Dr. Debra S. Larson has been serving in the position of Provost and Vice President for the Division of Academic Affairs since 2017. The Division consists of seven academic colleges (Agriculture; Behavioral & Social Sciences; Business; Communication & Education; Engineering, Computer Science, and Construction Management; Humanities & Fine Arts; and Natural Sciences) and many other units including Academic Personnel; Graduate Studies; International Education; Information Resources; Meriam Library; Regional and Continuing Education; and Undergraduate Education. Larson serves as the President of Chico State Enterprises. The CSE is a non-profit corporation that develops and administers those activities that aid and supplement the educational mission of CSU, Chico. The CSE is engaged with CapRadio through a Public Service Agreement while simultaneously maintaining its obligations of a Public Radio license owner.

Larson’s academic career began in 1994 after she completed her Ph.D. in civil engineering from Arizona State University. She also holds master’s and bachelor’s degrees in civil engineering from Michigan Technological University. Larson’s academic career was preceded by an earlier professional career as a civil and structural engineer working in manufacturing, product development, and consulting within the engineered wood products industry. These experiences eventually translated into a cross-disciplinary research agenda in forest restoration economics that were aligned with regional needs of Northern Arizona.

Before coming to Chico State, Larson was the dean of the College of Engineering from 2011-2017 at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. Prior to that appointment, she served as a member of the faculty, chair, associate dean, and associate vice provost during 17 years of service at Northern Arizona University (NAU).