ETHICS

Brought to you by The Office of Institutional Compliance & Risk Services.
The estimated time to review this lesson is 20 minutes.
OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

As a UTSA employee, you are required to acknowledge that you have read the statutes prescribed under Texas State Law as well as the UTSA policy that governs your ethical conduct as a public employee.

In this Ethics course, there are three sections: Gifts, Acceptable Use of Resources and Outside Employment.
As a public servant, you have a responsibility to act as a good steward to the people of Texas in the performance of your official duties.

Management personnel are expected to be role models for ethical behavior in their departments.

Each employee has the personal obligation to report any activity that appears to violate laws, policies, rules and regulations.

The Board of Regents of the UT System has set out a general outline of the level of ethical behavior expected of all UT System employees in its Ethics Policy.
ETHICS QUESTIONS

Whenever possible, specific ethics or employee questions should first be directed to your supervisor. In addition, questions regarding ethics or other employee compliance questions can be directed to the following:

UTSA Ethics Officer (Chief Legal Officer) at (210) 458-4105

Office of Institutional Compliance & Risk Services at (210) 458-4992

To report issues of non-compliance anonymously, call the toll-free UTSA Ethics and Compliance Hotline at 1-877-270-5051

Or, go to the Web Reporting System at
As an employee, there are several ways to report concerns or questions. Click over each number for more information.
COMPLIANCE

The UTSA Ethics Officer (Chief Legal Officer) and/or the Office of Institutional Compliance and Risk Services are also available to answer questions. Additionally, you may report issues anonymously through the UTSA Hotline at 1 (877)-270-5051 or via the Web at https://www.reportlineweb.com/UTSA (refer to the section on the Compliance Program & Reporting Non-Compliance for more details).
MANAGERS’ & SUPERVISORS’ RESPONSIBILITIES

Whenever possible, specific ethics or employee compliance questions should first be directed to the employee’s supervisor.

Management personnel at every level are expected to set examples and to be role models for doing what is right in their departments. They should create a departmental culture that promotes the highest standards of honesty and integrity and encourages employees to share compliance concerns with them. Managers and supervisors include all individuals who have, as a part of their job description, the supervision of any UTSA employee. The support of and adherence to the Institutional Compliance Program by managers and supervisors is considered an important part of their job performance.

Managers and supervisors are required to ensure and verify the employees they supervise receive appropriate compliance training. In addition, they are responsible for discussing with their employees the UTSA Standards of Conduct and compliance policies and procedures specifically related to their job function.
ANONYMOUS REPORTING

You may report issues anonymously through the UTSA Hotline at 1 (877) - 270-5051. The Hotline is administered by a company that is unaffiliated with UTSA and acts as a neutral third party to accurately document the issues reported and forward them immediately to the appropriate individuals at UTSA for resolution.
**GIFTS**

Chapter 36 of the Texas Penal Code prohibits public servants from accepting certain gifts or benefits.

Violations of the laws in that Chapter carry criminal penalties.

A benefit is any gift, favor or service that might reasonably appear to influence the employee in the discharge of his or her job duties.

As a public servant, under Section 36.02 of the Texas Penal Code, you commit bribery if you solicit, offer or accept a “benefit” in exchange for your decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or other exercise of official discretion.
You may not solicit, agree to accept, or accept an honorarium in consideration for services you would not have been asked to provide but for your official position.

For example, you may not take a speaker's fee for speaking if your position with the state is one of the reasons you were asked to speak.

However, you may accept food, transportation and lodging in connection with a speech.
Taking or receiving a benefit may be prohibited in certain circumstances.

A gift is one form of benefit. A state employee who "exercises discretion in connection with contracts, purchases, payments, claims or other pecuniary transactions" of the agency may not accept a benefit from a person the employee knows is interested in or likely to become interested in such a transaction.
Benefits in the form of food, lodging, transportation or entertainment if you accept them as a “guest,” which means the donor must be present. All applicable reporting requirements must be followed.

Click on each tab to learn about gifts that you may accept.

