

Civility Policy and Procedures

UPPS No. 01.04.07

Issue No. 1

Effective Date: 10/01/2020

Next Review Date: 7/01/2022 (E2Y)

Sr. Reviewer: Chief Diversity Officer

01. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 01.01 The purpose of this policy is to establish an overarching understanding of civility within the Texas State University community (students, faculty, and staff) that incorporates current policies and procedures related to conduct and engagement.
- 01.02 This policy encourages a commitment to a common understanding of civility and is inclusive of definitions based on unique cultural identities related to race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, political affiliation, personal belief system, individual differences, and in support of freedom of expression.
- 01.03 This policy introduces the use of Texas State's core values as a framework for a protocol of intergroup engagement that are identified as appropriate behaviors for members of the Texas State community. This framework is used to recommend and promote behaviors of civility that build on principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion and allow Texas State to be a diverse, equitable, inclusive, safe, and healthy working, learning, and social environment where every individual is treated with civility and respect inclusive of their own individual identities.
- 01.04 This policy establishes a protocol for addressing behavior that is counter to Texas State's core values and engaging in civil behaviors that are conducive to a living and working environment that recognizes differences as an opportunity to learn and grow.
- 01.05 This policy provides resources and information to faculty, staff, and students who have experienced or witnessed incivility or bullying, including counterproductive behaviors that are not conducive, or are counter to values that embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion.

02. COMMITMENT

- 02.01 This policy provides a general overview of preferred individual and community engagement that supports a safe, nurturing, shared space known as Texas State.
- 02.02 As a public institution, civility framed in free expression is encouraged. Texas State supports freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of inquiry, and freedom of dissent, as addressed in the [Texas State University System \(TSUS\) Rules and Regulations, Chapter VII, paragraph 3.3, and](#) is committed to freedom of inquiry and discussion as basic and essential to intellectual development provided such freedoms are exercised in a manner that does not unlawfully derogate the rights of others or interfere with the academic programs and administrative processes of Texas State (see [UPPS No. 07.04.04, External](#)

[Speakers Using University Facilities](#) for more information).

- 02.03 Texas State condemns and prohibits acts of intolerance, hate, bias, and prejudice when manifested in threatening or violent conduct against a person or incitement to imminent violations of law. Texas State is committed to an inclusive education and work environment that provides equal opportunity and access to all qualified persons and to the extent not in conflict with federal or state law, prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, veterans' status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression (see [UPPS No. 04.04.46, Prohibition of Discrimination](#) for more information).
- 02.04 In addition to supporting free speech and prohibiting discrimination, Texas State embraces civility as the willingness to offer and engage in cooperation, embrace diversity, practice inclusion, consider acceptance, demonstrate kindness, be courteous, and practice patience in a tone and manner that embraces all differences.
- 02.05 Texas State embraces communication as a primary catalyst for establishing a climate that is conducive to an intellectual learning environment that provides for disagreement, mutual respect for differing points of view, and a climate of civility that allows for disagreement free of fear of reprisal or revenge. To protect these rights, all members of the Texas State community should act toward each other with civility, mutual respect, integrity, and reason.
- 02.06 This policy is not intended to replace policies that involve discrimination or sexual misconduct.

03. DEFINITIONS

- 03.01 Civility – the demonstration of respect and dignity for oneself and others and involves acting with regard to others (i.e., treating others as we desire to be treated). Civility is a “good faith effort” to engage in a positive manner with even the most critical feedback being delivered in a manner free of malintent and intended to sow good will. Examples of civility may include but are not limited to:
- a. treating others with dignity, courtesy, respect, politeness, and consideration;
 - b. willingness to offer and engage in cooperation, embrace diversity, practice inclusion, consider acceptance;
 - c. demonstrating kindness, being courteous, and practicing patience;
 - d. speaking in tones of voice that are appropriate for the circumstances;
 - e. being respectful of other’s right to express their views, even if there is disagreement; and
 - f. establishing a community interaction that establishes rules of engagement in managing conflict with others in a productive manner rather than one that is confrontational.
- 03.02 Incivility – a broad set of subtle or overt singular or continuous behaviors that are intentional or unintentional, directed at an individual or group of individuals that results in creating an unwelcome environment, are oppressive in nature, and unprofessional. It may be a single event or may involve a continuing series of

unprofessional. It may be a single event or may involve a continuing series of incidents and may involve the abuse of authority or position.

