

# ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

## First-Year Students

Students are first-year applicants if they are currently enrolled in high school, or if they have earned a high school diploma or its equivalent and have not enrolled in a college or university since graduation.

### Admission Criteria

Many factors are considered in evaluating students' applications for admission to CU Boulder. Although academic performance in high school context (high school GPA and the quality of coursework) is the most important indicator of success, other factors are also considered. These include students' college entrance test scores, should they choose to provide them (either the SAT or ACT), the trend in their grades and the extent to which the Higher Education Admission Recommendations (HEAR) have been met. For information on HEAR, see the HEAR table (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/admissions/higher-education-admission-recommendations/>).

Applicants whose records reflect nontraditional grading systems, unusual curricula or high school equivalency such as the GED test will receive individual consideration.

### College Entrance Tests

CU Boulder is test optional and does not require test scores for admission consideration. If students would like to have test scores considered, they should indicate this on their Common Application. Please note, as of April 2025 the Writing and Science section of the ACT are not accepted or considered. To submit scores, students can self-report in the application, upload an unofficial score report to their application status page or submit an official score report to CU Boulder. For more information, see the Application Process (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/admissions/application-process/>) section.

### Higher Education Admission Recommendations (HEAR)

First-year students applying to undergraduate programs are strongly encouraged to meet the following Higher Education Admission Recommendations (HEAR) (<https://cdhe.colorado.gov/sites/highered/files/Section%20I%20-%20Part%20F%20-%20Revised%2004-07-2023.pdf>).

Students may be admitted to CU Boulder even though they have not completed all of the HEAR courses. There are no consequences if HEAR is not met. However, not completing HEAR might result in taking additional courses to meet the graduation requirements of individual majors.

### Policies Concerning Not Meeting HEAR

Students not meeting HEAR may be considered for admission on an individual basis based on the rigor of units completed as well as other admission criteria (e.g., optional test scores, GPA and world language proficiency). The policies of the Boulder campus with respect to completing HEAR coursework after enrollment are as follows.

1. Missing HEAR coursework might result in taking additional courses to meet the graduation requirements of individual majors.
2. If additional HEAR coursework is needed to meet graduation requirements, the course work must be taken for a letter grade and not pass/fail.

## Advanced Placement

CU Boulder participates in the Advanced Placement program of the College Board. Half of Boulder's entering first-year students submit Advanced Placement (AP) test scores each year. Official scores must be sent to the admissions office directly from the College Board for both first-year students and transfer students. For a guide to specific equivalencies, see the Advanced Placement (AP) Credit Table (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/admissions/credit-examination/>).

For more information, write or call:

### AP Exams

P.O. Box 6671  
Princeton, NJ 08541-6671  
609-771-7300 or toll free 888-225-5427  
[aphighered.collegeboard.org](http://aphighered.collegeboard.org) (<http://aphighered.collegeboard.org>)

## International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma programs provide pre-university study. IB examinations, whether leading to a full IB diploma or to an IB certificate often qualify students for advanced standing at CU Boulder. In general, credit hours are granted for approved IB examinations at the higher level with a score of 4 or better.

Students admitted to the University of Colorado Boulder who graduated from high school having successfully completed the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program—and earned a score of 4 or higher on each IB subject exam—shall be granted 24 hours of college credit. If a student scores lower than 4 on any IB subject exam, the credit hours granted will be reduced accordingly. Students should check with their college or school to determine if or how the earned college credit hours apply toward degree requirements.

An official copy of the diploma with test scores must be sent to the admissions office directly from the IB organization. For a guide to specific equivalencies, see International Baccalaureate (IB) Credit Table (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/admissions/credit-examination/#internationalbaccalaureateibcredittext>). For the most current information on how CU Boulder evaluates IB credit hours, visit the Credit for Coursework or Exams section of the First-Year Student Selection Process (<https://www.colorado.edu/admissions/first-year/selection/>) webpage.

For more information on test administration, write or call:

### International Baccalaureate Organization

475 Riverside Drive  
16th floor  
New York, NY 10115  
212-696-4464  
[www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org) (<http://www.ibo.org>)

## First-Year Applicants Not Granted Admission

Students who are not granted admission as entering first-year students may consider transferring to CU Boulder after successful study elsewhere. Students are encouraged to look at the Transfer Guidelines (<https://www.colorado.edu/admissions/transfer/credit/>).

## Transfer Students

Applicants are considered transfer students if they enrolled in any college-level coursework (at another college or university, or other campus of the University of Colorado), full time or part time, since

graduating from high school. Applicants are not considered transfer students if the only college-level classes they have taken were while enrolled in high school. To be considered for admission, transfer students must report all previous college work and have a high school diploma or its equivalent.

