

BP 3050 INSTITUTIONAL CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Reference:

ACCJC Accreditation Standard III.A.13 (formerly III.A.1.d)

The Board of Trustees shall mandate the establishment of an Institutional Code of Professional Ethics.

Date Adopted: May 15, 2007

Revised: December 2, 2014 (References only)

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DEFINITION OF ETHICS

Ethical behavior is often defined as “right” or “good” behavior as measured against commonly accepted rules of conduct for a society or for a profession. The ethical person is often described in absolute terms as one who is fair, honest, straightforward, trustworthy, dispassionate, and unprejudiced. If, however, one is inconsistently fair or honest, one loses credibility and is perceived to be unethical. The ethical person must be conspicuously consistent in the exercise of integrity to sustain the credibility that is an expectation of office.

IMPORTANCE OF ETHICS

The credibility of the District’s employees depends upon whether they are perceived as honest men and women. If integrity contributes to credibility, then ethical behavior is a singular prerequisite to successful performance. When people are convinced that public institutions employ honest individuals, questions of credibility and demands for public accountability rarely arise.

Statements of ethical standards do not necessarily ensure ethical behavior. Yet public statements of intent surely create an expectation that public officials will indeed act with integrity in the public interest.

EXPECTATIONS FOR ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

Employees of the District shall be committed to the principles of honesty and equity. They shall not seek to abridge for any purpose the freedoms of other employees or students. At the same time, they shall not willingly permit the right and privileges of any members of the college community to override the best interests of the public served by the District.

Employees shall exercise judgments that are dispassionate, fair, consistent, and equitable. They shall exhibit openness and reliability in what they say and do as educational leaders. They shall confront issues and people without prejudice. They shall do everything they can to demonstrate a commitment to excellence in education and without compromise to the principles of ethical behavior.

Similarly, students are expected to abide by ethical behavior and decision-making in their treatment of District employees, other students, and members of the public.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The following statements are intended as guidelines:

1. With respect to students:
 - a. Remain continuously informed of characteristics, preferences, and educational needs of the local community.
 - b. Provide and protect student access to educational resources of the District.
 - c. Protect human dignity and individual freedom, and assure that students are respected as individuals, as learners, and as independent decision-makers.
 - d. Invite students to contribute to the District decisions and directions.
 - e. Protect students from disparagement, embarrassment, or capricious judgment.
 - f. Keep foremost in mind at all times that the District exists to serve students.
2. With respect to colleagues and staff:
 - a. Develop a climate of trust and mutual support through the governance process characterized by participation of the people affected; focus on objectives rather than personalities; respect for reason, freedom of expression, and right to dissent.
 - b. Foster openness by encouraging and maintaining two-way communication.
 - c. Encourage, support, and abide by written policies and procedures and to communicate clearly to new staff members the conditions of employment, work expectations, and evaluation procedures.
 - d. Provide opportunities for professional growth.
 - e. Provide due process with opportunity for appeal and review of employee evaluation.
3. With respect to the Board of Trustees:
 - a. Keep the Board informed so it can act in the best interests of the District and the public.
 - b. Act in the best interest of the District even when that action conflicts with an interest of an administrator or individual colleagues.
 - c. Be guided by the principles and policies established by the Board of Trustees.

Offices of Primary Responsibility: District Chancellor and College Presidents

Administrative Approval: October 18, 2007

Revised: November 26, 2014 (References only)