Note: In some instances, cultural differences in communication style may present situations in which social role, gender, social class, religion, and cultural identity may all affect the perception of a given behavior. For example, a behavior that is considered perfectly acceptable and considered civil by some cultural communities may be considered uncivil, inappropriate, and rude by other communities. In these situations, it is imperative to establish a community agreement prior to engagement in order to communicate intent. Examples of incivility include but are not limited to:

- a. bullying;
 - b. intimidation;
 - c. gestures, actions, or comments that cause offense or humiliation;
 - d. threatening comments or behavior;
 - e. comments or conduct that a reasonable person would consider unwelcome, offensive, embarrassing, rude, hurtful, or demeaning;
 - f. profanity or abusive, aggressive, or violent language directed at an individual or individuals;
 - g. humiliating, degrading, demeaning, belittling, insulting, frightening, or intimidating another person; and
 - h. telling inappropriate jokes.
- 03.03 Respect – a feeling of admiring someone or something that is good, valuable, or important; a feeling or understanding that someone or something is important or serious and should be treated in an appropriate way.
- 03.04 Disrespect – low regard or esteem for someone or something.
- 03.05 Bullying – an extreme example of incivility and disrespectful behavior; a pattern of repeated behavior that a reasonable person would find hostile and offensive.

Note: Differences of opinion, interpersonal conflicts, and occasional problems in working relations are an inevitable part of work and educational life and do not necessarily constitute bullying.

Examples of bullying may include but are not limited to:

- a. persistent or egregious use of abusive, insulting, or offensive language directed at an individual;
- b. spreading misinformation or malicious rumors;
- c. behavior or language that belittles or degrades, including criticism or feedback that is delivered with yelling, screaming, threats, or insults;
- d. making repeated inappropriate comments about a person's appearance, lifestyle, family, or culture, inclusive of race and ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, ability, and sexual orientation;
- e. regularly teasing or making someone the brunt of unwelcome pranks or

practical jokes;

- f. interfering with a person's personal property or work equipment;
 - g. circulating inappropriate or embarrassing photos or videos via email or social media; and
 - h. intentionally or repeatedly referring to people using names or pronouns different than they specify despite correction.
- 03.06 Harassment – a form of discrimination consisting of unwelcome verbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct that:
- a. is directed at an individual or group of individuals because of their race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, veterans' status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression; and
 - b. is sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to interfere with an individual's employment, education, academic environment, or participation in institution programs or activities; and creates a working, learning, program, or activity environment that a reasonable person would find intimidating, offensive, or hostile (see [UPPS No. 04.04.46, Prohibition of Discrimination](#) for more information).
- 03.07 Sexual Harassment – unwelcome, sex-based verbal or physical conduct that:
- a. in the employment context, unreasonably interferes with a person's work performance or creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile work environment; or
 - b. in the education context, is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct interferes with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from educational programs or activities at a postsecondary educational institution (see the [TSUS Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) for more information).
- 03.08 Workplace Violence – any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site.

04. COMMITMENT TO SHARED VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

- 04.01 Texas State's mission statement, the [Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan](#), and the [DEIA Chronical](#) support core values that engage, embrace, and celebrate expressions of diversity, equity, and inclusion. In addition, Texas State's stated [Shared Values](#) are used in this policy to function as a framework in support of proposed civility principles and are listed in the following sections.
- 04.02 Shared Value: Teaching and learning based on research, student involvement, and the free exchange of ideas in a supportive environment.
- Civility Principles: Value an environment that facilitates collegial relationships, encourages mutual understanding among diverse individuals, and leads to addressing difficult issues and differences in an atmosphere of mutual respect and civility.
- 04.03 Shared Value: Research and creative activities that encompass the full range of academic disciplines – research with relevance, from the sciences to the arts,

from the theoretical to the applied.

