

Somerset Community College Financial Aid Department

Statement of Ethical Principles

Somerset Community College provides that the primary goal of the institutional financial aid professional is to help students achieve their educational potential by providing appropriate financial resources. To this end, this statement provides that the financial aid professional shall:

Be committed to removing financial barriers for those who wish to pursue postsecondary learning.

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, as early as the elementary grades, 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.

Maintain the highest level of professionalism, reflecting a commitment to the goals of Somerset Community College.

Code of Conduct for Somerset Community College Financial Aid Professionals

Any Somerset Community College 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 doing so, a financial aid professional should:

Refrain from taking any action for his/her personal benefit

Refrain from taking any action he/she believes is contrary to law, regulation, or the best interests of the students and parents he/she serves.

Ensure that the information he/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/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.

Disclose to Somerset Community College, in such manner as Somerset Community College may prescribe, any involvement with or interest in any entity involved in any aspect of student financial aid.

These principles should apply throughout the administration of the programs for which the financial aid professional is responsible, including, but not limited to, FFELP.

There should never be any difference between “ethical” and “best” practices. The ethical practice is the best practice. When a practice or policy arises that appears in conflict with these principles, it is the obligation of the financial aid professional to bring this to the attention of those responsible within his/her institution, and to seek a resolution consistent with these principles.