve the divisions and colleges and will improve data collection, data definitions, analysis, reporting, auditing and will support more reliable, data-informed planning over time.

**I would like to ask about the broader context—specifically how these decisions fit within the state budget, Regent directives, and the CU system as a whole.**

The State provides about 8% of our total UCCS budget. As a state enterprise, UCCS must follow all state laws. We also follow all Regent laws and policies, one of which is to submit a balanced budget each year for Regent approval. The CU system is made up of a system office and 4 campuses. The system office ensure that we are compliant with state law, Regent law and policy and campus policy.

**Are we receiving an appropriate level of funding relative to other campuses and are other campuses experiencing similar shortfalls in core operational areas?**

The State of Colorado uses a performance funding model to allocate state funds to board and universities/colleges. If we increase our retention rates, graduation rates and enrollment, we could receive increased funding from the State of Colorado. Our primary source of revenue comes from student tuition fees. One of the reasons we have seen weak growth in revenue is because our enrollment has fallen from 12,500 students to 11,100

students. If we turn around enrollment declines into growth, this would significantly alter our financial situation. Other CU campuses, like CU Boulder and CU Anschutz, are experiencing student enrollment growth and research growth. CU Denver in the past has experienced enrollment declines. As they grow their enrollment, their revenues are also growing.

**To what extent are these issues being discussed within the system and with the Regents? Is there any consideration of reallocating resources across campuses to provide support?**

The CU System and Board of Regents are well informed and support our efforts to grow revenue, contain costs and reallocate resources. The CU System allocates State revenue based on the State formula. The best way to improve our allocation is to grow enrollment through increased retention and graduation rates.

**Why is the university not pursuing retrenchment or declaring Financial Exigency in response to current financial challenges?**

At this time, the university is not pursuing retrenchment or declaring Financial Exigency because both actions are defined by the CU Board of Regents as last resort measures with significant and long-lasting academic, contractual, and reputational consequences. Under CU Board of Regents law and policy, a declaration of Financial Exigency is reserved for circumstances in which the institution's financial condition cannot be resolved through less severe means. Once declared, Financial Exigency substantially limits local discretion, activates mandatory system-level processes, and may require actions such as program discontinuance, faculty appointment terminations, and retrenchment that are difficult to reverse.

Consistent with Regents policy, campus leadership is first pursuing targeted budget reductions, structural and academic efficiencies and realignments, and operational changes to stabilize finances to support long term institutional capacity. Current financial conditions, while serious, remain within a range where these actions can address the shortfall without invoking Financial Exigency or retrenchment thresholds. Campus leadership continues to monitor financial conditions closely, and any future consideration of Financial Exigency or retrenchment would follow CU Board of Regents.

**How much (and in what ways) has the campus already been financially supplemented by System?**

Since Chancellor Sobanet has been in her role, President Saliman has provided more than \$24 million to support specific campus needs, above and beyond the UCCS general funding available to the campus. These funds have been used for targeted investments, for example: \$8 million to reduce the borrowing needed for the engineering building renovations which reduces the debt service payments saving the campus money on an ongoing basis. \$2.5 million has supported staffing for enrollment managers, student affairs and faculty affairs to boost student enrollment and retention efforts, which seek to lessen expense reductions in coming years. About \$1.6 million has funded campus safety and mental health needs following the events of Feb. 16, 2024. And \$4.9 million has gone to the campus for needed investments around campus-led online learning.

But it is important to remember that no one-time funding from the system office can solve the multi-year challenge of closing the revenue and expense gap the campus is experiencing. In fact, prior spending of one-time funding as if it were ongoing, coupled with a decline in total student enrollment, is a major driver of the budget issues during the last decade. Only by reigning in expenses to match revenues and then growing campus revenues can the campus regain a healthy financial footing.

## **Revenue & Expense Strategy**

### **What are the main fundraising priorities for the Advancement team, and how do those priorities support campus needs?**

The UCCS Advancement team is currently working on a number of fundraising initiatives across the UCCS campus, which have been prioritized by Deans and Campus Leaders. Annually, a top priority for the team is to raise scholarship funding, expanding access for students to attend UCCS. One of our current initiatives is the “[Carry the Light](#)”, UCCS Annual Giving Day, which uplifts more than 20 different gift funds across the campus community supporting efforts in each college, across the arts, sustainability, and students. Another large effort is the renovation of the original Engineering Building, to upgrade classrooms and laboratories to modernize the facilities and equipment for students and faculty alike.

### **Will every year include budget cuts?**

The goal is to stop the cycle of annual expense reductions. While FY27 includes significant reductions, future years' budget reductions will depend on our success in increasing revenue and following financial guideposts. Strategic investments are part of this process.

### **What will happen in the first year?**

In FY27, UCCS will begin a budget reset that requires \$11.7 million in spending reductions while also keeping a sharp focus on increasing revenue. These reductions will likely affect personnel and programs.

**What are the university’s revenue-raising strategies?**

UCCS is working to strengthen its financial foundation by increasing enrollment, expanding online and graduate programs, growing philanthropic and grant support, building community and industry partnerships, and using campus resources more strategically to diversify revenue. More details will be shared as these strategies continue to develop.

**Which services are being considered for consolidation across the CU System?**

UCCS is not currently reviewing a range of services to determine whether they could be delivered more efficiently or effectively through consolidation or alternative service models. The goal of exploring any future consolidation efforts is to support long-term financial sustainability while maintaining, or improving, service quality for campuses. Any proposed changes will involve consultation with affected units and clear communication before implementation.

**Can UCCS rely more heavily on CU System administrative services—for example, for HR?**

The university may explore opportunities to leverage CU System and sister campus resources where we could increase efficiency, reduce duplication, or improve service delivery. Any move toward greater reliance on system-level services would involve assessing capacity, cost, service quality, and the potential impact on campus operations. Decisions of this nature would be made thoughtfully, involve consultation with affected units and communicated clearly to campus.

**Will campus spaces—such as residence halls, the Ent Center, or the Rec Center—be used more frequently for external rentals or community events?**

Yes, campus facilities can be, and in some cases already are, used for external rentals and community events. These rentals provide important revenue that supports campus operations. However, any expanded use of student-fee-supported spaces (such as residence halls, the Rec Center, or the Ent Center) must be balanced carefully to ensure that rentals do not with unduly impact student access or the student experience. Rental use will continue to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to ensure alignment with campus priorities, operational capacity, and student needs.

**Will dining options reopen or expand (e.g., Roaring Fork, cafés, national brands)?**

If Dining and Hospitality Services (DHS) remains a self-operated unit, reopening additional venues will be extremely difficult without creating a significant deficit. Rising costs—such as labor, food, shared services, equipment maintenance, and compliance—make additional locations financially challenging under the current model. DHS is currently undergoing a formal RFP process to evaluate bids from potential external dining contractors. Contract providers may propose expanded venue options, reopen Roaring Fork, and offer national brands. A committee with broad campus representation is reviewing these proposals. Updates will be shared with campus in March once the review process concludes.

### **What is the plan for Roaring Fork? Could it be turned into classroom space?**

Several proposals submitted through the dining RFP include reopening Roaring Fork as a residential dining facility. Because a strong dining program is essential to supporting students living in residence halls, reopening Roaring Fork aligns with student expectations and residential-life needs. Given the number of contractor proposals recommending its return as a dining facility, it is unlikely that Roaring Fork will be repurposed as classroom space or used for another function at this time.

### **Why don't we outsource dining?**

The campus is actively exploring this possibility. Dining and Hospitality Services is currently in a formal RFP (Request for Proposals) process, and outsourcing is one of the options being reviewed. Decisions about outsourcing will be informed by:

- cost service quality
- campus cultural expectations
- ability to operate without deficits
- feedback from the cross-campus review committee

More information will be available when the RFP evaluation is complete.

### **Can Roaring Fork be converted into a low-cost operation, such as a coffee shop?**

Contract providers participating in the RFP process have submitted proposals outlining how they believe the space can be used in ways that are financially viable and aligned with student needs. Some bids include varied concepts for the space, but most emphasize using Roaring Fork to support residential dining in alignment with campus priorities. Additional details will be shared after the proposal review process concludes in the coming weeks.

**What new revenue opportunities are being pursued by UCCS (events, camps, partnerships, naming rights)?**

UCCS continues to explore a wide range of revenue-generating opportunities, including events, camps, external rentals, partnerships, and naming rights. Limited staffing does constrain how quickly these areas can expand; however, as revenue grows, the university will be able to reinvest in additional staff capacity to support and scale these activities. Naming opportunities are also being actively pursued. For example, Athletics recently secured a major naming partnership that will fund student-athlete scholarships for years to come. Similar opportunities are being evaluated across campus.

**How are meaningful, funded partnerships formed? We are skeptical that P3s, CCIP, or other partnership models bring in the dollars needed to support their work. What metrics define success?**

Partnerships at UCCS, whether through Public-Private Partnerships (P3), Community Campus Partnerships (CCP), or Campus Community Innovation Partnerships (CCIP), are designed to create long-term financial resilience, expand academic opportunity, and diversify revenue streams. UCCS's P3 activity already aligns with national higher-education success models in which universities leverage ground leases, innovation districts, auxiliary collaborations, and shared capital projects to:

- preserve debt capacity,
- accelerate capital construction or renovation,
- reduce campus financial risk, and
- generate recurring revenue (e.g., tuition, lease revenue, indirect cost, auxiliary income).

Metrics commonly used to evaluate partnership success include:

- Capital leverage: dollars of private or partner investment relative to university investment.
- Balance-sheet impact: preservation of debt capacity and reduced campus financial risk.
- Recurring revenue: tuition generation, lease income, cost savings, auxiliary revenue, or indirect cost recovery.
- Student and academic impact: improved experiential learning, internships, workforce pathways, or research opportunities.

- Community and economic impact: partnerships that strengthen regional workforce pipelines and innovation activity.

Viewed across these measures, UCCS's P3 portfolio reflects a proven and sustainable strategic model. These partnerships should be understood not as isolated projects but as a deliberate institutional strategy supporting long-term financial strength for students, faculty, and the campus.

### **How will UCCS strengthen industry and employer partnerships?**

Strengthening external partnerships is a central goal of the Success 2030 Strategic Plan, the Strategic Plan Action Initiatives, and the UCCS Differentiator Initiative. UCCS is advancing a three-tiered approach that builds toward deeper, more sustainable, and mutually beneficial relationships:

- Community Campus Partnerships (CCP)- Supports broad community engagement, service, and collaborative programming.
- Campus Community Innovation Partnerships (CCIP)- Creates opportunities for applied research, innovation, and experiential learning aligned with employer needs.
- Public-Private Partnerships (P3)- Facilitates long-term collaborations involving shared investment, capital development, revenue diversification, or co-located academic/industry spaces.

Together, these tiers create a continuum of partnership engagement—from simple connections to highly structured collaborations, that advance academic excellence, student success, research impact, and financial sustainability.

### **How will the university ensure that investments in the City of Colorado Springs yield meaningful and reciprocal financial benefit to UCCS?**

Community and regional investments are evaluated based on measurable institutional outcomes, such as:

- enrollment growth,
- workforce and employer partnerships,
- research collaborations and funding, and
- diversified revenue opportunities.

Partnerships must demonstrate clear institutional value and are pursued only when they strengthen both UCCS and the broader region in ways that support student success, academic excellence, and long-term sustainability.

### **What financial data will be shared with the campus community?**

UCCS will continue to share key financial information with the campus community through established governance and reporting channels.

This includes:

- Five-year revenue and expense projections
- Annual structural deficit amounts
- Mandatory cost drivers
- Reserve balances

This information will be updated as part of the Financially Healthy Campus process and shared through the Healthy Campus website, UBAC, ULT, town halls, and other campus forums.

### **If colleges generally operate with surpluses while some administrative divisions run deficits, how are budget reductions prioritized in those deficit-generating areas? How will the campus gain a clearer understanding of these decisions?**

While our colleges do generate tuition revenue, the university also relies on a wide range of essential support services that keep the campus functioning. These include facilities, IT, enrollment management (recruitment and admissions), financial aid, advising, student affairs, public safety, custodial services and facility structural and mechanical maintenance, human resources, research administration, regulatory compliance, institutional research, and data analytics to name a few.

Most administrative units do not generate revenue directly, but their contributions are essential. These areas are not the source of the deficit; they provide infrastructure that allows faculty, staff, and students to succeed.

Many of these units have also experienced significant increases in workload. Regulatory requirements have expanded in areas such as public safety, student conduct, wellness, and faculty affairs. At the same time, growing student needs have increased demand for services such as financial aid support, advising, and career counseling. Additional positions have also been created to meet new federal and state requirements, including Title IX compliance, financial aid regulations, and cybersecurity.