## Competitive Admission Criteria

Transfer applicants are considered for admission on the basis of transfer as well as first-year student criteria (when relevant).

CU Boulder's aim is to offer highly qualified and intellectually curious transfer students the opportunity to continue pursuing their educational goals. We practice a holistic admission review process, taking into account a variety of primary academic and secondary factors as they relate to your projected success in our competitive academic environment. You will be considered on an individual basis relative to a prediction of your academic success in the college, school or program to which you apply. For more information on competitive transfer admission guidelines, visit the Transfer Students (<https://www.colorado.edu/admissions/transfer/>) webpage.

## Program in Exploratory Studies

A cumulative college GPA of 2.50 or better in appropriate general education courses is required. Students are encouraged to meet the Higher Education Admission Recommendations (HEAR) (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/admissions/higher-education-admission-recommendations/>).

Note: HEAR is effective for students whose first enrollment is Summer 2023 or later; students with earlier enrollments will be held to previous CU Boulder MAPS requirements (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/archive/2022-2023/undergraduate/admissions/minimum-academic-preparation-standards/>).

## College of Arts and Sciences

A cumulative college GPA of 2.50 or better in appropriate general education courses is required. Students who complete 30 credit hours of transfer-level work with a cumulative GPA of 2.70 at a Colorado community college and who apply by the equal consideration deadline are assured admission to the College of Arts and Sciences. Students are encouraged to meet the Higher Education Admission Recommendations (HEAR) (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/admissions/higher-education-admission-recommendations/>).

Note: Effective for students whose first enrollment is Summer 2023 or later; students with earlier enrollments will be held to previous CU Boulder MAPS requirements (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/archive/2022-2023/undergraduate/admissions/minimum-academic-preparation-standards/>).

## Leeds School of Business

A cumulative college GPA of 3.2 or higher and completion of microeconomics, macroeconomics and statistics (business statistics strongly preferred, but general statistics is accepted). All three prerequisite courses must be completed with a grade of B or higher.

## School of Education

The School of Education offers four bachelor's degree programs: Elementary Education, Leadership & Community Engagement, Education Studies, and Middle and High School Teaching. A cumulative college GPA of 2.75 or better as well as 24 completed college credits in general education requirements are preferred for admission consideration. Applicants with a GPA lower than 2.75 will be considered on a case by

case basis. Applicants with fewer than 24 completed college credit hours will be evaluated based on both their high school and college coursework.

Elementary Education and Middle and High School Teaching are bachelor's degree + licensure programs, and have requirements beyond coursework, such as fieldwork (including student teaching), Praxis exams and professional disposition. The Elementary Education program includes an endorsement in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education along with the recommendation for initial teacher licensure. Secondary licensure in English, world languages, mathematics, science and social studies can be completed with or without the Middle and High School Teaching bachelor's degree, but those pursuing secondary licensure must also complete a bachelor's degree in a content area major outside of the School of Education, regardless of whether they pursue the BA. Applicants interested in K-12 music education licensure should apply directly to the College of Music.

Refer to the School of Education (<https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/education/>) section for more information about teacher education. Interested students may also visit the School of Education (<http://www.colorado.edu/education/>) website.

## College of Engineering and Applied Science

A cumulative college GPA of 3.0 or higher is required. Transfer applicants must have taken courses relevant to an engineering curriculum, including at least two semesters of college-level calculus and one semester of calculus-based physics or one semester of college-level chemistry, or one semester of intro to computer programming, C++ strongly preferred. Chemical and Environmental Engineering majors must take one semester of chemistry but are encouraged to take two semesters. (Exception: students [resident or nonresident] who apply for admission for a semester which occurs within 18 months of their high school graduation date may also be competitive without having taken the above coursework, as long as their high school academic record is competitive. In addition, if any college-level work has been completed, an overall GPA should be 3.0 or higher). All prerequisite courses must be completed with a grade of B or higher. Prerequisites must be completed with a grade of B or better.

The college guarantees admission to any of its baccalaureate degree programs to students transferring from Colorado public institutions of higher education who meet the College of Engineering and Applied Science Guaranteed Admission Criteria for Colorado Transfers (<https://www.colorado.edu/engineering/admissions/transfer/>).

## College of Communication, Media, Design and Information

For all CMDI transfer students an overall college GPA of 3.0 or higher is required.

