SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Procedure for Impartial Policing

"The mission of the South Texas College Police Department is to provide a safe educational environment for students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors".

I. Procedure

The South Texas College Police Department is committed to impartial policing practices. Biased policing, and the perceptions of it, threatens the relationship with students, faculty, and staff that the department seeks to enhance.

The application of the social psychological research leads to the conclusions that even the best law enforcement officers may manifest bias because they are human. While some of the bias in policing is caused by intentional discrimination against people of color and other groups, the research points to another mechanism producing biased behavior. Social psychologists have shown that “implicit” or “unconscious” bias can impact what people perceive and do, even in people who consciously hold non-prejudiced attitudes. While training cannot easily undo the implicit associations that took a lifetime to develop, the social psychologists have shown that people can implement controlled (unbiased) behavioral responses that override automatic (biased) associations. The implication is that the South Texas College police officers need to be aware of any unconscious biases, so that they are able and motivated to activate controlled responses to counteract them. Therefore, all college police officers will strive to:

1. Recognize their conscious and implicit biases.
2. Implement “controlled” (unbiased) behavioral responses.
3. Promote fair and impartial policing in the daily work routine.

II. DEFINITION

"Racial profiling" means any action initiated by a police officer that relies upon the race, ethnicity, or national origin of an individual rather than the behavior of that individual, or information that leads the police officer to a particular individual who has been identified as being engaged in criminal activity. Racial profiling includes use of racial or ethnic stereotypes as factors in selecting whom to stop and search. Racial profiling does not include a police officer’s use of race or ethnicity to determine whether a person matches a specific description of a particular subject.

III.PROCEDURES

A. Policing impartially, not racial profiling, is the standard for the South Texas College Police Department. College police officers will abide by the following procedures:

1. Investigative detentions, pedestrian and vehicle stops, arrests, searches and property seizures will be based on a standard of

reasonable suspicion or probable cause in accordance with the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution. College police officers must be able to articulate specific facts, circumstances and conclusions that support reasonable suspicion or probable cause for these actions.

2. College police officers may take into account information that links specific, suspected, unlawful or suspicious activity to a particular individual or group of individuals and this information may be used in the same manner officers use specific information regarding age, height, weight, etc. about specific suspects.

B. In an effort to prevent the perception of biased law enforcement South Texas College police officers shall:

1. Be respectful and professional.

2. Introduce or identify themselves to an individual and state the reason for the contact as soon as practical, unless providing this information will compromise officer or public safety.

3. Ensure the detention is no longer than necessary to take appropriate action for the known or suspected offense.

4. Attempt to answer any relevant questions the individual may have regarding the officer contact including relevant referrals to other agencies when appropriate;

5. Provide their name and badge number when requested, preferably in writing or on a business card.

6. Explain if it is determined the reasonable suspicion was unfounded (e.g. after an investigatory stop).

C. South Texas College Sergeants shall ensure all college police officers are familiar with the content of this policy and are in compliance.