



APPENDIX A

STATEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY-TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM

STANDARDS OF INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE

[Motivation](#) - [Interpersonal Skills](#) - [Knowledge Base](#) - [Application of Knowledge Base](#)

The qualities and characteristics of effective faculty who demonstrate instructional excellence are described in four categories: (1) intrinsic motivation and the ability to motivate others, (2) interpersonal skills, (3) knowledge base and (4) skill at applying that knowledge.

Assumptions

Three assumptions provide a framework upon which the standards of instructional excellence are built.

(1) All Connecticut Community-Technical College faculty are dedicated to the teaching/learning process. Imparting knowledge and skills, providing a framework and strategy on how best to think through complex problems, preparing students for future educational and professional challenges and assuring student success are the primary goals of a faculty member.

(2) This description of instructional excellence is not intended to be a job description. Faculty who have demonstrated an instructional approach in the classroom which is judged to be of an excellent quality also make significant contributions to the college outside of class. These activities include the development of new curricula and courses, taking an active role on college committees and task forces, advisement of students, and community involvement.

(3) These standards of instructional excellence are not designed as an evaluation instrument. The qualities of instructional excellence have been written with the belief that these faculty characteristics promote student success. It is anticipated that the evaluation system would be based on these standards.

MOTIVATION

Excellent Connecticut Community-Technical College faculty are dedicated to their profession in higher education and to the mission of their respective institution. Their greatest concern is for student learning. Faculty are highly motivated to achieve excellence and to strive to motivate students to reach their educational and personal goals. Excellent faculty are enthusiastic about their work. Enthusiasm is considered by faculty, administration and students to be a primary motivational factor. Faculty manifest this enthusiasm and inspiration in a variety of ways. They communicate their deep abiding interest in their particular discipline and the satisfaction they themselves have

gained through broadening their knowledge base. Faculty demonstrate this enthusiasm in their profession by eagerly working in a personal way with students, prospective students and former students to help them achieve their individual goals. Faculty build in students a sense of accomplishment when students demonstrate their learning. They instill in students the desire and self-confidence needed to expand and improve their learning. In short, faculty communicate the values and satisfactions to be gained in the teaching/learning activity. Excellent faculty set challenging individual and collective performance goals for themselves. These goals address not only learning activities, but also other specific academic responsibilities and areas of professional involvement. They continually strive to increase their currency in their field and to perfect skills, practices and procedures. In so doing, they serve as positive role models for students and colleagues. Excellent faculty also set challenging performance goals for students. Faculty communicate to students that progress is not made without a substantial cost in time, effort and perseverance. They encourage students to overcome their limitations and to reach beyond their current achievements in an attempt to fulfill their potential.

Excellent faculty are committed to education as a profession. They value their work highly because of the intrinsic satisfaction they derive from knowing that they have helped students to learn and succeed in their personal and professional lives. Regardless of circumstances, commitment to their students does not waiver.

Excellent faculty, who are committed to the mission and goals of their respective institution, project a positive attitude about students' ability to learn. Outstanding faculty have a strong commitment to the open admissions policy; they believe that students with diverse needs can learn and as a result challenge them accordingly. This belief is a motivating force for students and faculty.

Excellent faculty display behavior consistent with professional ethics. They are aware that a failure to commit to professional standards weakens the profession. They guard against behavior that may distract from the teaching/learning process. These faculty maintain the most professional and ethical relationships with students and colleagues.

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Excellent faculty in the Connecticut Community-Technical College system interact actively and positively with students and colleagues. Their interpersonal skills are evident in their interaction with all members of the college community, local citizens and businesses, civic and governmental representatives.

Excellent faculty treat all individuals with respect. This respect characterizes all of their dealings with students, especially when providing corrective feedback. This professional attitude is critical when they interact with any member of the community.

Excellent faculty respect diverse talents. They recognize that students have different learning styles and bring different talents and backgrounds to the teaching/learning process. Consequently, they encourage students to develop their individual learning abilities. Excellent faculty work collaboratively with colleagues. They know the importance of bringing their collective strengths to deal with departmental, campus and college issues in order to achieve excellence in the teaching/learning process. Faculty collaborative efforts serve as a model for students inside and outside of the classroom. Excellent faculty are available to students. They realize that student contact with faculty is critical to the teaching/learning process. Faculty provide students ample opportunities for such contact and encourage students to meet and interact with them.

Excellent faculty listen attentively to what students say. They are sensitive to non-verbal and verbal cues and are careful in their analysis of a student's written work. They pay attention to student feedback in critiquing and improving their own performance. Excellent faculty are responsive to students' needs. They realize that students, in addition to requiring academic support, often need

encouragement and individual attention as they try to adjust to the varied demands in their lives. These faculty can provide legitimate and appropriate responses to students' needs. They are careful to maintain a professional approach in all of their interactions with students.

