Standard Eleven: Integrity
Description

Ethical Standards in Management
As a public institution of higher education, Eastern Connecticut State University is bound in the management of its affairs and dealings with students, faculty, staff, external agencies and organizations, and the general public by state and federal statutes. Connecticut General Statutes CGS 1-83 (Ethics Statute) and the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act inform Eastern’s management and administration, and the University is bound, as well, by the provisions of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. The Connecticut State University Ethics Statement was developed pursuant to Section 1-83 of the Connecticut General Statutes and is included in the Faculty Handbook.

Workshops for faculty and staff on compliance with FERPA and the state Ethics Statute are conducted periodically by the Executive Vice President. Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act training is required of all staff members with access to student banking and credit card information, including staff in Financial Aid, Admissions, Accounts Payable, the Bursar’s office, Accounting, the Office of the Controller, Card Services, Information Technology, Institutional Advancement, Payroll, Purchasing, Fiscal Affairs, the Registrar’s office, and the offices of the Vice President of Finance and Administration and of the Executive Vice President. Compliance is monitored by the Office of Human Resources. A Financial Aid Code of Conduct was approved by the CSU BOT in 2007.

Standards of conduct in research are overseen by the university’s Research Advisory Council (Committee on the use of Humans Subjects in Research). Together with the Grants Officer, the Council enforces the University’s Policy on Responsible Conduct of Research. In April 2008 a Policy And Procedures For Review Of Alleged Misconduct In Research And Other Scholarly And Creative Activities was passed by the University Senate to ensure that faculty members have a set of clear guidelines for behavior. The Conflict of Interest (Financial Disclosure) Policy, posted at the Grants Office web site, addresses potential financial conflicts. The Office of Fiscal Affairs Accounting and Grants Unit oversees all grant transactions with the goal of “maintaining the integrity of the University's financial data by assuring transactions are processed and recorded properly, efficiently and in accordance with state-mandated guidelines and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).”

Oversight of Board of Trustee Guidelines on Faculty Consulting is by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Reports on compliance are reviewed by state auditors. Faculty are reminded annually about the need to comply with BOT policies on Faculty Consulting and Faculty-Authored Materials. An appointed committee oversees compliance with BOT policies on Faculty-Authored Materials.

Fair and Equitable Relations with Constituencies
Collective bargaining agreements inform the administration of its ethical obligations to faculty and staff.

The University Catalog describes standards for admission, details educational policies and procedures, and outlines students’ rights under the Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. The catalog is supplemented by Eastern's Student Handbook, which details the requirements, policies, regulations and procedures that govern Eastern’s relations with students, consistent with FERPA and the CSU Code of Conduct. The Handbook has links to Judicial Policies and Information, the Policy on Academic Misconduct, and the Policy on Appeal by a Student for a Change in a Final Grade.

Eastern’s library staff maintains a web page related to academic honesty, which students are introduced to during Information Literacy sessions. The library’s web site contains links to information about Copyright and Avoiding Plagiarism and includes a page entitled Plagiarism: A Guide for ECSU Students.
Guidelines in all of these documents ensure that educational policies and procedures are equitably applied to all students.

**Free Pursuit and Dissemination of Knowledge**

CSU-AAUP (Article 4.2) and State University Organization of Administrative Faculty (SUOAF) (Article 8) collective bargaining agreements include articles that protect academic freedom. The Faculty Handbook notes that questions of intellectual property in inventions and marketable discoveries are governed by CGS 10a-98 through CGS 10a-98f, except as provided by BOT/CSU/AAUP Agreement, Article 10.15 and Appendix E.

The Connecticut State University Student Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook states that, like other academic institutions, “[CSU campuses] exist for the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, the development of students and the general well-being of society. In line with this purpose, the university has the duty to protect the freedoms of inquiry and expression and furthermore has the responsibility to encourage all of its members in developing a capacity for critical judgment in their sustained and independent search for truth.”

