

POLICY

Title: Code of Ethics and Conduct

Policy Statement:

The Board desires that all members of the College community of Northern Lakes College work and learn in an environment which ensures professionalism, impartiality, integrity, and mutual respect. Codes of conduct shall reflect such basic College values as personal and professional integrity, respect for the individual, pursuit of excellence, and the provision of a quality learning and work environment.

Approved: Original signed by the Board Chair
(Archie Cunningham, Chair of the Board)

September 18, 2014
(Date)

Sponsorship: Governance

To Be Reviewed: September 18, 2019

Review and Revision Dates: May 2007; March 17, 2009; June 25, 2014, September 10, 2014; September 18, 2014.

First Approval Date: December 14, 2000

Stakeholders Consulted (Dates):

Employee Management Advisory Committee (EMAC): May 23, 2007.

Senior Management Team (SMT): May 17, 2007; March 9, 2009; June 24, 2014.

Operations Policy Review Committee: September 10, 2014.

Reference to other Documents:

Student Conduct Procedure; Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act; Post-Secondary Learning Act.

Purpose:

The purpose of the codes of conduct is to ensure that:

1. the Board of Governors governs in an effective, impartial and equitable manner;

2. College employees provide service which is conducted with impartiality, integrity and professionalism;
3. students are able to exercise their rights, fulfill their responsibilities, and achieve their goals to successfully complete their studies; and
4. public advisory committees provide informed advice with impartiality and integrity.

Guidelines:

1. Code of Conduct for the Board of Governors

- A. Board members must represent the collective interests of the partners and stakeholders of the College over their own interests or the interests of any other group they belong to, when acting on behalf of the College.
- B. Board members must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility.
 - i. There must be no self-dealing or any conduct of private business or personal services between any Board member and the College except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity, and equal access to “inside” information.
 - ii. Board members must not use their positions to obtain employment in the College for themselves, immediate family members or close associates.
 - iii. Public members (those members who applied as individuals to the Minister to be appointed to the Board, and were subsequently appointed) may not retain their Board membership if they become employed by the College.
 - iv. A member may at any time seek clarification from the Board as to whether any transaction s/he is contemplating would constitute a conflict of interest within the meaning of this code, and the Board shall rule on such a request.
- C. Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the College except as explicitly put forth in College policies.
 - i. In their interaction with the public, press or other entities, Board members must recognize the limitation and inability of any Board member or group of members to speak for the Board when not appointed to speak on behalf of the Board.
 - ii. Board members will make no judgments of employee performance except as that performance is assessed through College policies and procedures.
- D. A Board member may be deemed to have breached duties and responsibilities by being absent from the meetings of the Board for three consecutive months

without authorization by a resolution of the Board to do so.

- E. If the Board has reasonably determined that a member, other than the President, has breached the approved standards of conduct for its members, it may petition the Minister to revoke the appointment of the member.
- F. All members of the Board must maintain confidentiality of any confidential and/or in camera information that may come into their possession as a result of their being a member of the Board.

Board of Governors Oath of Office and Confidentiality

By virtue of my appointment to the Board of Governors of Northern Lakes College I, _____, swear to carry out my duties ethically, conscientiously and with due diligence. I will abide by the Post-Secondary Learning Act, and the policies and practices of the Board of Governors. I will treat everyone with respect and consideration. I will comply with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act as regards any information which might come into my possession as a result of my being a member of the Board. I further acknowledge that I understand that my failure to carry out my duties ethically, conscientiously, and with due diligence may result in my being removed from the Board, and that I may be subject to litigation depending on the severity of the infraction.

Signature

Signature of Witness

Date

Attachment to the Board of Governors Oath of Office

By virtue of their participation with Northern Lakes College, Board members may become aware of personal and/or confidential information about staff and students. Respect of privacy should always be a paramount consideration when dealing with such information. When specific information is to be released, the member should ensure that necessary authorization is in place and that the information released is appropriate to the recipient's legitimate need to know. Specific examples of personal or confidential information for both staff and students include, but are not restricted to: the release of attendance records; the release of academic or performance records; the release of medical or counseling records; or other information of a confidential nature. When dealing with personal and confidential information, members must not freely disseminate information. Information in this category would also include budget information, program development plans, policy and planning information, and other similar information about the College. There is also information of a more general nature that, while not personal, should not be freely disseminated. When in doubt, refer requests to the appropriate source.

2. Code of Conduct for Employees

A. Application

- i. This code applies to all College employees and contracted service deliverers.
- ii. The responsibility for administration of this code and for issuing the instructions necessary to implement it rests with the President.
- iii. The responsibility for administering this code with respect to the President rests with the Board.
- iv. Any issues regarding the interpretation of these procedures shall be resolved by the President except as they pertain to the President as an employee of the College, in which event such issues shall be resolved by the Board.

B. Educational Functions.

- i. As a member of an educational community, every employee is personally responsible for assuring the highest possible quality of learning environment by committing to:
 - a. responsible scholarship in the execution of educational duties, including researching and presenting information which is current, valid, and commensurate with the needs and readiness of the participants in the learning process; and
 - b. the validity of the learning experience at the College.