- Food, Lodging, and Transportation
- Benefits
- Special Events
- Awards and Mementos
- Gifts
A benefit from a person such as a friend, relative, or business associate with whom you have a relationship independent of your official status if the benefit is given on account of that relationship rather than your official status.

Click on each tab to learn about gifts that you may accept.
Awards and mementos such as plaques, T-shirts, caps, souvenirs and other gifts of minor value under $50.

Click on each tab to learn about gifts that you may accept.
Athletic or special events tickets if you accept them as a “guest”, the value of the ticket is less than $50 and the donor is present.

Click on each tab to learn about gifts that you may accept.

- Food, Lodging, and Transportation
- Benefits
- Special Events
- Gifts
- Awards and Mementos
Gifts valued at less than $50 as long as the gift is not cash or a negotiable instrument.

Click on each tab to learn about gifts that you may accept.

- Food, Lodging, and Transportation
- Benefits
- Awards and Mementos
- Special Events
- Gifts
A benefit is any gift, favor or service that might reasonably appear to influence the employee in the discharge of his or her job duties.

○ True
○ False
YOU’RE RIGHT.

A benefit is any gift, favor or service that might reasonably appear to influence the employee in the discharge of his or her job duties.
Mary's assignment was to find a new video projector for the conference room. She did quite a bit of research - she contacted different departments asking if someone had the same equipment, she reviewed the approved vendor list and requested information from the different companies. She then contacted 3 companies asking for a price quote. One of the vendors recognized the fact that Mary was a "new" customer so he provided her with incentives to purchase the video projector from them.

From the items listed below, what (if any) can Mary accept from the vendor?

- A $100 HEB gift card
- Inexpensive pens to hand out in the office
- $200 San Antonio Stars tickets
YOU’RE RIGHT.

You may accept gifts valued at less than $50 as long as the gift is not cash or a negotiable instrument.
You must use government property for governmental purposes, not for personal or private purposes.
TELEPHONE AND ELECTRONIC MAIL

State law requires telephone and e-mail to be used for institutional purposes. Incidental personal use of UTSA e-mail, a state telephone to make a local telephone call, or the Internet is permissible provided that the use complies with all applicable policies and does not result in additional cost to the university.

Personal long-distance phone calls should not be charged to the institution and must be reimbursed by the employee if charged inadvertently. UTSA telephone logs and e-mail are public property and may be subject to open records requests.

EXPENSE CLAIMS

Vouchers for travel expenses must be accurate and requested only for expenses related to official business.

Personal or private use of travel awards (e.g., frequent flyer miles) accrued on state business is not a crime.

INSTITUTIONAL CREDIT CARDS

Employees shall not use credit cards issued by the institution for personal expenses unrelated to institutional business.
What can state employees do when it comes to political campaigns?

Drag each statement to the appropriate box to see if you’re right.

As a state employee, you **MAY:**

- Use your official authority to interfere with or attempt to influence the result of an election.
- Participate in political activities on your own time.
- Dedicate state time or state equipment to work on an individual's political campaign.
- Spend appropriated funds in connection with a political campaign.
- Contribute to campaigns or candidates with your own money on your own time.

As a state employee, you **MAY NOT:**
MISUSE OF OFFICIAL INFORMATION

As a state employee you may have access to information that has not been made public; however, you may NOT:

- Use the information to acquire or help another person to acquire a pecuniary interest in any property, transaction or enterprise affected by the information.

- Speculate or aid another to speculate on the basis of the information.

- Disclose or use the information with the intent to obtain a benefit or to harm another.
OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

No employee shall accept outside employment, dual employment or compensation that could reasonably impair the employee's independence of judgment in the performance of the employee's duties at UTSA.

Employees should not have a direct or indirect interest, financial or otherwise, in any outside company or organization which might influence the performance of his or her duties at UTSA.

Prior to engaging in any outside employment, all UTSA employees, with the exception of Researchers, must request prior approval using the UT System online portal.

Prior to engaging in any outside employment, Researchers must complete the Request for Prior Approval of Outside Activity form.

