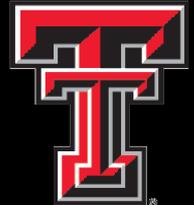


Public Accountability



Statement of Ethical Principles

Texas Tech University
Ethics Center
2011



Public Accountability



“Texas Tech University is committed to transparency in governance, personal responsibility, and both individual and organizational integrity. Being responsible requires us to be thoughtful stewards of our resources—**accountable** and respectful to ourselves, to each other, and to the publics we serve. A sense of institutional and public responsibility requires careful reflection on one’s ethical obligations and the duty to respect commitments and expectations by acknowledging the context and considering the consequences, both intended and unintended, of any course of action.

(cont. on next slide)

Public Accountability



(cont.)

We promptly and openly identify and disclose conflicts of interest on the part of faculty, staff, students, administration, and the institution as a whole, and we take appropriate steps to either eliminate such conflicts or ensure that they do not compromise our procedures and values. When we make promises, we must keep those promises. We strive to do what is honest and ethical even if no one is watching us or compelling us to ‘do the right thing.’”

Texas Tech University
Statement of Ethical Principles

This Module Examines



Transparency

*Communication &
Serving the Public*

**Public
Accountability**

*TTU's Statement
of Ethical Principles*

Integrity

*Compliance &
Conflicts of Interest
and Commitment*

Responsibility

*Personal,
Institutional,
& Fiscal*

Public Accountability



Accountability includes a network of obligations and responsibilities.

“Public accountability pertains to the obligation of persons or entities entrusted with public resources to be answerable for the fiscal, managerial and program responsibilities that have been conferred on them, and to report to those that have conferred these responsibilities.”

Boncodin, 2007

(drawing on the International Organisation
of Supreme Audit Institutions' definition)

Public Accountability



Why is it important?

Public Accountability aims to ensure that
- public money is “spent with a minimum of irregularities and wastage”

- “such spending results in the maximisation of benefits with the minimisation of costs”

(Khan and Chowdhury, 2008)

Public Accountability



Why does TTU need an accountability process?

- ✓ As the recipient of public funds, TTU is accountable to prospective students, current students and their parents; faculty and campus staff; public policy-makers and the funders of higher education.
- ✓ Accountability ensures that the resources of the University are managed to benefit the whole public.

Public Accountability



The TTU System uses an Office of Audit Services to assure accountability.

“The **Office of Audit Services** is independent, reporting directly to the Board of Regents. Independence includes not only ‘in fact,’ but also in mind and appearance.”

<http://www.texastech.edu/audit/>

Some of the Office of Audit Services’ objectives:

- ✓ promoting appropriate ethics and values within Texas Tech and its components
- ✓ ensuring effective organizational performance management and accountability
- ✓ effectively coordinating the activities of and communicating information among our office, the Board of Regents, external auditors, and management

<http://www.irs.ttu.edu/Reports/StateReports/SYSTEM/Audit/TTUSAuditFY2011.pdf>

Public Accountability



Public
accountability
involves

TRANSPARENCY

inviting & encouraging public oversight of decision making processes of organizations entrusted with public resources.

INTEGRITY

examining situations that affect organizational and personal integrity, including conflicts of interest & commitment.

RESPONSIBILITY

requiring that individuals and institutions consider both the intended and unintended consequences of contemplated actions and be accountable for the fiscal & social consequences of decisions.

Transparency



Transparency includes **public oversight** of decision making processes.

- ✓ The public served by TTU receives information about the university's goals and priorities and how it measures progress towards these goals.
- ✓ University policies and procedures are open to public scrutiny.
- ✓ Communication and public service are key elements of transparency.

Transparency & Communication



Sincere and clear communication is critical to the task of transparency

Openness in governance to the public served by TTU helps prevent undue influence and corruption.

The university may communicate information about its work in several ways:

- ✓ internally
- ✓ externally
- ✓ formally, or
- ✓ informally

Transparency & Serving the Public



Transparency
benefits the
community

encourages greater
communication &
cooperation
among internal
and external
constituent groups

Transparency ...