C. Professional Relationships

- i. Effective professional relationships which build trust and cooperation are fundamental to our success as an educational community. Every employee is:
 - a. responsible for the influence he or she may have over the physical, social and mental well-being of students and colleagues;
 - b. expected to maintain integrity in interpersonal relationships which affect the College;
 - c. expected to recognize the requirement for sensitivity to the needs of others;
 - d. expected to provide a valid personal example of responsible leadership and to provide valid opportunities to others to develop leadership skills through the learning experience; and

- e. expected to maintain respect and professionalism (including diplomacy, sensitivity and prudence) in all communications internal and external to the College.

D. Outside Employment

- i. Employees may take supplementary employment, including self-employment, unless such employment:
 - a. causes an actual or apparent conflict of interest;
 - b. is performed in such a way as to appear to be an official act, or to represent a College opinion or policy;
 - c. interferes through telephone calls, or otherwise with regular duties; or
 - d. involves the use of College premises, equipment, or supplies, unless such use is otherwise authorized.
- ii. Where it is evident that a conflict of interest or other situation described in section (a.) above might arise in taking supplementary employment, it is the duty of employees to notify the President in writing as to the nature of the employment and shall provide such other information concerning the employment as the President may require. If the President determines that a conflict of interest, or any other situation described in section (a.) above exists then the President may, at his discretion, prohibit such other employment whether or not it has already commenced. The President may impose conditions to allow such employment to continue including conditions which vary the terms of the employee's employment with the College.
- iii. Employees shall not accept monetary or other payment in addition to normal pay or expenses for duties which they perform in the normal course of their duties.
- iv. Employees may, with the consent of their supervisor, teach courses for other institutions for a fee during normal working hours provided that:
 - a. acceptable arrangements can be made for the employee to perform regular duties;
 - b. course preparation and marking is done on the employee's own time; and
 - c. no other conflict arises.
- v. Where infringement upon normal duties is unavoidable, the President may require that all or part of the fee received under (4. a.) shall be paid to the

College.

E. Investment and Management of Private Assets

- i. Where the business or financial interests of employees, their spouses or of their minor children are affected or appear to be affected by actions taken or decisions made in the course of their service to the College or in any situation where the employee, or any spouse or child of the employee or any business or corporate entity in which such person has a material financial interest enters into a contract or proposes to enter into a contract with the College, the employees shall provide a fair and complete disclosure of those interests to the President in writing, and shall provide such other information concerning the perceived conflict as the President may require. If the President determines that a conflict of interest does exist, then the President may, in his or her discretion, prohibit the continuance of such conflict, or require the employee to divest himself or herself from such interest or may otherwise impose reasonable terms and conditions to resolve such conflict including, where the President deems appropriate, the dismissal of the employee.
- ii. If an actual or potential conflict of interest situation exists as described in (4.a.), the employees involved with that business or financial interest shall not be involved in making decisions for or with that business or financial interest.
- iii. Without limitation to (4.a.) above the President may require that employees in specific positions disclose specific types of business interests which would, in the opinion of the President, create a conflict of interest.
- iv. No employee involved in the acquisition or sale of assets for the College, or for the provision of services to the College, shall acquire such assets from or sell such assets to the College, without the approval of the President.

F. Political Activity

- i. Employees who wish to run as candidates in a provincial or federal election must take leave of absence without pay commencing on the day after the writ for the election is issued or on the day that their candidacy is publicly announced, whichever is the later.
- ii. An employee who is elected to federal or provincial office shall resign effective forthwith after being elected and, in any event, not later than the last day of the leave of absence.
- iii. An employee who seeks election and is not elected shall be entitled to return to the same or similar employment, effective the day after the election.
- iv. An employee who is a candidate for municipal office shall, if elected, be

subject to the provisions of this code regarding outside employment.

G. Public Statements

- i. Employees who speak or write publicly shall ensure that they do not release information in contravention of their duties of confidentiality to the College including those duties arising under the terms of their oath of office or Official Confirmation and Agreement.
- ii. The responsibility for maintaining the confidentiality of information or documents includes the responsibility for ensuring that such information or documents are not directly or indirectly made available to unauthorized persons.

H. Acceptance of Gifts

- i. An employee shall not accept a gift, favor or service from any individual, organization or corporation, other than the normal exchange of hospitality between persons doing business together, tokens exchanged as part of protocol, or the normal presentation of gifts to persons participating in public functions.

I. Dealing with Relatives

- i. Employees who exercise a regulatory, inspectional, supervisory, or other discretionary control over members of the College community shall disqualify themselves from dealing with immediate family member by reporting the issue to the Director, Human Resource Services or the Vice President, Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer. An immediate family member is defined as a spouse (including common law as defined in the College Employee Benefit Plan) children (including step children), parents, parents in-law, guardian, grandparent, brother, sister, and brother and sister in-laws.

J. Penalties

- i. This code is additional to any statute or policy pertaining to the actions of employees.
- ii. An employee who does not comply with any provisions of this code may be subject to dismissal or other disciplinary action, as prescribed in College policy and procedures.

