



Administrative Policy Professional Standards and Workplace Expectations

Approved By: President

Date Approved: December 6, 2023

Effective Date: December 6, 2023

- 1. Summary:** This policy sets a standard for new employees and serves as a reminder for all employees of their role and responsibility in supporting a productive and healthy workplace.
- 2. Rationale:** The purpose of this policy is to ensure a workplace that is supportive of the College's mission by providing institutional excellence that reflects the College's values.
- 3. Entities Affected:** faculty, staff
- 4. Definitions:** not applicable
- 5. Policy:** Regardless of the role each employee plays at Criswell College, the work they do is very important and ultimately touches the lives of many more than just the student or fellow employee standing before them. Every day, Criswell employees interact with a diverse range of individuals and represent the College in each conversation. Through the professional and successful interactions Criswell faculty and staff conduct, the College finds its success and makes good progress toward accomplishing its institutional goals.

Professional Conduct

a. Customer Service

- Employees should know the needs of their customers (students, potential students, fellow employees, alumni, donors, vendors, etc.).
- Employees should be prepared to provide exemplary service to all customers.
- Employees should respond to all email and phone requests for assistance and other inquiries by noon the next business day.
- Employees (or if they are absent or unavailable, another employee in their department) should meet with every customer and either assist them then or reschedule a time suitable to meet with the customer.
- Employees should offer helpful advice and be prepared to problem-solve in order to provide every customer with a way to move forward.

b. Courtesy and Teamwork

- Employees should be kind, professional, and respectful to all customers, co-workers, supervisors, external vendors, and the public.
- Employees should refrain from actions or language constituting workplace harassment or bullying.
- Employees should value diversity and value each other.
- Employees should share information and good ideas to improve policies, procedures, and outcomes.
- Employees should celebrate others' achievements and promote the success of their department and the College.
- Employees should be receptive to constructive criticism from customers.

- Employees should be open to input from co-workers and supervisors.
- Employees should be willing to seek help when needed and give help when asked.

c. Responsibility and Confidentiality

- Employees should meet commitments and deadlines.
- Employees should abide by all College policies as they complete their tasks.
- Employees should develop dependable work habits and be “work focused” during the workday.
- Employees should take care of personal business outside of business hours or during the lunch break.
- Employees should keep a neat and orderly workspace. In order to maintain a uniform workplace environment, no excess signs that can be seen from the hallways (as a customer walks by) should be placed outside employee doors or in their offices. If an employee needs a particular sign, they should make a request through the proper channels and have a sign created using the College-wide template. Workspaces may be minimally personalized but should also reflect the style and sense of the College.
- Employees should be familiar with FERPA policies and other confidentiality policies and abide by them.
- Employees should maintain confidential information in a manner that safeguards its privacy.

d. Safety

- Employees should ensure they are aware of the inclement weather policy and the disaster preparedness plan.
- Employees should follow all safety directives of the College’s Chief of Police and Security staff.
- Employees should ask their supervisor if they are unsure of the safest and most appropriate course of action in a given situation.

Time and Attendance

a. Attendance

- Employees should be at their workstation and ready to work when the scheduled workday begins.
- Employees should set up an “out of office” message for their emails when they will be gone for more than one business day and set up a message on their voicemail when they will be gone for more than two business days. This message should include the date at which the employee will return and whom to contact during the employees’ absence.
- Employees should seek permission from their supervisor for time off, notify their immediate co-workers of their absence, and obtain coverage of their office if necessary.

b. Business Hours

- Employees should follow official College business hours and ensure their offices are open during those hours. Supervisors, in consultation with the associated divisional Vice President, may assign office hours that extend beyond normal business hours in order to fulfill the mission of the organization and requirements of the job position.
- Employees should have written approval from their supervisor before using a different work schedule and this non-standard work schedule should be filed with the HR office.
- Employees should discuss with their supervisor by what method the employee reports an illness or situation that prevents them from reporting to work.
- VPs should notify their co-workers (assistants) when they will be away from the office during business hours and provide an estimated time of return.
- Employees should take no more than an hour’s lunch break sometime between the hours of 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. Exceptions should be approved by a supervisor.

Communication

a. Person to Person

- Employees should be open and honest. Positive and professional adult-to-adult conversations are essential to earning the trust of the College’s customers, co-workers, supervisors, trustees, and vendors.
- Employees should greet people with a smile and a kind word. The phone should be answered with a friendly voice and employees should always consider how their communication will be received.
- Employees should not engage in gossip or pass along rumors but should go directly to the person in question with their concern or bring it to their supervisor when appropriate.

b. Email

- Employees should use appropriate business-like language and refrain from slang to ensure the message is understood by its recipient.
- Employees should use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation in their email messages. They should proofread emails and documents for errors and not rely on spellcheck alone.
- Employees should consistently proofread (or have someone else proofread) their emails to ensure that the tone does not come across as disrespectful, aggressive, or demanding, and emails should never be used to express anger or annoyance.
- Employees should not capitalize entire words, as it is considered shouting, and font color and size should not be changed for emphasis (unless it is a heading). If emphasis is necessary employees should bold, underline, or italicize particular parts of a message.
- Employees should use a relevant subject title for each message.
- Employees should gain approval from their vice presidents before emailing mass communications to large groups such as students, staff, or faculty. Once approval of the subject matter and content has been approved by their vice president, an employee may send out the email. All prayer requests or notifications on deaths of family members or friends of the College will be sent out by the designated staff member chosen by the Executive Cabinet.

c. Phone and Technology Use

- Employees should refrain from taking numerous personal phone calls during business hours.
- Employees should refrain from repeatedly checking devices (such as cell phones, tablets, etc.) for messages during business hours or when meeting with an individual or attending a group meeting and should keep their devices on silent during meetings to minimize distractions.

6. Procedure:

- Implementation:** not applicable
- Responsibility for Compliance:** Chief Financial Officer
- Notification:** This policy will be posted on the College’s website and provided to new employees during their orientation to the College.
- Policy Review:** This policy will be regularly reviewed according to the College’s policy review procedure.

For the Office of the President only:

Policy version: 3.0

Policy number: 2.034

Related policies:

Policy History

Version 1.0	December 18, 2014
Version 2.0	September 28, 2015
Version 3.0	December 6, 2023