For all majors **except environmental design majors**, students with more than 36 credit hours must have completed an introductory course in the major they intend to pursue with a grade of B or better and with a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

- Communication majors: Public Speaking OR Group Communication
- Information Science majors: Intro to Computer Science OR Intro to Programming
- Journalism majors: Media News and Reporting OR New Media/ Internet Media
- Media Production majors: Intro to Film Art (Colorado community colleges only) or Intro to Critical Media Practices (non-Colorado community colleges)
- Media Studies majors: Intro to Mass Media

- Strategic Communication majors: Intro to Public Relations OR an equivalent Principles of Public Relations course

For **Environmental Design majors**, a college GPA of 3.0 or higher is required. Preference is given to students who have had drafting, architecture and/or fine arts courses in college. A good math and science background is also essential.

### College of Music

A cumulative college GPA of 2.75 or higher and an audition of all applicants is required. More information may be found at the College of Music Undergraduate Transfer Students (<https://www.colorado.edu/music/admissions/transfer-students/>) webpage.

### College Entrance Tests

ACT or SAT scores are not required for transfer students, but students may provide self-reported scores if they would like us to take their scores into consideration when reviewing their application.

Students' highest scores are used in the admission decision. If the same test is taken more than once, the scores on each subsection are combined to give the highest overall score. SAT subject test scores are not required. For more information, visit the Selection Process (<https://www.colorado.edu/admissions/process/transfer/>) website.

### Higher Education Admission Recommendations (HEAR)

Transfer students applying to undergraduate programs are strongly encouraged to meet the following Higher Education Admission Recommendations (HEAR) (<https://cdhe.colorado.gov/sites/highered/files/Section%20I%20-%20Part%20F%20-%20Revised%2004-07-2023.pdf>).

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## International Students

### International Degree-Seeking Students

The university invites applications from qualified international students. International applicants are those who already have, or will be applying for, a temporary U.S. visa such as F-1 and J-1. Applicants who are United States citizens, permanent residents, asylees or refugees are not considered international. These students should follow application and admission procedures for undergraduates or graduates as described elsewhere in this catalog.

More than 2,500 international students from more than 100 countries study at CU Boulder. Applications for admission are processed by the Office of Admissions. International students who wish to pursue a full-time program of study at the undergraduate or graduate level should visit the Admissions (<https://www.colorado.edu/admissions/>) website for admission information and online application forms.

Assistance after admission is provided by International Student and Scholar Services (<https://www.colorado.edu/iss/>), located in the Office of International Education. CU Boulder offers a full range of services to international students, including a host family program, orientation, special programs and activities for international students and personal attention to individual needs. For information, visit the International Student and Scholar Services Student Resources (<https://www.colorado.edu/iss/student-resources/>) webpage.

Intensive English language instruction is also offered by the International English Center (<http://iec.colorado.edu/>). For information, email [ieccu@colorado.edu](mailto:ieccu@colorado.edu) or call +1-303-492-5547.

Prospective graduate students should visit the Graduate School Admissions (<https://www.colorado.edu/graduateschool/admissions/>) website for information and application forms specific to the academic department in which they are interested. Prospective graduate students can also call the campus telephone operator at +1-303-492-1411 and ask to have the call transferred to the department of interest or write to the specific department, University of Colorado Boulder, Boulder, CO 80309.

### International Nondegree Students

The University of Colorado Boulder welcomes nondegree visiting international students from around the world. International students who are requesting a form I-20 (for an F-1 visa) are required to enroll full-time (6 credit hours in summer and 12 credit hours in fall and spring semesters). In order to maintain F-1 status, international students should not drop below full-time enrollment. Students on B-1/B-2 visas may be eligible to take one course. Visiting international students must meet relevant prerequisite courses and English proficiency requirements in order to enroll.

Email [ceadvise@colorado.edu](mailto:ceadvise@colorado.edu) ([ceadvisor@colorado.edu](mailto:ceadvisor@colorado.edu)) for additional information.

### Readmit Students

CU Boulder undergraduate degree-seeking students who have not attended the Boulder campus for three semesters (including summer) since their last graded semester must submit the undergraduate Application for Readmission (<https://www.colorado.edu/admissions/transfer/apply/readmit/>) to the Office of Admissions. No application fee is required. Students who have attended any other college or university since attending CU Boulder must submit official transcripts directly from the issuing institution(s) to the Office of Admissions.

Continuing undergraduate degree-seeking students who do not attend for three or fewer semesters (including summer), and who were not academically suspended are automatically eligible to return without having to readmit (does not apply to graduate students). This policy includes degree-seeking undergraduates who are only taking classes through Continuing Education. During these semesters of non-enrollment, students' CU Boulder email and student portal accounts remain open. To return, students should register for classes during the regular enrollment period for the returning term. Students who received a refund of the confirmation deposit must repay it when returning. Consult the Withdrawal Return Chart (<https://www.colorado.edu/registrar/students/withdraw-cu/>) for important details.

