



COLLEGE OF NATURAL SCIENCES

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

OUR HISTORY

Courses in the natural sciences were part of the original curriculum of Colorado Agricultural College upon its founding in 1870. The college was originally one half of the College of Science and Arts (Natural Sciences and Liberal Arts), and in 1968, the College of Natural Sciences was formed as its own college.

YEAR FOUNDED
1968

NUMBER OF STUDENTS
6,375

SPONSORED PROJECT EXPENDITURES
\$52,876,594

Fall Census 2024

Fiscal Year 2025

DEPARTMENTS

- Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
- Computer Science
- Biology
- Mathematics
- Psychology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Statistics

Computer science, data science, and statistics are all distinct disciplinary areas that evolved from the math department.

WHAT WE'RE KNOWN FOR

Life: The college studies life at every scale, from genes to ecosystems, and uses that knowledge to advance our understanding of living systems, health, and animal and human behavior.

Data: Through modeling, reasoning, and computation, the college uses data to answer the world's biggest questions.

Matter: The foundation of everything, the college studies matter to discover the intricacies of the world and to create the innovations of the future.

KEY INITIATIVES

Investing in increased data science expertise across the college through a data science faculty cluster hire, resulting in new faculty in multiple departments.

Performing a comprehensive review of undergraduate programs to identify areas to increase student success rates including persistence and time to degree.

Investing in strategic **student recruitment** through marketing campaigns, personnel, and budget.



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**ACCOLADES
AND RANKINGS**

1/5

of faculty are fellows in their disciplinary national societies.

20%

of new CSU undergraduates start at the College of Natural Sciences each year.

7/8

of departments rank in the top 100 for their disciplines on the U.S. News and World Report rankings.

AREAS OF EXCELLENCE

LIFE SCIENCES STRENGTH

- Genetics, cellular function including proteins, viruses, bacteria, prions, and imaging.
- Neuroscience, behavior, human development, health, and aging.
- Ecosystem science including plants and animals, from genetics to behavior to environment.

EXPERTISE IN DATA

- Modeling and analysis, including distilling useful information from complex data.
- Leading-edge technologies like machine learning and AI.
- Cybersecurity.
- Human aspects of computing.
- Software creation and distribution.

THE AREA OF MATTER

- Creation of new materials including next-generation plastics, batteries, chemicals, and advanced fabrics.
- Diagnostic tools for health, water, pollution, and precision measurement in physics.
- Quantum materials and measurement.
- Novel energy sources and increasing efficiency and security for energy capture and storage.

**RECENT
HIGH-IMPACT
RESEARCH**

Greener plastics: Advancements in materials science published in Nature by CSU faculty member and University Distinguished Professor Eugene Chen are leading to more sustainable plastics.

Plant genetics: A new genetic switch in plants created by researchers in the College of Natural Sciences and the Walter Scott, Jr. College of Engineering allows scientists to turn on and off genes, giving more control over how plants progress through their life cycle.

Solar energy: University Distinguished Professor Alan Knapp has shown that the use of an “eco-voltaics” approach to solar energy planning can result in positive benefits for grasslands.

Rural health: Researchers in the Department of Computer Science are aiming to provide better health care access to rural patients through the use of mobile clinics that use AI to assist physicians.

Sleep and health: While it is well known that sleep is important to health, an advancement from Department of Psychology Assistant Professor Emily Merz has shown how lack of sleep among children affects the structure of the developing brain. In particular, less sleep was associated with a smaller amygdala, the portion of the brain responsible for fear and aggression, and connections between the amygdala and emotional processing portions of the brain.