

## Code of Conduct

### **Erie Community College's Office of Financial Assistance Statement of Ethical Principles and Professional Code of Conduct**

Erie Community College is committed to the highest standards of professional conduct. Erie Community College recognizes that ensuring ethical behavior through established standards and guidance is the most important core principle for self-governance in our profession in order to assure the public of the profession's integrity.

As such, the office of Financial Aid has developed a sound framework to guide financial aid professionals in their every day administration of the student financial aid programs in general and the student loan programs in particular. This framework consists of a Statement of Ethical Principles and a Code of Conduct.

#### **Statement of Ethical Principles**

The Statement of Ethical Principles provides that the primary goal of the institutional financial aid profession is to help students achieve their educational potential by providing appropriate financial resources. To this end, the financial aid professional shall:

- Be committed to removing financial barriers for those who wish to pursue postsecondary education to our professional ability
- Make every effort to assist students with financial need
- Be aware of the issues affecting students and advocate their interests at the institutional, state, and federal levels
- Support efforts to encourage students to aspire to and plan for education beyond high school
- Educate students and families through quality consumer information
- Respect the dignity and protect the privacy of students, and ensure the confidentiality of student records and personal circumstances
- Ensure equity by applying all need analysis formulas consistently across the institution's full population of student financial aid applicants
- Provide services that do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age or economic status
- Recognize the need for professional development and continuing education opportunities
- Promote the free expression of ideas and opinions, and foster respect for diverse viewpoints within the profession
- Commit to the highest level of ethical behavior and refrain from conflict of interest or the perception thereof and
- Maintain the highest level of professionalism reflecting a commitment to the goals of Erie Community College and student financial aid administrators.

### **Code of Conduct for Institutional Financial Aid Professionals**

An institutional financial aid professional is expected to always maintain exemplary standards of professional conduct in all aspects of carrying out his or her responsibilities, specifically including all dealings with any entities involved in any manner in student financial aid, regardless of whether such entities are involved in a government sponsored, subsidized, or regulated activity. In so doing, the institutional financial aid professional shall:

- Refrain from taking any action for his or her personal benefit
- Refrain from taking any action he or she believes is contrary to law, regulation, or the best interest of the students and parents he or she serves
- Ensure that information he or she provides is accurate, unbiased, and does not reflect any preference arising from actual or potential personal gain
- Be objective in making decisions and advising his or her institution regarding relationships with any entity involved in any aspect of student financial aid
- Refrain from soliciting or accepting anything of other than nominal value from any entity (other than an institution of higher education or a governmental entity such as the U. S. Department of Education) involved in the making, holding, consolidating or processing of any student loans, including anything of value (including reimbursement of expenses) for serving on an advisory body or as part of a training activity of or sponsored by any such entity; and
- Disclose to his or her institution, in such manner as his or her institution may prescribe, any involvement with or interest in any entity involved in any aspect of student financial aid.

The Erie Community College's Office of Financial Aid adheres to the professional standards of conduct.. This is particularly crucial in our commitment to ensure transparency in our administration of student financial aid programs and to avoid any conflicts of interest.

**In compliance with the requirements of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (H.R. 4137) as signed into law on August 14, 2008 the above is the Code of Conduct regarding student loans and all other financial aid for the Office of Financial Aid at Erie Community College.**