Dear [INSERT CAMPUS] Student:

Congratulations on starting the next stage of your academic journey. The Board of Regents is proud to count you as one of the University of Colorado’s newest students, and we welcome you to our community of scholars.

Since 1876, more than 475,000 individuals have graduated from the University of Colorado, and many went on to distinguished careers. They thrived in a campus culture that aims to teach students how to think, not what to think.

When Colorado’s voters elected us to serve, we took an oath to uphold and protect both the state and federal Constitutions and the University of Colorado’s mission, and we want to share our commitments with you in the hope that you will embrace and advance these ideals during your time on campus.

The University of Colorado is one of only a few universities that have recognized that students have rights of academic freedom in the classroom. Your classes should challenge you intellectually and expose you to new ideas. Within the framework of how your faculty members conduct their classes, we hope that you engage each other, raise questions, and develop reasoned opinions. You not only learn from the faculty; you learn from each other. You will meet and engage with people of different races, religions, genders, sexual identities, and political philosophies, and your different perspectives and experience will make your education more rewarding. Your classrooms are places where you can develop the skills that will make you informed participants in our civic discourse while respecting academic freedom.

Our campuses are also places that embrace freedom of expression. Freedom of expression is different than academic freedom and applies to activities outside of the classroom and across the campus. Every person in our community has a responsibility to protect the university as a forum for free expression of ideas, and we uphold our students’ ability to voice their beliefs, even when others construe their speech as wrong or insensitive. Rather than attempting to interfere with or suppress ideas you find offensive or unwarranted, we expect you to challenge them through the exercise of reason and debate.

Our shared commitment to freedom of expression means we do not confine expression to free speech zones that shield individuals from perspectives different from their own. We fundamentally believe more communication and a greater exchange of ideas between people of diverse backgrounds makes our constitutional republic stronger. The University is a marketplace of ideas, and you will most benefit from your time here as an active participant.

Those who came before you worked diligently to create an engaging, diverse academic arena. Your contributions to promoting our vibrant campus culture will enhance the educational environment for you and your peers. Should you do your part, we know that upon graduation you will leave this university with not just a degree but an ability to analyze information, think critically, and express your thoughts in a compelling fashion. Your actions will leave the university a better place.

Thank you again for selecting CU. We look forward to seeing great achievements out of you in the years and decades to come.

Sincerely,

The University of Colorado Board of Regents