Guideline 120 - Communication - Departmental & Individual

One of the cornerstones of efficient and effective fulfillment of any organization's designated mission is clear and timely communication.

The Director of the Library and all supervisory staff are responsible for promotion of effective, efficient communication among staff. To facilitate and promote such communication among staff of the Library, and with the University and public at large, as well as to ensure certain elements of guidelines and procedures compliance (e.g., proper handling of receipts and invoices), the following norms are expected:

Addressing Norms of Behavior (adopted 6/6/01)

While communication is essential in creating a productive and humane workplace, particularly when group effort is involved, it is recognized that mutual respect in that communication effort by all is most important for productivity and a high level of morale.

Open communication should be exhibited with all having input into group decision-making. Such communication should exist both within and between departments. It is recognized that decisions will be made which will include the ideas and suggestions made by some and not others. In no case, however, should individuals be made to feel that their ideas and suggestions were not considered. Each contribution should be discussed or responded to within the group based on the merits of achieving a stated workplace goal. A summary of how the decision was reached based on contributed suggestions and their merits should follow an agreed plan of action.

Within departments individuals should be free to express their views fully without fear of being misunderstood, prejudged or retaliated against by coworkers or their supervisors. If disagreements arise over those expressions or the outcome of decisions that are made, mutual respect for the held views and/or the decision should be maintained. If individuals believe that disrespect has been shown, it is incumbent upon them to resolve such differences at the lowest possible level by discussion between affected parties beginning by acknowledging that there is a problem. If understanding is not achieved, the discussion should be carried to the next higher level.

In any exchange, views may be expressed which are strongly held and expressed. That said, it is most important that all parties avoid either expressing or interpreting such remarks, verbal or nonverbal, as personal attacks.

The Library Assembly’s role in maintaining good communication (9/1/04)

It is the purpose of the Library Assembly "to act as an advisory group to the Library Director on problems and guidelines that affect the Library and the people it serves," and "to establish and maintain effective communication among the Assembly membership." In light of this purpose, staff may use the Assembly to bring issues forward, as an alternative to bringing them to the attention of supervisors. Similarly, communication on developments in the Library and across campus as well as on revisions of guidelines or procedures under consideration by units, the Library Executive Council or the Director may be achieved through the Assembly.

previously implemented guideline rewritten 6/13/91
norms added 6/6/01, rev. 9/1/04
references: Library Council meeting 6/6/01 minutes