

Board expected to approve civility policy

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Mackenzie Hendricks

Reporter

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The policy was created after the Board of Trustees requested an official written statement on Pierce College's civil conduct.

The Civility Policy had its first reading in the Cabinet meeting on Feb. 25, and the second reading of the policy was passed on April 8.

Cabinet members gave their recommendation to Chancellor and CEO Michele Johnson to bring the proposed policy to the Board of Trustees members for their review and final approval.

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The Civility Policy outlines a number of expectations for the Pierce College community, and it places an emphasis on communication.

As stated in the latest version of the policy, speakers are expected to avoid personal attacks, make reasonable efforts to ensure accuracy of communications, address communication to the appropriate audience and have the courage to honestly express views they feel are important to the mission of the college.

In response, receivers are then obligated to recognize the variety of communication skills, listen with an open mind and have the courage to engage with those expressing themselves in ways that may generate discomfort.

Speakers and receivers are expected to develop skill sets

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At press time, the proposed policy was expected to be presented to the Board of Trustees for first reading at its May 8 meeting. If the Board has any suggested changes, the policy will go back to Cabinet for revisions. If the policy is approved, it will then be adopted as official.

Executive Assistant Marie Harris said the Civility Policy has been wordsmithed and vetted through the college community for feedback. The Civility Policy taskforce wants to ensure that the policy is concise and correctly conveys its message.

Civility is defined within the document, in its simplest form, as courteous behavior. This policy is then established to set the expectations of the interactions within the college, preserve the freedom of expression and address any conflicts or disagreements in a polite and professional manner.

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Speakers and receivers are expected to develop skill sets that allow them to convey views within a diverse community while abiding by civil and professional behavior.

“We need to be able to express ourselves,” Bucholz said, “but in a way where people are respectful of where others are coming from. We have a responsibility as both a speaker and a receiver.”

Conflict resolution within the Pierce College community is expected to be swift, just and appropriate. The policy outlines that those in conflict should attempt to resolve the situation themselves and then seek outside mediation if the conflict continues.

Faculty counselor and advisor Bret Burkholder is available to mediate conversations and assist with conflict resolution if needed.