



# Department of English Texas Tech University

## Ethics in English: A Guide for Students

The purpose of this brief guide is to heighten your awareness of the values that undergird ethical behavior inside and outside of the classroom. The guide also provides examples of how these values are enacted. Please use this information as a springboard to facilitate further discussion with your instructors and with your peers as you progress through your courses in the English department and other departments on campus.

### **Clarity—no disparity between surface and subtext in departmental documents and in interactions with each other**

- know what is expected of you as a student in a course (e.g., policy statement, syllabi, academic integrity, assignments, evaluation criteria, attendance)
- provide documentation to your instructors/professors immediately of any special circumstance (e.g., disability, participation in university-sponsored events) that may affect your ability to meet course requirements

### **Honesty—accurately representing facts and situations to each other**

- operate out of the highest academic and professional motives
- submit only work that is your own
- do not provide work to other students
- understand what constitutes plagiarism and correct handling of documentation

### **Tolerance—the ability to listen to and consider ideas different from your own**

- be receptive to the opinions of other students, even when you disagree—disagreement with you does not necessarily mean disrespect for you
- be sensitive to all forms of diversity (sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, gender, age, etc.)
- support an atmosphere in the classroom in which individuals are comfortable stating ideas and opinions

### **Respect—a regard for the equality, dignity, and uniqueness of other people**

- distinguish constructive disagreement and academic debate with other students and faculty from personal attack
- recognize and value the different talents, backgrounds, and beliefs of individual students and faculty

**Objectivity—careful compilation and consideration of all pertinent information and evidence**

- be able to discern when you are at fault and when not
- recognize that faculty and administration have the right to set their policies in writing and that continued enrollment in the course assumes acceptance of those policies

**Fairness—reaching a just decision based on objectively compiled information**

- allow faculty sufficient time to grade papers, complete recommendations, etc.
- be aware of your biases and do your best to recognize their effects on your actions
- recognize that grades are earned, not given

**Engagement—active participation in all communities of which we are a part**

- engage in the learning opportunities offered in individual courses by diligent attendance and active participation
- take advantage of the cultural activities offered on campus
- make a sincere effort to see yourself as part of an academic community
- avail yourself of opportunities to represent the university to the broader community

**Responsibility—holding yourself and others to a high standard**

- recognize that a college student, as an adult, is expected to be able to function on her or his own—more freedom means more individual accountability
- keep informed with regard to university policies and individual instructors' policies and procedures—ignorance is not an excuse
- fulfill your duty to report instances of plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty—someone who is cheating is not making the effort that you and everyone else is, and hiding your knowledge of dishonesty makes you complicit