Employee Oath of Employment and Confidentiality

By virtue of my employment I, _____, hereby agree that I will execute ethically, conscientiously, with due diligence and according to law, the duties required of me as an employee of the Board of Governors of Northern Lakes College to the best of my abilities. I will treat everyone with respect. I will comply with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. I will not, without due authorization, disclose or make known to any unauthorized person, any matter or thing which comes, or has previously come, to my knowledge by reason of my said employment or by reason of any previous employment with the College's predecessors.

Where in connection with my previous employment with the Province of Alberta, if any, I have sworn an Official Oath to the similar effect as above, this document does not in any manner release or reduce my obligations to a) the Province of Alberta or b) to the College as a successor of the Provinces rights in that regard.

Signature

Signature of Witness

Date

Attachment to the Official Confirmation and Agreement

By virtue of their employment at Northern Lakes College, employees become aware of personal and/or confidential information about staff and students or the College, including financial records and other information. Respect of privacy should always be a paramount consideration when dealing with such information. When specific information is to be released, the employee should ensure that necessary authorization is in place and that the information released is appropriate to the recipient's legitimate need to know.

Specific examples of personal or confidential information for both staff and students include, but are not restricted to: the release of attendance records; the release of academic or performance records; the release of medical or counselling records; or other information of a confidential nature. When dealing with personal and confidential information, employees must not freely disseminate information. Employees should refer all requests for information to the appropriate senior manager or the Director, Human Resource Services. Information in this category would also include budget information, program development plans, policy and planning information, and other similar information about the College. There is also information of a more general

nature that, while not personal, should not be freely disseminated. When in doubt, refer requests to the appropriate Senior Manager or the Director, Human Resource Services.

3. Code of Conduct for Students

If a student is registered in a program brokered from another institution, the student is subject to the rules of conduct and penalties of that institution, as well as those of Northern Lakes College.

The guidelines and responsibilities for students' conduct apply to all students, whether registered in full time or part time courses or programs, and are outlined in the Student Conduct Procedure.

4. Code of Conduct for Public Advisory Bodies

A. Members of the College's public advisory bodies must represent the interests of the partners and stakeholders of the College over their own interests, or the interests of any other group they belong to while acting on behalf of the College. Members must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their financial responsibility.

- i. There must be no self-dealing or any conduct of private business or personal services between any committee member and the College to assure openness, competitive opportunity, and equal access to "inside" information.
- ii. Members must not use their positions to obtain employment in the College for themselves, family members or close associates.
- iii. Should a member be considered for employment, s/he must temporarily withdraw from committee deliberation, voting and access to applicable committee information.
- iv. Members may not retain their committee membership if they are employed by the College, unless approved by the President.
- v. A member may at any time seek clarification from the College as to whether any transaction s/he is contemplating would constitute a conflict of interest within the meaning of this code, and the President shall rule on such a request.
- vi. When a member wishes to declare a conflict of interest s/he shall so declare before the discussion of the question and shall not participate in the discussion and the abstention shall be recorded in the minutes.

B. Members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the College.

- i. Members' interaction with the College's employees must recognize the lack of authority of an individual committee member or group of committee members.

- ii. Members' interaction with the public, press or other entities must recognize the same limitation as above and the similar inability of any member or group of members to speak for the whole committee or the whole College.
- ii. Members will make no judgements of employee performance except as that performance is assessed against explicit College policies, by official process.

C. Breach of Responsibility:

- i. A member may be deemed to have breached his/her duties and responsibilities by being absent from meetings for three consecutive regular meetings without authorization.
- ii. If the committee has reasonably determined that a member has breached the approved standards of conduct for its members, it may petition the President to revoke the appointment of the member.

D. All members must maintain confidentiality of any information, the release of which would contravene FOIPP Legislation, which might come into their possession as a result of being a member of an NLC committee.

Public Advisory Committee Member Oath of Office and Confidentiality

By virtue of my appointment to the _____
Committee of Northern Lakes College, I, _____, swear to
carry out my duties ethically, conscientiously and with due diligence. I will
abide by the policies and practices of the College. I will treat everyone with
respect and consideration. I will comply with the Freedom of Information and
Protection of Privacy Legislation as regards any information which might
come into my possession as a result of my being a member of the Committee.
I further acknowledge that I understand that my failure to carry out my duties
ethically, conscientiously and with due diligence may result in my being
removed from the Committee and that I may be subject to litigation depending
on the severity of the infraction.

Signature

Signature of Witness

Date

Attachment to the Official Confirmation and Agreement

By virtue of their participation with Northern Lakes College, Committee members may become aware of personal and/or confidential information about staff and students. Respect of privacy should always be a paramount consideration when dealing with such information. Specific examples of personal or confidential information for both staff and students include, but are not restricted to: the release of attendance records; the release of academic or performance records; the release of medical or counseling records; or other information of a confidential nature. When dealing with personal and confidential information, committee members must not freely disseminate information. Information in this category would also include budget information, program development plans, policy and planning information, and other similar information about the College. There is also information of a more general nature that, while not personal, should not be freely disseminated. When in doubt, refer requests to the appropriate source.