



AQIP PROFILES 2018



AQIP Criterion 2: Integrity – Ethical and Responsible Conduct

Tri-C's Board of Trustees Helps the College Maintain High Standards of Integrity and Conduct

Integrity is critical in higher education, inside and outside the classroom. And at an institution like Cuyahoga Community College, which is supported by taxpayers, that responsibility is only more important.

The job of ensuring that Tri-C is consistent in its policies belongs to the Cuyahoga Community College Board of Trustees, a nine-person body that collaborates with Tri-C President Alex Johnson to ensure that the College fulfills its mission statement:

“To provide high quality, accessible and affordable educational opportunities and services — including university transfer, technical and lifelong learning programs — that promote individual development and improve the overall quality of life in a multicultural community.”

As part of [Tri-C's policies and procedures](#), integrity and ethical conduct are critically important to the fulfillment of the College's mission. Standards and expectations are outlined in the policies and procedures document, available on the College's website, and any update or alteration to those standards must pass a vote of the Board before enactment.

“Changes to the policies and procedures must go before a Board committee for discussion and review first,” said Barb Bell, executive administrative associate in the President's Office. “If it passes the committee phase, then it goes to the full Board for a vote.”

The Board's influential position in enforcement of ethical standards means Board members must be well-versed in topics related to integrity, ethics and personal conduct. It's why College trustees are required to take ethics training on a yearly basis.

“The training can take different forms,” said Bell, who works closely with Ronna McNair, chief of staff, and Kay Jones-Williams, administrative coordinator for the Board of Trustees, in their support of the trustees. “At the annual board retreat, sometimes we'll bring in an outside speaker to talk about emerging topics, how the definition of ethical standards is changing and evolving. Sometimes there are webinars that Board members can attend.”

Uniform enforcement of high ethical standards is a challenge for a College system with many locations across Cuyahoga County and beyond, but it is essential — which is why

the Board and the College make it an ongoing priority. The College's ethical and conduct standards provide part of the foundation that impacts strategic planning, quality assurance and the College's operations.

In short, without Board oversight to maintain high standards of integrity, ethics and conduct, it would be impossible for the College to function as a premier educational resource for the Northeast Ohio community.

"Our Board understands the role it plays in carrying out our mission statement, and the trustees take it seriously," Bell said. "When it comes to laying the groundwork for carrying out our mission statement, there is nothing more important than high ethical standards. The Board is committed to the training and work necessary to maintain those standards at the highest level."

This is the third article in a seven-part series that examines how various programs and people throughout Tri-C each play an important role in meeting the AQIP criteria and, by extension, assist the College in remaining accredited. Keep an eye on your email Inbox for the next four stories, running through Feb. 15.

Published Feb. 2, 2018

[© 1997-2018 Cuyahoga Community College](#)