

Butte College Statement on Professional Ethics*

Professional educators invested in their institution, community and in student success practice ethical behavior beyond merely fulfilling job descriptions. As academic professionals, we recognize that we have certain responsibilities.

- 1. Guided by a deep conviction of the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge, faculty recognize the special responsibilities placed upon them.** Their primary responsibility to their subject is to seek and to state the truth as they see it. To this end professors devote their energies to developing and improving their scholarly competence. They accept the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. They practice intellectual honesty. Although professors may follow subsidiary interests, these interests must never seriously hamper or compromise their freedom of inquiry.
- 2. As teachers, faculty encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students.** They hold before them the best scholarly and ethical standards of their discipline. Faculty demonstrate respect for students as individuals and adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides and counselors. Faculty make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to ensure that their evaluations of students reflect each student's true merit. They respect the confidential nature of the relationship between instructor and student. They avoid any intimidation, exploitation, harassment or discriminatory treatment of students. They acknowledge significant academic or scholarly assistance from them. Faculty protect students' academic freedom.
- 3. As colleagues, faculty acknowledge the vitality of diversity.** They have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of scholars. Faculty do not belittle, intimidate, discriminate against or harass colleagues. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates. In the exchange of criticism and ideas faculty show due respect for the opinions of others. Faculty acknowledge academic debt and strive to be objective in their professional judgment of colleagues. Faculty accept their share of responsibilities for the governance of their institution.
- 4. As members of an academic institution, faculty seek above all to be effective teachers and scholars.** Although they observe the stated regulations of the institution, provided the regulations do not contravene academic freedom, they maintain their right to criticize and seek revision. They give due regard to their paramount responsibilities within their institution in determining the amount and character of work done outside it.
- 5. As members of their community, faculty have the rights and obligations of other citizens.** They measure the urgency of these obligations in the light of their responsibilities to their subject, to their students, to their profession, and to their institution. When they speak or act as private persons, they avoid creating the impression of speaking or acting for their college. As citizens engaged in a profession that depends upon freedom for its health and integrity, faculty have a particular obligation to promote conditions of free inquiry and to further public understanding of academic freedom.

*This statement is an adaptation of the American Association of University Professors' June 1987 Ethics Statement.