Civility Principles: Encourage development of a community that works to enhance the knowledge of different cultures, that values critical inquiry, debate, discovery, and innovation to better the world through teaching, research, and service.

- 04.04 Shared Value: The cultivation of character, integrity, honesty, civility, compassion, fairness, respect, and ethical behavior in all members of our Texas State community.

Civility Principles: Explore and consider culturally relevant views and ideas to engage in behavior that support respect of members of the community feelings, circumstances, and individuality.

- 04.05 Shared Value: A diversity of people and ideas, a spirit of inclusiveness, a global perspective, and a sense of community as essential conditions for campus life.

Civility Principles: Respect the diverse backgrounds of the Texas State community and welcome the opportunity for interpersonal and intellectual group interactions while practicing kindness in our communication with one another.

- 04.06 Shared Value: A commitment to service and leadership for the public good.

Civility Principles: Practice a productive response to disagreements including ways to disagree and explore resolutions.

- 04.07 Shared Value: Responsible stewardship of our resources and environment.

Civility Principles: Strengthen university recruitment and retention of highly qualified and diverse students, faculty, and staff and better distribute the utilization of resources in an equitable and fair manner.

- 04.08 Shared Value: Continued reflection and evaluation to ensure that our strengths as a community always benefit those we serve.

Civility Principles: Recognize and explore “triggers” to seek understanding and hold ourselves accountable for reactions to various situations, activities, and events and practice empathy and patience while doing so.

- 04.09 These guiding principles are inclusive of Texas State’s commitment to academic freedom and personal expression. Texas State acknowledges the articulation of unpopular and unsettling ideas as an integral part of intellectual inquiry. These civility principles are presented in a good faith effort for all Texas State community members to engage with each other to promote the rights, safety, dignity, and value of every individual in a civil, respectful, and inclusive environment.

05. COMMON UNDERSTANDING AND EXPECTATIONS OF CIVILITY

- 05.01 All Texas State students, faculty, and staff deserve to work, grow, and learn in an environment where they are treated with dignity and respect and free from incivility, harassment, or bullying with specific consideration to impact and intent.

- 05.02 Texas State is responsible for creating and providing guidance and communication regarding the cultural climate and expectations of engagement for all its community members.

- 05.03 This policy reinforces Texas State’s commitment to academic freedom, open

- 05.03 This policy reinforces Texas State's commitment to academic freedom, open inquiry, and the pursuit of knowledge by engaging diverse viewpoints at the highest standards of academic and ethical integrity as the foundation of educational excellence.
- 05.04 Texas State strives to cultivate a climate of mutual respect with consideration to an individual's right to expression, including guaranteeing the right to free speech, as well as ethical conduct and values that represent institutional standards.
- 05.05 Historically, the term civility has been used to represent a calm and controlled demeanor in which restraint, moderation, respect, and reason are exhibited. However, the use of the term civility within this policy adds to the above definition the full extent of First Amendment practices that embraces the intensity and richness of feelings that are attached to a cause and may be reflected in behavior that is dynamic in nature.

