Student Accountability For Off Campus Actions
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You may be aware that Colorado State University, like most universities, meets with students to address disruptive or inappropriate behavior that occurs on campus. For example, an underage student drinking alcohol in the residence halls meets with a University Hearing Officer to determine if they have violated any policies in the Student Conduct Code. But, did you know that we also meet with students regarding their behavior in off-campus incidents?

Law enforcement agencies in the region partner with CSU by sending copies of police reports and citations involving CSU students to the office of Conflict Resolution and Student Conduct Services (CRSCS). After reading the reports, if we determine there is a reason to believe the students’ actions in the incident may be in violation of the CSU Student Conduct Code, we send them a letter of notice to come to a meeting. While we may meet with students for a wide variety of incidents that take place off-campus, some of the most common reports we receive are: unreasonable noise citations, driving under the influence, minor in possession of alcohol, domestic violence, and disorderly conduct.

As you can imagine, the first question on most students’ minds when they come to our office for a meeting regarding their off-campus behavior is “Why do I have to address this with CSU if it happened off-campus in my own personal time?” When students ask me this question in a hearing (and they do almost every time), I usually ask them if they can answer it first. “Why do you think CSU wants to meet with students regarding off-campus related incidents?” Students usually respond by saying they think we want CSU to have a good reputation in the community and if they are violating laws, they are damaging the reputation of the University. While this may be true, it is not the primary reason we hold these meetings.

Simply put, we care about students. Two of our primary goals are to help students as they overcome mistakes, and foster a safe and welcoming environment for other students and community members. By holding students accountable for their behaviors on and off-campus, we keep the CSU community safe, and also help students involved in off-campus legal difficulties find the resources they need to learn from the incident and move in a positive direction.

It can be easy for students to stuff their books in their backpack, leave campus Friday afternoon, and forget about classes for a couple of days only to frantically start the cycle again Sunday night as they begin to study. Although students who meet with me initially question CSU’s involvement in their off-campus behaviors, by the end of our meetings, students typically acknowledge good decision making, treating other people with respect, and overall responsible behavior are not things that can simply be forgotten about in their backpacks and only applied while at school.

For further information about the office of Conflict Resolution and Student Conduct Services or the student conduct process, please visit our website at www.conflictresolution.colostate.edu.