



Student Loan Code of Conduct

Ethical Principles

All decisions and actions made or taken by any of the Institution's financial aid office employees or any other officers and employees who have contact with guaranty agencies or lenders (for federal or private loans) shall be consistent with the following principles.

Student Choice

Students must be given a genuine, fair, and equal opportunity to choose between all lenders and loans, federal and private, which choice shall not be limited to those lenders or loans made available or recommended by the institution.

Student Interests

The institution must seek to establish relationships with those lenders which offer the best benefits for students (interest rates and fees; payment terms and services).

Avoidance of Conflicts

No director, officer or employee of the institution should have any relationship (director or employee or representative) with any lender or guaranty agency nor accept anything of value, other than token marketing items and nominal conference refreshments. The institution should not accept any service or thing of value from any lender or guaranty agency, other than training for financial aid staff relevant to loan processing, loan processing materials and financial literacy material, emergency staffing services, entrance and exit counseling services conducted under the supervision of a financial aid officer of the institution, and reimbursement of reasonable costs for domestic travel to training conference hosted by lenders and/or guaranty agencies.

Institutional Disclosure

If the institution develops and uses a preferred lender list, the selection process and criteria must be disclosed in writing to students. If any lender or guaranty agency offers to make philanthropic contributions to the institution for institutional aid or student financial assistance, there can be no promise of preferred status or other commitments given in exchange for or because of such contributions.

Student Privacy

All student financial information (about need, resources, loans, and other aid) must be kept confidential and, without written student authorization, not shared with outside parties, other than the United States Department of Education (DOE), state aid agencies, lenders, servicers, and guaranty agencies.

Code of Conduct

All directors, officers, employees, and other representatives of Texas County Technical College are required to comply with each of the following rules in this Code of Conduct for Lender Relationships & Loan ("Code") and to also promptly inform either the institution's ethics officer, legal counsel, or president (as directed by the institution in writing) if they become aware of facts indicating there may have been a violation of the Code.

Prohibited Relationships

No institutional representative shall act as an officer, employee, consultant or sales representative for any guaranty agency or lender.

No financial aid officer or employee of the institution (including any officer of the Institution with responsibility for overseeing the financial aid office) shall serve on the board of directors of a lender, and no other employee, officer and director of the institution shall serve as an uncompensated member of the board of directors of any lender, unless such



individual has confirmed in writing that they will abide by obtained written permission from the ethics officer, legal counsel or president of the institution.

No financial aid officer or employee of the institution shall serve on any advisory board for any guaranty agency or lender, nor shall any other institutional representative serve on such board, unless such service has been approved in writing by the ethics officer, legal counselor, or president of the institution.

Prohibited Investment

No institutional representative shall purchase or accept any stock, bond, or other equitable or legal interest in any guaranty agency or lender, nor any option to acquire such an interest, but this prohibition shall not preclude ownership of units in a mutual fund holding such stocks or bonds.

Prohibited Benefits to Individuals

No institutional representative shall accept any prize, gift, compensation, entertainment (including concert and sporting event tickets), meals, travel cost reimbursement or other benefit. Prohibited benefits does not include promotional items of nominal value, conference meals and refreshments open to all attendees, and reimbursement of reasonable costs for domestic travel to attend conferences or seminars providing training on the administration of loans or to attend advisory board meetings focused on best practices. If any lender or guaranty agency attempts to offer any institutional representative any prohibited benefit, they shall promptly report this to the institutions legal counsel or president and where required, to the state department of education for any state in which the institution maintains a campus.

Prohibited Benefits or Inducements to Institution

The institution shall not accept any payment or benefit of any kind from any guaranty agency or lender, including without limitation, any rebate or share of revenue and any computer software or hardware (at no charge or at below market rates), as consideration for entering a contractual relationship or for placing a lender on a preferred lender list.

The institution shall not accept from any lender any opportunity pool revenue sharing arrangements or similar funding arrangements offered for use in making private loans to higher risk students in exchange for promise or concessions by the institution.

The institution may accept philanthropic contributions from a lender or guaranty agency, only if such contributions are made without any expectation or promise of any preferred status, advantage, recommendation, business volume, or other benefit.

Prohibited Promotions

The institution shall not allow its name, logo, emblem or mascot, or any other words, symbols or photographs readily associated with the institution to be used by any guaranty agency or lender in any advertisement, publication or other communication suggesting that the institution has endorsed loans or services offered or guaranteed by the guaranty agency or lender. The institution shall ensure that all materials provided to students about federal or private educational loans shall prominently identify the name of the lender.

