

# **Colorado School of Mines Graduate Student Statement of Values and Responsibilities**

**November 3, 2011**

## **Preamble**

We, the graduate students of the Colorado School of Mines, as distinct members of the campus community, in order to help promote a collegial, respectful, and academically sound environment, endorse the values and responsibilities enumerated below. We will strive to fulfill the provisions outlined in this document, as we believe these lay a solid foundation for faculty and students to build a vibrant and genuine intellectual community.

The guidelines articulated below are intended to provide a framework of guidance for navigating the rich and complex interactions between graduate students and faculty. The intended audience is the graduate student body, though faculty members may find it to be a useful resource as well. Nothing in this document can, or is intended to replace good-faith communication and cooperation between students and faculty. Rather, it is our intent to reinforce the importance of this cooperation, and to provide support and guidance to graduate students for this cooperation. As such, this document is not legally binding, but rather a statement of principles to be used to help guide both faculty and students. These principles should not be cited in formal grievance processes, but should instead empower graduate students to identify and resolve potential conflicts and understand their responsibilities in maximizing the potential of their graduate education.

We recognize that graduate students, as students, budding scholars and oftentimes institutional employees, serve in many different and potentially conflicting roles. Expectations and protections associated with each of these roles are defined by a variety of sources (e.g., Board Policy, Human Resources, Office of Graduate Studies, Departments and Divisions, federal and state regulations, professional societies, etc.), and are not repeated below. Within this context, some of the principles articulated below may be contradictory to policies stated elsewhere when applied to individual situations. In application to these situations, it is not the intent of this document to justify violation of any institutional, regulatory or governmental policy/requirement, but again to provide a framework for understanding and resolving potential conflicts within the confines of complying with the relevant institutional, regulatory and/or governmental requirements.

## **Graduate Student Responsibilities**

1. We have a responsibility to conduct ourselves in a manner befitting a representative of the university. Our behavior should be a credit to our program, the university and ourselves. We have the responsibility to respect and uphold all relevant university policies regarding professional conduct.
2. In our role as students, we have a responsibility to read, be familiar and comply with all of the rules and regulations defined in the Graduate Bulletin. In our role as employees, we have the responsibility to read, be familiar and comply with the employment policies defined by the Office of Graduate Studies, the Office of Human Resources and, if available, the hiring program.
3. We have the responsibility to fulfill any teaching and research obligations to the best of our knowledge, training, and ability; to carry out our job responsibilities in a conscientious and timely manner; and, to perform these duties in accordance with all relevant university, state and federal rules and regulations.
4. It is our responsibility to provide accurate and honest reporting of research results and to uphold the ethical norms promulgated by the institution and our professional societies in research methodology and scholarship. We acknowledge the importance that ethics plays in our professional careers, and as such, it is our responsibility to become educated on this topic.
5. We have a responsibility to devote appropriate time and energy toward achieving the advanced degree in which we are enrolled.
6. We have a responsibility to communicate regularly with faculty members and advisors, especially in matters related to our research activities and our progress toward degree.
7. We have the responsibility to understand our role and to do our part in the development of the

relationship between a faculty mentor and a graduate student. This includes having an awareness of time constraints and demands imposed on faculty members and program staff. We recognize that one faculty member may not be able to fulfill all of a student's mentoring needs. In these instances, we have the responsibility to seek assistance from multiple individuals and organizations as needed.

8. We have the responsibility to take ownership of our experience and the direction of our educational program, to be familiar with and meet program requirements, and define our unique research path. We understand that while graduate advisors may guide students on our journey, it is our responsibility to create the most enriching graduate experience we can.
9. We have the responsibility to educate ourselves on the availability of financial support, whether it be through the university via teaching or research assistantships, or through fellowship programs supported by governmental agencies (e.g. National Science Foundation).

### **Graduate Student Expectations**

1. We should have the opportunity to openly and respectfully express our views, and, to the level of our desire, participate in the university community. As graduate students, we may govern ourselves through a university-sanctioned organization, currently the Graduate Student Association.
2. We may expect to interact with those faculty members who will enrich our graduate education. We recognize, however, that establishing a mentor-mentee relationship is mutual and to be successful requires enthusiastic participation by the potential faculty mentor. We cannot compel a faculty member to become a mentor.
3. We should expect timely information related to degree requirements, and the availability and likelihood of financial support.
4. We may expect that academic advisors be available to establish and maintain a mutually agreeable schedule of evaluation and supervisory meetings, either remotely or in person. This expectation extends to include reasonably prompt email response and communication, especially when advisors are working away from campus.
5. We expect reasonable confidentiality in our direct communications with professors and in any discussion of performance or behavioral issues. The substance of these communications and issues should be shared with others on a need-to-know basis only.
6. We should receive objective and timely evaluations of progress-toward-degree based on criteria that are understood by both the advisor and the student. Reasons for unsatisfactory performance should be clearly communicated in writing. Students should be given a fair opportunity to correct or remedy deficiencies in academic performance in compliance with the policies defined in the Graduate Bulletin.
7. We should be included in the co-authorship of publications that are based on activities to which we have contributed sufficient intellectual capital, as defined by our academic advisor(s). To avoid potential misunderstandings, as early as possible, faculty and students should agree upon authorship positions commensurate with levels of contributions to a particular work.
8. We should have the opportunity to provide evaluations of professors, both within the classroom environment and as faculty mentors, without fear of retribution.
9. Should we feel that we are assigned tasks thoroughly outside the scope of our academic or professional development program, we may strive to resolve this issue at an informal level. If it cannot be resolved informally, we may seek to resolve the issue with Human Resources.

### **Program and Institutional Responsibilities**

1. Provided we maintain good academic standing and are making satisfactory progress toward our intended degrees, the degree program to which we have been admitted has the obligation to provide us with opportunities to continue to make progress toward degree with a goal of timely completion.
2. Each program should communicate degree requirements clearly. Currently enrolled students should be notified in writing of changes in program requirements or administrative processes, and how existing students will be "grandfathered" into the new system.
3. Upon entry into a degree program, new students should be provided a thorough description of the

requirements, qualifications, and applicable deadlines necessary for academic employment, training or financial support at the university.

4. The university, departments, and programs shall strive to enhance financial aid and the acquisition of other resources to support research-based graduate education. This includes maximizing institutional resources and seeking support from outside the institution.
5. It is the responsibility of the institution, departments and faculty mentors to provide students with meaningful opportunities for professional training. This training should include socialization into the norms of the discipline, information about professional associations and conferences, job interview skills, career options, standards of conduct and professional ethics, and the basic intellectual skills required to be successful practitioners of the discipline. In turn, we will endeavor to participate in these opportunities.

### **Modification Protocol**

The version of this document dated November 3, 2011 has been endorsed by the Graduate Student Association and members of the faculty as represented by the Graduate Council and Faculty Senate. It has not been approved for inclusion in the Graduate Bulletin. Any modifications to the document must be approved by the Graduate Student Association, Graduate Council, and Faculty Senate. Any modifications made to this document without going through these channels will cease to carry the endorsement of both the faculty and the graduate student body.