

Internal Audit Spotlight

Ethics

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What is workplace ethics?

There is a decision-making process that comes in play with each and every ethical question. When that question is clearly against the law or even policy most people tend to make the correct choice fairly easily. Where things become a bit less black-and-white is when there are no steadfast laws or policies surround the issue at hand, or if the alternative choice appears to hold some attraction or benefit to the employee.

Who is responsible for creating an ethical culture?

Everyone!

Everyone from the Board of Trustees, college leadership, faculty, staff, and students play a vital role in maintaining an ethical culture. College employees are required to learn and follow the college ethics policies and perform their jobs to the highest ethical standards. Students are responsible for upholding student code of conduct.

One of the college's core values is Integrity, which means "*We conduct ourselves in ways that are professional, instill confidence, and promote trust.*"

What are the benefits of an ethical culture?

A workplace that values an ethical culture encourages transparency and accountability during the decision-making process and instills confidence in the organization. It fosters a strong image both internally for those that work within the college and publicly for those that work with the college (i.e., students, vendors, etc.).

Ethics *continued*

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What are examples of unethical behavior in the workplace?

With an endless variety of ethical decisions made throughout the day, it is impossible to add each to college policy or to provide examples of everything that might arise, however examples of unethical actions include:

- Taking credit for the work of others
- Failing to honor commitments
- Deception or lying about qualifications or to hide mistakes
- Using your position for personal gain
 - Changing information in college systems to benefit yourself, family, or friends (i.e., adding exemptions, changing grades, residency, etc.)
 - Securing business for yourself, family, or friend
 - Utilizing college resources for a personal business
- Abusive behavior or bullying
- Seeing someone perform an unethical act and not reporting it

What resources are available at the college surrounding ethics?

If you have questions regarding ethical behaviors, the college has several resources available. *Policy III.3003.A. Ethical Conduct and Conflicts of Interest* and the related procedure provides employees with an understanding of ethical conduct and conflicts of interest. Training can be found in Cornerstone under *ETHC 1001 - Ethical Conduct, Fraud Prevention, and Conflict of Interest*. The Ethics Point Hotline is available if you need to report any ethical issues and of course you can contact the Internal Audit Department directly if you need to discuss anything related to ethical conduct.

External Reports

Did you know that external audit/review reports should be forwarded to the Internal Audit Department? Often time external entities will perform reviews of college operations to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements or the college will bring in an external vendor to review operations.

If you receive a report, memo, letter, etc. during the year from an any outside entity, please forward it to internal.audit@sjcd.edu.

