The highest academic recognition awarded by the University, the title of University Distinguished Professor, is bestowed upon a very small number of full professors at any one time on the basis of outstanding scholarship and achievement. Professors receiving this title hold the distinction for the duration of their association with Colorado State University.

To obtain the rank, faculty members are nominated through an extensive review process and must be approved by the current University Distinguished Professors. Colorado State’s current president approves new selections and secures endorsement from the Board of Governors of the Colorado State University System.

V. “Chandra” Chandrasekar, B.S. (Indian Institute of Technology), M.S., Ph.D. (Colorado State University)
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

Chandrasekar has made pioneering contributions in the area of polarimetric radar observations of the atmosphere and urban observation networks. He has extensive experience in radar system design, radar network development, digital signal processing design, as well as radio frequency communication systems.

Donald J. Estep, B.A. (Columbia University), M.S., Ph.D. (University of Michigan)
Department of Statistics

Dr. Estep is recognized nationally and internationally for his research on the influence of uncertainty quantification for differential equations modeling biological, engineering systems, and physical systems. He has also contributed significant research in error estimation and solution of complex scientific models.

Sonia Kreidenweis, B.S. (Manhattan College - Riverdale, NY), M.S., Ph.D. (California Institute of Technology) Department of Atmospheric Science

Dr. Kreidenweis and her research group have developed new scientific approaches to carefully measure and describe the properties and effects of atmospheric aerosol particles, including their impacts on visibility and climate and their influence on the formation and properties of both warm (liquid) and cold (ice) clouds.

Manfred Diehl, M.S. (Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universitat Bonn, West Germany), Ph.D. (Pennsylvania State University)
Department of Human Development and Family Studies

Dr. Diehl is an expert on the psychology of aging. He is known both nationally and internationally for his work in the field of gerontology.

Alan K. Knapp, B.Sc. (Idaho State University), M.Sc., Ph.D. (University of Wyoming)
Department of Biology

Dr. Knapp is one of the world’s most respected ecosystems ecologists and has compiled a noteworthy career in teaching and research that spans more than 35 years. His best known work came at the Konza Prairie Long-Term Ecological Research program in the grasslands of northeastern Kansas.

Jan E. Leach B.S., M.S. (University of Nebraska), Ph.D. (University of Wisconsin)
Department of Bioagricultural Sciences and Pest Management

Dr. Jan Leach studies how plants respond to diverse disease-causing microbes, including bacteria and fungi. She and an international team of scholars then use this fundamental information to develop plants, particularly rice, with long-lasting disease resistance to multiple pathogens.
Dr. David A. Randall, B.S., M.S. (The Ohio State University), Ph.D. (University of California – Los Angeles) Department of Atmospheric Science

Dr. David Randall works on simulation of the global climate, with an emphasis on clouds and precipitation. He created and directs the Center for Multiscale Modeling of Atmospheric Processes, a National Science Foundation Science and Technology Center. He has strong interests in science education and scientific publishing.

Dr. C. Wayne McIlwraith, B.V.Sc (Massey University, New Zealand), M.S., Ph.D. (Purdue University), Department of Clinical Sciences

Dr. Wayne McIlwraith, Director of the Orthopedic Research Center and Barbara Cox Anthony Chair in Orthopedics, is recognized internationally as a leading equine orthopedic surgeon as well as a researcher in joint problems (arthritis) of horses and humans. Research focuses include novel arthritis treatments (including gene therapy), new methods of cartilage repair and early diagnosis of pre-arthritis and pre-fracture disease using novel imaging and fluid biomarkers. He also directs the Musculoskeletal Research Program of Scholarly Excellence.

Ian M. Orme, Ph.D. (University of London, UK) Department of Microbiology, Immunology and Pathology

Dr. Orme co-founded the Mycobacteria Research Laboratories at CSU, and is internationally recognized for his development of animal models that are used to understand the host response to tuberculosis, and ways to treat it with drugs and vaccines. He is currently focusing on multi-drug resistant TB and ways to treat it, including the development of post-exposure vaccines.

Keith Paustian, B.Sc., M.Sc. (Colorado State University), Ph.D. (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences) Department of Soil and Crop Sciences

Dr. Paustian is internationally renowned as a carbon sequestration, global climate change expert. His work has substantially contributed to better understanding a fundamental ecosystem attribute - the dynamics of organic matter in soils. He has helped establish CSU as a global leader in inventory and assessment technology of greenhouse gas emissions from land use activities.