06. PROTOCOL IN IDENTIFYING INCIVILITY

- 06.01 It is a reasonable expectation for all within the Texas State community to be able to work, grow, and learn in a civil and respectful workplace and engage in a learning environment that is free of bullying, promotes greater job satisfaction, greater perceptions of fairness, a positive attitude, improved morale, better teamwork, greater interest in personal development, engagement in problem resolution, and enhanced relationships. Organizations characterized by civility and respect create a positive atmosphere marked by high morale and work satisfaction.
- 06.02 Within this policy, a pledge is offered as a voluntary commitment to engage in culturally relevant civility and anti-bullying behavior:
- PLEDGE:** I pledge to uphold the core values of Texas State University to the best of my ability. I pledge to engage with other members of our university community in a culturally relevant civil manner free from bullying, harassment, and negative behavior. I pledge to engage in self-reflection to understand my reactions to events and activities as they relate to upholding the value and worth of individuals different than myself. I pledge to increase my skill level as an effective communicator to engage in conversations that allow others to feel valued, listened to, and heard. I pledge to utilize appropriate university resources to report behavior that is counter to creating a welcoming, diverse, equitable, and inclusive university community for all members.
- 06.03 Reports of and complaints of incivility should be addressed using programs and policies listed in Section 07.02.
- 06.04 All managers, faculty, and staff are encouraged to act in "good faith" and be active participants in contributing to the creation and enhancement of a community culture of respect, inclusion, civility, dignity, and understanding for the people with whom they work. All parties, at a minimum, are encouraged to be open about concerns and listen to each other's point of view. Incidents of incivility and bullying should not be ignored and should be addressed.
- 06.05 The intent of this policy is not to impinge upon the academic freedom provisions specified in Texas State agreements, Texas State policies, or the [TSUS Rules and Regulations](#). However, faculty, instructors, and others, who have academic

freedom rights, have a responsibility to exercise these rights in a civil and respectful manner.

- 06.06 Supervisors are expected to identify and address issues of reported workplace incivility and bullying in a timely and fair manner. Such intervention may involve coaching and counseling their employees and, if deemed necessary, the submission of a formal report to the appropriate university office listed below, which may result in disciplinary action.

07. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING INCIVILITY

- 07.01 All Texas State community members are encouraged at the highest standards to treat each other with civility and respect. Anyone who has experienced or witnessed incivility, bullying or behavior that is counter to Texas State's core values, are discriminatory, biased in nature, unethical, related to sexual misconduct, appear to be criminal in nature, or may require mediation, should report these incidents to the appropriate support program or should consult the policies listed below. Each respective program and policy includes instructions for a reporting protocol.

07.02 Support Programs

- a. [Report It](#) – This website directs readers to the various reporting tools and instructions available at the university:

- 1) Clery Act Incident;
- 2) University Police Department's Complaint Form;
- 3) Behavioral Assessment Team;
- 4) Code of Student Conduct;
- 5) Honor Code;
- 6) Paws Alert;
- 7) Conflict of Interest Reporting;
- 8) Copyright Infringement;
- 9) Crisis Information;
- 10) Ethics Reporting;
- 11) Faculty Ombudsperson; and
- 12) Information Security.

07.03 Policies

- a. Submit reports of Sexual Misconduct as specified in the [TSUS Sexual Misconduct Policy](#).
- b. [UPPS No. 01.04.02, Ethics Policy](#)
- c. [UPPS No. 04.04.41, Staff Employee Mediation and Grievance Policy](#)
- d. [UPPS No. 04.04.04, Affirmative Action Program](#)
- e. [UPPS No. 04.04.46, Prohibition of Discrimination](#)

- f. [UPPS No. 07.04.07, Demonstrations on University Property](#)
- g. [AA/PPS No. 04.02.32, Faculty Grievance Policy](#)

08. REVIEWERS OF THIS UPPS

08.01 Reviewers of this UPPS include the following:

Position	Date
Chief Diversity Officer	July 1 E2Y
Assistant Vice President – Institutional Inclusive Excellence for Faculty and Staff Initiatives	July 1 E2Y
Title IX Coordinator	July 1 E2Y
Chief Compliance Officer	July 1 E2Y
Director, University Police Department	July 1 E2Y
Assistant Vice President for Human Resources	July 1 E2Y
Chair, LGBTQIA+ Advisory Board and Resource Network	July 1 E2Y
Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Director of Office of Student Diversity, Inclusion and ADA Coordinator	July1 E2Y

09. CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

This UPPS has been approved by the following individuals in their official capacities and represents Texas State policy and procedure from the date of this document until superseded.

Chief Diversity Officer

Assistant Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Faculty and Staff Initiatives

Vice President for University Administration

President