

Boulder Faculty Assembly  
Executive Committee  
Motion Regarding the Policy on  
Class Conflicts and Club Sports  
BFA-X-M-030810.2

MOVED that the BFA affirm the following campus policies and practices regarding conflicts between classes and University of Colorado collegiate sport club events:

- It is the student's responsibility to notify each instructor—in the first several weeks of the semester and in writing--about any known conflicts between academic requirements and sport club events.
- For conflicts that arise during the regular term, instructors have full authority to decide whether and/or how to accommodate those conflicts.
- While an instructor has the right to refuse to allow make-ups or other accommodations, he or she is permitted to provide such accommodations.

Further MOVED that:

- The BFA consider a general statement of policy in the case of accommodation of conflicts that arise when students are representing CU-Boulder.
- The attached report be reviewed on an annual basis by the SAC, and be sent out to all teaching faculty at CUB by the BFA before classes start every year.

From BFA Student Affairs Committee: March 8, 2010  
Approved by the BFA Executive Committee: March 8, 2010  
Notice of motion to the BFA: April 1, 2010  
Approved by the BFA: April 29, 2010

**To: All faculty, instructors, and sport club advisors**

**From: The Boulder Faculty Assembly**

**Subject: The interaction between Collegiate Sport Clubs and Academics at CU Boulder**

The purpose of this document is to circulate a summary of campus policies and practices regarding situations where conflicts arise between collegiate sport club events and classes. Our goal is to help clarify the rights and responsibilities of student-sport club athletes, coaches, coordinators, faculty, and instructors, and to anticipate and help solve problems. This information may be especially useful for new or junior faculty, and in any case it may help guide decisions about how to deal with conflicts when they arise.

This document was prepared by the BFA Committee on Student Affairs, with the cooperation of the BFA Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics, and pertains only to collegiate sport clubs that are coordinated through the Student Recreation Center. Thus, it does not address conflicts related to other forms of athletic participation by students, such as intercollegiate varsity athletics, intramurals, or the band and cheer squads.

## **I. Overview.**

It is campus policy, and our belief as well, that participation in Collegiate Sport Clubs is a valuable part of the college experience for students, and that student-athletes represent the university in a positive way. Hence athletic participation should be accommodated insofar as the academic context permits. On the other hand, it is also campus policy that academics has priority at all times, that student-athletes must satisfy all class requirements, and that instructors have final authority in deciding how to handle conflicts.

It is the recommendation of our committee that conflicts between Collegiate Sport Club participation and academics be accommodated as constructively as possible. It is the student-athlete's responsibility to notify instructors of their intention to participate in a Collegiate Sport Club during the first week of enrollment in class and about schedule conflicts with athletic events within the first three weeks and to seek accommodation.

## **II. Policies and practices regarding conflicts.**

Sometimes travel to games or tournaments may cause Collegiate Sport Club participants to miss classes. The authority over how to resolve such conflicts rests entirely with the instructor. Thus an instructor has the right to refuse to allow make-ups or provide other accommodations -- but also, in our view, the instructor is encouraged to try to resolve such conflicts in a manner that does not unduly penalize or advantage the student-athlete.

Normally, sport club team schedules are known well in advance, so student-athletes are able to communicate with their instructors at the beginning of the term. In addition, the Collegiate Sport Clubs coordinators provide written notification of conflicts, also far in advance when possible.

However, situations can arise where a student-athlete may make the travel roster and/or qualify for a game or tournament at the last minute. In that event, the student-athlete may not be able to provide much advance notice of an upcoming absence.

Instructor responses to schedule conflicts have varied widely. Some instructors attempt to work with the student-athletes to resolve schedule conflicts, usually by allowing assignments to be turned in late; scheduling early or make-up tests; or simply excusing the absence (in classes where attendance is taken). Some instructors have taken a harder line, offering no make-up opportunities, in which case the student-athlete either misses a game or tournament or loses credit for class time and work missed.