A.R. Ravishankara, B.Sc., M.Sc. (University of Mysore, India), Ph.D. (University of Florida) Departments of Chemistry and Atmospheric Science

Ravi has held research positions in both government and universities. He has studied the chemistry of Earth's atmosphere as it relates to stratospheric ozone, climate change, and regional air quality. His research has contributed to deciphering ozone layer depletion, and quantifying the role of chemically active species that affect climate. His research has advanced the understanding of the formation, removal, and properties of pollutants in the atmosphere.

Jorge J. Rocca, B.S. (Universidad de Rosario, Argentina), Ph.D. (Colorado State University) Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and Department of Physics

Dr. Rocca’s research concerns physics and development of x-ray lasers, application of coherent short wavelength light, and study of dense plasmas. He is internationally recognized for his contributions to development of compact soft x-ray lasers and their application to scientific and technological problems. He serves as Director of the NSF Engineering Research Center for Extreme Ultraviolet Science and Technology, a consortium between CSU, the University of Colorado, and the University of California Berkeley.
Robert M. Williams, B.A. (Syracuse University), Ph.D. (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Post-doctoral (Harvard University)
Department of Chemistry

Dr. Williams’ research harnesses the interplay of synthetic organic chemistry, physical organic chemistry, microbiology, biochemistry, and molecular biology. His research interests have included the total synthesis of natural products with an emphasis on cytotoxic agents relevant to cancer and antimicrobial therapies, studies on drug-DNA interactions, design and synthesis of antibiotics and DNA-cleaving molecules, and biosynthetic pathways.

Bernard E. Rollin, B.A. (City College of New York), Ph.D. (Columbia University)
Department of Philosophy, Department of Biomedical Sciences, and Department of Animal Sciences

Dr. Rollin’s focus is on animal ethics, genetic engineering, animal pain, animal research, animal agriculture, veterinary ethics, and various other topics in bioethics and philosophy of interest to medical researchers, attorneys, psychologists, students, ranchers, and lay people all around the world.

Diana Wall, B.A., Ph.D. (University of Kentucky)
Department of Biology, Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory, School of Global Environmental Sustainability

Dr. Wall is actively engaged in research to explore how soil biodiversity contributes to healthy, productive soils and thus to society, and the consequences of human activities on soil sustainability. Her research examining soil biodiversity and ecosystem processes stretches globally from the tropics to the Antarctic Dry Valleys where she has worked for the past 20 years.

Ellen E. Wohl, B.S. (Arizona State University), Ph.D. (University of Arizona)
Department of Geosciences

Dr. Wohl specializes in fluvial science and geomorphology. Her contributions include interactions between river profiles and tectonism, the influences of woody debris on river flow and geomorphology, historic benchmarking of flooding in rivers, debris flows, carbon cycling, biogeochemistry, ecological river restoration, and the historic role of beavers in post-glacial floodplain development.
University Distinguished Professors
Emeritus/Emerita

- Dr. Barry Beaty, Department of Microbiology, Immunology, and Pathology
- Dr. Patrick Brennan, Department of Microbiology, Immunology, and Pathology
- Dr. Jack Cermak, Department of Civil Engineering (deceased)
- Dr. Mortimer Elkind, Department of Environmental and Radiogocial Health Sciences (deceased)
- Dr. Howard Evans, Department of Zoology and Engomology (deceased)
- Dr. Ann Fisher, Department of Occupational Therapy
- Dr. Marshall Fixman, Department of Chemistry (deceased)
- Dr. Louis Hegedus, Department of Chemistry
- Dr. Ed Hoover, Department of Microbiology, Immunology, and Pathology
- Dr. Willard Lindsay, Department of Soil and Crop Sciences (deceased)
- Dr. Karolin Luger, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
- Dr. Albert Meyers, Department of Chemistry (deceased)
- Dr. Gordon Niswender, Department of Biomedical Sciences (deceased)
- Dr. Philip Risbeck, Department of Art and Art History
- Dr. Holmes Rolston III, Department of Philosophy
- Dr. Stanley Schumm, Department of Earth Resources (deceased)
- Dr. George Seidel, Jr., Department of Biomedical Sciences
- Dr. Gary Smith, Department of Animal Sciences
- Dr. John Sofos, Department of Animal Sciences
- Dr. Graeme Stephens, Department of Atmospheric Science
- Dr. John Stille, Department of Chemistry (deceased)
- Dr. Takumi Tasuchiya, Department of Agronomy (deceased)
- Dr. Thomas Vonder Haar, Department of Atmospheric Science
- Dr. John Wiens, Department of Biology
- Dr. Stephen Withrow, Department of Clinical Sciences