



# CODE OF CONDUCT

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CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY

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# INTRODUCTION TO THE CODE

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A Message From the President

Who We Are

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Speak Up: Asking Questions and Raising Issues

No Tolerance for Retaliation

Cougar Conduct: Making the Right Decision

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT TO THE CSU COMMUNITY

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As a public university, Chicago State University is accountable to our students, faculty, staff, community, and the State of Illinois for achieving our academic mission. We are not, however, defined by our mission alone. We are also defined by how we achieve it. Our daily choices and interactions, whether large or small, make an impact. This is why we have the responsibility to act with the highest ethical standards in everything we do.

Acting with the highest ethical standards requires us to be accountable for our experience, how we engage with the people, information, and situations around us, and to speak up about what matters. It requires an unshakable commitment to integrity and honesty. Our success hinges on our people, ideas, programs, and services; we cannot and will not tolerate unethical or dishonest behavior. We must work together to uphold and promote this ethical culture.

Our Code of Conduct outlines CSU's ethical standards. It applies to our entire CSU community, including students, faculty, staff, and partners. I am championing the Code, and have set aside this time to focus on it, so that we all understand our expectations when interacting with each other or external parties.

Achieving our mission requires complex interactions and decision making, but the foundational concept is simple: do the right thing. Our Code may not address every situation that you encounter as a student, faculty, or staff member. If you have questions, it is always appropriate and encouraged to ask for help. We value CSU community members who speak up and raise concerns. We will not tolerate retaliation against anyone who reports a potential ethics violation in good faith.

I am proud of all we have achieved and will achieve together as a CSU community, and this includes renewing our commitment to ethics. Thank you for upholding our values and placing integrity, honesty, and accountability at the center of everything we do.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zaldwaynaka Scott". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light-colored background.

Zaldwaynaka ("Z") Scott, Esq.  
President, Chicago State University



# SUCCESS IN MOTION

## WHO WE ARE

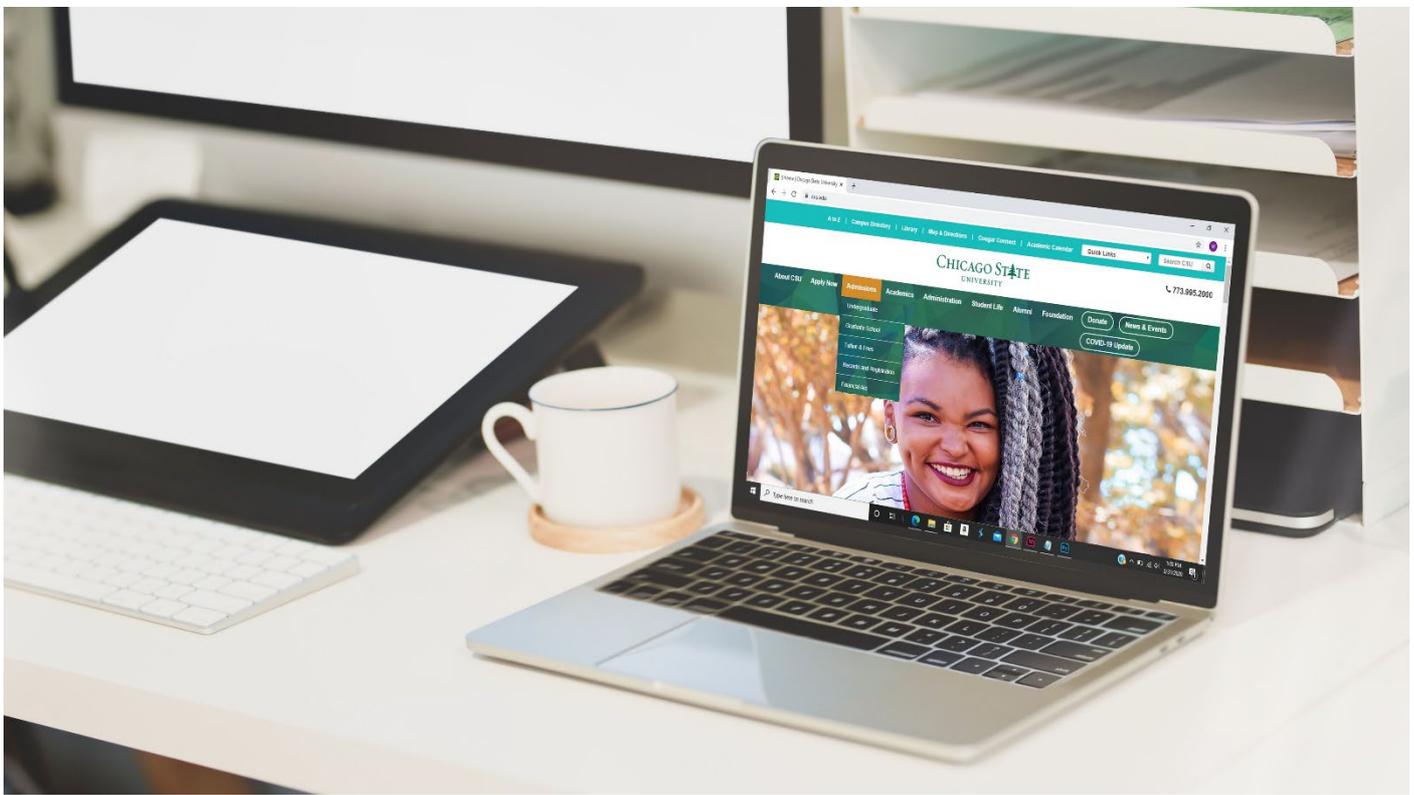
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### OUR VALUES

