

FLATHEAD VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Policy Manual

CHAPTER I - DOCTRINE

SECTION 40: CODE OF ETHICS*

Approved: April 26, 1999

CODE OF ETHICS

It is the policy at Flathead Valley Community College that all employees will adhere to the College's Code of Ethics and a commitment to the student and the public.

I. INSTITUTIONAL CODE OF ETHICS

We will be a staunch advocate of the community college "open door" policy.

We will uphold and enforce all laws, rules and regulations and court orders pertaining to community colleges. Desired changes will be brought about only through legal and ethical procedures.

We will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of students and will strive to be a community college that can meet the individual needs of all students.

All components of the College will continue to study the nature, value and direction of contemporary education in our society in order to facilitate needed change.

We will work unremittingly to help the people of our community understand the importance of public higher education and the need to support it.

We will strive to ensure that people are accurately informed about our college and we will try to interpret the aspirations of the community for its college.

We will create and maintain a positive working environment that encourages and rewards involvement and innovation for the efforts of our employees and supports their work through fair and reasonable institutional policy and practices.

II. POLICY OF PROFESSIONAL CODE OF ETHICS

It is the policy at Flathead Valley Community College that all employees will adhere to the following Code of Ethics:

- A. Believe in the worth and dignity of each person;
- B. Recognize the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, and nurturing of democratic citizenship;
- C. Regard as essential to these goals the protection of the freedom to learn and to teach, and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all;

- D. Accept the responsibility of practicing this profession according to the highest ethical standards;
- E. Recognize the magnitude of the responsibility accepted by choosing a career in education, and engages individually and collectively with other educators to judge colleagues and to be judged in accordance with the provisions of this code.

III. PRINCIPLE 1 - COMMITMENT TO THE STUDENT

Our objective is to move each student toward the realization of his or her potential as a person, and as an effective citizen. Therefore we work to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals. In fulfilling this obligation to the student, the we:

- A. Will not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter;
- B. Will make reasonable effort to protect our students from conditions harmful to learning, or to their health and safety;
- C. Will conduct professional business in such a way that the student is not exposed to embarrassment or disparagement;
- D. Will not discriminate against any student in relation to participation in any College related programs;
- E. Will not use professional relationships with students for private or personal advantage;
- F. Will keep in confidence information that has been obtained in the course of professional services, unless disclosure is professionally appropriate or is required by law;
- G. Will not tutor for remuneration students assigned to classes given through the College.

IV. PRINCIPLE 2 - COMMITMENT TO THE PUBLIC

We believe that patriotism in its highest form requires dedication to the principles of our democratic heritage. In sharing with all other citizens the responsibility of developing a sound public policy, we assume full political and citizenship responsibilities. We bear particular responsibility for the development of policy relating to the extension of educational opportunities, and for interpreting educational programs and policies. In fulfilling this obligation to the public, we:

- A. Will not misrepresent the institution, and will take adequate precautions to distinguish between personal and institutional views;
- B. Will not knowingly distort or misrepresent the facts concerning educational matters through direct or indirect public expressions;
- C. Will not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities;
- D. Will not use institutional privileges or public time, facilities, equipment, supplies, personnel or funds for private gain, or to promote political candidates or partisan

- political activities;
- E. Will accept no gratuities, gifts or favors that might impair or appear to impair independent professional judgment, nor offer any favor, service, or thing of value to obtain advantage.

V. PRINCIPLE 3 - COMMITMENT TO THE PROFESSION

We believe that the quality of services provided by the education profession, directly influence the nation and its citizens. Therefore we exert every effort to raise professional standards to improve service, to promote a climate in which the exercise of professional judgment is encouraged, and to achieve conditions that attract persons to careers in education who are worthy of the trust. In fulfilling this obligation to the profession, the educator:

- A. Will not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, sex, marital status, creed, religion, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, political ideas or sexual orientation, in any professional relationships;
- B. Will accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession in the exercise of their professional rights and responsibilities;
- C. Will not use coercive means or promise special treatment in order to influence professional decisions of colleagues;
- D. Will safeguard information acquired about colleagues in the course of employment, unless disclosure is professionally appropriate or is required by law;
- E. Will not misrepresent personal or professional qualifications;
- F. Will not knowingly distort evaluations of colleagues.

VI. PRINCIPLE 4 - COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

PRACTICES

- A. Regard employment as a pledge to be executed both in spirit and fact in a manner consistent with the highest ideals of professional service;
- B. Believe that sound relationships with governing boards are built upon personal integrity, dignity, and mutual respect;
- C. Discourage the practice of this profession by unqualified persons. In fulfilling this obligation to professional employment practices, the educator:
 - 1. Will apply for, accept, offer or assign a position or responsibility on the basis of professional preparation and qualifications;
 - 2. Will apply for a specific position only when it is known to be vacant, and will refrain from underbidding or making unfounded, adverse comments about other candidates;
 - 3. Will not knowingly withhold relevant information from an applicant regarding a position, or misrepresent an assignment or the conditions of employment;
 - 4. Will adhere to the terms of a contract or appointment, unless said terms have been legally terminated, falsely represented or substantially altered by unilateral action of the employing agency;

5. Will not delegate assigned tasks to unqualified personnel;
6. Will prevent any commercial exploitation of his or her professional position;
7. Will use time granted for the purpose for which it is intended.

VII. PRINCIPLE 5 - TRUSTEE COMMITMENT TO THE COLLEGE

We will recognize that our responsibility is not to run the college, but together with our fellow trustees, to see that it is well run.

We understand that the primary function of the board is fiscal responsibility, policy-making, planning, and appraisal, and we will help to frame policies and plans only after the board has consulted those who will be affected by them.

We will arrive at conclusions only after discussing all aspects of the issues at hand with our fellow board members assembled in meeting.

We will recognize that authority rests with the whole board assembled in public meetings and will make no personal promises nor take any private action that may compromise the board.

We will refuse to surrender our independent judgment to special interest or partisan political groups or to use the college for personal gain or for the gain of friends.

We will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the College that are private as a matter of law.

We will vote to appoint, upon proper recommendation by the appropriate administrative officer, the best-qualified technical and professional personnel available.

We will support and protect college personnel in proper performance of their duties.

We will refer all complaints to the chief administrative officer and will act on such complaints at public meetings only if the decision of the chief administrative officer has been appealed to the Board.

Mon. Code Ann. 2-2-121

* History: Board Code of Ethics formerly included in Section 200 of Board of Trustees Policy 201; Revised April 26, 1999, Reviewed January 23, 2017, Revised February 24, 2020