**Charter and Accreditation**

Eastern’s academic programs are accredited by the Connecticut Board of Governors of Higher Education according to Connecticut General Statue 10a-3 Regulations for Licensure and Accreditation of Institutions and Programs of Higher Learning. Page 8 of the Eastern Catalog states that Eastern is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

**Nondiscriminatory Policies and Diversity**

Eastern Connecticut State University adheres to all federal, state, and CSU policies related to affirmative action, equity and diversity, and non-discrimination. Eastern is committed to educational access, at a reasonable cost, for all students with academic potential. The University’s catalog affirms Eastern’s resolve to foster diversity in the student body and in the University’s faculty and staff, as outlined in the Compliance Statement and the CSU Pluralism Statement.

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions and Enrollment Management and the Graduate Division attempt to ensure that the student population is ethnically, economically, and geographically diverse. Efforts to promote diversity include the Dual Enrollment Initiative, the STEP-CAP program, and Targeted Academic Advising; designated personnel are assigned to provide services to first-generation college students, students from low-income families, and students of color. Several organizations exist on campus to foster an atmosphere that respects and supports people of diverse characteristics and backgrounds. These include the Women’s Center, the Intercultural Center, the West Indian Club, Abigayle, the Pride Room and others.

The Office of Equity and Diversity advises the President and the University community on hiring procedures, affirmative action planning, civil rights, and equity policies. This office is responsible for ensuring the University’s compliance with all federal and state laws, including Title VII and Title IX of the Civil Rights Act, state employment and affirmative action laws (including regulations outlined in CGS Secs. 46a-68-31 to 46a-68-74), the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Family and Medical Leave Act. As a unit of the Connecticut State University system, Eastern also enforces the CSU Policy Regarding Racism and Acts of Intolerance. The Office of Equity and Diversity provides monitoring and programming to ensure compliance with all applicable policies by all University personnel.

The Director of Equity and Diversity serves as the University’s affirmative action officer, coordinates training sessions on diversity and sexual harassment, provides affirmative action guidelines, and serves as campus coordinator for the Americans with Disabilities Act.
The University prepares an annual affirmative action plan that describes its goals and related procedures for hiring and advancement. The Director of Equity and Diversity serves on the president's staff and informs the staff and all other University officials of affirmative action goals and developments in affirmative action law. The office ensures through its Procedures for Conducting Affirmative Action Searches that all searches are conducted in a manner consistent with institutional goals of equity and diversity and in compliance with legal mandates.

The Office of Equity and Diversity contracts with consultants to provide training on sexual harassment prevention for University staff and students and for investigating complaints of sexual harassment and discrimination. Eastern's policy on Discrimination and Sexual Harassment is published in the Faculty Handbook and the Employee Handbook, and the Office advises complainants that they also have a right to file a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the U.S. Department of Labor, or any other agency that enforces laws concerning discrimination in employment. The Student Handbook explains that claims of discrimination or harassment by students will be investigated by the Office of Student Affairs according to the Guidelines for Student Rights and Responsibilities as outlined in the Student Handbook.

The Director of Equity and Diversity serves as campus coordinator for the Americans with Disabilities Act. Eastern’s Guidelines for Reasonable Accommodations for People with Disabilities is posted at the Office of Equity and Diversity web site. The office advises staff with disabilities, maintains files on staff, makes recommendations for accommodations for employees when necessary, and handles complaints from students and employees. Provision of these services for students is coordinated by the Director of Accessibility Services. The Office of Accessibility Services produces a Faculty Handbook that serves as a guide for providing accommodations. ECSU complies with the Family and Medical Leave Act and informs its employees of their rights under that act via the Employee Handbook.

For the last two years the Office of Equity and Diversity has led in the administration of a campus climate survey and development of a Comprehensive Diversity Plan, one of 18 initiatives approved as part of the 2008-2013 University Strategic Plan. The first step in implementation of the plan was the creation of a Diversity Council. This was accomplished in Spring 2010. The Council will begin work in Fall 2010.

