Mutual Respect

Statement of Ethical Principles

Texas Tech University Ethics Center 2011
“Texas Tech University is committed to an open and diverse society. Each member of the Texas Tech community has the right to be treated with **respect** and dignity. This right imposes a duty not to infringe upon the rights or personal values of others. Professional relationships among all members of the Texas Tech community deserve attention so that they are not exploited for base motives or personal gain.”

Texas Tech University
Statement of Ethical Principles
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TTU’s Statement of Ethical Principles

Meritorious respect

Intrinsic respect

Relationships

Communication
Mutual Respect

**Meritorious (merit-based)**

Respect is conditional

It requires that the recipient of respect meet certain expectations and that the giver of respect recognize that these expectations have been met.

**Intrinsic (fundamental or innate)**

Respect is not conditional

It does not require that expectations be met before respect is given or received. Respect is granted and received without restriction because of a fundamental characteristic or quality inherent in the recipient.

At TTU, the principle of “Mutual Respect” is based on intrinsic respect.

(Jimmy Smith and Richard Burgess, 2008)
What is R-E-S-P-E-C-T?

- Is respect an action?
  - Following the law?

- Is respect conditional?
  - Must respect be earned (must a person prove themselves worthy of receiving respect)?
  - Must a rule, law, or person be respected because failing to do so could produce negative consequences?

- Is respect unconditional?
  - Awarded freely?

- Who or what is the beneficiary of respect?
  - People?
  - Beliefs?
  - Feelings?
  - Ideas?
Practicing mutual respect in a diverse community includes having the ability to:

- Acknowledge
- Foster understanding
- Allow interaction
- Recognize
- Contemplate
- Accept
Mutual Respect throughout the ages...

“Do not to your neighbor what you would take ill from him.”

~Pittacus, *Fragm 10.3*

“Treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.”

~Udànāvarga 5.18

“Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you.”

~Muhammad PBUH, *The Farwell Sermon*
Mutual Respect throughout the ages...

“In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you: for this is the law and the prophets.”
~Matthew 7:12

“What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. This is the whole Torah; all the rest is commentary.”
~Talmud, Shabbat 31a
Though we owe both strangers and those we know respect, we often talk about respect in the context of professional and/or personal relationships.

Healthy relationships are characterized, in part, by the presence of Mutual Respect.

- Some relationship characteristics are *Healthy*
- Other relationship characteristics are *Unhealthy*
Healthy relationship characteristics

- Respect of individuality
- Allowing for differences
- Based on personal or professional interest
- Listening
- Honesty
- Cooperative
- Generosity
- Respect of each other’s boundaries
- Acceptance of cultural, political, religious, and personal differences
- Mutually beneficial
**Relationships**

**Unhealthy relationship characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threats</th>
<th>No respect of personal boundaries</th>
<th>Fear of expressing disagreement</th>
<th>Benefits only one party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear of expressing beliefs, cultural practices, &amp; ideas</td>
<td>Based on intention to exploit an individual for base motives or personal gain</td>
<td>Pressure to change or give up beliefs, cultural practices, &amp; ideas</td>
<td>akra: Disrespect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How we communicate with one another is a way of demonstrating respect not only for others, but also for ourselves.

Texas Tech has an ethical principle that focuses on communication. You can read more about it in the “Communication and Cooperation” module.
“Mutual respect is the foundation of genuine harmony. We should strive for a spirit of harmony, not for political or economic reasons, but rather simply because we realize the value of other traditions.”

~The Dalai Lama
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Dr. Michelle Bair, former associate director, Community Engagement, Institutional Diversity

Howie Chin
Graduate Assistant, Ethics Center

Angela Frisbie
Former Graduate Assistant, Ethics Center

Yi Hui Lee
Sr. Editor, Ethics Center

Justin R. Louder
Director, Ethics Center

Keisha McKenzie
Graduate Assistant, Ethics Center

Esther Na
Former Graduate Assistant, QEP

References

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Questions? Comments?
Please contact:
TTU Ethics Center
806.742.1505
www.ethics.ttu.edu