

BP 3050 Institutional Code of Ethics

Reference:

Accreditation Standard III.A.1.d.

1. A 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, 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.

2. Importance of Ethics

The credibility of faculty and staff depends upon whether they are perceived as honest men and women. If integrity contributes to credibility, then ethical behavior is a single prerequisite to successful teaching, management, giving of services, etc. When people are convinced that public institutions are administered by honest individuals, questions 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.

3. Expectations for Ethical Behavior

Faculty and staff shall be committed to the principles of honesty and equity. They shall not seek to take away the freedoms of faculty, staff and students for any reason. At the same time, they shall not willingly permit the rights and privileges of any member of the college community to override the best interest of the public served by the college.

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

4. Faculty Code of Ethics

A. Professional Development/Best Practices

1. Taft College values the professional development of the individual faculty member as a foundation for ethics. Becoming the best educator that we can be requires conference attendance, study of the latest articles from professional journals, writing and communicating with our peers, and taking the time to assess our own teaching strategies and practices and their outcomes.

B. Support of Institution

1. Colleagues/Faculty: Taft College values honest dialogue between faculty, between faculty and administration, between faculty and all other employees as a foundation for an ethical institution. While respecting our academic freedom on the one hand, on the other hand we have a duty to the institution to maintain the integrity of the college's educational function and its mission and goals. By serving each other with both constructive criticism and moral support, we can establish a respectful work environment where all feel empowered to achieve their best.
2. Diversity: Taft College values America's multicultural society as an ethical foundation for social understanding and growth. Understanding and teaching the value and strength that comes from all our social differences, while respecting both law and morality, creates a culture that can more peacefully negotiate conflict by minimizing the mitigating effects of ignorance, stereotypes, and prejudice. An educated citizenry goes hand in hand with tolerance of those whose beliefs or backgrounds we may not share but who we recognize as having rights equal to our own.
3. Governance of the Institution: Taft College values participative governance as the ethical requirement for maintaining the integrity of the community college's role in society. Faculty must play their part in the decision-making process that governs the growth and development of the college. To do otherwise is to abdicate our responsibility to our country, our state, our county, our students, and ourselves. Our role in governance means we must do more than teach; we must contribute to the formation and growth of our institution and to the fulfillment of its most ideal state.

C. Support of Student Growth

1. Students: Taft College values the development of our student's knowledge, empowerment, and sense of responsibility as the means by which we secure an ethical future for our country and our world. They are the seeds of our

society's future, but supporting student growth is more than a metaphor where we water them with facts or shine the light of truth upon them; our goal is to develop critical thinkers whose understanding of what is right and good is tempered by the insight that human limitation can blind us to the nature and substance of the greatest good, that there are many viewpoints from which to view an issue or conflict, and that sometimes even being right and being good are antithetical. Our mission at Taft College includes developing students who respect individual rights, understand diverse viewpoints, and are good global citizens with the skills, knowledge, and ethics to build a better future for humanity.

D. Integrity/Character

1. Personal behavior: Taft College faculty value ethical personal behavior, recognizing that while we have personal freedoms and rights, we also represent the college in our classroom, on our campus, and in our community. We want to make sure we model behavior consistent with our role as educators, exemplifying a positive example for the students we teach. To behave with integrity, we must adhere to the laws of our society. To demonstrate character, we must do what is right even when no one else is looking. To err is human and we faculty are eminently human, but the goal of our personal, public behavior should be to set a proper standard by which we would be proud to be seen by others, flattered to be emulated by those we teach.

5. Educational and Classified Administrator Code of Ethics

A. Responsibilities of Administrators

1. Administrators respond to many constituencies including: Elected or appointed governing boards; colleague administrators, faculty and staff; and the students and the community.

B. Responsibility Statement Guidelines with Respect to the Governing Board

1. Keep the Governing Board informed so that it can act in the best interest of the District and the public.

2. Act in the best interest of the District.
3. Be guided by the principles and policies established by the Board.
4. Represent the Board in official statements only when formally designated to do so.

