

CHAPTER XII – CODE OF CONDUCT: ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

George Brown College is mandated by law and by the community it serves to provide an educational environment that demonstrates professionalism and academic currency, values diversity, and respects the processes and traditions of learning.

The terms of this mandate are prescribed by the founding documents of the College; by the laws to which the College is subject; by the terms and conditions of employment for administrative staff; by the collective agreements that govern academic employees and support staff; and by the operational policies and procedures that the College has adopted (see Appendix C).

Central to these documents and the processes that created them is the *implicit* assumption of professionalism and appropriate professional conduct on the part of all College employees.

This code of conduct is designed to provide an *explicit* definition of the standards of professional conduct expected of all administrative staff. It represents, for the College, a benchmark of expectations about professional conduct.

For the purposes of this document, the terms "administrative staff" and "managers" are used interchangeably to refer to any person in the College who serves as a Dean, Director, Manager, or Chair.

A BENCHMARK STATEMENT ON PROFESSIONALISM

Administrative staff are expected to proceed in their daily duties in a manner that upholds the dignity of their profession; to honour the terms and intent of the collective agreements that have been entered into with faculty and support staff and the terms and conditions of employment for administrative staff; and to exhibit a commitment to excellence in learning and teaching and a concern for the well-being of students, faculty, support staff, colleagues, the College, and the broader society in which all exist.

1 PROFESSIONALISM AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

George Brown College expects all administrators in its employ to conform to the explicit standards of professionalism defined in this document.

Administrators who demonstrate behaviour that does not comply with or that is inconsistent with the minimal standards of professionalism contained in this document may be subject to the range of disciplinary actions specified in the College's *Progressive Discipline Policy*.

1.1 Scope

The term "professionalism" is used to describe adherence by administrative staff to an acceptable standard in the method, manner, and spirit in which they perform their duties. The professional conduct of administrative staff at George Brown College is assessed in five distinct areas of College activity:

- management;
- conflict resolution;
- enactment of college priorities;
- collective agreements;
- public relations.

1.2 Adherence to Policies

The expectations of the College with relation to each of these areas will be described in detail in the following sections of this document. The College also expects that administrative staff will:

- familiarize themselves with College policies that are relevant to their responsibilities;
- adhere to those policies to the best of their ability;
- assist and encourage others to adhere to the policies, for example, by directing a student to the appropriate channels for appeal;
- draw perceived problems with the policies to the attention of the Office of the Vice-President, Academic;
- familiarize themselves with and adhere to the relevant provisions of the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *College Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment* policy; and
- familiarize themselves with and adhere to the policies regarding Intellectual Property, and Academic Freedom (see Section 6), and Academic Dishonesty (see Chapter 15 – Research Ethics).

1.3 Unacceptable Behaviours

Administrative staff will not use the workplace or online environment to:

- use scurrilous, profane, or obscene language;
- make remarks or engage in behaviour that could reasonably be considered racist, sexist, or discriminatory according to the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (see Appendix D) and will intervene if they witness such behaviour;
- engage in behaviour or make remarks that could reasonably be interpreted as threatening and will intervene if they witness such behaviour;
- intimidate any employee or student verbally, while they themselves strive actively to prevent others from engaging in such behaviour; or
- encourage, by inaction or innuendo, the development of an environment that is fractious, disrespectful of others, or intolerant of order and good manners;
- promote their personal, religious, political, social, or business agendas

In addition, administrators will avoid attempts to use their authority as managers or the reputation of the College to forward any personal or political agendas.

1.4 Online Environment/Communication Facilities

All staff must apply professional and ethical standards at all times when accessing, using, and distributing information and materials through use of learning technologies. Staff must use computing and communication facilities and services only for the purposes for which they are authorized. Technologies must not be used to access, use or distribute materials that are obscene, vulgar, or pornographic, or that might be perceived by others as harassment or intimidation.

The College believes that every user bears the primary responsibility for the material she/he chooses to access, send, or display. A full description of policies in this area (technology and accessibility) are located in the Appendices.

Note: All policies regarding academic staff conduct and responsibilities also apply to the online teaching environment.

1.5 Copyright

Administrative staff will abide by all copyright laws, which applies to the internet as well as paper. Staff wishing to copy original work shall receive written permission from the copyright owner prior to copying (George Brown College Copyright Policy and Procedures, 1985).