What is allowed?
What is NOT allowed?
Pat, a magnificent artist, found a website to help him sell his artwork online and decided to open up an online store. Everything was going great for Pat until the online store started getting busy. Pat was not able to keep up with the administrative duties for his online store so he started doing them at UTSA during his regular work hours.

**According to the UTSA HOP, what is the policy regarding outside employment?**

- As long as you request and receive prior approval for Outside Employment you may use UTSA resources for your outside job.

- As a UTSA employee, you may not use UTSA resources in connection with any outside employment.
THAT’S RIGHT.

You may never use UTSA resources in connection with outside employment.
FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE, CONFLICTS OF INTEREST, AND OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

UTSA policy requires some employees to file an annual disclosure of financial interests and outside activities.

All Tenure and Tenure Track (T/T-T) Faculty members, Principal Investigators and Project Directors must make an annual disclosure as required by federal regulations and UTSA HOP policy 10.04. Also included is anyone else directly responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of research, as identified by the Principal Investigator.

HOP 10.04 Conflicts of Interest in Research & Intellectual Property

Contact the Office of Research Integrity at (210) 458-4233 for further information.
FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE, CONFLICTS OF INTEREST, AND OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

All Non-Tenure Track Faculty and Covered Staff (as defined by UTSA HOP 1.33) are required to disclose and/or request approval for outside activities.

**Covered Staff:** Those UTSA employees who have been determined to be exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act and are, therefore, not entitled to overtime pay. It also includes employees designated by their vice president as having authority to exercise discretion with regard to the award of contracts or financial transactions.

HOP 1.33 Conflicts of Interest, Conflicts of Commitment, and Outside Activities

Contact the Office of Institutional Compliance & Risk Services at (210) 458-4992 for further information.
Identify which, if any, of the following would be an acceptable use of UTSA resources (e.g. computer, copier, staff, etc.):

- Sending out personal mail using stamps purchased by UTSA.
- Checking employee or student records to gain information not associated with your job duties.
- Making multiple copies for a UTSA meeting or presentation.
- Using your UTSA computer and printer to create and print out advertisements for your personal company.
- Spending significant amounts of time sending personal emails or updating your personal status on Facebook during your normal working hours.
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- Sending out personal mail using stamps purchased by UTSA.
- Checking employee or student records to gain information not associated with your job duties.
- Making multiple copies for a UTSA meeting or presentation.
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- Spending significant amounts of time sending personal emails or updating your personal status on Facebook during your normal working hours.
YOU’RE RIGHT.

Making multiple copies for a UTSA meeting or presentation is appropriate.
People have enjoyed working with Joe since the very first day Joe started working at UTSA. Joe is great to talk to. He is very personable, has wonderful people skills and is very knowledgeable. Although his phone calls are not always related to UTSA business, the office doesn't mind because he is such a well-liked guy.

What is UTSA's practice concerning phone calls?

- Incidental use for local phone calls not interfering with work responsibility is permissible.
- Employees may make unlimited personal long distance calls using UTSA phones without reimbursing UTSA.
YOU’RE RIGHT.

Personal long-distance phone calls should not be charged to the institution and must be reimbursed by the employee if charged inadvertently.
ALERT! CONFLICTS OF INTEREST POLICY

ALL UTSA employees must read 4.31, Conflicts of Interest. You may wish to save the HOP link as a favorite in your Internet browser for future access.

Employees with questions or concerns about the policy should contact the UTSA Office of Legal Affairs at (210) 458-4105.

The Office of Legal Affairs - (210) 458-4105

The Office of Institutional Compliance & Risk Services - (210) 458-4992

UTSA's policy regarding outside employment and financial interest: 1.33

Regents' Rules and Regulations Series 30103 Standards of Conduct:

UTS 180 - Conflicts of Interest, Conflicts of Commitment, and Outside Activities:
BEFORE YOU CONTINUE

You have completed the Ethics lesson. What would you like to do next?

- e-mail The Office of Institutional Compliance and Risk Services
- Review Lesson
- Scroll up and click the orange EXIT ACTIVITY button above this lesson to return to the course homepage and click on the FRAUD lesson