
TITLE: Civility Policy
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Statement of Values: Civility, Respect, Integrity, Honesty, Accountability, Inclusion, Collaboration

As a learning institution, Whatcom Community College is committed to creating a dynamic learning atmosphere for students, faculty and staff. The continuing health and vitality of the college, as a place committed to learning, relies heavily upon a faculty and staff representing diverse experiences and perspectives, and a resulting free exchange of ideas and informed opinions. To ensure that the college curriculum and delivery provide intellectual growth, instructors and students must engage in a vibrant exchange of ideas, and the college culture must ensure that faculty and staff outside the classroom be accorded a similar, vibrant exchange.

The college workplace also depends upon collegiality—i.e., shared authority—and collaboration. The college depends upon the professionalism of the faculty and staff for the conduct of its business and for the successful completion and implementation of projects and initiatives. Disagreement and disrespect create barriers to collaborative effort and impede productive effort and achievement of fundamental and collective goals; indeed, impede mission fulfillment. The work of the college and of individuals across the college depends upon the faculty and staff treating each other with professionalism and mutual respect.

The entitlement to free expression requires important responsibilities. Diversity of background and conflicting ideas and opinions present significant challenges, including the potential for breakdown in campus activity and morale; to ensure that the exchange is conducted professionally and respectfully, the entire campus community must be committed to honoring the entitlements of others, to tolerance of divergent opinion, and to vigilance in conflict resolution. Moreover, creating and maintaining a commitment to diversity and tolerance cannot be managed solely by policy and procedure; rather, these purposes can only be achieved by a collective adherence to fundamental purposes and values; including the following:

- treating members of the campus community and the community at large with respect, concern, courtesy and responsiveness; and
- demonstrating respect for peoples' diverse backgrounds and expertise; and
- acknowledging dissenting opinions; and
- accepting diverse learning, work, and communication styles; and
- honoring, within the campus community exchange, the entitlements of others; including the right to speak and be heard and to participate in college governance and decision-making

These practices are not options, based on either generosity or mere tolerance; rather, they constitute required responsibilities for all individuals within our campus community. Each of us is responsible for treating others professionally and respectfully.