Prohibited Representations and Services

The institution shall not allow any employee, agent, or representative of any lender or guaranty agency to represent themselves to the public, or to otherwise act, as an agent or representative of the institution.

No institutional representative shall represent themselves to the public, or otherwise act, as an agent or representative of any lender or guaranty agency.

The institution generally shall not accept any assistance from a lender or guaranty agency for financial aid office or call center staffing but may accept staffing assistance on a short-term basis in the event of a disaster creating emergency needs; entrance and exit counseling services when supervised by a financial aid officer of the institution; and financial literacy materials not promoting any lender or guaranty agency.



Prohibited Inducement by Institution

The institution shall not offer or provide to any guaranty agency or lender any inducement to secure any business relationship, any kind of loans or scholarships, services, or other benefits. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, any promise of loan volume, preferred status, or any other advantage or benefit.

Preferred Lender Lists

The institution shall comply with the following requirements for any list of preferred federal or private student loan lenders (Lender List) given to students and parents:

1. The Lender List shall include a prominent reminder that students may choose to use a lender not on the list and that the institution is required to process loan documents for any eligible lender selected by students.
2. The institution shall include on the financial aid webpage of its website a prominent reminder that students are not required to use any federal or private lender recommended by the institution and may select any other lender.
3. The Lender List shall clearly disclose the institution's selection process and selection criteria.
4. The criteria for selecting preferred lenders shall emphasize student interests and benefits, competitive rates and high-quality service, along with business reputation, financial strength, and processing capabilities of the lender.
5. Terms offered by preferred lenders must be equally available to all the institution's eligible students.
6. The institution's financial aid staff shall conduct a performance review of its preferred lenders at least once every 12 months and make changes when appropriate.
7. The Lender List shall include comparative information for listed lenders, including interest rates, origination fees and repayment terms, including all information required by the Department of Education Model Disclosure Form for presentation of information required by the federal Truth in Lending Act (TILA).
8. The Lender List shall include information on the maximum amount of federal grant and loan aid available to students.
9. The Lender List shall disclose all types of financial aid that may be available from the Institution.
10. At least three unaffiliated lenders for federal loans and two unaffiliated lenders for private loans shall be listed (periodic reviews of the DOE lender affiliation webpage shall be conducted to determine affiliation status of all listed lenders); if one or more lenders withdraw and fewer than three unaffiliated lenders remain, then the institution shall cease to use a preferred lender list and instead shall only offer contact information for all lenders willing to make loans.
11. If any lender listed is affiliated to another lender on the list, such affiliation shall be disclosed on the list.
12. No lender will be included which has offered any payments or other benefits to the institution to seek preferred status.
13. No lender will be included which is known to sell its loans to another lender but has not disclosed such a relationship.
14. No lender shall be included which offers prizes or other benefits to students for applying for loans.
15. No lender shall be included which makes unsolicited mailing of loan applications to students.

Loan Processing Arrangements

The institution shall not use any software or processing system or practices that create a default arrangement through which a student borrower is automatically referred to any one or more federal or private student lenders, whether any such lenders have been designated by the institution as preferred lenders.

The institution shall not use any financial aid processing or packaging practices that delay certification of borrowers choosing federal or private student loan lenders not on the institution lender list.

Federal and Private Comparisons

If the institution provides students with information on loans from private lenders, it shall provide each student with a separate written reminder of the potential availability of federal student loans and a written comparison of the principal terms of such loans to the principal terms of federal student loans, including eligibility conditions, interest rates, origination fees, and repayment options and terms.



Limitations on Student Information Disclosures

In the absence of a signed authorization from specific students or parents (in the case of minors) or documentation showing that the specific students or parents have filed an application with a specific lender, the institution shall not disclose any information about the financial needs, resources and loan options or considerations of its students to any prospective lender or to any other person or entity, excluding those entities and persons to which disclosure is authorized under FERPA statutory and regulatory provisions.

Preferred Lender List Disclosures

The institution shall annually give written disclosure to the U.S. Secretary of Education and to students about all lenders selected for inclusion on any Preferred Lender List published by the Institution, explaining the reasons why the lenders were selected, identifying the student benefits they provide, and providing the Model Disclosure Form information and if required by state law, shall provide the same written report to any state education department with oversight of the institution.

Publication of Code

A copy of this Code shall be provided at least annually to all employees of the institution. The Code shall be posted on the institution's website and upon request, a paper copy of the Code shall be given to all students either in written mailings or email notice.