Excellent faculty are fair in their evaluations of students. They maintain objectivity and follow carefully the evaluation criteria provided in the syllabus at the beginning of each term. They do not allow subjective opinions to interfere with evaluations of students.

Excellent faculty present ideas clearly. They are good transmitters as well as good receivers of messages. Faculty and students agree that communicating ideas clearly is one of the most important interpersonal skills.

Finally, excellent faculty create a climate which is conducive to learning. They know that the atmosphere which surrounds learning can have a significant impact on learning. These faculty view situations and events in perspective, taking themselves and their subject matter with appropriate seriousness, but respecting the fact that there are important disciplines and interests in life other than theirs. In some cases, that sense of balance and perspective may be manifested in a sense of humor. In other cases, tolerance, open-mindedness, acceptance, approachability and sensitivity may be the positive characteristics that create the atmosphere conducive to learning.

KNOWLEDGE BASE

Excellent faculty possess a broad range of intellectual skills and knowledge necessary for superior performance. They have a thorough understanding not only of their own work areas and disciplines, but also of how students learn and develop. This foundation is essential in the context of the open admissions policy of the college.

Fundamental to excellence is that faculty are knowledgeable about their particular discipline. This knowledge includes substantive content as well as keen insight into the roles they play in their departments and on campus as a whole. These faculty share their knowledge with one another in a collegial effort to achieve an excellent teaching/learning process at the college. There is no substitute for faculty members' having an in-depth knowledge of their field in order to transfer knowledge to students. Without this strong base, faculty are ill-prepared to foster student learning, even if their motivational techniques and interpersonal skills are sound.

Excellent faculty are knowledgeable about how students learn. They understand established principles of learning which serve as a foundation for the work they do with the students they advise, teach, and academically support. This knowledge encompasses the heterogeneous nature of our campus.

Excellent faculty integrate current subject matter into their work. Students should have the information and the results of research which reflect the latest work in the field. These faculty update their professional skills, knowledge base, and resources to make their instruction meaningful, timely and refreshing to students.

Excellent faculty provide perspectives that include a respect for diverse views. They provide a variety of theories and interpretations that represent the best thinking in their field. Moreover, they demonstrate to their students an openness and willingness to communicate and share differing views. These faculty are particularly sensitive to the varied needs of the entire student body who represent a wide variety of cultures and academic traditions. Excellent faculty do their work in a well-prepared and well-organized manner. Faculty have clear learning goals and well planned activities which enable students to master content material and to process and apply information. Faculty proceed logically and use time effectively so that students learn as much as possible. Faculty provide assistance to students in a clear manner so that they know and use the College's educational systems effectively.

APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE BASE

Excellent faculty apply major principles of learning into practice as they carry out their responsibilities related to the teaching/learning process. These faculty continually seek ways to meet the individual needs of students and to help students learn effectively and efficiently. Excellent faculty provide students with alternative ways of learning. This implies that faculty understand different learning styles and analyze the effectiveness of various instructional strategies. Faculty match students' individual learning styles by employing a multi-modal learning environment. Faculty help students to discover ways of learning and provide assistance to students as they develop their educational plans.

Excellent faculty stimulate intellectual curiosity. They develop challenging presentations and activities while maintaining an appropriate level of complexity. Faculty create an interactive learning environment in which students are active not passive learners. Excellent faculty encourage independent thinking. Students develop an independence in acquiring, analyzing and accessing knowledge in the process of assuming more responsibility for their own learning. The faculty member's role becomes less of a communicator of information and more that of a mentor who guides students in the pursuit of learning. These outstanding faculty understand that students must develop independent thinking in order to make the most productive use of their talents and abilities.

Excellent faculty encourage students to be analytical listeners. To develop their students' intellectual curiosity, they provide opportunities for students to analyze carefully what they hear. As students listen more carefully and more critically, they will be able to engage in more mature conceptual thinking.

Excellent faculty provide cooperative learning opportunities for students. In recognition of current research on learning, faculty plan learning strategies that promote collaborative study among students. As students understand that learning is properly a collaborative rather than a competitive activity, the entire educational process will be enhanced. Excellent faculty provide constructive feedback to students promptly. They understand that timely feedback which promotes positive action is most useful to students. Excellent faculty give consideration to feedback from students and others. These faculty know the importance of analyzing and evaluating their own performance. This feedback from students, colleagues and observers is welcomed as a positive resource for their own improvement. Excellent faculty use this feedback to make immediate adjustments that improve student learning.

Excellent faculty provide clear and substantial evidence that students have learned. This evidence allows students and faculty to have realistic appraisals of their performance and to know the effectiveness of their work. In order to acquire this evidence, these faculty first establish clear objectives and performance standards. With this positive evidence, excellent faculty can enjoy the professional and personal satisfaction of work well done.

[Return to the FDRP Index](#)