

***Appendix B***  
***NACAC Statement of Principles of Good Practice***

**For Members of the National Association for College Admission Counseling**  
Revised October 1997

Ethics in recruiting students and awarding scholarships provided the impetus for creating NACAC in 1937. As a reflection of that major purpose, one of the first actions taken by the founders was the creation of a Code of Ethics. After many years of reviewing, updating, and rewriting, this Code is today's Statement of Principles of Good Practice.

While the Code originally applied only to NACAC members, the importance of ethical practices in the admission process for all institutions was recognized by those in the profession. As a result, a joint statement utilizing the basic philosophy of NACAC's Code of Ethics was developed in tandem with the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers and The College Board, and was endorsed by the American Council on Education, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Student Association, and the American School Counselor Association. The Statement of Principles of Good Practice is reviewed annually and revised to reflect new concerns for ethical admission practices and policies.

High schools, colleges, universities, other institutions and organizations, and individuals dedicated to the promotion of formal education believe in the dignity, the worth, and the potentialities of every human being. They cooperate in the development of programs and services in postsecondary counseling, admission, and financial aid to eliminate bias related to race, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, political affiliation, national origin, and disabling conditions. Believing that institutions of learning are only as strong ultimately as their human resources, they look upon counseling individual students about their educational plans as a fundamental aspect of their responsibilities. They support, therefore, the following Statement of Principles of Good Practice for members of the National Association for College Admission Counseling:

**I. ADMISSION PROMOTION AND RECRUITMENT**

**A. College and University Members agree that they**

1. will ensure that admission counselors are viewed as professional members of their institutions' staffs. As professionals, their compensation shall take the form of a fixed salary rather than commissions or bonuses based on the number of students recruited.
2. will be responsible for the development of publications, written communications, and presentations, i.e., college nights, college days, and college fairs, used for their institution's promotional and recruitment activity. They
  - a. will state clearly and precisely the requirements for secondary school preparation, admission tests, and transfer student admission.

- b. will include a current and accurate admission calendar. If the institution offers special admission options such as early admission, early action, early decision, or waiting list, the publication should define these programs and state deadline dates, notification dates, required deposits, refund policies, and the date when the candidates must reply. If students are placed on wait lists or alternate lists, the letter which notifies the students of the placement should provide a history that describes the number of students placed on the wait lists, the number offered admission, and the availability of financial aid and housing. Finally, if summer admission or mid-year admission is available, students should be made aware of the possibility in official communication from the institutions.
- c. will not falsely advertise or misrepresent their academic offerings. Rather, members will provide precise information about their academic majors and degree programs. Such information should include a factual and accurate description of majors, minors, concentrations and/or interdisciplinary offerings that apply toward the completion of the undergraduate degree.
- d. will provide students, families and secondary schools with the most comprehensive information about costs of attendance and opportunities and requirements for all types of financial aid, and state the specific relationship between admission practices and policies and financial aid practices and policies.
- e. will describe in detail any special programs, including overseas study, credit by examination, or advanced placement.
- f. will include pictures and descriptions of the campus and community which are current and realistic.
- g. will provide accurate information about the opportunities/selection for institutional housing, deadline dates for housing deposits, housing deposit refunds, and describe policies for renewal availability of such institutional housing.
- h. will provide accurate and specific descriptions of any special programs or support services available to students with handicapping conditions, learning disabilities, and/or other special needs.
- i. will identify the source and year of study when institutional publications and/or media communications cite published ratings of academic programs, academic rigor or reputations, or athletic rankings.
- j. should indicate that the institution is a NACAC member and has endorsed the principles contained in this Statement.

- 3. will exercise appropriate responsibility for all people whom the institution involves in admission, promotional, and recruitment activities (including their alumni, coaches, students, faculty, and other institutional representatives), and educate them about the principles outlined in this Statement. Colleges and universities which engage the services of admission management or consulting firms shall be responsible for assuring that such firms adhere to this Statement.