Complaints and Grievance Procedures
Procedures for the fair resolution of complaints and grievances are described in the Student Handbook for students and the collective bargaining agreements for employees, respectively. The University has in place the necessary mechanisms to implement these procedures. Mechanisms include hearing officers for student appeals, relevant senate committees, and other processes required by collective bargaining agreements.

The Student Handbook includes information on the Campus Parking Appeal Board, Instructional Rights and Responsibilities, Procedures for Students with Disabilities to Appeal for Modifications to Eastern’s Academic Requirements, procedures related to charges of Academic Misconduct and Policy on Appeal by a Student for a Change in a Final Grade. Each employee bargaining unit’s collective bargaining agreement outlines its own procedures; procedures for SUOAF and AAUP employees are outlined in Articles 21 and 15, respectively, of those units’ agreements.

Conferences, Workshops and Institutes
Eastern sponsors a number of conferences and arranges for use of facilities by external groups. Conferences are sponsored by an on-campus organization with the approval of the Office of Student Affairs or the Office of Academic Affairs. External groups such as Girls State, Boys State and the
Advanced Placement Institute are allowed access to facilities when their needs can be met. These arrangements are evaluated and then conducted through the School of Continuing Education.

Assessment of Ethical Policies and Procedures
Periodic assessment of the university's ethical policies and the mechanisms by which they are enforced occurs through several mechanisms, including negotiation of collective bargaining agreements, resolution of grievances filed under those agreements, ongoing senate committee reviews, and widespread participation in the University Senate, including membership from administrative and teaching faculty, students, and administration. Eastern updates its policies and procedures in response to changes in state statutes, Board of Trustees resolutions, and CSU policies.

Appraisal

Ethical Standards in Management
Governing statutes, regulations, collective bargaining agreements, and BOT policies support a culture of high expectations for integrity and ethical behavior. Audit findings in all areas have been favorable and complaints related to unethical behavior rare.

The Research Advisory Council (Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research; CUHSR) has played an important role in promoting ethical standards in research by faculty and students. Guidelines for ethical research have been developed, and a clear and timely process has been implemented to ensure that all appropriate safeguards are in place to protect human and animal subjects. Members of the Research Advisory Council are appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who acts as the president's designee in all matters of academic research on campus. The CUHSR carefully reviews protocol applications with approximately 80% being approved as submitted; the balance are returned to applicants with guidelines for revision of the proposed protocol.

In response to a finding in 2006 that personnel being charged to a grant were not meeting requirements for time and effort, the Office of Fiscal Affairs, the Grants Office, the Executive Vice President, and the Office of Academic Affairs closely monitor grant transactions and salary charges.

Fair and Equitable Relations with Constituencies
Eastern’s policies and procedures are applied equitably and provide adequate guidance for faculty and staff in dealings with students. Policies related to academic honesty are currently being reviewed to ensure that students have adequate opportunity for appeal. The University responds to formal and informal appeals quickly. The policy on refunds following medical withdrawal were reviewed and revised recently in response to a complaint. Policies on course repeats for graduate students are currently under review. Recent changes in housing assignment policies, procedures for advisement, and academic misconduct procedures have been implemented to ensure fairness.

Questions about intellectual property in the context of online courses continue. A system-level committee is addressing this issue.

Free Pursuit and Dissemination of Knowledge
As noted in the Faculty Chapter, Eastern has had no case of a violation of academic freedom upheld by grievance in the last ten years.

Charter and Accreditation
Eastern continues to be subject to Connecticut Board of Governors of Higher Education requirements for all academic programs.
Nondiscriminatory Policies and Diversity

Policies and procedures in place at Eastern effectively support a commitment to advancing social justice and equity by exercising affirmative action to remove all discriminatory barriers to equal employment opportunity, admissions, and upward mobility. This commitment is evident in the inclusion of the Comprehensive Diversity Plan as one of 18 initiatives in the strategic plan. A campus climate survey was conducted in 2008-2009 with initial results pointing to generally favorable assessments on three statements: “Eastern is a diverse community;” “The leadership at Eastern fosters respect for diversity on campus;” and “The climate in the classroom/work environment is accepting of who I am.” Additional evidence of the commitment to equity and diversity is the level of diversity in faculty and administration as detailed in Tables 10a through 10d in the State of Connecticut’s Strategic Plan to Ensure Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Connecticut Public Higher Education 2009. Chapter 5 notes that Eastern leads its COPLAC peers in the diversity of its faculty.

