

# STUDENTS' RIGHTS

As members of the CSU community, students can reasonably expect the following:

1. Students have the right to freedom from discriminatory harassment on the basis of race, color, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, religion, creed, political beliefs, veteran status, pregnancy, national origin or ancestry, age, or disability.
2. The University shall not interfere with the rights of students to join associations.
3. Students should have accurate information relating to maintaining acceptable academic standing, graduation requirements, program student learning outcomes, and individual course objectives and requirements.
4. Student records will be maintained in keeping with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and subsequent amendments and the guidelines for implementation.
5. In all instances of general discipline, academic discipline, and academic evaluation, the student has the right to fair and impartial treatment.
6. CSU considers freedom of inquiry and discussion essential to a student's educational development. Thus, the University recognizes the right of all students to engage in discussion, to exchange thought and opinion, and to speak, write, or print freely on any subject in accordance with the guarantees of Federal and State constitutions. This broad principle is the cornerstone of education in a democracy.
7. Students have the right to be free from illegal searches and seizures.
8. Students have the right to freely exercise their full rights as citizens. In this light, the University affirms the right of students to exercise their freedoms without fear of University interference for such activity.

Student Bill of Rights

Students' Rights Regarding Their Education Records

Right to Discuss Concerns with Department Heads/Chairs

Right to File a Grade Appeal

Right to File a Complaint

Academic Assessment

Right to Seek Membership in Student Organizations

Victims' Rights

Resources

## Student Bill of Rights

The Colorado Student Bill of Rights, Colo. Rev. Stat. § 23-1-125, guarantees certain rights and expectations for various aspects of student academic life including advising, transferability of credits, and degree completion.

One such right is that a student may enter into an agreement with the University to formalize a plan to obtain a degree in four years (§ 23-1-125(1)(b), C.R.S.). CSU supports this timeline for graduation by publishing advising guidelines under which a student may expect to graduate in four years, and also maintains Major Completion Maps. Major Completion Maps are designed to assist students and their advisors in building a semester-by-semester course schedule that will enable students to complete their baccalaureate degree within the minimum

number of semesters established in the major's program of study. Major Completion Maps have been approved through the University's curriculum process. Review CSU Major Completion Maps on the "Major Completion Map" tab for each undergraduate program of study listed in this General Catalog.

There are some majors that a student may not be able to complete in four years because of additional degree requirements recognized by the Colorado Department of Higher Education.

The Bill of Rights also includes:

§ 23-1-125. Commission directive - student bill of rights - degree requirements - implementation of core courses - competency test - prior learning

1. Student bill of rights. The general assembly hereby finds that students enrolled in public institutions of higher education shall have the following rights:
  - a. Students should be able to complete their associate of arts and associate of science degree programs in no more than sixty credit hours or their baccalaureate programs in no more than one hundred twenty credit hours unless there are additional degree requirements recognized by the commission;
  - b. A student can sign a two-year or four-year graduation agreement that formalizes a plan for that student to obtain a degree in two or four years, unless there are additional degree requirements recognized by the commission;
  - c. Students have a right to clear and concise information concerning which courses must be completed successfully to complete their degrees;
  - d. Students have a right to know which courses are transferable among the state public two-year and four-year institutions of higher education;
  - e. Students, upon completion of core general education courses, regardless of the delivery method, should have those courses satisfy the core course requirements of all Colorado public institutions of higher education;
  - f. Students have a right to know if courses from one or more public higher education institutions satisfy the students' degree requirements;
  - g. A student's credit for the completion of the core requirements and core courses shall not expire for ten years from the date of initial enrollment and shall be transferrable [sic].

## Students' Rights Regarding Their Education Records

Students have certain rights concerning their "education records" under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/policies/ferpa/>), as amended, 20 U.S. 1232g et. seq. Please see the FERPA (Student Privacy) (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/policies/ferpa/>) section of this catalog for more information on FERPA.

## Right to Discuss Concerns with Department Heads/Chairs

Academic department heads are expected to incorporate student input into decisions affecting academic instruction, advising, and student learning assessment. This input usually takes form through departmental advisory committees and student evaluation of faculty members. Individual students, however, may make appointments with their department heads to discuss specific problems, plans, or suggestions.

## Right to File a Grade Appeal

Instructors are responsible for stating clearly the instructional objectives of the course at the beginning of each term and for evaluating student achievement in a manner consistent with these objectives. Students are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled. Instructors are responsible for determining and assigning final course grades. Graded examinations, papers, and other materials used as a basis for evaluating a student's achievement will be available to the student for inspection and discussion.

Students may appeal instructors' grading decisions. The burden of proof, however, rests with the student. More information is available in Grading (<http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/academic-standards/grading/#grade-appeals>).

## Right to File a Complaint

CSU is committed to treating all students fairly and respectfully. CSU's policies that apply to students are published annually in the General Catalog, in addition to those found in other resources from individual departments and offices. In an instance of perceived violation of a CSU policy, a student may file a complaint in accordance with the Student Complaint Reporting (<http://policylibrary.colostate.edu/policy.aspx?id=603>) policy.

When a student encounters a problem on campus that they do not know how to resolve, they should always try to work the problem out by first discussing it with those involved. Dealing with concerns in the most direct and honest fashion should always be the first step toward resolution. Many problems are resolved when a student makes an appointment with a faculty or staff member and calmly and honestly communicates their concerns.

If, however, an issue or problem still exists, a student may initiate the formal complaint procedures at CSU. All formal complaints must be put in writing and must be signed by the student (including electronic or digital facsimile signatures clearly attributable to the student—for example, the student's name in an email message received from their CSU email account). A Student Complaint Form is provided as a tool for presenting a written complaint, but is not required.

