

01.03.00 TRUSTEE CODE OF CONDUCT

Division: Board of Trustees

Adopted: 1970

Revised: 1982, 05/1993, 02/1998, 09/2015, 08/2018, 12/2022

Reviewed:

The Board of Trustees (Board) recognizes the responsibilities of persons placed in a position of trust in the educational development of individuals at Joliet Junior College (College). Therefore each member of the Board is responsible for conduct consistent with this policy. The Trustee Code of Conduct is a statement of the belief in each Trustee's fiduciary duty to act ethically, professionally, and in compliance with any applicable laws and regulations in all dealings within the College. Trustees who have a question regarding the interpretation of legal requirements should contact the College's legal counsel.

- Each Trustee, as an individual member of the local Board of Trustees representing all the constituents of this College district, recognizes the following.
 - Trustees are entrusted with the quality of educational development for students at the College and with that the future welfare of this community, of this State, and for the public good.
 - Trustees are expected to attend all scheduled board meetings and be informed concerning issues to be considered at those meetings.
 - Trustees are expected to have their first and greatest concern be in the best interest of the people they represent, without distinction of who they are or the individual's background, and to consider all reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during decision-making deliberations.
 - Trustees, as members of the Board, must preserve independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties as outlined in the Illinois State Offices and Employees Ethics Act and shall follow the College's conflict of interest and ethics ordinance policies (including Gift Ban provisions).
 - Trustees may take the initiative in communicating with constituents of this community in keeping them duly and factually informed of official action taken by the Board, at all times, regarding College issues and to the end that they will readily be provided the finest possible College programs, College staff, and College facilities. Only the Board Chairperson can make statements on behalf of the Board.
 - Legally the authority of the Board is derived from the State, which ultimately controls the organization and operation of the College which determines the degree of discretionary power left with the Board and the people of this community for the exercise of local autonomy.

- A Trustee must not neglect personal obligation to the community and legal obligation to the State nor surrender these responsibilities to any other person, group, or organization; but that, beyond these, has a moral and civic obligation to the Nation.
- Individually, a Trustee is responsible for the prompt reporting of any violations of this Code, dependent upon the nature of the violation either to the Board Chairperson, College President, and/or the College's legal counsel.
- In view of the foregoing consideration, it is a Trustee's obligation to make a constant effort to:
 - Devote time, thought, and study to the duties and responsibilities of a community college board member so that effective and creditable service can be rendered.
 - Work with fellow board members and the College President with civility and in a spirit of harmony, mutual respect, and cooperation regardless of differences of opinion that arise during vigorous debates.
 - Base decisions upon all available facts in each situation; to vote by honest conviction in every case, not influenced by partisan bias of any kind; thereafter, to abide by and uphold the final majority decision of the Board.
 - Remember Trustees have no legal authority outside the meetings of the Board, and that Trustees are to conduct relationships with the community college staff, the local citizenry, and all media of the community on the basis of this fact.
 - Shall not use the position of Trustee for personal benefit or to benefit any other individual or agency apart from the total interest of the College, including and not limited to the employment or tasking of College faculty, staff and/or students for anything other than College business during scheduled College work time, on or off campus.
 - Recognize that it is as important for the Board to understand and evaluate the educational programs of the community college as it is to plan for the business of the college operation.
 - Bear in mind, under all circumstances, that the primary function of the Board is to establish the policies by which the College is to be administered – remembering that the administration of the educational program and the conduct of college business shall be left to the employed President of the College and their professional and non-professional staff – and also remembering that there is a gray line between policy-making and policy-implementation which should not be crossed.
 - Welcome and encourage active involvement and cooperation by students, employees, citizens, organizations, and the communications media in the district with respect to establishing policy on current College operations and proposed future developments.
 - Maintain confidentiality of privileged information including that discussed during Executive Sessions.

Related Institutional Procedures:

None