C. Responsibility Statement Guidelines with Respect to the Profession

1. Improve performance through participation in professional activities in order to inform colleagues about the developments in education in general and in the community college district in particular.
2. Encourage and assist new professionals toward growth and effectiveness.

D. Responsibility Statement Guidelines with Respect to Faculty and Staff

1. Develop a climate of trust and mutual support through the established participative governance process.
2. Foster openness by encouraging and maintaining two-way communications.
3. Encourage, support and abide by written policies and regulations and to communicate clearly to all staff members the conditions of employment, work expectations and evaluation regulations.
4. Provide opportunities for professional growth.
5. Challenge unethical behavior in a timely manner.

E. Responsibility Statement Guidelines with Respect to Students

1. Provide and protect student access to the educational resources of the community college district.
2. Protect human dignity and individual freedom, and assure that students are respected as individuals, as learners, and as independent decision-makers.
3. Invite students to participate in the established participative governance process.

4. Protect students from disparagements, embarrassment, or capricious judgment.
5. Keep foremost in mind at all times that the college district exists to serve students.

F. Responsibility Statement Guidelines with Respect to the Community

1. Remain continuously informed of the characteristics, preferences and educational needs of the local community.
2. Be sensitive to individuals from diverse backgrounds.
3. Encourage and stimulate communications with community groups.

G. Rights and Due Process—An administrator in the community college district should have the right to:

1. Be considered for employment without regard to race, sex, religion, creed, age, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation.
2. A clear written statement of the philosophy, goals and objectives of the District.
3. A written contract identifying terms and conditions of employment.
4. Work in a setting of institutional support and a climate of professional respect.
5. Be assigned authority commensurate with responsibilities and resources adequate to carry out assigned functions.
6. Act independently within the scope of authority to carry out responsibilities assigned.
7. Perform duties and carry out responsibilities without disruption or harassment.
8. Be provided with legal and financial protection from liability in carrying out duties of the position.
9. Participate in formulating and implementing institutional policy at a level appropriate for the position held.

10. Speak for the institution at the level of assigned authority.
11. Participate in professional associations.
12. Confidentiality regarding personnel matters.
13. Participate in and to be supported at an appropriate level in activities providing for professional growth such as career advancement and promotion, sabbatical leaves, other leaves, and conference attendance.
14. Loyal support from supervisors for the proper performance of work assigned.
15. Be evaluated in a professional manner on a regular and systematic basis, and to receive adequate notice of dissatisfaction with performance or action to terminate in accordance with existing statutes.
16. Due process in accordance with written regulations which are communicated to the administrator prior to appointment.

6. Classified Staff Code of Ethics

- A. We the members of the Classified unit, in cooperation with faculty and administrators, provide students with the support needed to achieve an excellent educational experience. We pledge to the best of our abilities to serve the students, directly and indirectly, in harmony with the mission of Taft College, and to promote the representation of classified staff as participants in the participative governance of Taft College.

Commitments:

1. Devote time, thought and study to duties and responsibilities so that, as a Taft College employee, we may render effective and credible service.
2. Base our decisions upon all available facts in each situation; vote our honest conviction in every case, unswayed by biases of any kind; abide by and uphold the majority decision of the Classified Unit.
3. Welcome and encourage the active cooperation of the students, staff, faculty, administrators and public with respect to establishing policy on current and future college operations.

4. Provide equal treatment and respect to all college community members and take pride in extending our professional expertise within our designated field to the college community.
5. Recognize that unwelcome attention toward any member of the campus community is not permissible and shall not be condoned.
6. Encourage involvement in the college community by participating in campus committees, activities, and other affiliations.
7. Maintain integrity in all aspects of service.
8. Promote an exchange of information and communication with employee organizations, Associated Students, Academic Senate and administration.
9. To dedicate ourselves to the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal conduct: to maintain integrity, to disclose conflicts of interest, personal relationships or other affiliations that may influence our Unit decisions, and if necessary, to abstain from the discussion and vote of the Unit.