## Procedures for Filing a Written Complaint

1. Attempt an informal resolution of the matter as noted above.
2. Complete the Student Complaint Form and mail, email, or deliver it to the VPSA by mail, email, or campus delivery to:

Vice President for Student Affairs

Attn: Dean of Students  
201 Administration Building  
8004 Campus Delivery  
Fort Collins, CO 80523-8004

email: [VPSA@colostate.edu](mailto:VPSA@colostate.edu)

Tel: (970) 491-5312

Fax: (970) 491-7025

The VPSA Office will notify you with an acknowledgement that the complaint was received.

**NOTE: All Student Complaints must be submitted in writing. A complaint reported by telephone will not be considered as submitted for review.**

## Complaint Review and Resolution Process

The VPSA Office is not an advocate for any party to a dispute but is an advocate for a fair process. Acting as a neutral, third party, the Dean of Students or their designee will first attempt to resolve the complaint by working with the student and the appropriate CSU employees and officials to assure a fair process. The Dean of Students may refer the matter to the Student Resolution Center for assistance in attempting an informal resolution. This assures that the complaint is considered by the appropriate officials and receives an impartial review.

If the matter is not able to be resolved informally, the Dean of Students will forward the complaint to the appropriate CSU Vice President or other official for further review and attempt to resolve the matter. If the matter is still not resolved to the Student's satisfaction, the Dean of Students will help identify other resources that may be available to the Student including any appeals that may be available from agencies external to CSU, including the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Contact information for these agencies is provided in the full policy document (<http://policylibrary.colostate.edu/policy.aspx?id=603>).

The complete policy and procedures for filing a student complaint is available through the Policy Library (<http://policylibrary.colostate.edu/>).

## Academic Assessment

CSU is committed to providing a quality education for all its students. The regular evaluation of student learning, performance, and educational experience is fundamental to the continuous improvement of CSU's academic programs. All academic programs at CSU, including All-University Core Curriculum, have student learning outcomes that are assessed regularly. Student coursework may be randomly selected and used for such assessments. Student identities will not be shared in the collection, review, or sharing of assessment results, and grades will not be affected. Student participation is essential to understanding learning outcomes, and students and alumni may be asked to engage in a variety of assessment activities including surveys and focus groups.

Students may contact the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness (IRPE) (<https://www.ir.colostate.edu/>) with questions or concerns about assessment activities at CSU.

## Right to Seek Membership in Student Organizations

CSU officially recognizes a great variety of student organizations. Policies established by the Board of Governors prohibit any recognized student organization from excluding students from membership on the basis of race, age, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender, disability, veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or pregnancy.

All recognized student organizations must assure CSU that their membership policies and procedures are in compliance with this policy. Local chapters of regional, national, or international organizations must assure CSU that membership policies of the parent organization do not require the local chapter to exclude any student from membership on the basis of race, age, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender, disability, veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or pregnancy.

## Victims' Rights

The University is committed to providing appropriate support and referrals to persons who have been the victims of crimes or violations of University Policy or the Student Conduct Code. A victim of another person's unlawful or prohibited actions may seek personal support, explore options, and report the incident.

Confidential services are available through the Victim Assistance Team (<http://www.wgac.colostate.edu/support/>), University Counseling Center (<https://health.colostate.edu/about-counseling-services/>), CSU Health Network (<http://health.colostate.edu/>), and Student Legal Services (<http://sls.colostate.edu/>). Other University agencies may be required by law and University policy to take appropriate action when notified. Victims may receive assistance from other appropriate University resources, such as relocation within or to campus housing; academic support services; notification of appropriate persons/agencies; and, at the victim's request, University cooperation in using University procedures to deter harassment or retribution.

Students are encouraged to report complaints of:

- Sexual harassment or discrimination to the Office of Equal Opportunity (<http://oeo.colostate.edu/>); (<http://oeo.colostate.edu/>)
- Crimes to the Colorado State University Police (<http://police.colostate.edu/>);
- Violations of the Student Conduct Code to University Housing staff (<https://housing.colostate.edu/halls/policies/>) or Student Conduct Services (<https://resolutioncenter.colostate.edu/student-conduct-code/>);
- Interpersonal and sexual violence to the Office of Equal Opportunity-Title IX (<https://oeo.colostate.edu/title-ix-sexual-harassment/>), Office of Support and Safety Assessment (<https://supportandsafety.colostate.edu/>), Colorado State University Police (<http://police.colostate.edu/>), and Victim Assistance Team (<http://www.wgac.colostate.edu/support/>) (confidential resource);

- Violations of their right to free speech in the classroom directly to the instructor involved or the department chair or Conflict Resolution Services (<https://resolutioncenter.colostate.edu/conflict-resolution-services/>) at the Student Resolution Center.

**Sexual Misconduct Reporting Exemption:** The University encourages reporting of sexual misconduct by the impacted party or others who are aware of sexual misconduct incidents. To encourage reporting, it is the practice of Student Conduct Services (<https://resolutioncenter.colostate.edu/student-conduct-code/>) to not charge reporting parties for other, lesser violations of this Student Conduct Code that may be related to the sexual misconduct incident. For example, a student who may have been under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of experiencing or witnessing a sexual misconduct incident will not be charged with drug or alcohol violations in connection with the reported incident.

## Resources

Students who have questions, concerns, or need assistance with application of rights listed above may contact the pertinent resource including: Student Resolution Center, Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, Office of Equal Opportunity, Provost/Executive Vice President's Office, or academic department office. If unclear as to which office to approach, begin with the Student Resolution Center (<https://resolutioncenter.colostate.edu/>).