

Contra Costa College (CCC)
Office of Financial Assistance
Statement of Ethics and Customer Service Principles

The Office of Financial Assistance at Contra Costa College has developed the following Statement of Ethics and Customer Service Principles, in conjunction with the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) Statement of Ethical Principles, in order to provide students with a clear explanation of the expectations of every financial aid staff at Contra Costa College.

I. Introduction

The primary goal of the financial aid professional is to help students achieve their educational goals through financial support and resources. Staff of the Contra Costa College Office of Financial Assistance are required to exemplify the highest level of ethical behavior, and demonstrate the highest level of professionalism and customer service, during all interactions with students and the community of Contra Costa College. As financial aid professionals, we declare our commitment to the following ethical and customer service principles.

All financial aid professionals at CCC shall:

II. Advocate for Students

- Remain aware of issues affecting students and continually advocate for their interests at the institutional, state, and federal levels.
- Support federal, state, and institutional efforts to encourage students to aspire to and plan for education beyond high school.

III. Manifest the Highest Level of Integrity

- Commit to the highest level of ethical behavior and refrain from conflict of interest or perception thereof.
- Deal with others honestly and fairly, abiding by our commitments and always acting in a manner that merits the trust and confidence that others have placed in us.
- Promote the free expression of ideas and opinions, and foster respect for diverse viewpoints.

IV. Support Student Access and Success

- Commit to removing financial barriers for those who want to pursue postsecondary learning and support each student admitted to Contra Costa College.
- Without charge, assist students in applying for financial assistance programs.
- Provide services and apply principles that do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, or economic status.
- Understand the need for financial education and commit to educate students and families on how to responsibly manage expenses and debt.

V. Practice Active and Empathetic Listening

- Communicate effectively with students, parents, and the college community in order to comprehend and understand each person's individual needs.
- Listen not only to the words of the speaker, but the underlying ideas or feelings, and respond by repeating or paraphrasing the question to ensure mutual understanding.
- Listen attentively to students, parents, and the college community and respond with tact, courtesy, and professionalism.
- Follow the mantra "seek to understand before being understood" by displaying compassion, feelings, and insight when working with students, parents, and the college community.

VI. Comply with Federal and State Laws

- Adhere to all applicable laws and regulations governing financial assistance programs.
- Actively participate in ongoing professional development to ensure ample understanding of statutes, regulations, and best practices governing financial assistance programs.
- Encourage colleagues to participate in financial aid professional associations available at the state, regional, or national level.

VII. Strive for Transparency and Clarity

- Provide our students and parents with information they need to make good decisions about attending and paying for college.
- Educate students and families by providing transparent and quality information.
- Ensure equity by applying all need-analysis formulas consistently across the full population of student financial assistance applicants at Contra Costa College.
- Inform students, parents, and the community about any changes in financial aid programs that could affect eligibility for student aid.

VIII. Protect the Privacy of Financial Aid Applicants

- Ensure that the student and parent information and documents provided to the Office of Financial Assistance is protected in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Protect the information on the FAFSA, other applications for financial assistance programs, and other documents submitted for the application of financial assistance programs, from inappropriate use by ensuring that this information is used only for the application, awarding, and administration of all aid awarded by the Office of Financial Assistance.