4. will speak forthrightly, accurately, and comprehensively in presenting their institutions to counseling personnel, prospective students, and their families. They
  - a. will state clearly the admission requirements of their institutions, and inform students and counselors about changed admission requirements so that candidates will not be adversely affected in the admission process.
  - b. will state clearly all deadlines for application, notification, housing, and candidates' reply requirements for both admission and financial aid.
  - c. will furnish data describing the currently enrolled freshman class and will describe in published profiles all members of the enrolling freshman class. Subgroups within the profile may be presented separately because of their unique character or special circumstances.
  - d. will not use disparaging comparisons of secondary or postsecondary institutions.
  - e. will provide accurate information about the use/role of standardized testing in their institutions' admission process.
  
5. will not use unprofessional promotional tactics by admission counselors and other institutional representatives. They
  - a. will not contract with secondary school personnel for remuneration for referred students.
  - b. will not offer or pay a per capita premium to any individual or agency for the recruitment or enrollment of students, international as well as domestic.
  - c. will not encourage students to transfer if they have shown no interest in doing so.
  - d. will not compromise the goals and principles of this Statement.
  
6. will refrain from recruiting students who are enrolled, registered, or have declared their intent or submitted contractual deposit with other institutions unless the students initiate inquiries themselves or unless cooperation is sought from institutions which provide transfer programs.
7. will understand the nature and intent of all admission referral services utilized by their institutions (including their alumni, coaches, students, faculty, and other institutional representatives) and seek to ensure the validity and professional competency of such services.

## **II. ADMISSION PROCEDURES**

### **A. College and University Members agree that they**

1. will accept full responsibility for admission decisions and for proper notification of those decisions to candidates and, when possible, to their secondary schools.
2. will receive information about candidates in confidence and respect completely, consistent with applicable laws and regulations, the confidential nature of such data.

3. will not apply newly-revised requirements to the disadvantage of a candidate whose secondary school courses were established in accordance with earlier requirements.
4. will not require candidates or the secondary schools to indicate the order of the candidates' college or university preferences, except under early decision plans.
5. will not make offers of admission to students who have not submitted admission applications.
6. will permit first-year candidates for fall admission to choose, without penalty, among offers of admission and financial aid until May 1. Colleges that solicit commitments to offers of admission and/or financial assistance prior to May 1 may do so provided those offers include a clear statement that written requests for extensions until May 1 will be granted, and that such requests will not jeopardize a student's status for admission or financial aid. Candidates admitted under an early decision program are a recognized exception to this provision.
7. will work with their institution's administration to ensure that financial aid and scholarship offers and housing options are not used to manipulate commitments prior to May 1.
8. will, if necessary, establish a wait list that: a. is of reasonable length. b. is maintained for the shortest possible period and in no B-W later than August 1.
9. will establish wait list procedures that ensure that no student on any wait list is asked for a deposit in order to remain on the wait list or for a commitment to enroll prior to receiving an official written offer of admission.
10. will state clearly the admission procedures for transfer students by informing candidates of deadlines, documents required, courses accepted, and course equivalency and other relevant policies.
11. will inform students and counselors about new or changed requirements which may adversely affect candidates who have met all required deadlines, deposits, and commitments according to the students' original notification from the institution.
12. will accept, for the purposes of documenting student academic records, only official transcripts in the admission or registration process which come directly from the counseling, guidance, or registrar's offices of the institution(s) the candidate attends or has attended or from other appropriate agencies.
13. will, in the development and administration of their application policies and procedures for early decision programs, abide by the NACAC Guidelines for Admission Decision Options.
14. should admit candidates on the basis of academic and personal criteria rather than financial need. This provision shall not apply to foreign nationals ineligible for federal student assistance.
15. should notify high school personnel when the institution's admission selection committee includes students.
16. should notify candidates as soon as possible if they are clearly inadmissible.
17. should make every effort to provide candidates for financial aid with financial aid decisions as soon as possible following an offer of admission.

**C. Independent Counselor Members agree that they**

1. will refrain, in public announcements, from giving the amounts of financial aid received by individual students; however, amounts of no-need scholarship awards may be a matter of public record.
2. will not make guarantees of any financial aid or scholarship awards.
3. should advise students who have been awarded financial aid by non-collegiate sources that they have the responsibility to notify the college of the type and amount of such outside aid.

**D. All other members providing college admission and financial counseling services to students agree to adhere to the principles in this Statement.**