provides a
safeguard against
undue influence
and corruption in
decision making

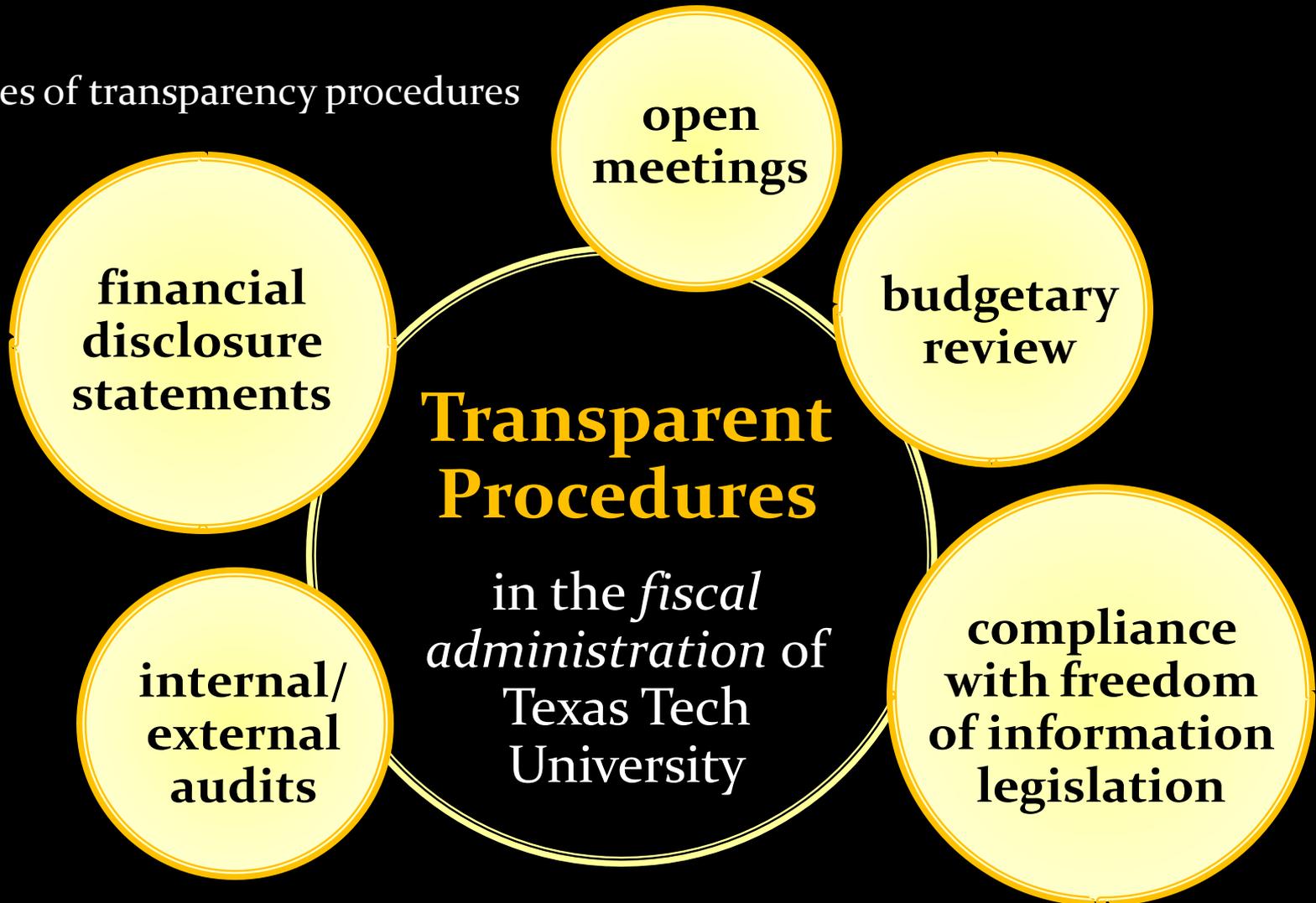
increases
accountability
for decisions

enhances trust
and confidence
in leadership
and thus, in the
University as a
whole

Transparency & Serving the Public



Examples of transparency procedures



Integrity



Being a community of integrity requires that

we uphold and comply with all applicable laws, statutes, contracts, policies, and regulations governing high education institutions.



Integrity



Institutional integrity inspires **trust** and **confidence**.

In this section, we review two important features of fostering a culture of integrity and public accountability:

- **Compliance**
- **Conflicts of interest & conflicts of commitment**

It is important to consider **facts** and **perceptions** surrounding these types of situations.



Integrity & Compliance



“How a university is perceived and evaluated by its governing accreditation body plays a major role in how a university is perceived by potential students, faculty and funding dollars.”

Having an adequate student to faculty ratio is an important part of compliance.

(Michael Castellon, “Committees Formed to Analyze Tech's Compliance,” 2004)

Integrity & Compliance



Here at TTU ~

- ✓ The University must comply with the requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) in order to be reaffirmed as an accredited university.

<http://www.irim.ttu.edu/SACS/index.asp>

- ✓ The Protection of Human Subjects Committee and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) review all proposals for research with human subjects carried out at the University.