- Personal and academic excellence
- Personal, professional, and academic integrity
- Diversity, quality, and inclusion
- Creative and innovative thinking and learning
- Pride in self, community, and the university
- Lifelong learning and collaboration
- Leadership, service, philanthropy, social justice, and entrepreneurship

### OUR MISSION

Chicago State University (CSU) is a public, comprehensive university that provides access to higher education for students of diverse backgrounds and educational needs. The University fosters the intellectual development and success of its student population through a rigorous, positive, and transformative educational experience. CSU is committed to teaching, research, service, and community development including social justice, leadership, and entrepreneurship.



# HOW TO USE OUR CODE

Ethics situations can be complicated. Sometimes it's hard to know what to do. Our Code is a guide for applying sound judgment, accountability, and integrity to our daily decision making. While the Code is a guide for ethical decision making in accordance with laws and policies, it does not provide all details about specific rules and regulations that require our compliance. You may need to consult additional policies if you have specific questions.

We comply with all laws and regulations that apply to CSU. The Code does not supersede any policies or laws that govern us. The Code includes references to relevant policies and a resource directory to aid with decision making.

**Remember, to fulfill our mission, we must consider both the end goal and how we reach it.**

**To be #csuproud of our accomplishments, we must:**



**Be accountable for our experience.**



**Engage with the people, information, and situations around us.**



**Speak up about what matters.**

Look for these icons throughout the Code for helpful tips.



## OUR CODE APPLIES TO EVERYONE

Everyone at CSU is accountable for living our values and behaving with the highest ethical standards. This includes leaders, faculty, staff, and students. We expect that everyone we work with, including vendors, alumni, and business partners, will act in accordance with our values and ethics. Violating our Code of Conduct has consequences, up to and including termination or removal from CSU.



**Q:** What should I do if I'm in a situation that is not included in our Code?

**A:** Our Code does not address every issue that may arise. If you're ever unsure, first check our policies. It's also encouraged and always appropriate to ask for help. CSU's Ethics Officer is available as a resource ([ethicsoffice@csu.edu](mailto:ethicsoffice@csu.edu) or by phone at 773-995-3519).

# OUR RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE CODE



**Every CSU community member is responsible for maintaining high ethical standards.**

- Act with honesty and integrity in everything you do.
- Understand our Code, the laws, and policies that relate to your role.
- Speak up and report concerns.
- Cooperate fully and tell the whole truth.

**If you are a leader, you have additional responsibilities.**

- Lead by example and demonstrate integrity.
- Encourage people to ask questions and raise concerns.
- Clarify expectations for your group.
- Report behavior that is illegal or violates our Code or policies.
- Never retaliate or allow retaliation against someone who raises concerns.
- Follow through with consequences if required.

# SPEAK UP: ASKING QUESTIONS AND RAISING ISSUES

At CSU, we are accountable for maintaining a culture of ethics together. This means speaking up when you have a concern or question and protecting others who do the same. If you have questions about any portion of the Code or the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, contact CSU's Ethics Officer at [ethicsoffice@csu.edu](mailto:ethicsoffice@csu.edu) or by phone at 773-995-3519.

