

DRAFT ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

AP 3050 CODE OF ETHICS

Reference:

Accreditation Standard III.A.1.d

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. In support of its mission, the San Diego Community College District sets forth the ideals of access and excellence, with teaching and learning as our highest priorities.

As a multicultural institution with diverse colleges and continuing education sites and varied priorities, we are bound together by shared values and a shared vision of our future. The ideals set forth include enrichment through diversity, commitment to excellence, collegiality, mutual respect, service to others, life-long learning, and personal integrity. The District is guided by the belief that a sense of true community is achieved when these ideals and values are reflected in the behavior of its members toward one another. As faculty, staff, students and trustees, we each bear responsibility not only for the ethics of our own behavior, but also for building the District’s stature as an ethical institution.

The District is committed to creating an atmosphere of respect and civility amongst its members. As members of our campus community, our interactions with one another are to be guided by the general principles as set forth in this Code of Ethics.

District Principles:

- Maintain awareness of the cultural and economic make-up, geographic distribution, characteristics and educational needs of the communities we serve.

- Be fair and considerate in all interactions with colleagues, students, and public, respecting the integrity and professionalism of administrators, faculty, staff and students.
- Maintain constant awareness that the District exists to serve the needs of its students.
- Make every reasonable effort to create an equal-access learning environment that will help students succeed.
- Maintain a working and learning environment free from harassment and discrimination as defined by District policies.
- Support and abide by the District's established policies and procedures and act within applicable laws, codes and regulations, distinguishing between legal behaviors on the one hand and ethical behavior on the other. Understand that, while the two overlap in many areas, they are quite distinct from each other. While we follow legal requirements, we must never lose sight of ethical considerations.
- Demonstrate open communication and make positive contributions to the District through participation in the shared governance process.
- Nurture an environment of mutual respect and tolerance by respecting the personal values, beliefs and behaviors of others and reflect this in all interactions with colleagues, students and the public
- Protect District assets. Refrain from using District time, supplies and equipment for non-District activities. Refrain from using the goodwill or name of the District for personal gain.
- Avoid a conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety between obligations to the District and private business or personal commitments and relationships.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding information about students or staff obtained in the course of District employment.
- Maintain and enhance job effectiveness and competency through professional growth and development.
- Be honest and accountable in all actions and activities
- When making promises as an institution, or as individuals who are authorized to speak on behalf of SDCCD, keep those promises, including

and especially the promises expressed and implied in our Mission Statement.

- Demonstrate personal and professional integrity by trying to do what is right even if no one is watching us or compelling us to do the right thing.

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: