Our CougarCARE Principles
Because students are our top priority, we show that we care by exhibiting these behaviors. How we act toward our students and toward each other speaks volumes.

CONNECT WITH STUDENTS FIRST
- We try to understand what the student’s needs are and we don’t dismiss requests or questions as trivial, dumb, or unwelcome.
- We learn about and are respectful of differences in cultures and beliefs.
- We keep students informed of decisions that may affect them.
- We use easy-to-understand language and avoid using jargon or abbreviations.
- We take time to explain “college” terminology to students and guests.
- We verify understanding by asking if people have questions or if they are clear on what we have explained.
- We involve students and guests in conversations and discuss topics relevant to students and guests. We never talk to other employees as if the student or guest is not present.
- We start and end every student and visitor contact and communication with direct eye contact and a sincere smile.
- When we come in contact with students or guests, we extend the appropriate greeting. We say, “good morning, welcome, may I help you,” etc. We speak to students and guests right away even if it is to say, “I’ll be with you in a moment.”
- We display appropriate body language. We show we are attentive; we sit up or stand up straight, have open body language, and maintain welcoming facial expressions.

OWN THE SITUATION
- We are aware of and help people who appear lost. If we are unable to escort a person to his or her destination, we call someone who can.
- When giving directions, we point with two fingers or an open palm, to avoid insulting people of other cultures.
- We apologize for problems and inconvenience and take immediate action to address the situation.
- We offer assistance to those who have limitations.
- We take ownership when problems are encountered, discuss problems with the appropriate people and actively support workable solutions.

USE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS
- We introduce ourselves; explain who we are and what our role is. When appropriate, we ask students and guests their names. We wear our College nametag where it is clearly visible. We don’t obscure our nametag or substitute a different nametag for the College-accepted one.
- We use a pleasant, calm, and respectful tone of voice. We never yell or use profanities or vulgarities.
- We greet others, including our colleagues, with a warm smile and make eye contact. We say “hi” to people we pass on campus or see on the elevator.
- We use “please” and “thank you” and other social courtesies. We do not use phrases that might appear condescending such as “honey” or “sweetie.”
- We serve as positive role models and adhere to our departmental guidelines.
- We choose a positive attitude over negativity.
• We acknowledge good work by our students and colleagues with heartfelt praise and recognition.

GO THE EXTRA MILE
• We always ask, "Is there anything else I can do for you?"
• We follow through on what we’ve told students or colleagues we will do.
• We make every attempt to anticipate student needs and meet them before we’re asked.
• We hold the elevator door and allow students and visitors to enter and exit first.
• We never say, “It’s not my job” or “I am too busy.” Instead we say, “I'll find someone who can help you.”
• We meet student and guest needs as soon as possible. If information is needed, we take responsibility for obtaining it or direct the student or guest to the appropriate person.
• Before we send a student or guest to an office, we check to see if someone is available in the office and if the office is the right place to provide help. We verify that where we are sending a student or guest is the right place to help them.

ACT PROMPTLY AND PROFESSIONALLY
• We answer the phone in three rings or less.
• We return phone calls and e-mails within 24 hours.
• We promptly report items that are not working and take them out of service.
• We discuss student issues only within hearing of those who “need to know.”
• We use the intercom or walk over to the desk to discuss student issues.
• We never yell across areas to other staff.
• In high traffic areas, we ask the student to write down information rather than asking them to speak personal information that should be kept private.
• We keep behaviors such as personal conversations, eating, expressing criticism, etc., out of sight and ear shot of students and guests.
• We keep work areas and public areas clean and orderly. We pick up litter and report spills and other facility problems.
• We keep our appointments. We arrive on time to meetings and appointments and are prepared to participate. We notify people well in advance if we cannot attend a meeting and we do not commit to meetings we know we cannot attend.

REMEMBER TO WORK AS A TEAM
• We take ownership when problems are encountered, discuss problems with the appropriate people and actively support workable solutions.
• We work collaboratively to get the job done; keep other team members informed; follow-through on responsibilities, and offer assistance without being asked.
• We return all equipment to its proper place and in the condition we found it. If we lose or break equipment, we inform the appropriate people and take responsibility.
• We support changes and adjust when necessary or expected.
• We value all members of the team. We encourage, teach, mentor, listen to others. We resolve conflict in a healthy way.
• We respect colleagues and follow policies, procedures, and guidelines of other departments. We extend professional courtesy to our colleagues at ICC giving them the benefit of the doubt and helping them whenever we can.
- We inspire confidence by talking positively about the College, all departments, and all members of the College team. We vent privately, never back-stab, and always discourage gossip.
- We introduce ourselves to new employees and make them feel at home.