If you need to file a complaint, contact CSU's Ethics Officer, or use the Office of Executive Inspector General (OEIG) Hotline at 1-866-814-1113.

Your reports will remain confidential to the fullest extent possible, consistent with the law. Exercising responsible and proper reporting practices helps keep the CSU community safe and allows for a more expedited and fair follow-up process. When you speak up, we have the chance to address issues before they become more serious.

To build and maintain mutual trust related to speaking up, we must speak up honestly. You should not file a report in bad faith to harass someone, retaliate against someone, or gain advantage. CSU takes all reporting, unless given reason not to, in good faith and for the benefit of the community.

## SPEAK UP

- Speaking up protects our culture of ethics.
- You will not be retaliated against for making a report in good faith.
- Knowingly making an improper or dishonest report is in violation of our Code.



## ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

1. Whistleblower Protection Policy
2. State Officials and Employees Ethics Act



# NO TOLERANCE FOR RETALIATION

If you speak up by raising a concern, asking a question, or taking part in an ethics investigation, you are living our values and doing the right thing. Retaliation against you will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Whether actual or threatened, retaliation harms the sense of community and trust that is central to CSU.

Retaliation can be any action, statement, or behavior meant to punish or intimidate someone for reporting or providing information. Examples include withholding resources, bullying, and unfair dismissal. Acts of retaliation are acts of misconduct.

We expect that reports will be made in good faith. False accusations intended to harm or retaliate against another person, if substantiated, could result in disciplinary action.

## ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

1. Whistleblower Protection Policy
2. State Officials and Employees Ethics Act



# COUGAR CONDUCT: MAKING THE RIGHT DECISION

Is it safe, honest, and legal?



Is it in-line with our policies and processes?



Would I be comfortable if my choice was publicized?



Could this harm our community's reputation?



When faced with a potential ethical decision, take time to answer these questions. Use your best judgment. If you are ever unsure, ask a leader.



# OUR COMMITMENTS

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Respect and Campus Safety

Non-Discrimination

Personal, Professional, and Academic Integrity

Academic Freedom of Expression

Ethical Research

Careful Communication and Media Use

Conflicts of Commitment / Interest

Gifts

Ethical Partnerships

Anti-Bribery

Political Activity

University Assets, Resources, and Property of Others

Confidentiality and Information Privacy

Accurate Financial Information

Community Relations



# RESPECT AND CAMPUS SAFETY

We treat each other with respect and create a safe campus.

## MUTUAL RESPECT

Our community is dedicated to creating an environment that is safe and respectful. We communicate and sustain a welcoming and inclusive university climate. We pride ourselves on our cultural diversity and celebrate the differences of others. Our community does not behave in ways that would deny anyone of their equal rights and opportunities for reasons including, but not limited to, age, sex, race, religion, disability, ethnic heritage, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and political beliefs. We treat each individual with human dignity.

## ENGAGE

- Keep an open mind about new ideas and points of view.
- Appreciate that each CSU community member is unique and their circumstances are unique.
- Think about how your words and actions could impact others.



## ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

1. Sexual Harassment & Sexual Misconduct Policy
2. Anti-Bullying Policy
3. Drug & Alcohol Policy
4. Conceal / Carry Policy
5. CSU HR Employee Handbook

# RESPECT AND CAMPUS SAFETY CONTINUED

We treat each other with respect and create a safe campus.

## SAFE CAMPUS

Everyone deserves to feel safe on CSU's campus. Our actions should never compromise the safety of ourselves or of those around us. CSU will not tolerate violence or threats of violence.



University community members will not use alcohol or drugs in a manner that could impair their safety or the safety of others, nor will they illegally use, sell, or distribute drugs of any kind. Community members should immediately report suspicious behavior, violence, or threats of violence.

We expect that no one in the CSU community would ever inhibit another's ability to feel safe or welcome in the pursuit of their appropriate academic or personal goals. All CSU community members are expected to encourage both the right to move freely and the right to privacy.

## BE ACCOUNTABLE

- Remember, CSU is a tobacco-free campus.
- Never illegally use, sell, or distribute drugs of any kind.
- Report suspicious behavior or threats of violence immediately.



## ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

1. Sexual Harassment & Sexual Misconduct Policy
2. Anti-Bullying Policy
3. Drug & Alcohol Policy
4. Conceal / Carry Policy
5. CSU HR Employee Handbook



# NON-DISCRIMINATION

## **We do not discriminate.**

We are committed to principles of equal opportunity and diversity in employment and education. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or parental status, religion, age, ancestry, mental or physical disability, military status, or veteran status. This applies to admissions, employment, activities, programs, and access to treatment.

## **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE**

1. CSU Public Notice of Non-Discrimination
2. Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement



# PERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL, AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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## **We practice personal, professional, and academic integrity.**

Honesty and accountability are at the center of everything we do. CSU community members behave in a trustworthy and responsible manner, demonstrating a pride in both themselves and in their community. This applies to the classroom, workplace, and off-campus CSU-sponsored events.

If you are a CSU employee, you are expected to act with integrity at all times in the workplace. Respecting your own work, and each other's work, is critical to achieving our mission.

### **BE ACCOUNTABLE**

- Respond to each other and external parties in a timely manner.
- Practice accurate time keeping.
- Own appropriate responsibilities for governance issues.
- Participate in the CSU community.





## PERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL, AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CONTINUED

If you are a student, you are responsible for the honest completion and representation of your work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for the respect of others' academic endeavors. CSU's mission of cultivating and promoting intellectual inquiry and rigor requires community members' honesty in all pursuits. We expect that both students and faculty will not produce dishonest work of any kind. A mutual trust between students and faculty allows for and encourages the spirit of lifelong learning that lies at the heart of our community.

### BE ACCOUNTABLE

- Cite all of your sources.
- Strive to develop your own arguments, views, and approaches.
- Give appropriate credit when collaborating with others.





## **ACADEMIC FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

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**We respect academic freedom and freedom of expression.**

We are committed to free and open inquiry in all matters, guaranteeing all CSU community members the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge, and learn. We respect and defend the free inquiry of community members, even when it leads to findings and conclusions that differ from our own. It is not the role of the University to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive.



## ETHICAL RESEARCH

**We conduct research in an ethical and lawful manner.**

We encourage innovation and collaboration, particularly in our research endeavors. We expect that those conducting research at CSU do so with the University's ethical commitments and legal obligations in mind. Being transparent with research participants, treating them with respect, and demonstrating academic and personal integrity while conducting and presenting research are all values that students and faculty alike should exhibit. All research at the University must be done in strict conformity with the applicable University policies, procedures, and approvals and the requirements of all governmental and private research sponsors.

### BE ACCOUNTABLE

- Comply with all policies related to protecting humans, animals, and research subjects.
- Give appropriate credit to anyone who participates in your studies.
- Comply with appropriate publishing requirements.



### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

Institutional Review Board Policy

# CAREFUL COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA USE



## We engage in careful communication and media use.

The internet and social media can be effective communication tools and positive outlets for personal expression. Individuals are responsible for anything posted on social media. CSU community members should recognize that when they speak or act as private persons, particularly on public platforms, they should avoid creating the impression of speaking or acting on behalf of their college or university. Social media accounts intended to formally represent CSU in any capacity require approval from the Office of External Affairs.

## MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

CSU must communicate openly to earn and maintain the public's trust. When engaging with journalists and other media personnel, it is important to understand when you are speaking on your behalf or the University's. If you are unsure, reach out to the Office of External Affairs.



**Q: I want to create a social media account that uses "CSU" in the name and includes our logo. What should I do?**

**A: When creating social media accounts associated with the University, reach out to the Office of External Affairs with any questions. They can help clarify whether the account is intended for personal use, or official use by the University.**

## BE ACCOUNTABLE

- Understand when you are speaking on behalf of yourself versus on behalf of the University.
- Direct inquiries from the public or media to the Office of External Affairs.



