



PASADENA AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT POLICY

Title: Professional Ethics of Faculty

Policy No. 3110

Legal Authority: California Education Code Section 70902

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It is the policy of the Pasadena Area Community College District that faculty members adhere to a code of professional ethics that includes responsibilities: to their disciplines; to their students; to their colleagues; to their institution; and to their community. Faculty accused of violating the Professional Ethics of Faculty policy and/or procedures shall be afforded appropriate due process.

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In developing the following statement of professional ethics for faculty members, the Academic Senate was guided by the document entitled "Academic Freedom and Professional Ethics of PCC Faculty" found in the Academic Senate Handbook and passed unanimously by the Academic Senate Board on April 29, 2002.

With a deep conviction in the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge, Pasadena City College faculty recognize the special ethical responsibilities placed upon them. Among these responsibilities are the following:

1. Ethical Responsibilities to Their Disciplines

As discipline experts, faculty members have a primary responsibility to seek and acquire knowledge and, with integrity, to communicate that knowledge to students. It is the responsibility of faculty members:

- a. to devote their energies to developing and improving their scholarly competence. It is the mastery teachers have of their subjects and their own scholarship that entitles them to teach and to have freedom in the presentation of their subjects,
- b. to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. It is improper for an instructor persistently to intrude material that has no relation to the subject, or to fail to present, in some mode or another, the subject matter of the course as announced to the students and as approved by the faculty in their collective responsibility for the curriculum, and
- c. to practice intellectual honesty. When faculty members recognize that their own personal convictions differ from other well-supported conclusions on the same matter, they have a responsibility to present relevant data as fairly and objectively as possible. Although faculty members may follow subsidiary interests, these interests should not hamper or compromise their commitment to maintain intellectual integrity.

2. Ethical Responsibilities to Their Students

Faculty members encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students in a number of ways. It is the responsibility of faculty members:

- a. to hold before their students the best scholarly and ethical standards of their discipline,
- b. to demonstrate respect for students as individuals and to adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides and counselors,
- c. to make reasonable efforts to foster honest academic conduct in their students,
- d. to acknowledge significant academic or scholarly assistance from students and to protect students' academic freedom,
- e. to respect the confidential nature of the relationship between faculty member and student,
- f. to avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students. Students are entitled to an atmosphere conducive to learning, which includes even-handed treatment in all aspects of the teacher-student relationship,

- g. to evaluate students and award credit based on academic performance professionally judged, and not on matters irrelevant to that performance, such as age, ethnicity, gender, personality, political persuasion, sexual orientation, religion, or other personal beliefs,
 - h. to avoid refusing to enroll or teach a student on the grounds of irrelevant personal criteria, the student's beliefs, or the possible uses of the knowledge the student may gain in a course,
 - i. to avoid using the authority inherent in the instructional role to force students to make personal choices as to political action or other actions in areas unrelated to fulfilling the students' appropriate academic obligations.
- 3. **Ethical Responsibilities to Their Colleagues**
As colleagues, faculty members have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of scholars. It is the responsibility of faculty members:
 - a. to avoid discrimination against or harassment of their faculty colleagues,
 - b. to avoid the disruption of the classes or academic projects of their colleagues,
 - c. to respect and defend free inquiry,
 - d. to show due respect to their faculty colleagues in the exchange of criticism and ideas,
 - e. to acknowledge academic debt and strive to be objective in the professional judgment of colleagues,
 - f. to accept their share of faculty obligations related to the governance of the institution.
- 4. **Ethical Responsibilities to Their College**
As members of an academic institution, faculty members – as individuals – seek above all to be effective teachers and scholars. It is the responsibility of faculty members:
 - a. to work together to maintain and enhance the quality of the academic program to which they are assigned,
 - b. to uphold the stated policies and procedures of the college, provided the policies and procedures do not contravene academic freedom; and to professionally criticize and seek revision of policies and procedures with which they do not agree,
 - c. to give due regard to their paramount responsibilities within the college in determining the amount and character of work they do outside of it,
 - d. to avoid situations, in their official college roles, in which they may reasonably be construed to have a conflict of interest.
- 5. **Ethical Responsibilities to Their Community**
As members of their community, faculty members have the rights and obligations of other citizens. Faculty members measure the extent of their obligations to their community in light of their responsibilities to their discipline, to their students, to their colleagues, and to the college. It is the responsibility of faculty members:
 - a. to avoid creating the impression, when they write, speak, or act as private persons, that they are writing, speaking, or acting for Pasadena City College, for its Academic Senate, or for any of the subdivisions of either. Faculty members should make a reasonable effort to avoid ambiguity in reference to whom they represent,
 - b. to promote conditions of free inquiry and to further public understanding of academic freedom, and to defend academic freedom when necessary.

