

Ground Rules for the Administrative Integration Steering Committee

April 12, 2005

1. **Come prepared.** Committee members will study the agenda before each meeting. They will collect and assemble relevant facts in advance, and provide brief handouts for fellow members, if necessary.
2. **Respect the group's time.** Members will attend all meetings, arrive on time, and remain for the duration of each meeting. (The committee should decide whether "alternates" are acceptable when members cannot avoid missing a meeting.) At meetings, people will make every effort to avoid distractions by turning off beepers and phones, and minimizing the number of times they come and go from the room. Speakers will have the committee's undivided attention.
3. **Monitor the speak-listen ratio.** Members will speak concisely, ask smart questions and listen actively, avoiding repetition and tangential comments. Members will try not to monopolize any discussion.
4. **Openness.** A climate of openness should permeate the committee's deliberative processes. Being open means being committed to your point of view while also remaining open to others expressing their points of view. It also means being willing to confront and then reconcile differences of opinion.
5. **Be willing to speak from multiple perspectives.** As the committee deliberates over issues, members should speak from their respective professional positions and on behalf of their respective institutions.
6. **Respect differences.** In an effort to fully explore others' ideas, members agree to suspend or set aside, at least temporarily, their own opinions or beliefs during discussions. When providing reaction or feedback, members will be direct, open, and timely. Comments will focus on the task or process, not on the personalities of committee members or any individuals.
7. **Agree to disagree.** Members acknowledge that their own opinions and viewpoints may change, but do not expect that they will be able to change other members' points of view. Everyone agrees to be creative, open to new concepts, and willing to see old concepts in new ways.
8. **Tolerate ambiguity.** Members acknowledge and accept the occasional chaos that will come from this problem-solving and strategy-making process.
9. **Accept personal responsibility for team outcomes.** Members agree to accept and support group decisions, even when they may have disagreed with individual actions.

10. Use a clear mechanism for approval.

- a. To ensure fairness and equity in group decisions, the committee will pre-agree on decision-making rules before any deliberations. Whenever possible, the committee should move toward consensus decision-making.
- b. When consensus is not possible, and members are ready to approve an operationally-specific proposal (one where the next step/steps and desired outcomes are clearly defined), members might be asked to vote on a scale of 1-5:

- 5: I love it.
- 4: Pretty good.
- 3: I can live with it.
- 2: I need to keep talking.
- 1: No way.

The committee will agree, in advance, on what will constitute a “passing” vote. This may be a simple majority of all members, a majority of members present, two-thirds majority, etc. The committee may also want to agree on a “quorum” for votes.

- 11. Honor confidentiality.** It is permissible to share relevant insights that members take away from meetings, but everyone agrees not to divulge “who said what” or reveal personal issues and opinions voiced by others. If a member specifically wants to offer comments that should never be repeated outside of the room, the person will preface his or her statement with a request for strict confidentiality, and other members will agree not to repeat the information shared at that point.