# CONFLICTS OF COMMITMENT / INTEREST

## We avoid conflicts of interest and commitment.

CSU community members who are faculty and staff owe their primary professional allegiance to the University and its mission to engage in the highest level of education, research, and business practices. A conflict of commitment can arise when a person's external activities interfere with their responsibilities to the University. Examples include, but are not limited to, consulting agreements, speaking engagements, public service, and personal business. A conflict of commitment usually involves time allocation issues. These conflicts must never seriously hamper or compromise our ability to contribute to the success of our students. Private financial interests or the receipt of benefits or gifts from third parties can also cause an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

### BE ACCOUNTABLE

- Avoid interests, relationships, or activities that compromise your ability to be fair and objective.
- Do not hold dual employment if your second job could impact your ability to do your complete, best work for CSU.
- Disclose any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest as soon as possible.



### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

1. Financial Conflict of Interest Policy
2. HR Employee Handbook

# GIFTS



## We abide by the State rules related to giving and receiving gifts.

CSU employees are subject to the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act “Gift Ban” provision. This means we may never solicit or accept gifts from people that do business, or seek to do business, with the University. In most instances, but not all, prohibited sources are vendors. As a general rule, CSU community members may never give or accept a gift, payment, or anything else of value if it could sway our judgment or decision making.



**Q:** One of our business partners sent me a movie pass for the holidays. It says “no resale value” on the pass. Can I accept this gift?

**A:** No. Gifts are not permissible under the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, no matter the denomination. You should notify your leader, thank the vendor, and let them know about the “Gift Ban.”

## BE ACCOUNTABLE

- Do not accept gifts from business partners, vendors, or anyone you are negotiating a contract with on behalf of CSU.
- Understand the gift ban applies to money, gift cards, tickets, and anything of value.
- Consult CSU policy and speak with your leader before accepting honoraria or payment for sharing expertise.



## ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

State Officials and Employees Ethics Act



# ETHICAL PARTNERSHIPS

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## **We respect our partners and expect the same in return.**

We expect that the individuals and entities with whom we partner meet their contractual obligations, honor our values, and maintain high ethical standards. CSU community members are responsible for conducting proper due diligence on any potential business partners. CSU could be held responsible for the actions of its business partners and suppliers, so it's critical to know who we are engaging with, and for what purpose. Relationships between CSU and its vendors or sponsors must be free of any real or perceived impropriety or favoritism.

### **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE**

1. Appropriate Use of Grants Funds Policy
2. State Officials and Employees Ethics Act



## ANTI-BRIBERY

### We avoid creating unfair advantages.

Anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws prohibit rewards for favors, and these rules are even stricter for CSU because we are a state-funded institution. We may never seek out, offer, or accept a benefit that could compromise our ability to be fair. This includes times when we are making decisions, entering into agreements, casting votes, or sharing opinions.

Influence, whether intentional or not, can come in many forms such as:

- Gifts, meals, and entertainment
- Grants
- Scholarships
- Internships
- Employment
- Financial / consulting agreements

### BE ACCOUNTABLE

- Understand CSU's heightened responsibility to prevent bribery as a state-funded institution.
- Do not let a benefit or potential benefit sway the decisions or actions you make on behalf of CSU.
- Work together to make objective decisions and understand what could constitute improper incentive.



### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

State Officials and Employees Ethics Act



# POLITICAL ACTIVITY

## We abide by the State rules related to political activity.

CSU employees are subject to strict rules related to political activity as outlined in the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act. This means we may not intentionally perform any prohibited political activity during any compensated time other than vacation, personal, or compensatory time off. We may not intentionally misappropriate any state property or resources (including University property or resources) by engaging in any prohibited political activity for the benefit of any campaign for elective office or any political organization or referendum question.

### BE ACCOUNTABLE

- Do not use CSU time or resources to participate in personal political activities.
- Do not use CSU funds to attempt to influence a political outcome, including an election.
- If you choose to hold office, consult with the Ethics Office or HR to make sure you can comply with Illinois regulations and CSU policy.



### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

Political Activities Guidelines

# UNIVERSITY ASSETS, RESOURCES, AND PROPERTY OF OTHERS

**We respect the University's resources, assets, and the property of others.**

Our campus exists to cultivate and promote education and intellectual growth. CSU cannot operate to its fullest potential when it is treated in a destructive or careless manner.



CSU community members take pride in their campus and should help the campus maintain its dignity by giving it the proper care that it deserves. The CSU community is responsible for maintaining a safe and clean environment, which includes general resources, CSU physical property, and the property of fellow community members. We expect that community members will use CSU assets and resources only in connection with their work on CSU's behalf. Never seek reimbursement from the school for expenses related to personal interests.