Because these services are essential, and often mandated, the campus chose, and in some cases was required, to fund these positions. However, instead of creating permanent budget capacity through expense reductions at the time of hiring, many of these ongoing costs were initially supported with one-time funding sources such as reserves and system funds. The expectation was that these costs would eventually transition to the base budget.

At the same time, the university experienced enrollment declines and volatility in state funding. Over the past two years, the Senior Leadership Team has absorbed or eliminated more than \$10 million in activities that were previously funded with one-time dollars. As part of the Healthy Campus Initiative, the SLT is now reviewing all remaining one-time funded activities and determining whether they should be integrated into the ongoing budget or discontinued. This work is part of the collaborative, iterative planning process currently underway.

**Can we reduce the size of our campus police force or transition to more of a security-team model like those used on hospital campuses?**

We continue to examine professional standards around our public safety operations. We are using national benchmarks to guide our staffing levels and structure. Based on national data for public four-year institutions, as well as recommendations made through the Look Back Report following the tragedy in February, 2024, an R2 university with approximately 11,000 students would generally employ between 20–30 sworn officers. Data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics indicates that campus law enforcement agencies serving public institutions employ an average of 2.1 sworn officers per 1,000 students. In addition to sworn officers, many campus agencies employ civilian personnel to support dispatch, safety escorts, mandatory state and federal compliance, and building access. We currently have 17 sworn officers with recruitment plans underway to fill 4 vacant positions, bringing the total to 21. In spring of 2024, UCCS had 15 sworn officers. Based upon national data and the report reflecting the campus needs after a significant event, reducing capacity of officers would not meet national standards and could adversely affect the campus community's sense of safety.

**How does the university balance donor interest and actual campus needs. For example, the interest in funding new facilities or renovations versus the need to support existing campus spaces and operational needs?**

Philanthropy is based on the voluntary action of contributing financial resources for a common good. While some donors are interested in, and are willing to support general

operations, many choose to give their personal finances to projects and initiatives about which they are passionate.

University Advancement professionals work closely with donors and prospective donors to understand personal giving interests. They also work closely with SLT and other campus leaders to understand campus priorities for fundraising initiatives. Through the knowledge of donor interests paired with collaborative campus conversations, advancement professionals work to find alignment between the donor's interests and campus needs to raise philanthropic support for the university.

### **What recommendations have our community partners made about where UCCS should invest?**

UCCS is fortunate to be part of a community that values the positive impact that an educated community provides to the region. Community members and employers commonly share that they are looking for higher education to develop graduates who are able to think critically, have developed soft skills (i.e. working with others on teams), creative thinkers who are well-rounded, individuals who participated in applied learning opportunities, and graduates who are workforce-ready with minimal additional training. Employers in particular are looking to higher education to adapt more quickly to changing business needs through nimble adjustments to curriculum to meet the career trajectory of the region and state. They are interested in opportunities to stack industry certifications into certificates and degrees, as well as micro-credentials. Additionally, employers are interested in hiring those who know how to use AI and have adaptable and innovative mindsets. Our community is looking for citizens who contribute to the social fabric of the region through volunteerism, employability and civic participation. Our community is encouraging UCCS to be more focused on workforce readiness and to provide stronger career pathway support for students.

### **What specific cost-saving measures or operational efficiencies are being considered?**

We are examining a range of cost-saving measures and operational efficiencies as part of the Healthy Campus Initiative, with the goal of aligning long-term expenses with sustainable revenue while protecting the university's core mission of student success, research, and community impact. Areas under review include streamlining administrative processes and reducing duplication across units, expanding shared services and potential collaborations with CU system partners or sister campuses, and reviewing software licenses, vendor contracts, and operational systems to identify opportunities for consolidation or renegotiation. The university is also implementing measures such as a position review committee (PRC) for new hires, careful evaluation of vacancies, and

prioritization of positions that directly support revenue generation, safety and compliance, or critical student services. In addition, leadership is evaluating organizational structures and operational workflows to identify areas where resources can be used more effectively. Many of these ideas came from submissions to the December and January surveys asking our campus community for ideas to create cost-saving measures. This type of collaboration helps us have a broad, cross-campus perspective in finding efficiencies.

**How will enrollment be strengthened, including the use of the \$3M marketing investment, EMSA stability, staffing levels in recruitment areas, and student experience impacts?**

One of our main initiatives that the \$3M marketing investment will go towards is optimizing the UCCS website for AI compatibility. This will ensure that when prospective students or their families search for our site, an AI-generated summary appears at the top of their results. Achieving this will require a dedicated website optimization process, but it's a vital step to keep us visible and competitive as AI-driven search becomes more prevalent. We also plan to revise our websites, aligning content with what students and their families find most appealing when researching colleges. This helps ensure our information connects with their needs and interests.

Another priority for these funds is expanding our brand awareness and marketing reach. We're targeting a diverse group: prospective freshmen, adult learners, transfer and graduate students, online students, and employers. We're collaborating closely with EAB and Greenhouse Partners, our external partners, to craft strategic brand and marketing campaigns that leverage new platforms and maximize visibility across these populations. This will also include the rollout of our new campus differentiator.

Additionally, we'll use funds to create new videos featuring deans and faculty, which will be distributed to students interested in their programs. We're also looking at a partnership with an external group to produce videos that guide prospective students through the application and FAFSA process, followed by personalized congratulations videos once they are admitted. These will provide cost estimates if a student has identified a program of interest and highlights what aid they are eligible for if a FAFSA was submitted. This personalized approach has proven to boost yield rates at other colleges, so we're excited to explore it for UCCS.

Expanding resources for outreach and campus events is another focus, as we aim to deliver a more personalized experience for prospective students and their families. Over the past year, our partnership with EAB has included a strategic analysis to assist us in prioritizing target markets based on our history and growth potential. These funds allow us

to strategically focus some expanded outreach and yield events in those identified locations as well as on campus.

Over the past several years, reductions in Admissions staffing and budgets have limited our capacity to recruit new students. Admissions is foundational to UCCS's overall success, and in response to these constraints, we are pursuing new and more strategic ways to connect with prospective students beyond traditional recruiter-based models. This includes closer collaboration with external partners to identify effective outreach strategies, optimizing our social media presence, implementation of a new CRM platform that will significantly enhance and personalize communications, and working with the system office to elevate UCCS's distinctive strengths in statewide outreach across Colorado.

At the same time, we recognize the critical importance of improving student retention, which is significantly more cost-effective than recruitment alone and better supports students in completing their degrees rather than leaving UCCS without realizing the full value of their investment. Student retention is directly tied to the overall student experience, which is shaped by every interaction students have both inside and outside the classroom. As such, retention is a shared responsibility across the institution and requires continued investment in student safety, compliance, engagement, sense of belonging, and comprehensive support services.

The search for a new Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs has therefore focused on identifying a leader who can provide stability for the division and guide deliberate decision-making. This includes helping each area assess which initiatives should be continued, refined, or discontinued, with a clear focus on maximizing return on investment and enhancing the student experience.

**What financial obligations exist related to North Nevada developments and other major financing decisions?**

The university does not have any current plans to add new financial commitments related to North Nevada developments beyond obligations that have already been made, inclusive of facility maintenance costs. The university continues to seek partnership opportunities that would allow the campus to realize strategic goals with minimal financial commitments. One possible North Nevada development project, a Hotel and Conference Center, is being explored as a public, private, partnership (P3) where the university is not extending financial resources. Through an RFI process (request for information), should there be a company interested in entering into an agreement with the university on a Hotel and Conference Center, the university would benefit through the creation of new academic

spaces to house additional academic programs, which would lead to increased enrollment. Additional benefits, such as student internships may also be achievable under a partnership agreement. A Hotel Conference Center will directly serve our academic mission and would help diversify campus revenue sources through a shared revenue model. Read more about how campus partnerships such as P3s are evaluated and entered into under the *FAQ section Revenue and Expense Strategy: How are meaningful, funded partnerships formed? We are skeptical that P3s, CCIP, or other partnership models bring in the dollars needed to support their work. What metrics define success?*

### **Can campus leadership share the plan and strategy for how we will grow revenue?**

Beginning this summer, campus leadership will start advancing initial concepts and analysis around revenue growth. Importantly, this work is not intended to finalize decisions over the summer, but rather to prepare options and data that can be meaningfully reviewed through shared governance in the fall semester.

The revenue growth strategy will focus on several key areas:

- Academic growth, new program development, and market-aligned offerings
- Expansion of non-tuition revenue streams, including partnerships, grants, philanthropy, and auxiliary enterprises
- Operational efficiencies that allow us to reinvest in areas with the highest return

### **Are partnerships that use campus space without generating direct revenue being reevaluated?**

Yes, we are looking at the proper use of the University Center fee and what it is funding. Part of that evaluation includes the costs associated with partner events that do not generate revenue, yet require a lot of time and resources to manage them. More information will be shared once a full review is done.

## **Decision-Making & Governance**

### **How are decisions being made?**

UCCS is using a multi-year, data-informed process guided by mission alignment, student demand, financial sustainability, and operational efficiency. ULT will share summary criteria and timelines as they are finalized.

The process includes:

- Data-informed analysis at unit and campus levels
- Feedback from UBAC and ULT
- Collaborative planning within colleges, divisions, and departments
- Regular communication and opportunities for campus feedback
- Multi-year financial modeling
- Attention to mission alignment, student needs, and academic excellence

### **How will program decisions be made?**

These decisions will be made with the colleges in coordination with the provost and senior leadership team. Faculty governance bodies will be engaged consistent with policy and shared governance practices. Decisions to end academic programs will follow the “Program Discontinuance Policy 200-014” and all applicable CU System and Regent policies and law. Non-academic program decisions will be made through careful review of impact and operation within the division and college and in coordination with the senior leadership team.

### **How will UCCS balance investments in emerging areas (e.g., cybersecurity) while sustaining core academic units like LAS? Can LAS be assured it will not face further cuts if enrollment fluctuates?**

Investments in emerging areas are evaluated for strategic alignment, workforce relevance, and financial sustainability. These efforts are designed to strengthen the university as a whole. Core academic units like LAS remain central to UCCS’s mission. No area is completely insulated from enrollment volatility. The broader objective of the Financially Healthy Campus plan is to stabilize the institution so future fluctuations are less disruptive and decisions can be made more strategically.

### **Why is UCCS investing in AI tools like ChatGPT during a budget crisis, and how does this support core priorities?**

This investment was made at the system level to ensure all campuses have equal access to Open AI and to ensure a secure, closed environment, reducing risk of data leakage or misuse, something that could not be guaranteed if campuses or units adopted tools independently. Additionally, AI is a tool that can be used to streamline efficiency, provide innovative technology to students, and new opportunities to explore the relationship between higher education and this evolving technology.

### **How will we ensure it is equitable across divisions?**

For this process, equitable does not mean equal or proportional. Expense reductions will not be across the board nor proportional to the size of the unit. Instead, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will be examining duplications, efficiencies, structural needs, and impacts across units. SLT will always center on the impact the budget decisions will make on our students, our mission, our university, and opportunity for future growth.

**Will UCCS publish unit- or program-level cost and revenue information?**

UCCS will continue to share meaningful financial information through existing governance structures. Currently, there is no formal plan to publish detailed program-level financial data with the campus community. Program- and unit-level budgets often include personnel costs, shared expenditures, and contextual factors that require careful interpretation. As such, these budgets are managed within colleges and divisions and reviewed through internal processes rather than broad public release.

**How will leadership avoid across-the-board cuts that disproportionately affect high-performing or high-growth programs?**

The Senior Leadership Team understands the risks associated with uniform reductions and is committed to a strategic, not across-the-board, approach. Decisions will be guided by:

- alignment with institutional priorities and the university’s strategic direction,
- Program performance
- University and Regent policies governing program review,
- student demand,
- Workforce needs,
- Cost relative to impact and long-term sustainability,
- academic mission and accreditation considerations, and
- Input through shared governance processes.

The intent is to minimize unintended impacts on strong or growing programs by ensuring reductions are guided by evidence and institutional priorities rather than applied uniformly across all programs.

**How are we encouraging transparency and meaningful shared governance throughout this process?**

As part of the Healthy Campus Initiative, the UBAC members defined transparency as: communicating openly about our priorities, constraints, and the reasoning behind decisions. It does not guarantee that everyone will receive the answer they prefer or immediate access to all information. Instead, transparency is achieved through a clear and consistent process; explaining the “why” behind decisions in a timely and respectful manner; building trust; and ensuring people know when, how, and where they can offer input.

