

March 30, 2022

To members of the search committee:

I am writing to express my interest in and to describe my qualifications and vision for the position, **Dean of the College of Education** at the University of Colorado – Colorado Springs. In this letter, I will summarize my experience as a scholar, academic leader, and administrator, and share some insights into the values I would bring to the College and University.

Review of the job description and online material convince me of the close fit between this position and my aspirations. UCCS is actively reinventing higher education at a moment in time that warrants placing *innovation* and *impact* as core values. We are rethinking all aspects of our institutions; an innovative spirit must become even more a part of the institution's DNA. It is both an exciting, and challenging time to be leaders in higher education, which drives me to seek this role at UCCS.

Experience

After serving as a faculty member and academic leader at the University of New Orleans and George Mason University for just over two decades, I have been Associate Dean for Advanced Education and Doctoral Programs for the School of Education and Human Development since August 2017. Since May 2021, I am serving at CU Denver as co-interim Dean.

After fourteen years as a consultant and researcher in organizational development, I started my academic career at the University of New Orleans in 1996, where I was promoted and tenured, and where I was program coordinator in Educational Leadership, a role akin to department chair but without faculty evaluation responsibilities. There, I also served on the Chancellor's Policy Committee (a select strategic advisory group), as a faculty senator, and as co-Director of Professional Development Schools.

While in New Orleans, I was among the founders and served as Research Director of the School Leadership Center of Greater New Orleans (SLC), a leadership development center created, in part, to promote social justice leadership to redress the inequities evident in schools throughout southeast Louisiana. Along with my role in professional development schools, work at the SLC involved a high degree of partnership-building and working across systems and governmental

agencies while assisting in advancement and the management of a very large (>\$10M) multi-year grant.

I moved to George Mason in 2004 as program coordinator in Education Leadership, and then served as Division Director and faculty lead for accreditation & continuous improvement. At Mason the division director job included oversight for accreditation and program improvement; human resources functions; management of a budget of around \$2M; promulgating and nurturing partnerships, development, and community relations; and serving on a variety of college and university collaborative work teams.

In Fall 2017, I joined the School of Education and Human Development (SEHD) at the University of Colorado Denver as Associate Dean for Advanced Education & Doctoral Programs, overseeing all masters programs other than teacher education and the school's three doctoral programs. As Associate Dean, I serve on strategic and operational leadership teams; represent the school campus-wide; lead accreditation and program improvement efforts; mentor and ensure the ongoing development of faculty and staff; serve as a leader in strategic enrollment management; and work with the university advancement team. This year, as co-interim dean, all facets of my role expanded, adding oversight of the promotion, tenure, and contract review process; all facets of financial operations; and representing the school in university- and system-wide activities as needed.

My background in organizational behavior and systems change, and ongoing scholarship in educational leadership, has served me well in academic leadership roles. Throughout, I maintained a teaching load, mentored students, conducted research, published, and contributed meaningfully through service to my program, college, university, and the profession. While the relative mix of my time commitments varied during different periods and based on my other responsibilities, I strongly feel that as an academic leader I must stay connected to faculty work and maintain my role as a colleague in my academic content area.

Qualifications

Review of the required and preferred job qualifications suggests that I am an exceptional fit for this opportunity. As outlined above, I would join UCCS State as a collaborative and strategically oriented leader with experience in all facets of administration including considerable and varied experience with accreditation and program improvement, budgeting and planning, human resource development, advancement, community relations and partnership-building.

My work is deeply informed by my scholarship and understanding of the field of PK-24 educational leadership, and I am committed to leading collaboratively and with an inquiry stance that empowers stakeholders while incorporating evidence to evaluate progress toward clear and transparently shared goals.

I believe in the critical role of inquiry in leadership decision making, and more broadly in the life of all professionals navigating the complexities of their work. I have developed over my career

an ability to approach research and problem solving using multiple modalities and frameworks that sometimes challenge orthodoxy and endorse a model that promotes conducting research in partnership with individuals, groups, and organizations in education and human development on real-world puzzles that can have an immediate impact on the lives of participants.

Vision: Leadership

As a student of leadership in PK-24 settings, I understand that the stewardship of a dean must focus first and foremost on *student success*. I also recognize that the dean primarily affects student outcomes through her/his impact on the work of faculty and staff. I understand that an academic leader improves the capacity of faculty and staff by impacting their motivation, their abilities to perform their jobs, and by creating a work setting that is conducive to productive work. Specifically,

- Leaders **motivate** others by inviting them to contribute their ideas to create an uplifting and ambitious vision, involving them meaningfully in decision making, and listening attentively and fully to their ideas, issues, and observations about their work and well-being.
- Leaders enhance staff and faculty **ability** to do their best by providing learning opportunities, creating space and time for such learning, and encouraging thoughtfully planned risk-taking.
- Leaders create a **work environment** conducive to high levels of performance by nurturing an environment that balances people's work and well-being, creating a truly collaborative environment where individuals both lead and follow, communicating transparently, and ensuring that effort is recognized and rewarded.

I understand, at a deep level, that a leaders' role is to model (that is, practice what we preach) and empower people to do the very best they can and to grow as individuals and as members of a program or work unit. Above all, I know that I must earn the trust and respect of my colleagues every day, in no small part by being fair, ethical, and transparent about actions and decisions that affect the team.

Leadership is a means to an end. The dean's goal is to make everyone around her/him better. An important goal is the creation and sustenance of systems of support and enrichment for students, staff, and faculty to allow contributors to the work of the College to build on their assets, grow as individuals, and contribute to organizational learning. The mark of an effective leader is the growth – and leadership – nurtured in others. By empowering and enabling faculty and staff to thrive, students and our community benefit.

Vision: The College of Education

Give my beliefs about leading with others, I am faced with a puzzle related to sharing my vision for the College of Education. Should I be offered the position as Dean, I would be committed to

first listening to stakeholders about individual and collective accomplishments and aspirations, developing a deep understanding of where the College has been and how it fits into the university's strategic goals and objectives, and understand the capacities existing to build for the future.

Nevertheless, I believe that the central vision of a College of Education must be to ***inspire learning that stimulates change to help each of us build our capacity to achieve our hopes and dreams*** as individuals, as families and groups, as communities, and as a society. As an academic leader, I would hope to help the faculty and staff (with input from stakeholders) to select a small number of core goals and objectives that can be resourced, enacted, reviewed, and amended annually that would address the big challenges of our field and ensure that the College of Education is a "best place to work" for faculty, staff, and student workers. Student success is clearly priority #1; ensuring an exceptional quality of work life for all the people who work to ensure that success is a close second.

In closing, I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to be considered for this position and would consider it an honor to serve as Dean. I would be happy to answer any questions or provide additional information and look forward to hearing from the committee. Regardless of outcome, I wish you success in your search.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott C. Bauer". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Scott C. Bauer