

Ethical Principles and Standards of Conduct



Preamble

The Association for Student Conduct Administration (ASCA) is an organization of professional educators, many of whom hold responsibility for administering standards of student conduct within colleges and universities. The membership of ASCA believes that a primary purpose for the enforcement of such standards is to maintain and strengthen the ethical climate and to promote the academic integrity of our institutions. Clearly articulated and consistently administered standards of conduct form the basis for behavioral expectations within an academic community. The enforcement of such standards should be accomplished in a manner that protects the rights, health and safety of members of that community so that they may pursue their educational goals without undue interference.

As a means of supporting our individual commitments to fairness, honesty, equity and responsibility, the members of ASCA subscribe to the following ethical principles and standards of conduct in their professional practice. Acceptance of membership in ASCA signifies that the individual member agrees to adhere to the principles in this statement.

Use of This Statement

The purpose of this statement is to assist judicial affairs professionals in regulating their own behavior by providing them with standards commonly held by practitioners in the field. These standards may be useful in the daily practice of student judicial affairs work. Self-regulation is preferred. However, if a professional observes conduct that may be contrary to established principles, she/he is obligated to bring the matter to the attention of the person allegedly committing the breach of ethics. If unethical conduct continues, the matter may be referred to the offender's institution for appropriate action.

Ethical Principles and Standards of Conduct

Membership in ASCA implies agreement with and adherence to the following ethical principles and standards of conduct:

1. Professional Responsibility.

Members have a responsibility to support both the general mission and goals of the employing institution and the rights, privileges and responsibilities of the students within that institution. Members shall make every effort to balance the developmental and educational needs of students with the obligation of the institution to protect the safety and welfare of the academic community.

2. Employment Obligations.

Acceptance of employment at an institution of higher education requires that members accept the general mission and goals of the institution and agree to adhere to the terms

and conditions of the employment contract or letter of agreement for employment. Members shall adhere to the lawful tenets of the employee handbook or similar documents of the employing institution.

3. Legal Authority.

Members respect and acknowledge all lawful authority. Members refrain from conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation or unlawful discrimination. ASCA recognizes that legal issues are often ambiguous and members should seek the advice of counsel as appropriate. Further, members shall demonstrate concern for the legal, social codes and moral expectations of the communities in which they live and work even when the dictates of one's conscience may require behavior as a private citizen which is not in keeping with these codes/expectations.

4. Nondiscrimination.

Members shall conduct their professional duties and responsibilities in a manner that complies fully with applicable law and demonstrates equal consideration to individuals regardless of status or position. Members shall work to protect human rights and promote an appreciation of diversity and pluralism in higher education. Members do not engage in or tolerate harassment in any form nor do they enter into intimate relationships with those for whom they have any disciplinary, supervisory, evaluative, or instructional responsibility.

5. Treatment of Students.

Members shall treat all students with impartiality and accept all students as individuals, each with rights and responsibilities, each with goals and needs; and seek to create and maintain a campus climate in which learning and personal growth and development take place. Further, members shall fully comply with the rules, regulations and procedural guidelines of the institution in enforcing its standards of conduct. Members shall not exceed their express authority in taking such actions.

6. Development of Rules, Procedures and Standards.

Members shall strive to ensure that rules, procedures and standards for student conduct on their respective campuses meet legal requirements for substantive and procedural due process and reflect the general mission and goals of the institution. Further, they shall follow established procedures in making changes in such regulations. Finally, any such rules, procedures and standards shall reflect the commitment to equity, fairness, honesty, trustworthiness and responsibility.

7. Student Behavior.

Members shall demonstrate and promote responsible behavior and seek to enhance the responsibility that each student takes for his/her own actions. Members support the principle of adherence to community standards and when those standards are violated, the necessity of disciplinary interventions that contribute to the educational and personal growth of the student. However, it is understood in situations where the behavior of a student poses a risk to self or others, members must take action consistent with applicable laws and the general mission and goals of the employing institution.

8. Conflict of Interest.

Members shall seek to avoid private interests, obligations and transactions which are or appear to be in conflict of interest with the mission, goals, policies or regulations of their employing institution. Members shall clearly distinguish between those public and private statements and actions which represent their personal views and those which represent the views of their employing institution. Further, if members are unable to perform their duties and responsibilities in a fair and just manner due to prior involvement with a party or parties, they shall remove themselves from the decision making process.

9. Confidentiality.

Members ensure that confidentiality is maintained with respect to all privileged communications and to educational and professional records considered confidential. They inform all parties of the nature and/or limits of confidentiality. Members share information only in accordance with institutional policies and relevant statutes, when given informed consent, or when required to prevent personal harm to themselves or others.

10. Accuracy of Information.

Members shall strive to assure that information provided for students, faculty, employees and employers, colleagues and the public is accurate and is accompanied by appropriate contextual material if needed.

11. References.

Members shall provide only appropriate information regarding student conduct when providing references to potential employers, graduate schools or professional schools.

12. Limitations.

Members are expected to understand the limits of their professional competencies and to refer students appropriately.

13. Supervision.

Members who have supervisory responsibilities shall clearly define job responsibilities and regularly evaluate performance in accordance with institutional policies.

14. Professional Responsibilities.

Members shall maintain and enhance professional effectiveness by improving skills and acquiring new knowledge so that they may better serve both their students and their institutions. Further, members shall seek to become active, involved members of their institutional communities and in professional associations and/or societies.

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