Practices that support transparency include:

- Sharing decision timelines, criteria, and responsibilities as early as possible.
- Providing concise summaries of key decisions and the rationale behind them.
- Offering clear and meaningful opportunities for input at campus-wide levels as well as college/division levels during the process.
- Closing the loop by communicating how feedback informed the outcome and implemented when applicable.

Shared governance is an important part of the Healthy Campus Initiative. The University Leadership Team is comprised of the executive leadership team, the deans and five shared governance leaders: the SGA president, the Staff Council president, the Faculty Assembly chair, the Faculty Assembly budget advisory committee chair and the UBAC chair. Since May 2024, the ULT has been working together in retreats and meetings to understand our financial data, discuss the need to Close the Gap between revenue and expenses, and develop the processes to do so. The UBAC has been meeting on a regular basis with UBAC representatives engaged in understanding the various aspects of our Healthy Campus Initiative. The group reviewed survey results, financial data, provided feedback, and Question and Answer sessions. Members of the Executive Leadership Team meet with Shared Governance leaders on a monthly basis and attend SGA, Staff Council and Faculty Assembly meetings to provide information and receive feedback. This feedback is incorporated into the decisions about this project. Each college uses their own shared governance processes for financial decision making. In addition to these communication channels, we maintain a Healthy Campus Initiative webpage with FAQs updated weekly.

**If faculty positions or programs are reduced, how will the university ensure these decisions do not create a net financial loss (e.g., SCH revenue vs. salary cost)?**

The university recognizes the importance of ensuring that any reduction in faculty positions or academic programs does not unintentionally create a net financial loss. As part of the evaluation process, multiple factors will be reviewed including student credit hour

production, enrollment trends, tuition revenue contribution, instructional costs, and the ability for remaining programs to absorb teaching demand. This analysis helps ensure that decisions improve the university's long-term financial sustainability rather than reducing revenue capacity.

### **What consultation occurred before the AI decision and how will future technology decisions be communicated?**

CU believes that educational equity requires all members of the CU community to have access to the tool. The AI Working Group, which included area experts from each campus and the system office, recommended the partnership with OpenAI following a review process. Outside some clinical and research settings, OpenAI's ChatGPT is already the most widely individually adopted AI tool across the CU system.

The systemwide working group including two UCCS representatives, one from the College of LAS and one from the College of Business, evaluated options months before recommending a vendor that was proposed to CU system President and Chancellors. The Chancellor provided updated and gained feedback from the Senior Leadership Team throughout the process. The decision made by CU leadership was intentional, deliberative, and focused on campus equity, security, and cost. A full campuswide review of technology contracts is underway, led by the Office of Information Technology, any future recommendations and decision on technology contracts will be brought to the Senior Leadership Team. As decisions are made, they will be communicated to the areas influenced or impacted by any technology changes along with campus communications, as needed. [Learn more about the CU OpenAI initiative.](#)

### **How is leadership responding to the censure vote and concerns about turnover and credibility?**

The ELT recognizes that the faculty censure vote reflects deep concerns and strong emotions within the campus community, and those concerns are being taken seriously. We respect the role of shared governance and understand that censure is one way faculty express deep frustration during challenging institutional moments. In response, the ELT and the deans (SLT) are focusing on increased transparency, continued engagement with faculty governance bodies (Town Halls, ULT, UBAC), and clearer communication about the financial context and decision-making processes guiding the Healthy Campus Initiative. Read the [Executive Leadership Team Campus Communication in Response to the Faculty Letter Regarding Vote to Censure.](#)

We also acknowledge that periods of institutional change can create concerns about leadership stability and credibility. It is important to note that interim leadership roles do

not diminish the commitment, expertise, or accountability of the individuals currently serving in those positions, many of whom are providing steady leadership and continuity during a complex period for the institution. Additionally, leadership transitions during the early years of a new chancellor's tenure are not unusual. As the chancellor gains deeper understanding of the institution, evaluates organizational effectiveness, and holds members of the executive leadership team accountable for progress, adjustments in leadership structure may occur. While these changes can be difficult, they are often part of aligning the leadership team with the long-term direction and needs of the university.

Moving forward, the focus remains on rebuilding trust through consistent engagement, listening, and follow-through, while working collaboratively with faculty, staff, students, and governance leaders to address concerns and strengthen communication. These efforts are grounded in the shared goal of shaping the UCCS of the future.

See additionally under Budget Context & Key Terms: What data was provided by the Budget and Controller Office to the Senior Leadership Team (Deans & Vice Chancellors) to inform budget decisions?

### **Why doesn't UBAC receive detailed unit-level budget information?**

According to the [UBAC Bylaws](#), UBAC is charged to provide recommendations and feedback to the Chancellor and Executive Leadership Team as an advisory committee. Its purpose is to advise on high-level budget issues, support shared governance, and ensure transparency around major financial proposals. Its role is campuswide and strategic in nature, focusing on transparency, engagement, and understanding of the university's budget as a whole.

Unit-level budgets fall outside the committee's defined scope. The bylaws specify that UBAC provides advice "considering all sources of revenue and expenditure" at a campuswide level, not at the level of individual colleges or departments. Colleges and divisions are responsible for managing and reviewing their own budgets, while UBAC remains focused on broader financial health and advising, on overall budget scenarios and recommendations.

**As someone who has gone to multiple of these meetings, why are we having discussions about who may or may not be let go without anything more concrete like a plan by the deans? If we have estimates and scenarios based on those estimates, why wait on releasing the data when the majority of questions are about who is being let go?**

The deans are developing those plans along with the vice chancellors and chancellor. The SLT is working together to understand the impacts. There is an HR and legal process that must be followed upon identifying positions for separation. We will not release those positions until after individual conversations are able to take place with the impacted individuals. This provides everyone involved time to process, make decisions, and prepare for a more public understanding of impact. This is crucial to our care for our employees. See also FAQs under Decision and Governance section

Where is the data that show the savings of letting ICR faculty go. How much does this contribute to the deficit.

Instructional costs, including IRC faculty, are one component of the university's overall expense structure and are being evaluated alongside other personnel and operational costs as part of the budget reduction process. Deans are reviewing course demands, enrollment patterns, student credit hours, course caps, and tenured and tenure-track teaching loads to determine the most efficient way to meet instructional needs within their colleges. These analyses help identify where instructional delivery can be adjusted while still supporting student progression and program quality. Any potential changes to IRC faculty positions would occur within this broader, data informed review aimed at addressing the university's budget gap.

**Can we trust the internal report, as skewed data may lead to favoritism concerning jobs?**

No one wants to let anyone go. One of the reasons the entire SLT is reviewing all of the steps of the process is to mitigate bias to the best of our abilities. For example, when the SLT reviews filled positions, impact to the college/division is discussed. See also FAQs under the Decision-Making & Governance section.

**The current UCCS mission and vision statements are not specific enough to provide a valuable framework for budget cut decisions. What strategic framework and metrics are being used for this process?**

The framework guiding current reductions is collaborative and iterative, led by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The SLT is using multiple data points, including unallocated base funding, vacancies, operating budgets, and filled at-will positions, to inform decision-making. Vice Chancellors and Deans work closely with their teams to analyze this data, understand unit-level impacts, and shape recommendations. These insights are then brought back to the SLT, where collective review ensures that decisions are informed by both data and a clear understanding of operational and academic impacts across the institution. See FAQ section *Budget Context & Process: What data was provided by the*

*Budget and Controller Office to the Senior Leadership Team (Deans & Vice Chancellors) to inform budget decisions*

**How do decision-making processes differ between staff positions, faculty positions, and academic programs?**

“At-will” positions are reviewed based upon unit need, impact on operations, and what the unit can afford. “At-will” positions can be both staff and some IRC faculty. IRC faculty with multi-year contracts have separate stipulations. The term “At-will” means that these positions are not State of Colorado classified positions or are not governed by the tenure and academic processes, which means that the employee or university can dissolve their employment agreement and can at any time. Academic programs are evaluated through a formal, multi-step review process as outlined in APS 1015, which includes faculty committee review, consideration of multiple forms of evidence (e.g., student demand, outcomes, workforce need, financial sustainability), and shared governance input. Final decisions are made by the Board of Regents based on recommendations from multiple levels of review. Tenure track and tenured faculty have certain rights and privileges regarding their employment, retirement, and termination. Separation of tenured and tenure track faculty follow established campus, system, and Regent policies and law. Some of these policies and laws are directly connected with the academic program discontinuance process.

**What role did System-level leadership play in shaping budget decisions?**

System-level leadership provided the planning parameters, guidance, that informed the development of the FY27 budget but did not direct or prescribe specific campus-level reduction decisions. Their role included setting key assumptions—such as tuition guidance, state support expectations, Inter-Campus Cost Allocation (ICCA), employee benefits, and other mandatory cost drivers—that define the financial environment in which UCCS must operate. System also serves an important accountability and stewardship role, ensuring that campus plans are aligned with Board of Regents expectations, and consistent with CU system policies. However, decisions regarding how reductions are implemented, including specific impacts to programs, positions, and operations, remain at the campus level.

**How is the university assessing the risks of deferring maintenance or project work?**

We’re taking a risk-based approach. Anything tied to safety and compliance is not deferred. For everything else, we focus on cost avoidance, looking at the impact of waiting, cost, condition, and disruption, and will make a deliberate decision.

**What does financial recovery look like, and how will we know when reductions can be reversed?**

Recovery means our ongoing revenue covers our ongoing expenses without using one-time funds or reserves. At that point, we can look at restoring reductions.

**How are short-term cost reductions being balanced against long-term financial risk?**

Some immediate actions are necessary; the priority is on expense reductions that align our base budget with ongoing revenue. At the same time, we are evaluating the impact of decisions, whether enrollment, academic instruction, faculty and staffing capacity, or deferred maintenance. The goal is to resolve the current structural deficit without introducing additional risk that would put us back in the same position in a few years.

**How is the university addressing aging facilities with limited or no state funding for controlled maintenance?**

We're addressing that through prioritization and phased investment. Given the limited availability of state funding, we're focusing first on life safety issues and compliance requirements that support the academic mission and student well-being. Beyond that, we are managing the remaining backlog over time, using available resources and long-term planning.

**How are major capital projects being prioritized given the current financial outlook?**

Potential new capital projects follow an assessment of shared input and evaluation across our campus community including academic, campus, finance, advancement and facility teams. Future capital projects are generally identified through a facilities master plan, which is required by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE). All new construction projects costing over \$2 million and renovation or renewal projects costing over \$5 million require program plan approval by the Board of Regents per [Article 13 - Business and Finance of the Laws of the Regents](#).

**How did you get vacancy number? If colleges have already given up some vacancies, what are these on top of it? Will it cause more strain on faculty workloads?**

The vacancy numbers reflects positions currently unfilled and projected attrition, not vacancies already surrendered by colleges. It is incremental, not duplicative. However, yes, not filling positions can increase workload pressure, and that is one of the hardest trade-offs we face. This is why vacancy management is being applied selectively, with attention to instructional and student facing impact.

**Impacts to Campus**

**Will there be job impacts?**

Yes, there will likely be impacts upon currently filled positions. Specific decisions on personnel will be made within units, guided by mission alignment, operational needs, long-term sustainability, and conducted with utmost care.

**Will there be advance notice around position impacts?**

Yes. When position changes are necessary, we will provide as much advance notice as possible and connect impacted employees with HR support and resources. Our goal is to communicate clearly and compassionately.

**Will my major or classes be affected?**

Most students will not see immediate changes to their major or required classes. Student degree progress remains a top priority.

If a program does change in the future, UCCS is committed to honoring all teach-out, accreditation, and student-protection requirements:

- Helping current students complete their degree on time
- Providing clear pathways and advising support
- Communicating changes early and transparently

**Will tuition go up because of this?**

Tuition decisions are made separately through the CU System and state processes. The Healthy Campus Initiative is focused on reducing the existing budget gap and stabilizing finances, not increasing the financial burden on students. If any tuition changes occur in the future, they will follow the normal approval process and will be communicated widely.

**Will student services be reduced?**

The goal is to protect essential student services — including advising, wellness, tutoring, financial aid, and campus support offices. Some services may be reorganized to improve efficiency, but the intention is to maintain or strengthen the support students rely on.

**Will campus jobs for students be impacted?**

Some departments may make adjustments, but student employment remains a priority because it supports financial stability, career readiness, and belonging. If any changes occur, students will receive clear communication and guidance about alternative opportunities.