Eastern’s commitment to the goal of ensuring that all students can enjoy full participation in our community life and learning has been accomplished through providing access and reasonable accommodations as appropriate through the Office of AccessAbility Services (OAS). The office is well-staffed and can quickly respond to most student needs.

Eastern’s policy of no tolerance for sexual harassment, sexual assault, or violence in the workplace is effectively communicated to the community through campus publications, as well as through collaborative efforts of the Eastern Campus Police, the Office of Equity and Diversity, and the Office of Student Affairs. The Office of Equity and Diversity, in collaboration with the Women’s Center and the Office of Human Resources, conducts or sponsors related workshops for faculty and staff. Shortages in staffing, however, have prevented these offices from offering workshops on sexual harassment as often as planned.

A continuing commitment to equity and diversity at Eastern requires ongoing enforcement of policies and procedures, as well as community engagement through programs and community activities. Support for Eastern’s commitment includes programs supported by the Housing Office, Office of Student Affairs, and the faculty. The Unity Center (which had coordinated programs throughout the year on topics concerning ethnicity, race, and gender orientation operating out of a house on High Street) was reconfigured into an Intercultural Center and relocated to the Student Center. This move has increased the visibility of the Center, which has become a hub of activity for all students, in particular students of color and international students. The University Hour program has been used to offer programs that celebrate the diversity of the campus and society. Similarly, academic departments and administrative units sponsor a number of innovative programs and activities that take into account Eastern’s diverse campus. Eastern’s activities to promote and celebrate diversity range from the annual Ella T. Grasso Distinguished Service Award and the Martin Luther King Jr. Award to the weekly Thursday night dinner offered by Psychology professor Margaret Letterman. What started as a small event for students in the Organization for Latin American Students has become a standing-room only tradition for many students, faculty, and staff. Academic programs are, moreover, encouraged to incorporate diverse perspectives in courses and programs.

Complaints and Grievance Procedures

The process for the resolution of grievances brought by employees is standardized through collective bargaining agreements. Grievances are rare and are generally settled at low levels. Students have not expressed widespread concern or dissatisfaction with policies and procedures.
Where concerns are raised, Eastern attempts to be responsive. While Eastern has widely disseminated policies related to student appeals of grades, misconduct (including academic misconduct), and appeal of misconduct charges, recent incidents across the four CSU campuses have spurred an attempt to refine the policies. Eastern does not have a designated ombudsman position, and students have reported difficulty in getting guidance on how to proceed when they have a complaint. This has been ameliorated with the filling of the vacant Dean of Students position. Existing policies are adhered to closely and procedures are implemented consistently according to published guidelines, but students express the need for more support and guidance in how to initiate procedures. The CSU BOT has recommended revisions to the Code of Conduct and that changes in Academic Misconduct procedures be considered. System-wide proposals are being developed. A key recommendation is to allow student appeal on limited ground of an academic misconduct charge that is upheld by the Academic Misconduct Committee. The appeal would be considered by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The proposed changes will be considered in Fall 2010.

University policies are generally available on the Eastern Web site with a diminishing number available in print format.

Conferences, Workshops and Institutes
With limited facilities for conferences and institutes, Eastern is limited to bringing to campus events that will draw up to only about 150 participants. These have included CSU conferences on assessment, research, and computing. Summer institutes sponsored by external groups have been managed effectively.

Assessment of Ethical Policies and Procedures
Audits, compliance reviews, and records of grievance and appeal procedures indicate that existing procedures for evaluation, dissemination and enforcement of ethical policies and procedures are adequate.

