



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY | CSU - PUEBLO | CSU - GLOBAL CAMPUS

Date: July 18, 2019

RE: Inclusive Language Guide

Statement from CSU System Chancellor Tony Frank

Statements being made on social media and in online publications are untrue and are based on an outdated document. The CSU System, Colorado State University, and all of the CSU campuses do not place prohibitions on language. We consider free speech and the First Amendment the foundations of a great American public university. The facts are that an informal group of CSU staff people who work with students created an internal guide on inclusive language because other staff members asked for it – it was designed as a free resource for people who were asking for help to avoid saying something unintentionally that might needlessly offend someone with whom they were working. Most of the suggestions in it are common sense and have been in common use for decades. This list was never intended for use by students. It is ***NOT*** official policy or required to be read or followed by anyone; in fact, the guide itself says that in bold type at the top of the list. It's just a resource available to people who want to voluntarily seek it out because they are interested in student access and success and helping people who come to CSU from all over the state, nation, and world feel welcome. The guide does not contain the item that many have described about use of the words America and American. The group of people working on a preliminary draft considered encouraging people to use "U.S. citizen" instead of American when referring to people from the US, as there are several geographic regions in the Americas. They decided against this on their own and deleted that from the draft before it was ever finalized or circulated to campus. Why that information is being circulated now as current or factual is unclear. We actively promote a climate of free and open debate at CSU. The bottom line is that no one is making anyone use this guide, and we have not seen any evidence that this brief guide has had a chilling effect on that climate on our learning environment. As a university system whose campuses strenuously advocate for First Amendment rights, we will defend someone's right to try and avoid offending someone inadvertently so long as they don't force it on others. Contrary to what online articles are portraying, we believe that is what this list aims to do.