

CALIFORNIA YOUNG DEMOCRATS
~Code of Ethics~

PREAMBLE

As the California Young Democrats we seek to create common standards to be shared by the members and officers of our organization. These standards will promote professionalism, integrity and accountability in order to foster an honest and ethical environment. This Code articulates not only our expectations for conduct while holding office, but also while campaigning as a candidate or on behalf of one during an inter-organization election. The goals expressed by the Code will be espoused by a committee as a means to upholding these standards.

I. Standard of Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials

- a. As a member of the Executive Board of the California Young Democrats (herein referred to as CYD), I pledge to be *professional*. In practice, this value looks like:
1. I treat all members of the executive board and of the greater CYD body with the utmost respect by valuing their participation, ideas and opinions.
 2. I will value all clubs equally regardless of region and/or school affiliation, status or size. I will be proactive to foster an inclusive working environment between varying members, officers, clubs and caucuses within the organization.
 3. I will conduct myself in a manner in which I am cognizant that my behavior is reflective of the organization as a whole. I will fulfill this responsibility through my official and unofficial acts while in office.
 4. I will support, through my actions and words, the mission of our organization as it relates to values of the California Democratic Party.
 5. I will treat all government and political officials, as well as donors to the organization, with the utmost respect and demonstrate appreciation for their support of our organization.

b. I pledge to act with ***integrity***. In practice, this value looks like:

1. I will be truthful in my interactions with all parties involved with CYD.
2. I will continually work to develop and maintain the trust of members and officers alike.
3. I will not utilize my position as an officer to promote my personal or political agenda, or to solely increase my standing within the organization.
4. I will make impartial decisions free of narrow political or personal interests always with the best interest of membership at large in mind. I will protect minority interests and advocate for inclusion and compromise. When making decisions that affect multiple parties or the body as a whole I will refrain from giving undeserved preference to specific individuals or groups.
5. In my actions, I will be guided by clear objectives as opposed to hidden agendas.
6. I will be accepting of all current and prospective members regardless of race, creed, religion, place of origin, gender, class, career/educational background, sexual orientation or age.

c. I pledge to maintain ***accountability***. In practice, this value looks like:

1. I will utilize my knowledge and expertise to fulfill my defined duties and will uphold my responsibilities as a board member and will participate in greater CYD activities.
2. In event that I am unable perform my duties, I will give adequate notice and make a best faith effort to find someone to act on my behalf in order to fulfill my responsibilities.
3. I will remember that I am in a position to serve the CYD body and will encourage the membership to hold me accountable to my official duties and to upholding the Ethics Code.

4. I will make meetings, records of meetings, and official correspondence available to the general membership upon request in an effort to encourage transparency.

II. Standard of Conduct for Inter-Organization Elections

- a. When acting on behalf of or as a candidate for office within the California Young Democrats I pledge to be *professional*. In addition to the examples set forth in Section I, this value looks like:
 1. My platform will be based on concrete issues affecting the organization as opposed to personal traits or rivalries. This specifically prohibits any elements of negative campaigning.
 2. I will maintain a mature decorum when interacting with individuals outside CYD, such as the media, government officials or young democrats from other states.
 3. I will respect the opinion, support and eventual vote of my peers, even if their decision does not support myself or the candidate that I have chosen to endorse.
- b. I pledge to act with *integrity*. In addition to the examples set forth in Section I, this value looks like:
 1. I will engage and respond to any opponent with respect and value their participation and decision to run for office.
 2. I will not include unethical strategies in my overall campaign plan as means of manipulating my peers to gain their votes.
 3. I will discuss the ethical expectations I have for those helping with my campaign as well as for those who choose to support my candidacy.
 4. I will remain cognizant that my behavior as a candidate for office should mimic how I plan to conduct myself once elected.
- c. I pledge to maintain *accountability*. In addition to the examples set forth in Section I, this value looks like:
 1. In the event that at I am aware that a negative campaign piece was created and/or distributed by a member of my campaign, I will make a best faith effort to encourage the destruction of the document or will

act in opposition to its distribution. In the event that it is circulated, I will issue a formal apology to my opponent.

2. I will refrain from making false allegations about my opponent(s). If I voice truthful allegations that challenge my opponent's personal or professional credibility, I will be able to provide concrete sources of information.
3. I will remember to be accountable to and inclusive of the general membership during a campaign and will avoid elitist or separatist behavior.
4. If I become aware of inappropriate professional or personal actions that a candidate has demonstrated, I will approach the Ethics Committee with evidence and candor. I will take such actions motivated solely by my genuine concern for the organization as a whole.