**Will this affect student organizations or events?**

Student life remains a major priority. While individual departments may adjust budgets, UCCS is committed to maintaining a vibrant campus with activities, organizations, and a strong sense of community. The Student Government Association is committed to advocating for student organizations and ensuring that student voices are represented as budget conversations continue. SGA leadership is actively monitoring potential impacts to the student experience and reviewing internal funding structure to ensure that student life and clubs remain supported.

**How will this protect academic quality?**

The initiative is built to protect and provide long-term stability to teaching, research, creative work, and student support by creating a financially stable environment where students can thrive.

**Will custodial, dining, or other student-facing jobs be outsourced?**

Dining and Hospitality Services is currently undergoing a formal RFP process through the Procurement Service Center (PSC) to evaluate proposals from external providers. A diverse committee of campus stakeholders is reviewing these proposals to assess alignment with campus needs, service quality, cost, and operational feasibility. UCCS has closely monitored dining self-operations this year to minimize potential deficits and evaluate the unit's capacity to remain self-operated. Updates on the RFP review will be shared with campus in March. At this time, there are no conversations underway about outsourcing other student-facing positions. However, the EMSA division is evaluating all programs and services to determine how to prioritize work and identify potential cost savings without reducing student support.

**Will the budget plan increase financial burdens on students, such as higher fees or tuition?**

The primary focus of the Financially Healthy Campus effort is structural expense realignment, not shifting costs to students. Tuition and fee decisions follow system policies and require Board of Regents approval. The goal is to stabilize the institution while avoiding increased financial burdens on students.

**Are cuts to student-facing services (food, safety, advising, career support) being considered?**

Every aspect of UCCS is being evaluated as part of this process, which includes student-facing services.

**What changes are being made to improve campus vibrancy and daily student life?**

Student engagement and campus vibrancy have increased significantly over the past year, driven by coordinated efforts across campus.

Some examples include:

- More student events and club participation, with significant increases in overall engagement.
- Plans to enhance student social spaces, based on feedback from multiple student focus groups that identified social spaces as a top motivator for staying on campus and building a sense of belonging.
- Ongoing assessment of student interests to guide future programming
- Strategic housing placements, ensuring students live in communities where they have the greatest opportunity to connect with peers and feel supported.
- SGA efforts to increase student club and event funding and a coordinated effort to partner with Athletics for student engagement opportunities.
- Increased participation in service learning days.
- Experiential learning experiences between academics and the farm.
- Student engagement leaders attending events with incoming students.

These efforts are continuing as teams assess student interests and expand opportunities for connection and belonging.

**How is the university evaluating the effectiveness of current safety strategies, and what evidence informs decisions about the appropriate mix of police presence, prevention efforts, and non-policing safety resources?**

Campus safety is evaluated through a combination of quantitative and qualitative data, professional expertise, and community feedback. Public Safety monitor calls for service, incident patterns, and response times to understand what concerns are emerging and how effectively we are addressing them. We also look at training outcomes for police officers and dispatch staff to make sure our teams are equipped with the skills needed for prevention, de-escalation, and emergency response.

Formal reporting, such as required campus crime statistics, provides one picture of safety, but we also recognize the importance of understanding how people *feel* on campus. Campus climate surveys and workplace/student surveys offer insight into perceptions of safety and help us identify whether there are disconnects between lived experiences and

recorded data. When anonymous reporting tools mirror what we see in our formal reporting channels, it gives us confidence that concerns are being captured consistently. We also consider student behavior trends, including recidivism rates within the student conduct process, which remain low and suggest that intervention and education are having a positive impact. In addition, we benchmark our practices with peer institutions across Colorado and the nation, so we can learn from broader trends and emerging best practices.

Our decision about the appropriate blend of police presence, prevention efforts, and non-policing safety resources draws on all this information. We use coordinated planning processes for campus events and emerging situations, incorporating risk assessment, cross-departmental input, and national guidance. While we don't publicly share every operational detail of our decision-making tools, since doing so could compromise safety, we do emphasize transparency where possible and welcome community feedback. This feedback often shapes how we balance visibility, support, and prevention efforts across campus. Ultimately, our safety approach at UCCS is layered and comprehensive. Law enforcement, behavioral intervention, mental health support, and prevention education all work together, because no single strategy is sufficient on its own.

**Has UCCS analyzed whether campus safety concerns have affected student recruitment, enrollment, or yield—particularly in relation to parental perceptions?**

UCCS understands that campus safety is an important factor for prospective students and their families. We regularly look at admissions and enrollment trends to understand whether safety concerns or perceptions may be influencing decisions about recruitment, yield, or a student's choice to attend.

It is difficult to know which students choose not to apply based on safety concerns, but given our increase in applications to matriculation in Fall '24 and '25, we are not seeing this as a contributing factor in decision making. We also pay close attention to the themes we hear during campus visits, orientation, and family outreach. Parents often ask thoughtful questions about safety practices, communication processes, and available support, which helps us identify where families need more information or reassurance. These conversations, paired with survey data and direct feedback, help us understand the concerns that matter most. Even when enrollment patterns are shaped by many factors, safety remains a significant lens through which families view campus life. Because of this, we are intentional about providing clear, practical, and timely information so that students and families feel informed and connected as they make decisions.

## **What actions is UCCS taking to strengthen campus safety in ways that support a thriving, welcoming, and inclusive community for students, faculty, and staff?**

UCCS believes that safety and belonging are inseparable. A campus cannot be truly safe if people do not feel included, supported, or connected. A strong sense of community helps prevent many issues long before they escalate into safety concerns.

To foster this environment, we are investing in a broad, integrated safety strategy that brings together law enforcement, behavioral intervention, mental health support, and prevention education. This ensures that we are addressing both the immediate needs of emergency response and the upstream, root-cause work that strengthens community well-being. Education and awareness remain core priorities. We are expanding opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to learn about prevention, reporting options, emergency preparedness, and strategies for recognizing and responding to concerning behavior. Internally, our police officers and dispatch staff participate in ongoing training that emphasizes preparedness, de-escalation, and national best practices.

Our hiring practices also reflect our commitment to community-centered safety. We seek individuals across both officer and dispatch roles who value collaboration, service, and relationship-building. After every major incident, we conduct structured debriefings to reflect on what went well, where we can improve, and how to strengthen our coordinated response across campus partners. Physical safety improvements continue as well, including enhancements to access control and other security tools in areas such as residence halls. These efforts will expand as funding becomes available and campus needs evolve.

We approach all this work with humility and realism. While we know we cannot prevent every harm, we also know that by staying informed, prepared, and focused on prevention, we place our campus in the strongest possible position.

## **How is UCCS responding to student and parent concerns about campus safety, and what communication efforts are helping build trust and confidence in campus safety measures?**

Responding to concerns with care, clarity, and timeliness is at the heart of how UCCS communicates about safety. We understand that when incidents occur, on our campus or elsewhere, students, families, and employees are looking not only for information but for reassurance and guidance. Our communication efforts aim to meet those needs more meaningfully than a standard resource list. We tailor content to each audience and include practical steps they can take, suggestions for conversations and check-ins, and clear routes to support. We also make ourselves available for one-on-one conversations when

individuals or families want to connect directly. These conversations are often valuable opportunities to answer questions, clarify processes, and offer guidance tailored to a person's unique concerns. By being responsive, transparent about what we can share, and clear about where to go for help, we work to build trust over time. Trust grows through consistency, and by ensuring that communication is both informative and compassionate, we strive to strengthen confidence in the safety measures and support systems that protect our campus.

**What specific improvements or initiatives are underway or planned to enhance campus safety across all areas of the university?**

UCCS is committed to continuous improvement in all areas of campus safety. We regularly review our strategies, incorporate lessons learned, and update our practices based on national trends, campus needs, and community feedback. Several efforts are currently underway or in development. We are expanding safety education and prevention initiatives across campus, in partnership with Emergency Management and other departments. We continue to enhance training for police officers and dispatch staff, focusing on preparedness, crisis response, and evolving national guidance on campus violence prevention. Strengthening recruitment and hiring remains a priority, ensuring that the individuals who serve our campus value collaboration, inclusivity, and community engagement. After each incident, we conduct reviews that help us refine response processes and improve coordination.

Physical security improvements, such as expanded access control and updated safety infrastructure, are already in place in some areas and continue to be evaluated as funding and needs evolve. Through all this work, we acknowledge a key truth: while no campus can prevent every harm, a strong focus on prevention, readiness, and shared responsibility makes us safer together. Our goal is to invest in the people, systems, and support that help the entire UCCS community thrive.

**What guidance will the university provide to help faculty and staff communicate with students and support retention during this period of budget crisis?**

The university will continue to prioritize clear, transparent communication with students and provide guidance to faculty and staff on how to support student success during this period. Faculty and staff play a critical role in helping students stay focused on their academic goals, and we encourage consistent messaging that emphasizes the continued availability of student support services, and the university's commitment to student success.

In the coming weeks, the university will share communication guidance, talking points, and updates that faculty and staff can use when speaking with students. These materials will help ensure that information shared across campus is accurate, consistent, and supportive.

### **Is the athletics budget being reviewed, and is dropping to Division III being considered?**

The Athletics budget has undergone a comprehensive review, consistent with the evaluation of other budgets across campus. Only a portion of Athletics is supported by general fund dollars, which covers mandated NCAA requirements, a limited number of administrative positions, and some student athlete financial aid. All remaining Athletics expenses are funded through auxiliary revenue sources.

UCCS currently supports 400 student-athletes who collectively maintain an academic success rate of 84%. This metric—based on retention, persistence, and graduation—positively contributes to the university’s overall performance in these areas. Additionally, student-athletes have achieved a cumulative GPA above 3.0 for 44 consecutive semesters, demonstrating their ability to balance academic and athletic commitments. Approximately half of our student-athletes come from out of state, generating higher tuition revenue. These students are likely to enroll elsewhere if UCCS cannot offer them the opportunity to compete, representing a significant financial and community impact.

Athletics has implemented substantial budget reductions in recent years, including the difficult decision in 2023 to discontinue men’s and women’s golf following an analysis of program costs relative to the small number of participating athletes. A transition from Division II to Division III would create similar challenges across all sports. Travel expenses would increase significantly due to the limited number of Division III institutions in Colorado, resulting in more frequent and longer trips—primarily to the East Coast. This shift would also require additional budget allocations and lead to increased class absences for student-athletes. In addition to this, it is unlikely that Division III would approve UCCS’s membership, as the division is composed largely of small private colleges, creating a competitive imbalance.

### **How will budget reductions affect DEI, research, and academic quality?**

Serving all Coloradans through access, research, academic quality, and supporting our region and Colorado are core to the university’s mission, and the intention throughout this process is to preserve and strengthen those commitments even as financial adjustments are made. Budget decisions are being evaluated through the lens of long-term institutional health to ensure that reductions do not undermine the university’s ability to provide high-

quality academic programs, support faculty scholarship, and maintain inclusive environments (learning, living, and engagement) for students. Efforts connected to the Healthy Campus Initiative focus on improving operational efficiency, reducing duplication, and aligning resources with strategic priorities so that core academic and research functions remain strong. The university's differentiator, powered by people, grounded in research, and connected to Colorado, helps guide these decisions, reinforcing the importance of faculty expertise, student opportunity, and community impact. At the same time, maintaining a Culture of Care means ensuring that all students, faculty, and staff feel supported and able to contribute to the intellectual and creative life of the institution. The goal is to navigate necessary financial changes while sustaining the academic rigor, research activity, and inclusive excellence that define UCCS.

**How is leadership planning to address morale, fear, and frustration across campus during this process?**

We recognize that periods of institutional change can create uncertainty, anxiety, and frustration across the campus community, and addressing morale during this process is a priority. To support the community, we are committed to transparent communication through town halls, campus updates, and regular engagement so faculty, staff, and students understand the financial context, decision-making process, and timelines. A key component of the Healthy Campus Initiative is positioning UCCS for strategic growth beginning in 2029, which is intended to create the capacity for investment in areas that strengthen the campus community, including compensation, deferred maintenance, IT infrastructure, and other university priorities such as academic program investments. Opportunities for input, such as surveys, the Healthy Campus form, and shared governance discussions (ULT and UBAC) connected to the Healthy Campus Initiative, ensure that campus perspectives are heard and may inform recommendations as options are evaluated. Throughout this work, we are grounding decisions in UCCS's Culture of Care, emphasizing respect, professionalism, and compassion for colleagues while also focusing on the long-term goal of building a financially sustainable institution.

**Is administration aware that the student body as a whole knows there are budget issues which may lead to their instructors being let go?**

Yes, the Student Government Association is part of the ULT and UBAC and has been at the table throughout this process. Students have also been part of the surveys used to support the understanding of the Healthy Campus Initiative and Efficiency and Effectiveness Projects. See also FAQ under Impacts to Campus: What guidance will the university provide to help faculty and staff communicate with students and support retention during this period of budget cuts? See also FAQ under Communication, Input, and Engagement: How is student feedback being collected for the Healthy Campus and budget process?