<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/vpr/irb/committee.php>

Integrity & Conflicts of Interest



Conflicts of interest happen when people put their “private interests ahead of an institution—to the detriment of the latter”

- ✓ For faculty: conflicts “may occur in any one of their roles as teachers, researchers or scholars, and service providers.”
- ✓ For students: “students who assume leadership positions in University-sanctioned organizations or student governance bodies take on special mantles of responsibility relative to their appointed duties.”

(Bob Smith, “No Conflicts—No Interest or Commitment . . .,” 2004)

Integrity & Conflicts of Interest



Examples of potential conflicts of interest

“Faculty or staff use university facilities for personal or commercial activities.”

“Employees are involved in the appointment, promotion, supervision, or management of immediate family members.”

A professor requires students to purchase materials when the professor derives direct/indirect financial benefits.

An employee accepts personal payments “or other benefits from organizations that propose or sponsor research at the University.”

Integrity & Conflicts of Commitment



Conflicts of commitment involve “diverting one’s time or interest from activities understood by supervisor and employee as core responsibilities”

Examples of potential conflicts of commitment

An employee provides “expert testimony in cases that may harm the university”

Employees “devote time and efforts to extramural entities, including non-profit agencies, that interfere with their obligations, duties, and responsibilities at the University”

(Bob Smith, “No Conflicts—No Interest or Commitment . . .,” 2004)

Integrity & Conflicts



Consequences of Conflicts of Interest

“A conflict of interest can create an appearance of impropriety and may compromise the integrity of an individual or institution.”

(Rial D. Rolfe, “Don’t Let Conflicts of Interest Mislead You,” 2011)

“Neglect or obfuscation of issues related to conflicts of interest and commitment can cause serious liabilities for individuals and the University.”

(Bob Smith, “No Conflicts—No Interest or Commitment . . .,” 2004)

Integrity & Conflicts



“It is important to eliminate or minimize the deleterious impact that conflicts of interest have on decision-making.

This is best accomplished by individuals and institutions recognizing, declaring and managing their conflicts of interest.”

(Rial D. Rolfe, “Don’t Let Conflicts of Interest Mislead You,” 2011)

Integrity & Managing the Conflicts



“Managing or eliminating conflicts of interest and commitment in teaching-, research- and service-related efforts calls for a blend of sensitivity to civil norms, an understanding of governmental regulations, and adherence to University policies and procedures.”

(Bob Smith, “No Conflicts—No Interest or Commitment . . .,” 2004)

- ✓ Prompt disclosure is key
- ✓ The facts of circumstances and the perceptions of unrelated observers are equally important
- ✓ The person in the conflict situation cannot be the decision maker about the situation

Responsibility



Institutional and personal responsibility requires that

- ✓ individuals and institutions consider the intended and unintended consequences of contemplated actions
- ✓ individuals and institutions be accountable for the fiscal and social consequences of decisions.