Students who wish to pursue a second undergraduate degree must apply to a major different from the one in which they received their degree. Students may not apply for a second bachelor's degree in the Leeds School of Business or the College of Communication, Media, Design and Information.

### Nondegree Students

Students who wish to take CU Boulder courses but are not currently admitted to a degree program at the university are classified as "nondegree students." Students apply as nondegree students through the Division of Continuing Education (<https://ce.colorado.edu/>). Nondegree students may enroll in credit classes through the ACCESS (Available Credit Courses for Eligible Special Students) Program, the Evening Credit

Program, the Online Credit Program, the Applied Music Program and Summer Session.

All nondegree students must have completed high school or have a high school equivalency diploma. Nondegree applicants under the age of 23 not enrolled in high school must meet criteria similar to first-year students entering CU Boulder. To determine eligibility, applicants must provide an unofficial copy of their high school transcripts or their high school equivalency scores. If students have been denied admission to an undergraduate degree program, they may not enroll as nondegree students in the ACCESS Program for the semester for which they sought degree program admission. Nondegree student admission does not guarantee future admission to any degree program.

Nondegree students may also enroll for courses on a pass/fail basis. These courses are counted toward credit hours of pass/fail coursework permitted according to the rules of the college or school to which students are admitted once they achieve degree status.

Nondegree students must maintain a 2.00 cumulative GPA. Failure to maintain the required GPA will result in the inability to continue taking classes as a nondegree student.

High school students interested in taking courses at CU Boulder apply as nondegree students through the High School Dual Enrollment Program (<https://ce.colorado.edu/programs/high-school-access/>) administered by the Division of Continuing Education.

International students who want to apply to the university as nondegree students should read the International Students section above. Students interested in teacher licensure should refer to the School of Education section.

### Nondegree Students Transferring to a Degree Program

Students who are currently enrolled or have been enrolled at any CU campus as nondegree students may apply for admission to an undergraduate degree program.

Students wishing to transfer to a graduate degree program should refer to the Graduate School section and individual college and school sections.

A degree-seeking applicant may transfer an unlimited number of credit hours taken as a nondegree student on any University of Colorado campus. However, applicability of these credit hours toward degree requirements is established by the colleges and schools. It is suggested that a student apply to a degree program as soon as admission requirements, including the Higher Education Admission Recommendations (HEAR) have been met. It is essential that former nondegree students actively seek academic advising in the respective college or school once they have been accepted into a degree program.

## Second Undergraduate Degree Applicants

Students may apply for a second undergraduate degree at the University of Colorado Boulder, but should explore the various options in graduate study available at the university before doing so. Students applying for a second undergraduate degree must follow transfer admission guidelines, and those students who are admitted must keep in mind that all college and major requirements must be met in order to complete degree programs satisfactorily. Restrictions mandated by general university policies, as well as specific college and school policies, include the following:

- Applicants may not apply to the major in which they received their first undergraduate degree.
- Applicants must apply to a specific major; applications for an open option or undetermined major cannot be considered.
- The Leeds School of Business, the College of Communication, Media, Design and Information, and the School of Education do not consider students who have already completed an undergraduate degree. These students are strongly encouraged to investigate graduate study.
- Students who already have an undergraduate degree from the College of Engineering and Applied Science and who desire a second undergraduate degree are strongly encouraged to investigate graduate study as an option.
- Credit hours earned as a nondegree student at the University of Colorado may not be used toward major degree requirements for a second degree in the College of Arts and Sciences.

## Students from Other CU Campuses

Students who wish to transfer to Boulder from another University of Colorado campus (Colorado Springs, Denver or Anschutz), from CU Study Abroad or from CU Continuing Education should refer to the Transfer Applicants (p. 1) section. Students should refer to their application status page for required documents. Currently enrolled degree students are not required to pay the application fee, but must complete the academic interest essay. Special consideration is given to applicants transferring from degree programs at other campuses of the University of Colorado. Coursework completed at other campuses in the University of Colorado System will be a part of the student's cumulative university record and will not be considered as transfer credit hours. However, the applicability of this coursework toward specific CU Boulder degree requirements will be determined solely by CU Boulder colleges and schools. External transfer credit presented by students to other University of Colorado campuses will be evaluated by CU Boulder guidelines upon the student's matriculation into a degree program at CU Boulder.

## Secondary Admissions Committee Review

If a student does not meet the admission criteria, an admission reader or other authorized CU Boulder employee may use their professional judgment to refer a student to a secondary committee review. Applicants referred must demonstrate academic preparation, talent and/or personal values that suggest the student will be successful given the opportunity to leverage campus support services. The secondary committee will consist of Admissions staff and authorized CU Boulder employees (as relevant). The decision of the secondary committee is final and unreviewable within the university.