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1. Informal Process

- a. If any member of the campus community - faculty, student, classified employee or manager - thinks that a faculty member has violated a provision of the college's policy and/or procedures on Professional Ethics of Faculty, that person should attempt to resolve the matter in an informal manner, and do so within 120 calendar days following the date of the alleged ethical violation or, when appropriate, the date that the accusing party became aware of the alleged ethical violation.
- b. It is recommended that the accusing party first meet with the accused faculty member to attempt a resolution.
- c. If an informal meeting between the two parties is not possible or hasn't achieved desired results, then the accusing party may attempt a resolution in one of the following ways:
 - (1) If the accusing party is a faculty member, that person should consult first with the Academic Senate President. The Academic Senate President shall schedule an ad-hoc meeting of the Academic Senate officers to meet with both parties to the dispute. Before the meeting, the Senate President shall provide the accused faculty member with details regarding the allegation(s). With advance notice to the other party and the Senate President, both parties may bring a colleague to the meeting(s) to assist with the resolution. Following the meeting(s), the Senate President shall make verbal recommendation(s) to the disputing parties in an effort to achieve a voluntary resolution.
 - (2) If the accusing party is a student, that person should consult first with the faculty member's immediate supervisor, usually a Division Dean. The student may choose to remain anonymous during such an informal process. In this event, the immediate supervisor shall meet with and inform the faculty member of the nature of the student's accusations. If the student chooses not to be anonymous, then the supervisor shall schedule a meeting with both parties to the dispute. Before this meeting, the supervisor shall provide the accused faculty member with details regarding the allegation(s). With advance notice to the other party and the supervisor, both parties may bring a colleague to the meeting(s) to assist with the resolution. Following the meeting(s), the supervisor shall make verbal recommendation(s) to the disputing parties in an effort to achieve a voluntary resolution.
 - (3) If the accusing party is a classified employee or manager (other than the accused faculty member's immediate supervisor), that person should consult first with the faculty member's immediate supervisor, usually a Division Dean. The supervisor shall schedule a meeting with both parties to the dispute. Before the meeting, the supervisor shall provide the accused faculty member with details regarding the allegation(s).

With advance notice to the other party and the supervisor, both parties may bring a colleague to the meeting(s) to assist with the resolution. Following the meeting(s), the supervisor shall make verbal recommendation(s) to the disputing parties in an effort to achieve a voluntary resolution.

- (4) If the accusing party is the accused faculty member's immediate supervisor (usually a Division Dean), that supervisor should consult first with the Vice President for Instruction. The Vice President shall schedule a meeting(s) with both parties to the dispute. Before the meeting(s), the Vice President shall provide the accused faculty member with details regarding the allegation(s). With advance notice to the other party and the Vice President, both parties may bring a colleague to the meeting(s) to assist with the resolution. Following the meeting(s), the Vice President shall make verbal recommendation(s) to the disputing parties in an effort to achieve a voluntary resolution.
 - d. The failure to achieve a satisfactory voluntary resolution to an ethical dispute using these informal processes shall not result in administrative penalties against the accused faculty member nor shall any written record be placed in the faculty member's personnel file.
 - e. At any time during an informal resolution process, either the accusing party or the accused faculty member may pursue the formal process outlined below to learn the Academic Senate's position on the ethics dispute in question.
- 2. Formal Process
 - a. When the accusing party is first to invoke a formal resolution process, he/she must do so within 180 calendar days following the date of the alleged ethical violation(s) or, when appropriate, the date that the accusing party became aware of the alleged ethical violation(s). The accusing party must summarize his or her position in writing, sign the summary document, and send a copy to the Academic Senate President with a cover memo requesting a formal hearing, and send another copy to the party accused of the ethical violation(s). This summary must indicate which paragraph(s) and specific sentence(s) of the policy and/or procedures on Professional Ethics of Faculty are alleged to have been violated and on what date(s) the violation(s) occurred [and, when appropriate, on what date(s) the accusing party became aware of the violation(s)]. The accused faculty member may submit a written response to the allegations to the Academic Senate President and to the accusing party.
 - b. When the accused faculty member is first to invoke a formal resolution process, he/she must do so within 30 working days after being informed of the outcome of the informal resolution process. The accused faculty member shall submit a written memo requesting a formal hearing to the Academic Senate President. The Academic Senate President, in turn, will notify the accusing party of the formal hearing request and ask the accusing party to summarize his or her position in writing, sign the summary document, and submit the summary to the accused party and the Senate President within 30 working days following the accusing party's receipt of the Senate President's notification. Should the accusing party fail to submit this summary, the matter will end. This summary must indicate which paragraph(s) and specific sentence(s) of the policy and/or procedures on Professional Ethics of Faculty are alleged to have been violated and on what date(s) the violation(s) occurred [and, when appropriate, on what date(s) the accusing party became aware of the violation(s)]. The accused faculty member may submit a written response to the allegations to the Academic Senate President and to the accusing party.