Those who are not familiar with these laws may clarify their responsibilities with any College librarian. The College will not provide assistance or protection relating to charges arising from violation of copyright law.

2 MANAGEMENT

2.1 General Expectations

Administrative staff are expected to:

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- demonstrate courtesy and respect in all dealings with students, academic employees, and support staff;
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- be fully conversant with all aspects of the College's policies and procedures and will be prepared to implement them;
- demonstrate their respect for the professionalism of faculty and support staff;
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- ensure that the work assigned to an employee meets the terms of the employee's job description and the collective agreements and that the duties are appropriate to the qualifications and skills of the employee;
- give faculty and support staff who agree to accept assignments currently outside their qualifications and skills but within their expected potential a commitment to provide the time or training needed to successfully perform these assignments;
- be clear and specific in communications with faculty and staff so that all concerned will know precisely what behaviour is expected of them;

- meet College deadlines for preparation of such items as standard workload forms, timetable profiles, and textbook ordering, as well as deadlines for submission of grades, timesheets to payroll, and budget data;
- practise fiscal responsibility to ensure that all expenditures fall within budget and use common sense in the expenditure of College funds;
- demonstrate support of the need for accurate class lists by supplying them in a timely fashion; and
- establish and maintain co-operative and collegial relationships with other administrative staff members;
- work diligently to ensure that the College provides faculty and staff with the tools needed to do their jobs and will act promptly to remedy such short-term deficiencies as equipment failures or classroom problems.
- exercise caution in the expenditure of College funds and ensure that due process and fair bidding practices are observed.

2.2 Relationships

Managers at the College will be aware that there are limitations on the nature of the collegial relationships they can have with faculty, staff, and students. Managers will, for example:

- avoid activities which might give rise to a perception of favouritism;
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- refuse to invite, solicit, or allow gossip, innuendo, or direct disparagement of any academic employee, support staff member, or other administrator, other than in the context of receiving a report regarding an issue of concern;
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- acknowledge any conflict of interest with faculty or staff due to a pre-existing relationship and attempt to resolve any difficulties that may arise;
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- maintain an even-handed and consistent professional tone in all their interactions with faculty, staff, and management in the College, and
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- refrain from engaging in behaviour on College premises that is inconsistent with their role as College leaders.
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3 Conflict Resolution

Processes of conflict resolution form a central mandate in job descriptions of all College management. Administrative staff will demonstrate professionalism in conflict resolution by doing the following:

- respecting the dignity of all parties involved;
- refusing to allow their own perception of the importance of the nature of the conflict to preclude attempts to achieve resolution of the problem;
- ensuring that specific complaints are resolved by a specific timetable for the resolution with all parties concerned;
- refusing to permit the same complaints or concerns to be raised without making a commitment to resolution, followed by reasonable and appropriate efforts to attain resolution; and
- ensuring that the terms of all resolutions of specific complaints are appropriately documented.

Following resolution of the immediate conflict, the manager will intervene as necessary to ensure that the behaviour that led to the conflict does not recur.

4 ENACTMENT OF COLLEGE PRIORITIES

Administrators will ensure that the priorities of the College are addressed. Administrative staff will:

- clearly communicate these priorities to everyone in their department;
- ensure that no activity in the department is running counter to those priorities;
- articulate departmental goals that further those priorities; and
- seek training in those areas where they are not equipped to meet the priorities of the College.

5 COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

Administrators will demonstrate their understanding that the terms of their relationships with faculty and staff in their departments are governed by the terms of the collective agreements into which the College has entered with faculty and support staff.

Administrators must:

- have a basic understanding of the terms of the collective agreements and seek counsel before taking action in areas of uncertainty
- not knowingly subvert the intention of the collective agreements.

6 PUBLIC RELATIONS

Administrators understand that how they represent the College is vitally important to all members of the College community. Professionalism in the realm of public relations will be demonstrated by ensuring:

- public statements are accurate, and
- public statements do not misrepresent or distort the intentions of the College.

Administrators are responsible for ensuring ensure that the required statistical data provided for external agencies providing funds is accurate.

Administrators will avoid attempts to use their authority as managers or the reputation of the College to forward any personal or political agendas.