## **Communication, Input, & Engagement**

### **Who is answering the FAQs? Are they being answered using AI?**

The healthy campus project team receives all questions submitted through the online inquiry form. The team collects, reviews and then groups similar questions into one question or theme. This is done to eliminate duplicative questions. AI tools are utilized to support the organization and theme identification of the submitted questions. Once the themes/questions are organized, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) collaboratively develops the answers. AI tools are not used to generate the answers.

### **How can I provide input or ask questions?**

The Healthy Campus Initiative website includes a question submission form. Questions will help guide additional communications, FAQs, listening sessions, and future updates. You can also provide questions to your UBAC representative, supervisor, dean, and vice chancellor.

### **How will the campus be updated?**

The ULT is committed to clear, consistent, and compassionate communication throughout the process. Information circulating through informal channels such as news and social media may be incomplete, inaccurate, or sensationalized information. Always check the Healthy Campus Initiative website for the most up to date, accurate information.

Regular updates will occur through:

- The Healthy Campus Initiative website
- Weekly UCCS News updates
- UBAC meetings and summaries

### **What ideas are being considered / not being considered?**

Everything is on the table. Lots of creative and good ideas are already pouring in through the healthy feedback form and the survey that closed on February 3, 2026. These ideas are

evaluated based on student impact, financial sustainability, feasibility, and alignment with our mission. If you have additional ideas or were unable to complete the survey, please fill out the Healthy Feedback form. Your feedback matters.

### **How is student feedback being collected for the Healthy Campus and budget processes?**

Student feedback is being incorporated through multiple channels:

- Two SGA representatives serve in shared governance roles and have been highly involved in the Financially Healthy Campus process.
- The IVCEMSA and SGA president provided updates and Q&A at the recent SGA meeting.
- Students received the online survey and were encouraged by SGA to participate.
- Additional drop-in listening sessions with the IVCEMSA and SGA leadership are being planned to give more students the opportunity to ask questions and share concerns

### **Can we lower the cost of on-campus housing or offer more scholarships?**

Housing costs cannot be reduced due to the debt service obligations associated with the university's housing bonds. Given this, UCCS has provided additional housing-related financial aid this year for students who met specific merit and financial criteria and expressed a desire to live on campus. Of the 52 students who received additional aid for housing in Fall '25, 50 returned for Spring '26. This targeted aid cohort demonstrated a 9% higher Fall to Spring persistence rate than the overall first-year cohort.

### **Why are we focusing so heavily on enrollment when campus growth has natural limits? Why not invest more energy in building a meaningful endowment?**

Enrollment (recruitment and retention of current students) remains the primary and most immediate revenue source for UCCS. Even with realistic limits on total student capacity, stabilizing and strengthening enrollment is essential to addressing the structural deficit and is our mission. Enrollment growth supports tuition, fees, auxiliary revenue, and state funding metrics, all of which must be part of a balanced strategy.

Endowment growth is also important. Endowments have been, and continue to be part of our long-range strategy.

- Endowed funds allow the university to utilize the proceeds of the invested principal balance. Due to the invested nature of these funds, the distribution (interest

earnings) from endowments reach a more stable source of funding after many years of investment.

- Are often restricted for specific purposes instead of general campus use, and
- Cannot replace the recurring operating revenue needed to support day-to-day functions.

For context, a \$1 million endowment generally generates approximately \$40,000 annually in spendable revenue under standard payout models, which is insufficient to fund large operational expenses such as faculty lines or major academic programs. For this reason, structural expense alignment and enrollment stabilization must move forward in parallel, while longer-term strategies like endowment growth build over time.

### **Can we eliminate athletics to save money?**

Athletics provides both academic, social connection, student development, and financial value to the institution:

- Student-athletes have a 14% higher academic success rate than the general student population.
- The department has maintained a cumulative GPA above 3.2 for more than 40 semesters.
- Half of UCCS student-athletes are from out of state, generating additional tuition revenue.
- SGA consistently identifies athletics as a meaningful contributor to school spirit, engagement, and sense of belonging.

Athletics is conducting an operational review for efficiencies, consistent with reviews occurring across all campus units.

### **“One way to do the budget cuts would be to cut what they did originally with temporary money...” Why can’t temporary (one-time) funds continue supporting ongoing operations?**

Ongoing activities that have been supported with one-time dollars are being reviewed as part of the budget process. One-time funding is appropriate for:

- pilot programs,
- start-up costs, or

- temporary needs.

However, one-time funds cannot support recurring expenses indefinitely, because they do not replenish. Correcting mismatches between temporary funding and permanent activities is a critical step in resolving the structural deficit and achieving long-term financial stability.

**Are there current plans for how we will proactively handle public relations and potentially negative coverage in the press as cuts are rolled out?**

The university is taking a proactive and coordinated approach to communications as budget decisions move forward. Our focus will be on clear, transparent messaging that explains the context for these decisions, the principles guiding them, and how they align with the long-term health of the institution.

UCCS's communications team, has been working to coordinate university communications throughout this process. This includes proactive outreach to news and media outlets before information is released, as well as responding quickly and consistently to media inquiries.

Communications and Marketing, in coordination with university leadership, will also provide timely updates, key messages, and media guidance to help ensure that information shared with the campus community and external audiences is accurate and consistent. When questions arise from the press, the university will respond by emphasizing our commitment to responsible stewardship, student success, and the long-term sustainability of UCCS.

We will also work to ensure that our communications reflect the broader vision for the university, including the Healthy Campus Initiative and the work underway to align resources with our strategic priorities. While budget adjustments are difficult, our goal is to communicate clearly about why these decisions.

**Human Resources**

**Where is the data from faculty/staff experience survey and are they being used during these next financial processes? (Asked in Online form)**

The Staff Qualification Data and the Faculty Experience Data Projects are strategic initiatives designed to systematically collect and integrate comprehensive experience and qualification information for all faculty and staff into the Human Capital Management (HCM) system. Centralizing this data strengthens our HR analytics, supports strategic compensation planning, and enhances our ability to identify and address disparities over

time. This work aligns with our commitment to a more transparent, equitable, and consistent employee experience. HR is in the final stages of uploading faculty experience data and continues to audit and update these records to ensure accuracy throughout an employee's time at UCCS.

Importantly, the data collected through this project is already informing the university's Compensation Strategy, which is included as a key line item in the Healthy Campus Initiatives. This project is not about eliminating positions—quite the opposite. The goal is to better understand how we can improve compensation for faculty and staff over time. Because elevating salaries requires ongoing investment, this analysis helps us determine how we can responsibly fund this work through strategic growth, revenue generation, or expense reductions. These insights guide long-term financial planning to ensure we can invest in our people in a sustainable and equitable way.

### **Can UCCS consider alternative work modalities such as 9-month staff appointments or four-day workweeks?**

Alternative work arrangements can be considered when they are operationally feasible, aligned with university policy, and compatible with staffing and service requirements. Any proposed changes would need to:

- Maintain required service levels
- Ensure continuous support for students and campus operations, and be evaluated for financial and operational impacts

These options may be explored where appropriate, but no decisions have been made.

### **Can more staff work remotely to free up space on campus?**

Remote or hybrid work arrangements are assessed based on operational needs, service expectations, team effectiveness, and the nature of each position. While space utilization is part of ongoing efficiency discussions, decisions about remote work must also ensure:

- Productivity is maintained,
- Student-facing services remain accessible, and
- Units can function cohesively.

Remote work may help with space management in certain situations, but it is not the primary driver of these decisions.

### **Do high vacation balances affect the university's budget?**

No. Vacation balances represent a financial liability, but they are not a driver of the current structural budget deficit. While managing leave balances responsibly is good practice, it does not play a significant role in addressing the budget gap.

**Will UCCS offer another retirement incentive or “retirement push”?**

There are no plans to explore or implement another retirement incentive program at this time.

**How does removing base-salary increases from the budget scenario align with a ‘culture of care’, especially when raises were included in earlier drafts?**

Compensation remains a priority; however, recurring salary increases require recurring revenue. Addressing the structural budget deficit first ensures that future compensation commitments are sustainable. Non-base-building adjustments are included early in the plan, with base-building increases phased in contingent upon achieving defined revenue thresholds.

**What will merit look like over the next two fiscal years, and will there be a total salary-increase freeze?**

The current budget scenario includes non-base-building monetary pay adjustments for FY27 and FY28. These are one-time payments and do not permanently increase salary base and will be connected to revenue growth goals. Base-building merit increases are included in later years of the plan. However, as budget planning continues, these decisions remain subject to change based on updated financial conditions including revenue growth that covers these costs. We recognize the importance of competitive compensation for both morale and retention, and these considerations remain part of ongoing discussions.

**The timing of notification of job loss should be sooner than April. Why can’t notifications be made earlier?**

We recognize that uncertainty is difficult and that employees need as much notice as possible. At the same time, notification of position eliminations cannot occur until the required review, budget analysis, and shared governance processes are completed. Once these steps are completed, the position eliminations will also be reviewed by HR and Legal. These steps ensure that decisions are thoroughly evaluated, consistent, and aligned with university policies and personnel guidelines. We will provide notice as soon as decisions are finalized. While we understand the desire for earlier timelines, moving forward before these processes are complete could result in incomplete or changing information. We are committed to moving through this work as thoughtfully and efficiently

as possible, with fairness, transparency, and a culture care for our employees at the center.

### **Why are administrators being hired at high salaries when cuts are being made elsewhere?**

We understand that questions about administrative hiring and compensation arise naturally during times when the university is also making difficult financial decisions. In many cases, positions that are being filled are critical leadership or operational roles that support the long-term stability of the institution, including areas tied to enrollment growth, fiscal oversight, compliance, and student success. These roles are often national searches, and compensation must remain competitive (and within UCCS compensation structures to comply with Colorado's Equal Pay for Equal Work Act) in order to attract candidates with the experience needed to lead complex divisions and manage large operational portfolios who will then stay to create stability over time.

At the same time, UCCS has implemented measures to ensure hiring decisions are carefully reviewed and aligned with institutional priorities. The position review committee (PRC) evaluates whether a role directly supports revenue growth, safety and compliance, student success, or the operational effectiveness needed. This approach helps ensure that hiring decisions are intentional and aligned with the Healthy Campus Initiative, which focuses on strengthening the institution's long-term financial sustainability while protecting the university's core mission. [Read about the PRC and what a hiring chill is.](#)

### **How many people will be let go, who will be affected, and when will notifications occur?**

The SLT (Deans, Chancellor, and Vice Chancellors) is continuing the process to identify the components of this year's expense reduction. On March 18, the SLT will meet to finalize several options. These options will be shared with the ULT (Vice Chancellors, Chancellor, Deans, and Shared Governance Leaders) on March 19, for feedback. Based upon feedback, adjustments will be made and presented at UBAC on March 30. UBAC will provide feedback and recommendations on the options at the April 8, UBAC meeting. After this meeting the SLT will convene to review and revise a more final option. At that time there will be more information regarding the impact on currently filled positions. Throughout this, HR and Legal will be working with the deans and vice chancellors to prepare for supporting those whose positions will be eliminated. The chancellor shared in the February 18, UBAC meeting that employees who are impacted by this year's expense reduction will be notified by late April to early May. As soon as we have a more specific set of dates, we will share them with the campus community.

### **Can UCCS implement furloughs as a budget-saving measure?**

Furloughs are used as a strategy to create one-time, temporary, savings. The strategy needed to close UCCS's budget gap between revenue and expenditures is tied to the base budget, which represents ongoing funds rather than temporary, or one-time funds. Since a furlough would not impact the need to reduce expenditures in the ongoing, base budget, we are not considering a furlough.

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### **When you say at will positions, that does include IRC faculty. Your previous language had been academic vs non academic, so does "at will" include IRC faculty in your mind?**

Yes, "At-will" refers to all employees who are not in tenure or tenure-track positions. IRC faculty are "at-will" employees unless they are subject to a specific contract.

