

Code of Ethics

Updated May 2026

The RP Group is an independent nonprofit serving the California Community College (CCC) system, its students, and its institutional research, planning, and effectiveness (IRPE) professionals.

Our work is based on a commitment to equitable student success. Each of the principles outlined in this document is designed to serve and benefit students, particularly those who have been marginalized and disproportionately impacted, and higher education professionals who serve as change agents shaping postsecondary success.

Purpose

The following Code of Ethics embeds, in writing, a common set of principles that reflect The RP Group's [mission, vision, and values](#) in the day-to-day decisions and behaviors of our staff, Board, and consultants. The creation of and adherence to a set of principles signals a level of professionalism to our partners and CCC constituents, building a culture of trust and collaboration necessary for progress toward common goals.

This Code of Ethics promotes the purpose of research and evaluation to seek knowledge and inform action. The Code heightens the role of inquiry and data to dismantle systemic barriers and injustices for students. Establishing the principles put forth in this Code of Ethics stimulates dialogue between CCC IRPE professionals and other constituents and encourages thoughtful responses to relevant issues that impact postsecondary success. This document is not intended to address all ethical situations, nor is it a regulatory document. Rather, it is a framework designed to foster and guide ethical decision-making across one's sphere of influence, affirming our responsibility to act ethically and with integrity.

We strongly encourage all CCC IRPE professionals to apply the following principles in service to their institutions and students.

Principles

Integrity & Authenticity

Our role as data stewards is one of great responsibility, ensuring trust and a culture of inquiry. To uphold this principle, we will:

- Ensure that data and data outcomes are reported accurately
- Proactively disclose any conflicts of interest, biases, and data omissions where they exist and implement accountability measures to address them
- Maintain transparency of data reporting and collection processes, while ensuring confidentiality and privacy
- Understand that data are not just numbers, but represent human stories and lived experiences
- Keep students and their voices at the heart of our research



Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion

Our purpose is intrinsically tied to improving education for marginalized and disproportionately impacted students. To uphold this principle, we will:

- Engage in inclusive research practices to bring awareness to inequities and injustices that are exposed or invisibilized in data, including student experiences, outcomes, practices, policies, and structures
- Facilitate dialogues with colleagues and students to illuminate and eradicate racial and other systemic injustices and inequities in both the outcomes and experiences of marginalized students
- Ensure that the nature, environment, and culture of our work engage constituents in meaningful ways to cultivate a diverse set of perspectives



Social Responsibility & Collaboration

Our role is to help facilitate the understanding and use of data in our collaborative efforts with others who may learn and adapt to better serve students. To uphold this principle, we will:

- Share knowledge resulting from research for the public good in a way that is meaningful, understandable, and actionable for a wide audience
- Collaborate with and engage other constituencies to benefit students in a multi-faceted way
- Help interpret data for others' increased understanding and implementation
- Act as an ambassador for the use of evidence-based decision-making
- Ensure constituents have appropriate access to data and understand data collection processes
- Model understanding as a foundation for mutual respect and empathetic engagement



Professional Responsibilities & Quality

Our ability to be effective researchers requires that we consistently put forth high-quality research and treat ourselves and others with dignity and respect. To uphold this principle, we will:

- Commit to continuous learning, growth, and improvement
- Acknowledge and challenge personal and group biases, positions, and privileges within the context of our work
- Engage in inquiry that honors diverse perspectives
- Adhere to high-quality and responsible data and research practices
- Tailor communications to the audience, considering their perspectives and preferences
- Recognize and uphold our responsibility to lead as experts in the field of institutional research, planning, and effectiveness



Process

This Code of Ethics was originally developed in 2020 through a collaborative process involving RP Group Board members, staff, and feedback from the IRPE community. The RP Group would like to acknowledge the following organizations whose guiding principles and standards helped in shaping our own:

- [American Educational Research Association \(AERA\) Code of Ethics](#)
- [Association for Institutional Research \(AIR\) Statement of Ethical Principles](#)
- [Academic Senate for California Community Colleges \(ASCCC\) Code of Ethics](#)
- [Community College League of California \(CCLC\) Resources for Governing Board on Code of Ethics](#)
- [The Belmont Report](#)

The Code of Ethics is reviewed and updated in alignment with the organization's strategic planning cycle. Reviews may occur at any point within the cycle as needed. The RP Group's Strategic Planning Committee leads this review and recommends updates for Board approval.

About The RP Group

The RP Group is a nonprofit, nonpartisan team made up of a dedicated Board of Directors and staff, working together with a shared and resolute goal: to increase the success of California community colleges and beyond.



www.rpgroup.org

Equity & Antiracism ♦ Student Voice ♦ Transformational Change ♦ Collaboration & Community ♦ Integrity & Quality