Responsibility



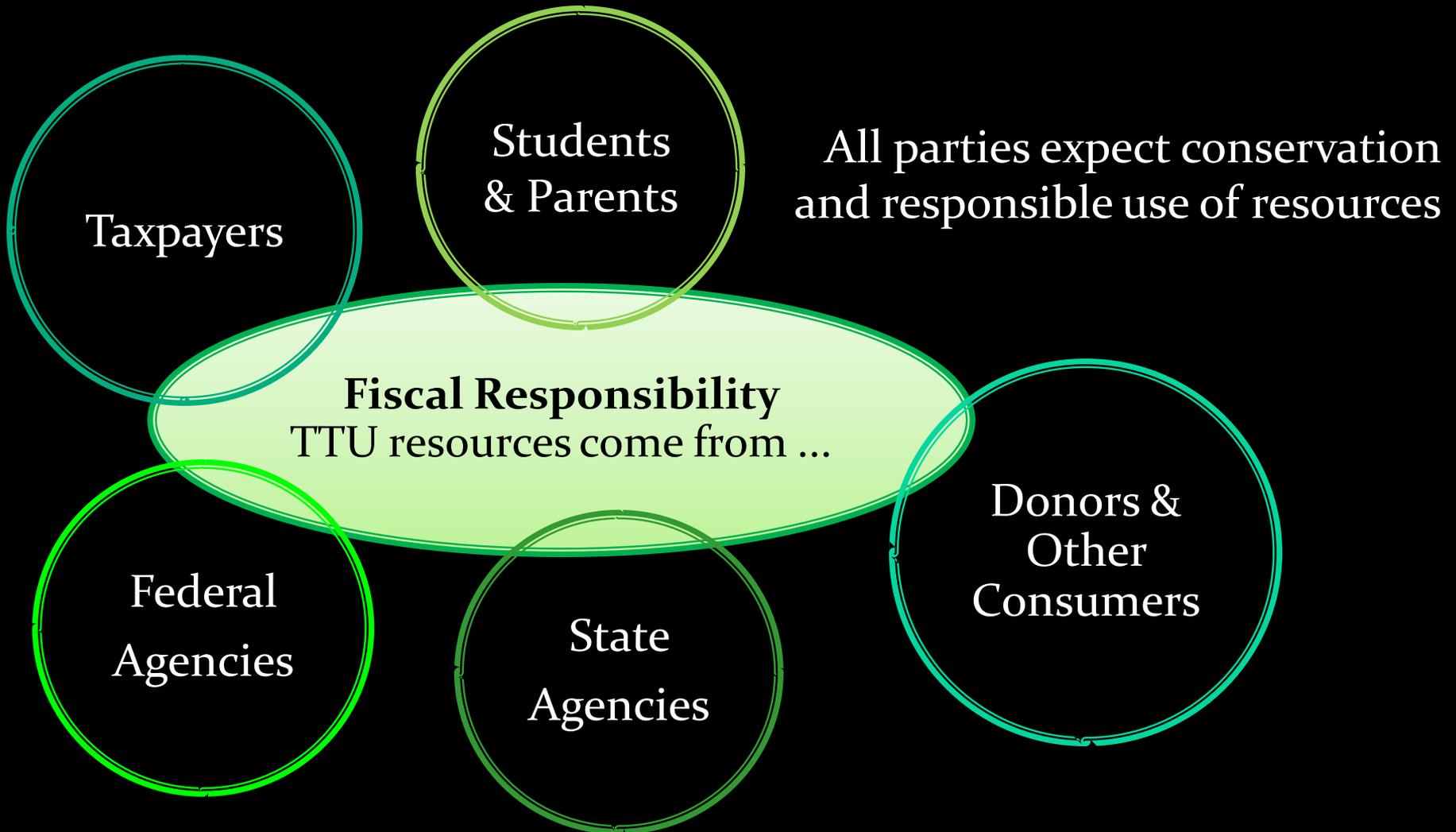
Personal Responsibility

- ✓ involves acknowledgement for the choices you make and the actions you take
- ✓ recognizes ethical issues in decision-making
- ✓ means involving the appropriate constituents in decisions

Institutional Responsibility

- ✓ protects public property and resources.
- ✓ considers the greater good—the many vs. the one—in decisions.
- ✓ avoids placing employees and students in untenable situations
- ✓ ensures policies and procedures are designed and functioning to protect institutional resources, including people.

Responsibility



Public Accountability



Commitment to transparency involves every level of leadership, starting with the Board of Regents.

Students, teachers, researchers, administrators, and staff are accountable to one another; each has an obligation to accept responsibility for their actions.

As members of a responsible institution, we routinely and carefully

- ✓ reflect our ethical obligations
- ✓ respect commitments and expectations
- ✓ acknowledge the consequences of our actions

Public Accountability



“Freedom is only part of the story and half of the truth.

Freedom is but the negative aspect of the whole phenomenon whose positive aspect is responsibility.

In fact, freedom is in danger of degenerating into mere arbitrariness unless it is lived in terms of responsibility.”

Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning* (1959)

Reporting Fraud



“Any member of the campus community who has a reasonable basis for believing a fraudulent act has occurred has a responsibility to properly notify the **Office of Audit Services**, their supervisor, the appropriate administrator or the Texas Tech Police Department.

The Texas Whistleblower Act protects anyone who, in good faith, reports unlawful activity from retaliation for making such a report.”

Reports may be submitted by web or phone:

- EthicsPoint web site: www.ethicspoint.com
- Toll Free: 1-866-294-9352 (also available in Spanish)

(<http://www.texastech.edu/audit/fraud.php#report>)

Acknowledgements and References



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Kim Turner, CPA
Chief Audit Executive, TTU System

References

The University's policies, procedures, regulations, and financial information can be accessed online:

- [The Student Handbook](#)
- [The Faculty Handbook](#)
- [New Employee Forms and Processes](#)
- [Texas Tech Operating Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Regents' Rules and Policies Statements](#)
- [FY 2010 Operating Budget Policy and Guidelines](#)
- [Annual Financial and Non-Financial Reports](#)
- [IRB Policies and Procedures](#)

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Public Accountability



Statement of Ethical Principles

Questions? Comments?

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