### **Will laid-off staff and faculty receive a severance package, and what will that include?**

All impacted IRC faculty and university staff will receive a severance package. All IRC faculty and staff are eligible for severance regardless of FTE, and those with appointments of 0.5 FTE or greater are eligible to continue benefits until July 31, 2026. Impacted employees will be notified in late April or early May 2026. For IRC faculty, the last day of employment is the end of the Spring 2026 contract, and for staff it is July 1, 2026; benefits for both groups continue through July 31, 2026, unless separation occurs earlier. The severance package includes four weeks of base pay plus one additional week for each full year of UCCS service after the first year, up to a maximum of 18 weeks, based on total professional service at UCCS, as well as a \$1,500 one-time transition payment. After July 31, 2026, both faculty and staff may elect COBRA continuation coverage at their own expense. [View the full powerpoint from the April 1st townhall for more information.](#)

### **Will the severance payout be in one lump payout or over time such as biweekly? If over time, will the severance pay stop if we get a new job?**

Severance is typically paid in one lump sum. If a person transfers to another university position prior to receiving severance, then severance will not be paid. If a person accepts another university position after their termination, then they would keep their severance.

**After this year's layoffs, will there be additional layoffs in years to come as we seek to reconcile this \$27.7M shortfall?**

Reducing expense budgets by implementing “At-Will” employee separations is always a last resort, and for FY27 there are no proposed separations. We cannot say there will never be future reductions. These decisions depend on meeting our enrollment and revenue objectives. We are being intentional to create financial stability going forward, and to break the continuous cycle of ongoing cuts.

**Enrollment & Retention**

**What is UCCS doing to improve enrollment and retention?**

Formal implementation of the Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP) is underway through eight active task forces, and many initiatives are occurring in individual units. Additional initiatives are planned for future years, Spring 2026 SEP-aligned work includes:

- Formation of Advising Transformation / Enrollment Center services.
- Operationalization and scale of the Concurrent Enrollment initiative.
- Planning and development led by the Continuous Improvement & Assessment team.
- Ongoing work across Course Scheduling, Financial Wellness, Integrated Communications and the New Student Experience Taskforces.
  - o This includes timely review and acceptance of prior learning credits and transfer credits to help with recruitment of transfer students, graduate, and working professionals in a timely manner with lower costs.
  - o Redesigning recruitment to meet students where they are (traditional students, working professionals, rural learners, community college students) so UCCS remains competitive and accessible for Colorado’s evolving population.
  - o Increasing outreach to adult learners via flexible program options and clearer on-ramps back into higher education.

- o Strengthen communication with prospective and continuing students to clearly define and reinforce the campus services component of our student value promise.
- Slate CRM: Ongoing enhancement to strengthen coordinated recruitment, enrollment, and retention strategies.

Learn more: <https://strategy.uccs.edu/sep>

### **How is EMSA addressing any deficits within its Division?**

EMSA has several positions and initiatives that have been temporarily funded using one-time temporary funds, both through system-funded initiatives and campus one-time funds rather than base funding. While this can sometimes be misinterpreted as a deficit, it is more accurately described as a structural funding challenge. EMSA is actively addressing temporary funding decisions through the Healthy Campus work, which focuses on:

- Aligning positions/ initiatives where possible with appropriate, stable funding sources
- Intentionally tracking one-time temporary funds and addressing any discrepancies or potential deficits.
- Strengthening long-term financial planning
- Ensuring EMSA's services are supported in a sustainable and transparent way

These actions are designed to support EMSA's mission while maintaining fiscal responsibility not deficit operations.

### **Are any auxiliary operations currently running a deficit?**

Over the past year there has been an intentional effort to address any auxiliary budget shortfalls. Through targeted financial management, updated processes, and cost saving actions, all auxiliary units have returned to a stable financial position, while ensuring limited impact to students. This resolution represents an important milestone and reflects improved alignment between operations, revenues, and expenses. *See also FAQ under Budget Context and Key Terms: What is the difference between general funds and auxiliary funds?*

**How will enrollment be strengthened, including the use of the \$3M marketing investment, EMSA stability, staffing levels in recruitment areas, and student experience impacts?**

One of our main initiatives that the \$3M marketing investment will go towards is optimizing the UCCS website for AI compatibility. This will ensure that when prospective students or their families search for our site, an AI-generated summary appears at the top of their results. Achieving this will require a dedicated website optimization process, but it's a vital step to keep us visible and competitive as AI-driven search becomes more prevalent. We also plan to revise our websites, aligning content with what students and their families find most appealing when researching colleges. This helps ensure our information connects with their needs and interests. Another priority for these funds is expanding our brand awareness and marketing reach. We're targeting a diverse group: prospective freshmen, adult learners, transfer and graduate students, online students, and employers. We're collaborating closely with EAB and Greenhouse Partners, our external partners, to craft strategic brand and marketing campaigns that leverage new platforms and maximize visibility across these populations. This will also include the rollout of our new campus differentiator.

Additionally, we'll use funds to create new videos featuring deans and faculty, which will be distributed to students interested in their programs. We're also looking at a partnership with an external group to produce videos that guide prospective students through the application and FAFSA process, followed by personalized congratulations videos once they are admitted. These will provide cost estimates if a student has identified a program of interest and highlights what aid they are eligible for if a FAFSA was submitted. This personalized approach has proven to boost yield rates at other colleges, so we're excited to explore it for UCCS. Expanding resources for outreach and campus events is another focus, as we aim to deliver a more personalized experience for prospective students and their families. Over the past year, our partnership with EAB has included a strategic analysis to assist us in prioritizing target markets based on our history and growth potential. These funds allow us to strategically focus some expanded outreach and yield events in those identified locations as well as on campus.

Over the past several years, reductions in Admissions staffing and budgets have limited our capacity to recruit new students. Admissions is foundational to UCCS's overall success, and in response to these constraints, we are pursuing new and more strategic ways to connect with prospective students beyond traditional recruiter-based models. This includes closer collaboration with external partners to identify effective outreach strategies, optimizing our social media presence, implementation of a new CRM platform that will significantly enhance and personalize communications, and working with the system office to elevate UCCS's distinctive strengths in statewide outreach across Colorado. At the same time, we recognize the critical importance of improving student retention, which is significantly more cost-effective than recruitment alone and better

supports students in completing their degrees rather than leaving UCCS without realizing the full value of their investment. Student retention is directly tied to the overall student experience, which is shaped by every interaction students have both inside and outside the classroom. As such, retention is a shared responsibility across the institution and requires continued investment in student safety, compliance, engagement, sense of belonging, and comprehensive support services.

The search for a new Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs has therefore focused on identifying a leader who can provide stability for the division and guide deliberate decision-making. This includes helping each area assess which initiatives should be continued, refined, or discontinued, with a clear focus on maximizing return on investment and enhancing the student experience.

### **How is the university addressing concerns about recruitment pipelines (PPSC, local districts, adult learners)?**

The SEP includes targeted strategies to strengthen and diversify recruitment pipelines, including:

- Deepening partnerships with local institutions, including Pikes Peak State College, Pueblo Community College, and Arapahoe Community College.
- Deepening partnerships and cultivating new relationships with local school districts.
- Expanding transfer-friendly pathways.
- Expanding and emphasizing assured admission pathways.
- Intentional cultivation of a sustained partnership with Peak Education.

### **How much money is UCCS spending on marketing and recruiting students, and how does this compare to peer institutions?**

UCCS currently spends under \$2 million annually on marketing, branding, and its contract with EAB. The EAB portion funds direct, targeted outreach to prospective students who meet admissions criteria and live in geographic areas with strong enrollment potential. These markets are evaluated regularly, and UCCS adjusts targeting as new opportunities emerge, or previous markets produce diminishing returns.

By comparison, institutions of similar size typically spend between \$5.5 million and \$7.5 million per year on marketing, branding, and recruitment efforts. This means UCCS invests

significantly less in these areas than many peer campuses, even as enrollment competition intensifies across the region and nationally.

### **How will enrollment strategy be communicated going forward?**

Enrollment strategy updates and expanded initiatives will be shared as the SEP implementation progresses, including progress, data, and key initiatives via:

- Emails and UCCS News highlights
- Leadership updates and EMSA town halls
- College/division meetings and campus events

The goal is clear, transparent communication so the campus understands roles in enrollment growth, student success, and long-term sustainability.

### **What accountability measures, performance incentives, or consequences are in place for Enrollment Management staff and contractors, given the centrality of enrollment growth to the university's financial recovery?**

All Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (EMSA) staff participate in annual performance evaluations tied to the outcomes and responsibilities defined in their roles. These evaluations include metrics related to recruitment, retention, student service, and operational effectiveness. At present, there are no additional financial incentives tied directly to enrollment performance beyond campuswide merit increases when available. If a staff member is not meeting the expectations outlined in their job description, the university follows standard HR procedures for performance management.

### **What does cybersecurity enrollment look like?**

The total headcount for cybersecurity pathways is over 700. From AY2020 to AY2025, overall UCCS enrollment decreased almost 10% while Cybersecurity enrollment increased more than 44%. Since last year (AY2024 to AY2025), cybersecurity enrollment increased 3.8%.

### **Are there opportunities to strengthen our partnership with Pikes Peak State College to reduce competition and better support student pathways between our institutions?**

We are collaborating closely with PPSC to strengthen and expand pathways for both undergraduate and graduate students. Together, we are preparing to launch a streamlined direct-admissions process between our campuses. As part of this effort, PPSC has agreed to waive transcript fees, and UCCS will waive application fees to help remove financial barriers for students.

PPSC will also begin promoting UCCS to their students from the moment they enroll, helping us build a clearer pipeline for learners who may not have previously considered completing their degree at UCCS. To further support these students, we have developed dedicated housing options designed specifically for adult learners—providing an environment that aligns with their needs and offers a distinctly different experience from traditional first-year housing.

### **How is UCCS helping students feel more connected to campus and university administration?**

Campus leaders are committed to students feeling connected to campus through some of the following examples. Host monthly meetings with SGA leadership to hear student concerns and share updates

- Regularly attend student events to maintain direct connection with the student community
- Campus invested in a new platform, Nearpeer to help students engage with their peers immediately after applying to UCCS.
- Engagement leaders were created last fall to help connect students from their arrival on campus with events, clubs, programs, and resources.
- New CRM platform allows for personalized communication to prospective and current students, as well as their families.
- Partnership between Wellness Promotion and faculty to embed mindfulness, positivity, and resilience skills and activities into course content.
- Partnership between colleges and Career Center for career readiness skills and internship opportunities
- Interim Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs conducted multiple student focus groups representing UCCS demographics to understand:
  - why students choose UCCS,
  - what keeps them here, and
  - why some students leave
- Strengthening student belonging by providing the Nearpeer “belonging before arriving” platform.

Findings from these sessions were shared with campus and college leadership to guide retention-focused improvements. Other college and university-level administrators also provide opportunities for dialogue and welcome student input.

### **What improvements are being made to student-facing services such as advising, tech support, and career services?**

UCCS is actively strengthening student-facing services across advising, technology support, and career readiness to improve the student experience and increase retention and persistence.

#### Advising

- Degree Audit Redesign:  
Advising is updating the degree audit to make each student's academic pathway clearer, easier to follow, and more aligned with timely degree completion.  
These improvements also encourage students to take 30 credits per year, helping minimize additional tuition and fees that accrue when degree completion extends beyond four years.
- Creation of a Student Enrollment Center:  
Multiple advising-related offices have been relocated within Main Hall to create a more student-focused environment.  
Advising will convert part of its space into a student enrollment center designed to support:
  - concurrent enrollment students
  - current UCCS students
  - prospective transfer and first-year students

This central hub will streamline access to advising and academic support.

#### Career Services

- The Career Center continues to expand offerings that help prepare students for internships and employment, including:
  - free workshops on résumé writing, interview skills, and job readiness
  - ongoing development of new internship opportunities

- o access to donated professional attire so students have appropriate clothing for interviews
- o individualized guidance on career pathways
- Career Center staff are strengthening community partnerships, helping students apply their classroom skills in real-world environments and increasing access to experiential learning.

### Technology & General Student Support

While this specific question focuses on advising and career services, improvements across technology support—such as expanded student-facing communication through Slate, improved onboarding tools, and enhanced access to support services—are also part of the broader SEP implementation and modernization efforts.

### **Can we bring back academic advisors for incoming freshmen?**

Incoming first-year students already have full access to academic advising and are required to meet with their advisors during their first semester. Advising availability is expanding to support prospective transfer and incoming first-year students, and new advising spaces in Main Hall are designed to offer a more student-centered experience.

### **What actions are being taken to improve the first-year and continuing student experience?**

The SEP prioritizes a seamless, supportive student journey, including:

- Strengthened first-year programming and new student experience.
- Improved advising, academic planning, and proactive student support services.
- Increased belonging and well-being initiatives.
- Enhanced campus communications and removal of operational barriers that impact persistence.

See task force sections below for specific actions and current updates.

### SEP Task Force Portfolio & Updates

#### Advising Transformation / Enrollment Center

Focus: Improve navigation of enrollment, onboarding, advising, and re-enrollment by reducing complexity and strengthening coordination across student services.