## BE ACCOUNTABLE

- Work together to maintain a physical environment that is comfortable and that you are proud of.
- Use CSU assets and resources in your work for CSU only.
- Do not seek reimbursement from CSU for personal expenses.



## ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

1. Computer Use Policy
2. Reimbursements Policy

# CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION PRIVACY



## **We maintain the confidentiality and privacy of information.**

CSU is dedicated to protecting and respecting each of its members' rights to privacy and expects that community members' behavior will also reflect these values.

Many employees at CSU work in departments and classifications that require interactions with confidential information. No confidential information will be released to unauthorized agencies or personnel. CSU community members who have access to confidential information are responsible for treating it with appropriate sensitivity and sharing its contents with only those who are authorized and need it in order to do their jobs.

### **BE ACCOUNTABLE**

- Follow all information security policies.
- Work together to protect all private and confidential information, including sharing only what is necessary to perform your job.
- Do not share private or confidential information from CSU even after your employment with the University ends.



### **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE**

1. CSU HR Handbook
2. Right to Privacy Protocols
3. Information Security Policy



## ACCURATE FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### We maintain and report accurate financial information.

Complete and accurate records are necessary for CSU to make sound decisions. State and federal agencies and business partners rely on our disclosures and records. CSU employees and faculty members have special responsibilities in this area. These include practicing accurate and transparent recordkeeping and creating communications that contain complete, accurate, and up to date information. Students are also responsible for submitting complete and accurate financial information, including, but not limited to, applications for grants, scholarships, and financial assistance.

#### ENGAGE

- Understand what CSU financial reporting policies apply to your job.
- Never intentionally give false information or enter a false record.
- Report potential false financial records immediately.



#### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

1. Anti-Fraud Policy
2. Records Retention Policy

# COMMUNITY RELATIONS

## **We maintain, respect, and value relations with our communities.**

We strive to maintain a strong and healthy relationship with the local community surrounding our campus. We recognize the connection between CSU's success as an educational institution and the success of our surrounding community.

We encourage volunteer and outreach efforts among CSU employees and students and engage with community leaders in their efforts to promote educational and economic opportunities. We prioritize mutually beneficial partnerships with local organizations to increase educational outcomes, improve health and well-being, and address disparity outcomes. We embrace our role as a local, regional, state-wide, national, and global stakeholder.

In all community relations, CSU employees and students should recognize that we act as representatives of the University and should show respect to the physical area surrounding CSU and its inhabitants.

The CSU community values and relies on our healthy relationships with community leaders, including government officials. Because these relationships require nurturing, it is always appropriate to seek guidance when considering speaking to a governmental official or community leader on CSU's behalf.



**Q: I've been invited to a luncheon with several local officials in my capacity as a CSU community member. What should I do?**

**A: Reach out to the Office of External Affairs to discuss. The Office of External Affairs can offer guidance on your role as an official representative of the University.**



# CONCLUSION

**We must uphold a culture of ethics together as a CSU community.**

- Use this Code as a resource for everyday decision making.
- Consult policies for more information.
- Ask questions when you have them.
- Speak up about what matters.
- Recognize and support each other in these efforts.

# RESOURCES

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Links to policies coming soon.

## **POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND HANDBOOKS**

1. Anti-Bullying Policy
2. Anti-Fraud Policy
3. Appropriate Use of Grants Funds Policy
4. Computer Use Policy
5. Conceal / Carry Policy
6. CSU HR Employee Handbook
7. CSU Public Notice of Non-Discrimination
8. Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement
9. Drug & Alcohol Policy
10. Faculty Handbook
11. Financial Conflict of Interest Policy
12. Information Security Policy
13. Institutional Review Board Policy
14. Political Activity Guidelines
15. Records Retention Policy
16. Reimbursements Policy
17. Right to Privacy Protocols
18. Sexual Harassment & Sexual Misconduct Policy
19. Whistleblower Protection Policy

## **CONTACTS**

1. CSU Ethics Officer:  
([ethicsoffice@csu.edu](mailto:ethicsoffice@csu.edu))
2. Human Resources:  
([hr@csu.edu](mailto:hr@csu.edu))
3. IL Inspector General Ethics Office: (866) 814-1113
4. Office of External Affairs:  
([urelatio@csu.edu](mailto:urelatio@csu.edu))