- c. The Academic Senate President, after informing the Academic Senate Officers, shall delegate the matter, with all supporting materials, to the Academic Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Professional Ethics (CAFPE). CAFPE or an appropriate ad-hoc committee shall handle the matter in a reasonably timely manner, preferably completing the formal process within the current semester but no later than by the end of the following semester.
- d. CAFPE or the ad-hoc committee shall decide under which of the following categories the complaint falls:
 - (1) A matter that does not primarily involve an alleged violation of the provisions of the policy and/or procedures on Professional Ethics of Faculty. In such a case CAFPE or the ad-hoc committee shall bring its determination to an ad-hoc meeting of the Academic Senate Officers called by the Senate President. The Senate President shall communicate the determination to the President of the College.
 - (2) A matter similar to a prior ethical violation committed by the same faculty member. In such a case, CAFPE or the ad-hoc committee shall further determine if the Senate recommendations for resolving that prior violation were sufficiently followed. If CAFPE or the ad-hoc committee determines that the recommendations were not sufficiently followed, then CAFPE or the ad-hoc committee shall consult with the Academic Senate Officers, and should the Officers concur, the Senate President shall refer the matter to the College President who shall handle the new matter through accepted professional supervisory practices and, if necessary, through formally contracted evaluation procedures with all of its protections and guarantees.
 - (3) A new ethical complaint not yet addressed by the Academic Senate.
- e. When CAFPE or the ad-hoc committee decides that the matter before it is indeed a new ethical complaint, the committee will request that the Academic Senate Board establish an Ad-Hoc Hearing Committee to address the complaint. Prior to referring the matter to the Academic Senate Board, CAFPE shall select a pool of qualified Ad-Hoc committee candidates for the Academic Senate Board's consideration. The Ad-Hoc Hearing Committee shall consist of two CAFPE members, one member of the Academic Senate Executive Committee, two current Academic Senate Board members, and one non-voting alternate member. The Ad-Hoc Hearing Committee shall select its own Chair.
- f. Once formally approved by the Academic Senate Board, the Ad-Hoc Hearing Committee may hear from the disputing parties and/or from other parties and may do its own fact-finding. After evaluating all the evidence, the Ad-Hoc Hearing Committee will make a determination and develop recommendations to resolve the dispute.
 - (1) If the accusing party withdraws from participation at any point prior to the Ad-Hoc Committee's completion of its formal investigation, the matter will be dropped.
 - (2) If the accused faculty member withdraws from participation in the formal resolution process, the Ad-Hoc Hearing Committee shall send a letter to the accused faculty member advising him or her to cooperate fully in the investigative and hearing process or face having the process go forward without his or her input.
- g. The Chair of the Ad-Hoc Hearing Committee and committee members will communicate the committee's findings, determination, and recommendations to the Academic Senate Officers during an ad-hoc meeting of the Senate Officers called by the Senate President. While the Ad-Hoc Hearing Committee's findings and determination shall remain intact, the Senate Officers shall work with the Ad-Hoc Hearing Committee to finalize the recommendations for resolving the dispute. The finalized recommendations approved by the Academic Senate Officers at this ad-hoc meeting shall be informational and instructive, not disciplinary. The recommendations of the Academic Senate Officers for resolving the dispute shall be considered final.

- h. The Academic Senate President will communicate the determination and recommendations approved by the Academic Senate Officers to all of the parties in the dispute.
- i. The Ad-Hoc Hearing Committee's findings and determination and the recommendations approved by the Academic Senate Officers shall not be used by the District in a formal evaluation of the faculty member and no information relevant to such matters shall be placed in the faculty member's personnel file. Any written records related to the investigation, determination, and recommendations regarding an ethical dispute shall be held in confidence in the Academic Senate Office for three years, after which the records shall be destroyed.
- j. An individual who is one of the parties in a dispute may not participate in decision-making regarding the matter at any level of the formal process.