Update:

- Designing an Enrollment Center concept as a centralized, student-centered hub (in-person + virtual) for undergraduate, graduate, and online learners.
- Leveraging Slate and Canvas to reduce administrative barriers, enable proactive outreach, and strengthen recruitment and retention at key transition points.

Concurrent Enrollment

Focus: Strengthen pathways for high school students by improving coordination, access, and scalability of concurrent and dual enrollment.

Update:

- Fall 2025: Centralized Extended Studies Academic Outreach & High School Programs as the single point of contact for districts and students—streamlining processes and reducing barriers
- Spring 2026: Advancing MOUs and deepening district partnerships to support sustained growth

Impact & Scale:

- 28 active MOUs in place statewide; outreach continues weekly.
- +85.14% headcount growth (+63 students) in concurrent enrollment from AY 2024–2025 to AY 2025–2026.
- Growth of +133 students over two academic years, starting from 4 students in AY 2023–2024.
- Now 10.4% of Spring 2026 non-degree enrollment.
- Policy context: Colorado HB 26-1078 would expand qualified off-campus courses for concurrent enrollment, reducing barriers like transportation, bell schedules, and geographic constraints, and supporting equitable, scalable growth.

Continuous Improvement & Assessment

Focus: Advance evidence-based decision-making by aligning metrics, monitoring progress, and evaluating SEP outcomes.

Update:

- Compiling baseline data aligned to SEP metrics and assessing progress on prior SEP initiatives.
- This year's Annual Report will establish baselines (see SEP page 48) and assess enrollment, retention, and student experience metrics.

- Launching a formal SEP outcomes assessment, with results shared each July for the next four years—reinforcing transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Link to the SEP PDF:

[https://strategy.uccs.edu/sites/default/files/2025-10/251023\\_UCCS%20SEP%20Enrollment%20Plan\\_Revised.pdf](https://strategy.uccs.edu/sites/default/files/2025-10/251023_UCCS%20SEP%20Enrollment%20Plan_Revised.pdf)

### Course Scheduling

Focus: Improve scheduling effectiveness, transparency, and predictability to support student progression and enrollment stability.

Update:

- Ad Astra implementation begins Spring 2026; full functionality by Fall 2027
- Scheduling Oversight Committee reconvened to improve communications (course cancellations, waitlists, key processes).
- Academic Affairs, EMSA, and Administration & Finance are collaborating with colleges to translate manual, student-facing processes into streamlined, scalable solutions that enhance course availability, reduce conflicts, and clarify academic pathways.

### Financial Wellness

Focus: Support access, affordability, and persistence by improving cost transparency and predictability for students and families.

Update:

- November 2025: CU Board of Regents approved the UCCS undergraduate tuition plan (anticipated start Fall 2026); final JBC approval expected this semester.
- Establishing a predictable tuition framework mitigates price sensitivity, improves cost transparency, and enables effective financial planning—supporting recruitment, reducing cost-related stop-out, and improving retention.

### **New Student Experience (First-Year)**

Focus: Review the new student journey (orientation → first year) to identify opportunities to improve engagement, persistence, and institutional affinity.

Update:

- Conducting structured interviews with SMEs (informed by NISS and prior retention work) to understand:
  - what students experience at each stage,
  - where they struggle at key transitions,
  - what decisions influence persistence, and
  - where friction or unmet needs occur
- Timeline: Phase 1 (discovery) to be completed by year-end; Phase 2 (implementation) will prioritize interventions, align responsibilities, improve processes/policies, and identify targeted investments.

#### Integrated Communications (Student Messaging)

Focus: Strengthen the clarity, timing, and coordination of student communications across recruitment, enrollment, and persistence.

#### Update:

- Centralizing UG/GR communications within Slate, embedding milestone-based journeys, and expanding faculty/advisor visibility into student data and early alerts.
- Since July 2025, more than 250 personalized campaigns have launched for prospects, parents, and current students.
- January 2026: 285,189 messages delivered with a 60% unique open rate—validating the effectiveness of coordinated, data-informed journeys.
- Outcomes: reduced duplication, improved timing/relevance, and earlier targeted interventions at critical points.

#### Slate CRM (Platform Enablement)

Focus: Provide the foundational CRM infrastructure to support coordinated recruitment, enrollment, and student success communications.

#### Update:

- Phase 2 of 3 phases complete: full deployment of Admissions and Student Success functionality—Slate is now the central CRM for the full enrollment lifecycle
- Processing gains: Nearly 50% of completed undergraduate applications now reviewed/processed within 24 hours

- Operational impact: Reduced manual effort and duplication; improved visibility and coordination across recruitment, admissions, advising, and success teams, freeing staff for high-impact student-facing work
- Student experience: Real-time visibility into application/admission status, enrollment checklists, and key contacts, clarifying next steps and smoothing the transition from prospect to enrolled student

What's ahead in Spring 2026:

- Expand/refine communications for yield and early persistence
- Integrate UIS online CRM functionality and data into Slate for an end-to-end experience
- Enhance faculty engagement with early alerts and student progress indicators
- Deepen integration of coursework, enrollment, and engagement data to enable proactive outreach and timely intervention as part of a comprehensive continuum of student care

Recruitment, Yield & Retention Impact:

With Admissions and Student Success fully implemented, Slate enables coordinated, milestone-driven, and personalized engagement that:

- reduces friction during recruitment and enrollment,
- strengthens yield at key decision points,
- clarifies pathways to enrollment, and
- (with upcoming integrations) improves retention via earlier insights into engagement and academic progress.

Communications, Metrics & Reporting

- Ongoing communications: Leadership updates, emails, UCCS News, town halls, college/division meetings
- Annual SEP Outcomes Assessment: Published each July for the next four years, establishing baselines and tracking progress on enrollment, retention, and student experience metrics (per SEP p. 48)
- Transparency & accountability: Task force updates will continue to tie actions → outcomes, enabling continuous improvement.

**Why are enrollment projections optimistic when trends show declines?**

The enrollment projection for FY27 reflects an anticipated 2% decline. As a reminder, enrollment is measured year over year—for example, Fall 2025 compared to Fall 2026. In the subsequent year, we project a 1% increase, which remains below the enrollment level achieved in Fall 2025. This modest increase is expected given the significant work completed over the past two years to implement the strategies outlined in the Strategic

Enrollment Plan [Strategic Enrollment Plan | Strategic Enrollment Planning and Outreach](#).

Notably, this month alone we have processed 2,000 more applications and admitted 2000 more students than at the same time last year.

In addition, the upcoming launch of the Ad Astra course scheduling platform will support a comprehensive redesign of the academic schedule. This work will be completed in collaboration with each college, with a focus on aligning course offerings with student needs and creating more efficient pathways to four-year graduation.

We have already begun implementing the growth plan supported by the \$3 million investment from the CU Foundation, which will positively impact enrollment in Fall 2026 and Fall 2027. A portion of these funds will be dedicated to strategic investments that include website enhancements, new marketing platforms, and expanded yield events, among other initiatives.

We also recognize the critical role of retention in achieving enrollment goals. Retention increased by 2% from Fall 2024 to Fall 2025, and continued improvement in this area is essential. Every member of the UCCS community contributes to retention through the quality of students' experiences. Sustained gains in retention will help ensure that future enrollment projections remain strong.

### **How can revenue increase when student headcount and credit hours decline?**

Revenue can increase through a variety of efforts. Given our mission, one of the best ways to increase revenue is to attract more students to enroll at UCCS, retain them through graduation and launch them into the next steps of their career and life. When student credit hours and headcount decline, we can increase revenue through "the mix" of our student population. State law requires that WUE and Nonresident students pay higher tuition; so one way to increase revenue as headcount and credit hours decline is by increasing the number of WUE and Nonresident students.

We want all of our students to be successful. Our retention and graduation rates are lower than our peers. For our students who are seeking a bachelor's degree, we should focus on increasing retention and 4-year graduation rates, thus helping our students be successful, achieving our mission and growing our revenue. This can be achieved by strategically engaging diverse student populations and designing course schedules that better align with student needs, ultimately supporting timely four-year degree completion. We recently launched the Think 30 campaign, which advisors are using to encourage students to complete 30 credit hours per academic year. This initiative helps students understand both the academic benefits and the increased financial costs associated with extending their studies beyond four years. We anticipate that a more flexible and student-centered

course schedule—paired with transparent cost comparisons—will further support increased credit hour completion.

We are also collaborating closely with the deans to expand dual and concurrent enrollment opportunities, including clear pathways for these students to be directly admitted to UCCS. Academic Advising is broadening its mission to become an enrollment center that will provide proactive advising to dual-enrollment, concurrent-enrollment, and prospective transfer students, ensuring they are well prepared before arriving on campus. In addition, innovative initiatives such as [C3 Innovation](#) and expanded community partnerships offer promising avenues for new funding sources and long-term revenue diversification.

The new tuition tables, designed with college and UBAC input, will also help with additional revenue in the future given that the new Tuition Tables will significantly decrease the confusion students and families have experienced with the cost to attend UCCS. Current students will transition over two years into the new tuition tables. New students will begin with the new Tuition Tables in Fall 2026.

### **I wonder if the Athletic Director is having to make the same decisions as the Deans**

UCCS currently supports 400 student-athletes who collectively maintain an academic success rate of 84%. This metric—based on retention, persistence, and graduation—positively contributes to the university’s overall performance in these areas. Additionally, student-athletes have achieved a cumulative GPA above 3.0 for 44 consecutive semesters, demonstrating their ability to balance academic and athletic commitments. Approximately half of our student-athletes come from out of state, generating higher tuition revenue. These students are likely to enroll elsewhere if UCCS cannot offer them the opportunity to compete, representing a significant financial and community impact.

Athletics has implemented substantial budget reductions in recent years, including the difficult decision in 2023 to discontinue men’s and women’s golf following an analysis of program costs relative to the small number of participating athletes. A transition from Division II to Division III would create similar challenges across all sports. Travel expenses would increase significantly due to the limited number of Division III institutions in Colorado, resulting in more frequent and longer trips—primarily to the East Coast. This shift would also require additional budget allocations and lead to increased class absences for student-athletes. In addition to this, it is unlikely that Division III would approve UCCS’s membership, as the division is composed largely of small private colleges, creating a competitive imbalance. See also FAQ under Decision-Making & Governance: How will program decisions be made?

**Speaking of the 5-year plan, why does it include an assumption of enrollment growth?**

Enrollment is measured year over year, for example fall to fall. In FY 2027 we are forecasting a 2% enrollment decrease. Due to the initiatives we are currently implementing, we are expecting to see a modest 1% return on these efforts in fall 2027's enrollment, which falls into FY 2028. See also FAQs under Enrollment & Retention section

**Why did the ELT allow the decrease in enrollment to continue for so many years without doing anything about it until now?**

Enrollment declines began in 2019 and was greatly impacted by the global pandemic, increased competitiveness in our regional market due to statutory mission changes for community colleges, and demographic impacts leading to high school graduation declines among other factors. We believe that the leadership at the time was making the best decisions possible with the information at hand. Under this leadership, we have crafted the Strategic Enrollment Plan received feedback on changes to our enrollment strategies from the National Institute for Student Success, and will be investing in additional marketing and recruiting efforts to stabilize and grow enrollment.

**Why am I seeing UCCS commercials on YouTube and TV now, as opposed to just after COVID, when numbers were at their lowest? Are we intentionally marketing to traditional first year students?**

The University Communication and Marketing Team is under new leadership and has been working over the past six months to elevate our visibility with as many markets as possible. Commercials are a good way to reach prospective students from all demographics through targeted zip code marketing. While 18 year olds are a traditional higher education population, they are also part of the demographic cliff. There are fewer traditional aged college goers than ever before. We are leaning into one of UCCS's strengths to attract transfer and populations outside of the "traditional college age". See also FAQ under Enrollment & Retention: How much money is UCCS spending on marketing and recruiting students, and how does this compare to peer institutions and What is UCCS doing to improve enrollment and retention?

**We need a lot more data about students and their experiences. Are there any plans to get any data?**

EMSA already collects and actively uses a substantial amount of student experience data to inform day-to-day operations, program improvement, and support strategies; our work is evidence-based and data-driven. Current tools include the National Health Assessment to gauge student need and experience, Mountain Lion Connect to track engagement and

interactions, and program-level data from student engagement offices to evaluate signature programs. Departments also compile mid-year and end-of-year reports, and the Rec Center and Wellness units draw on both quantitative and qualitative metrics. EMSA is also exploring how Slate can further support tracking student recruitment, retention, and persistence. Together, these efforts provide a meaningful picture of student engagement across multiple touchpoints.