In cases where it is known in advance that many schedule conflicts will arise (as, for example, when a required weekly lab conflicts with sport club team practice), it is advisable for the student not to take that particular course during the term in question. This possibility should be considered at the beginning of the semester, when student-athletes inform their instructors of known conflicts using the letter provided by the Collegiate Sport Club office. The letter, a sample of which is included at the conclusion of this report, details the expected dates of missed class as well as the contact information for the Collegiate Sport Club coordinators. Student-athletes are informed by the Collegiate Sport Club coordinators in the Recreation Center of their duty to inform their instructors of known conflicts at the beginning of the semester.

### **III. Communications between collegiate sport clubs and instructors.**

In order to avoid any appearance of pressure by the Collegiate Sport Clubs coaches on instructors, Collegiate Sport Clubs coaches are forbidden from contacting instructors directly regarding grades, schedule conflicts, or academic progress of specific student-athletes. Rather, coaches are encouraged to bring their concerns to the Collegiate Sport Clubs coordinators who will subsequently carry the issue to the instructor for discussion if necessary. Any instructor who feels that inappropriate contact has been made should contact the Collegiate Sport Clubs coordinators or any member of the BFA Student Affairs Committee. Names and contact information appear at the end of this report.

There is no rule that forbids an instructor from contacting the Collegiate Sport Clubs office. In fact, the Collegiate Sport Clubs staff in the Recreation Center would very much like to hear from instructors should there be a concern with poor attendance, poor academic performance, disruptive classroom behavior, etc. -- or if a student-athlete is performing particularly well in a class.

Currently, there are two Collegiate Sport Clubs Coordinators in the office at CU-Boulder to monitor the progress and status of approximately 1500 student-athletes in class.

Contact information for the BFA Student Affairs Committee members:  
<http://www.colorado.edu/FacultyGovernance/committees/studentaffairs.html>

## SAMPLE LETTER

### University of Colorado at Boulder

RecreationCenter  
Student Recreation Center  
Campus Box 355  
Boulder, Colorado 80309-0430  
(303) 492-5274

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May 4, 2010

Dear Professor J. Doe,

John Smith, XXX-XXX-XXX, a student in your class, ENGR XXXX, is also a member of the University of Colorado Collegiate Sport Clubs, Mens Ultimate team. Over the course of this semester, conflicts may arise between team travel and class obligations.

John understands his academic responsibilities and should make arrangements with you in regard to missed work. If it appears that John cannot fulfill the class obligations due to the sport club commitment, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can advise him appropriately about alternatives.

It is the responsibility of the sport club athlete to attend class if they are not on the travel squad for any of the competitions. Sport club athletes who are not scheduled to travel should not be excused from class.

The dates of potential missed classes:

October 2nd

October 16th

November 6th

If a situation does arise where John makes the travel roster and/or qualifies for a game or tournament at the last minute, he may not be able to provide much advance notice of an upcoming absence. In that case, he will request an absence from class and make arrangements with you to complete all work either prior to the absence, or with your permission, as soon as possible upon his return.

Your partnership with Collegiate Sport Clubs in support of our sport club athletes while they represent the University of Colorado is vital. If you have academic concerns

regarding this sport club athlete, please feel free to contact Patty McConnell at 303-492-7206 or Kris Schoech at 303-492-5133.

Very Sincerely,

Kristopher Schoech

Coordinator of Collegiate Sport Clubs

Patty McConnell

Coordinator of Collegiate Sport Clubs

## **SAMPLE Syllabus Language**

### **Syllabus statement:**

Students formally affiliated with University of Colorado Collegiate Sport Clubs are required to communicate with the instructor involved about any potential conflicts within the first three weeks of their enrollment in a class. Instructors are not obliged to accommodate any potential conflicts, but may, at their own discretion, allow reasonable accommodations for these absences. Instructors should also be made aware of the potential for upcoming competitions that are not yet scheduled as of the first week of class (often due to qualifying for Regional or National Championships).