Projection

Ethical Standards in Management
Policies and statutes regulating ethical behavior will continue to be enforced with increased training offered by the Office of the Executive Vice President, the Office of Human Resources, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs. In 2008, plans were developed for incorporating this training into orientations for new faculty and staff to which current employees would be invited. Two workshops were offered, but current limits on hiring have curtailed offerings of orientations. As hiring increases, orientations will be more frequent. In the meantime, workshops and training opportunities will be offered to current employees.

Ethical conduct in research is increasingly important as both faculty and students increase activity in this area. Demands on CUHSR will increase. In light of this, the chair of the committee has been awarded reassigned time for this role and it is projected that this practice will continue. The role of the Grants Officer and the Office of Fiscal Affairs in ensuring compliance with requirements of grants will expand and additional staffing in the Grants Office will be needed to support increased grant activity.

Fair and Equitable Relations with Constituencies
Eastern’s Academic Misconduct Policy will be reviewed and revised before January 2011 by the University Senate. A revised CSU Code of Conduct for Students will be adopted in Fall 2010. In the near future the Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs and of Student Affairs will develop a proposal for creation of an ombudsman position, although this has been addressed through the re-filling of the vacant Dean of Students position.
No changes related to faculty or staff are anticipated other than those that result from changes in collective bargaining agreements.

**Free Pursuit and Dissemination of Knowledge**
Eastern will continue to maintain conditions that promote free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. As noted in the chapter on Faculty, Eastern has a record of protecting and promoting faculty members’ academic freedom.

**Charter and Accreditation**
Eastern will continue to obtain approval for new or significantly modified academic programs from the Connecticut Board of Governors of Higher Education.

**Nondiscriminatory Policies and Diversity**
Although Eastern has been successful in attracting and retaining a diverse faculty and staff, recruiting and employment practices will need to change to ensure that these successes are maintained. Streamlined procedures for faculty hiring have been implemented to reduce the chance that attractive hires are lost due to time lags. These procedures will be continually monitored and revised. This concern is reflected in the Academic Plan. Similarly, creative strategies for attracting a diverse student body will be implemented by the Office of Admissions. These will include expansion of the Dual Enrollment Initiative as resources allow and continuing the STEP-CAP program. Student Affairs will continue to support clubs, organizations, and activities that engage all students, but particularly students of color. The Academic Services Center, the Intercultural Center, and the deans will enhance their collaborations to ensure that gaps in retention and graduation rates across ethnic and racial groups decrease. Strategies to accomplish this goal are outlined in the draft Nash report, available in the workroom in Folder 11. Finally, implementation of the approved Diversity Plan will support development of curriculum, procedures, and a culture that promote diversity.

**Complaints and Grievance Procedures**
As noted above, changes in the Academic Misconduct Policy and changes in the Student Code of Conduct are anticipated. These policies and all other policies will continue to be enforced fairly and equitably. Grievance procedures in collective bargaining agreements are not likely to be revised.

**Conferences, Workshops and Institutes**
Staff shortages and space constraints will limit Eastern’s sponsorship of large on-campus events. While the University will continue to invite CSU conferences to campus, it is unlikely that additional scholarly conferences can be accommodated during the academic year. Summer workshops and institutions will continue to be carefully screened and managed by the School of Continuing Education to ensure that appropriate services and facilities can be provided.

**Assessment of Ethical Policies and Procedures**
New information technologies will enable Eastern to publish, update, and disseminate information more widely and to specific groups. Maintaining accurate information and removing dated material from Web pages is an ongoing challenge. Guidelines and procedures regarding plagiarism and ethical use of intellectual property in online courses will be evaluated by a new Online Learning Committee.

**Institutional Effectiveness**
Eastern operates within a framework of federal and state statutes, Board resolutions, collective bargaining agreements, and University policies that promote high ethical standards. The campus has a culture of
strict compliance with regulations and a history of dealing fairly and equitably with all constituencies. Policies and procedures are modified as needed.