The gap is not in data collection, it's in capacity. Due to current staffing constraints, there is limited ability to formally synthesize, translate, and share these insights at a campus-wide level. The opportunity ahead is to enhance how we integrate, visualize, and communicate what we already know. With additional support, whether through tools, infrastructure, or dedicated capacity, we can more effectively tell the student data story and ensure that departmental insights inform broader institutional decision-making. See also FAQs under the Enrollment & Retention section

### **Has the university conducted comparisons with similarly sized institutions to determine appropriate staffing levels for effective operations?**

The Division of EMSA conducts comparisons to their staffing ratios compared to National Benchmarks, when national recommendations are not available they use regional and peer comparisons. [View a full report of the EMSA Staffing Ratios.](#)

## **Academic Affairs**

### **How will low-enrollment courses or departments be evaluated?**

College deans work with their respective faculty/staff to establish enrollment minimums for courses within their colleges and for reviewing any exceptions to those policies. Course enrollment patterns are evaluated alongside factors such as program requirements, accreditation needs, progression to degree, and strategic priorities. Typically, enrollment data is reviewed over multiple terms rather than a single semester to understand patterns. Low-enrollment courses are not evaluated on enrollment alone; decisions are made based on the academic mission, student and workforce needs, and the overall program structure. Department evaluations should be conducted by the dean within the shared governance processes of their respective college.

### **Will UCCS expand short-term certificates, micro-credentials, or professional programs?**

Yes, these options remain available and highly encouraged. Faculty are welcome to propose new certificates, micro-credentials, or professional programs through existing curriculum approval processes. These offerings can help attract new learners, support

workforce needs, and generate additional revenue while expanding educational pathways for students.

**How does the development of new programs intersect with the process of program discontinuance? Are these processes considered together?**

While new program development and program discontinuance are separate processes with different requirements and governance steps, they may occur concurrently at the institutional and college level. As the colleges and university evaluate the academic portfolio, we may discontinue programs that no longer align with demand or strategic priorities while simultaneously developing new programs that support long-term sustainability and student needs. Although these processes are not formally linked, they are part of the broader work of ensuring a balanced, forward-looking academic portfolio.

**Can we launch more dual degrees?**

Yes. Colleges may propose new dual-degree programs through the standard curriculum approval process. Dual degrees can be an effective way to attract new students, create interdisciplinary pathways, and strengthen enrollment. Per CU System policy and campus guidelines, any proposal should demonstrate areas such as clear student demand, alignment with workforce needs, and financial sustainability, and must follow campus and system curriculum review procedures.

**Are there protections for IRC faculty and will multi-year contracts (MYCs) be honored through completion?**

Yes, there are several. Under APS 1015, IRC faculty who have worked at least seven consecutive years at .5 FTE or higher receive protections in the event of program discontinuance, including a one-year terminal contract. Additionally, IRC faculty with multi-year contracts are not at-will employees, and the university will fully honor the terms of those contracts, unless cause exists under the terms of the agreement. Multi-year contracts are legally binding agreements and will be honored through their stated terms. Positions covered by MYCs are not at-will, and the contracts allow cancellation only under very limited circumstances, such as for-cause. Renewals of MYCs are determined at the college level and are at the discretion of the dean.

**How will we staff our courses with potentially higher minimum caps and/or with fewer faculty?**

Colleges and programs are using a number of strategies to align teaching capacity with student demand while maintaining program quality. Increasing course caps is one option, but it is not the only one. The implementation of the Ad Astra predictive scheduling tool will

assist colleges to schedule courses more efficiently based on historical demand and degree-progress needs.

**In alignment with our culture of care, will faculty associated with academic Minors receive the same protections and considerations as those associated with Majors under APS 1015 and the UCCS Program Discontinuance Policy? Will Minors receive formal teach-out processes?**

Under current policy, academic Minors, tracks, certificates, and micro-credentials are not covered by APS 1015 or the UCCS Program Discontinuance Policy. These policies apply specifically to degree-granting majors and outline distinct protections and considerations for tenured and tenure-track faculty, as well as some IRC faculty. If a dean chooses to close a Minor, track, or certificate, they may still elect to offer some of the associated courses if there is continued student demand, but this is an administrative decision rather than a formal policy requirement. While formal teach-out processes are not mandated for Minors, academic units may choose to provide structured support to ensure students can complete their chosen pathway where feasible.

**Should funding for the new Faculty Affairs Office be delayed until the university is in a stronger financial position?**

The Faculty Affairs Office is being launched using funds provided by the CU System Office that are restricted for this specific purpose to address crucial needs and to align with the other CU System campuses. These dollars cannot be redirected to other campus needs, including offsetting cuts. In addition, the campus portion of funding currently designated for this office consists of one-time funds, not ongoing base dollars. As the Provost has stated, no decision has been made about whether to base-fund this office in future years. Once the one-time resources are fully utilized, the Provost will evaluate the office's impact, effectiveness, and alignment with campus priorities before making any recommendation about ongoing funding. For this reason, the multi-year budget plan does not include base funding for the office until FY30, ensuring that the cam

**Will faculty workloads, teaching expectations, or course scheduling change?**

Faculty workloads, teaching expectations, and course scheduling are determined at the college and department levels in accordance with their respective policies and shared governance processes. As colleges and departments evaluate options to reduce expenses while protecting academic quality and student pathways, some adjustments to teaching assignments, course scheduling, or workload distribution may be considered. Any changes would be developed through established shared governance structures within the colleges.

**“I heard reference to pro formas as a means of resolving our deficit issue, but weren’t pro formas a big part of how we got here?”**

Pro formas did not create the structural deficit; however, enrollment volatility made some growth assumptions more difficult to realize on the originally projected timeline. On our campus, approved pro formas have typically been treated as committed investments to launch or scale programs we believe advance student demand and strategic priorities. Because we value academic innovation, funding new initiatives often requires reallocating existing resources to support them (e.g., start-up costs, marketing, staffing, equipment). Pro formas are funded based on actual enrollment in a new program, not on projected enrollment, and funding is adjusted accordingly if enrollments are lower than projected.

**Will all primary units add one class per faculty member before we consider eliminating any filled positions? Also, will this be temporary to align with our R2 status (research mission)?**

Deans are working with their college’s shared governance processes to evaluate a range of potential measures, including expanding course caps, adjusting teaching loads where appropriate, and identifying other cost saving strategies. All decisions are being considered in alignment with UCCS’s statutory mission, our commitment to student success, and the expectations associated with maintaining our R2 research status.

**Are IRC faculty at risk?**

At this stage, all positions across the university (including IRC faculty) are being reviewed as part of the broader budget reduction process, with college and program decisions guided by academic priorities, student impact, and long-term sustainability.

**Could UCCS consider offering associate degree programs alongside existing certificates and bachelor’s degrees, especially since community colleges are now able to offer bachelor’s degrees?**

Offering associate degrees in addition to certificates and bachelor’s degrees at UCCS would require legislation to adjust the range of degrees in our mission. Please let your chair/dean know you are interested in expanding our degree offerings to include associate’s degrees and we can explore this possibility.

Please note that through the Colorado Re-Engaged (CORE) Initiative <https://cdhe.colorado.gov/colorado-re-engaged-core-initiative>

UCCS and other 4-year institutions are able to offer earned associate’s degrees to students who have stopped out and completed at least 70 credit hours. UCCS’s Associate

of General Studies (AGS) degree for this Initiative was approved by the Board of Regents in April 2023.

[https://catalog.uccs.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=37&poid=18172&hl=%22ags%22&returnto=search](https://catalog.uccs.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=37&poid=18172&hl=%22ags%22&returnto=search)

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### **As we continue discussing program discontinuance, it would be helpful to pause and define the performance measures we're using. Right now, we haven't identified what differentiates a high performing program from an average or low performing one. What metrics are we using at the institutional level? Without clearly defined criteria, this conversation continues to be subjective rather than evidence-based.**

The university will align its evaluation framework, once it is developed, with the CU Administrative Policy Statement (APS) 1015: Academic Program Discontinuance. This policy outlines that decisions regarding academic programs be based on review of multiple forms of evidence, suggestions within the APS include factors such as student demand and enrollment trends, program productivity (e.g., retention, competition, impacts on other programs), alignment with institutional mission and strategic priorities, workforce and societal needs, financial sustainability, and program quality.

### **As the discussion of adding courses and the possibility of moving to a 3–3 teaching load, could someone clarify how this would interact with the Letters of Offer (LOO) many of us signed? The 2–3 loads (or 2–2 “until tenure”) were key recruitment commitments for a lot of people. Would shifting to a 3–3 load conflict with those contractual terms—and if so, what process would address that?**

Letters of Offer (LOOs) do carry weight, particularly where they outline initial teaching expectations such as a 2–3 load or a 2–2 load pre-tenure. At the same time, LOOs are generally understood to reflect conditions at the time of hire and are implemented within the broader context of institutional policies and evolving operational needs. If appropriate, amendments to letters of offer will be provided. If the university were to consider a shift to a 3–3 or alternative teaching load, it would not be implemented as a unilateral override of those commitments. Regent Policy 4.A.1. states that deans are responsible for faculty assignments and workload. Additionally, any changes may need to be addressed through established faculty processes, most appropriately through the Faculty Responsibility Statement (FRS) and any shared governance structures that comply with applicable Regent Laws and policies, as well as the CU Administrative Policy Statement (APS) framework.

**Will academic programs, faculty roles, or research be reduced, and how will program metrics account for student and community value?**

As part of addressing our financial challenges, all areas of the university are being carefully reviewed, including academic programs, faculty roles, and research activity. Our goal, however, is not to make across-the-board reductions, but to take a strategic and evidence-based approach that prioritizes student success, academic quality, and long-term institutional sustainability. In terms of academic programs, any consideration of reduction or discontinuance will follow established policies and shared governance processes, including those outlined in APS 1015. Decisions will be informed by multiple measures rather than any single metric. This multi-factor approach is intended to ensure that programs providing high value to students and the community, especially those critical to our mission, are appropriately recognized, even if they are not the largest or most revenue-generating. Ultimately, while some changes may be necessary, decisions will be made thoughtfully, transparently, and with input from shared governance to ensure we are strengthening the university's academic portfolio rather than simply reducing it.

**Why are we not looking at faculty workloads?**

We are, and it is part of the broader conversation. As we work through budget reductions, all areas of Academic Affairs are being considered, including how we structure and assign faculty workload. That said, changes to workload are more complex than many other cost-saving measures and must be approached thoughtfully and within established policies. We are actively exploring workload as part of longer-term, more sustainable solutions. This includes examining how teaching loads, course delivery, and faculty assignments align with student demand, program needs, and institutional priorities.

**Research is a pillar and a differentiator. With the cuts proposed there is major concern that faculty will have higher workloads and less time for research which then puts our R2 status in jeopardy. This is in contrast to what you are saying we want to highlight at UCCS. How are you going to keep research a priority and pillar when there are less resources available?**

Research is not just something we say is a priority, it is central to who we are as a university, to our R2 trajectory, and to our broader impact on students, workforce development, and the community. We cannot and will not advance as an institution if research erodes. At the same time, we are operating in a constrained environment, which means we have to be more intentional about how we support research, not less committed to it. Our approach moving forward is focused on protecting and prioritizing research capacity. This includes being intentional about workload, not simply increasing it and prioritizing research-active areas and faculty. Ultimately, being an R2 institution is not just about aspiration; it requires alignment of time, support, and strategy. Our goal is to ensure that, even in a challenging financial moment, we make decisions that preserve and strengthen research as a core pillar of UCCS.

**Why aren't we looking at removing GPS? It is a high cost program. It would be better to have an orientation style experience in each college.**

We are looking at GPS as part of the broader budget conversation. No program or unit is exempt from review, including GPS. At the same time, decisions about programs like GPS require us to weigh both cost and impact. The question is not simply whether GPS exists or not, it's whether we are delivering these supports in the most effective and efficient way possible. Our goal is to ensure that we are supporting students in a way that is both impactful and financially sustainable.

**What will happen to the Vice provost of Research line? It is critical that this line is filled. Cutting this line would be a clear message that ELT does not care about research. This also would indicate a clear lack of understanding of what Higher Education's mission and impact on society.**

We want to be very clear: research remains a core part of our mission as a university, and that is not changing. The VP for Research role is currently under review as part of the broader budget process, but that review should not be interpreted as a lack of commitment to research. Rather, we are evaluating how best to structure leadership and support for research in a way that is both effective and sustainable given our current financial realities. Our goal is not to step back from research, but to be intentional about how we sustain and grow it.

