



Boulder Faculty Assembly

Interoffice Memo

Date: September 22, 2006

To: Hank Brown, President

From: Jerry Hauser, chair, BFA

CC: B. Peterson

Subject: EthicsHotline

At the regularly scheduled meeting of September 7, 2006, the Boulder Faculty Assembly passed the following resolution regarding the newly implemented EthicsHotline

Boulder Faculty Assembly
Resolution: Ethics Hotline Explanation
BFA- R-9-0706

Be it resolved that it is the sense of the Boulder Faculty Assembly that the EthicsHotline is inappropriate. The Assembly requests a full explanation of its creation from University Administration.

Resolution presented to the BFA: September 7, 2006
Approved by the BFA: September 7, 2006
Amended and approved by the BFA Executive Committee: September 18, 2006

The faculty fully recognizes that fiscal and other improprieties are serious matters that can and do at times occur in the workplace and must be dealt with. It recognizes that individuals who have witnessed breaches of ethical standards may find it difficult to report these incidents, for a variety of reasons, while at the same time it is essential for the integrity, transparency and accountability of the University of Colorado that these breaches of conduct be reported and addressed. At the same time, the Boulder faculty has several concerns that raise questions about the necessity and propriety of this mode of surveillance. These can best be expressed as questions we desire you to answer, plus a closing observation that causes us grave concern.

1. Can individuals outside the University lodge a complaint through EthicsHotline?

2. The Audit website explains “Why are we making such a service available?” as follows:

CU EthicsLine is a service for the vast majority of our employees who conduct themselves with the ethical standards expected of them. CU EthicsLine can be used to report issues that cannot be handled or reported through normal channels.

The faculty wish to know what issues cannot be handled or reported through normal channels?

3. **University policy requires that those who see violations report them. In light of this, what calls for this added mode of surveillance?**

4. Serious concerns have been raised by faculty about the opportunity for anonymous allegations to be taken seriously. Against concerns about possible repercussions for whistle blowers, whistle blowers are protected under state law. In light of this, what is the justification for anonymity?

5. The Audit website answers the question “When should I use the CU EthicsLine?” as follows:

You are encouraged to speak with your supervisor or other appropriate manager within your organization as the primary means to resolve conflicts. Personnel issues, such as discrimination or harassment complaints, should be addressed with your supervisor or the e Human Resources Department. However, some issues may require the assistance of an independent source to investigate the facts and circumstances or to address matters of a sensitive nature. In such an instance, the CU EthicsLine may be the most appropriate resource to report and resolve the issue.

What beyond fiscal issues are included as “matters of a sensitive nature” that, being referred the Auditor’s office by Ethics Hotline, would merit further investigation under this procedure?

The above questions reflect a deep fear among the Boulder faculty that the EthicsHotline can open the door for mischief, that individuals and groups may be targeted by those hostile to them, and that, in light of already existing policies and structures, its presence adds an additional level of scrutiny that can contribute to a sense among CU employees that they are under constant surveillance and that corrodes confidence that we work in an atmosphere of mutual trust.