



Navigating our Future amid Challenges and Opportunities

📅 March 2, 2026

👤 Lise M. Youngblade, Interim Provost & Executive Vice President

Dear Colleagues:

These first two months in the role of Interim Provost and Executive Vice President have been profound, productive, and exciting, thanks largely to the open and honest conversations I have had with academic leadership, faculty, and staff across our institution. I am grateful for the willingness of those who have shared their triumphs and concerns with me, and for the many great ideas that have been shared as well.

We are currently in a transformational time, involving everything from how AI and other technologies are reshaping higher education to federal impacts to building a new budget model amid increasingly complex fiscal challenges. This requires an unwavering commitment to our academic integrity and our mission of access and excellence.

During my recent *Office Hours*, two themes stood out: 1) your focus on community and need for support, and 2) your concerns about navigating the hardships in front of us and the potential impact on your units and colleagues. It was clear that underlying these concerns was an immense sense of pride for CSU and taking care of each other. It is also clear that, even as we navigate challenges, we are still thinking about and deeply motivated in how we innovate and move ahead in new and creative ways.

At heart, we are learners and curiosity is core to what we do. So, even given our challenges, I have been moved by hearing the “what if we did this?” and “I have an idea for that” sentiments. Hope, meaning, and purpose are powerful drivers. Please know that leadership

is focused not only on protecting our standing as a top land-grant and public university, but also on supporting our people who are the bedrock of our success. As President Parsons has noted, our fundamentals are strong, and by staying grounded in our strengths, we will navigate these challenges together.

We are moving forward. In late February, CSU hosted Microsoft's U.S. Public Sector Industries Global Town Hall. It was the first time Microsoft has held a town hall at a university, and it was standing room only as well as live streamed around the world. This global spotlight highlighted CSU's leadership in many areas, including new digital technologies to expand access to education and new state of the art facilities, like the Don and Susie Law Engineering Future Technologies Building now under construction.

CSU leadership and faculty are actively engaging with the challenges and opportunities AI presents, driven by our commitment to workforce preparation. As AI reshapes both higher education and society, the stakes are high. It is rapidly being incorporated into both pedagogy and research; for instance, colleagues in Natural Sciences, Engineering, and Veterinary Medicine are already utilizing AI to modify antibodies, enabling us to better visualize and track cancer-causing gene expression errors. The Provost's Office is convening a working group to address the integration of AI in curriculum and learning, and more information will be shared as this group gets going. We are at a critical juncture, addressing the ethical risks while harnessing the potential of these tools, with significant, ongoing work required to stay ahead.

I invite you to join me at an upcoming *Office Hours* and share your ideas about where we are now and our future. You know this institution better than anyone, and I truly want to hear from you as we decide our next steps together. These conversations are also great ways to socialize and engage with new colleagues across campus.

Interim Provost and Executive Vice President Office Hours

This is a dedicated space to provide feedback, ask questions, and discuss how our office can better support your work and well-being. Please join me:

Wednesday, March 4, 4-5 p.m.

Thursday, March 12, 10-11 a.m.

(Administration room 108 or [via Teams](#))

Thank you for your tireless support of our students and all you do to elevate our excellence.

Sincerely,
Lise

Lise M. Youngblade, Ph.D.
Interim Provost and Executive Vice President

Colleges:

- Agricultural Sciences
- Business
- Walter Scott, Jr. College of Engineering
- Health and Human Sciences
- Liberal Arts
- Warner College of Natural Resources
- Natural Sciences
- Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences

Schools & Programs:

- Graduate School
- International Programs
- Online Degrees and Courses
- School of Materials Science and Engineering
- School of Music, Theatre and Dance
- School of Biomedical Engineering
- School of Education
- School of Global Environmental Sustainability
- School of Social Work
- School of Public Health

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