

Introduction

FRC Team 1410 strives to use technology to work smarter, not harder; we want to teach young people how to think critically, develop valuable technical skills and gain an appreciation for problem solving in a global context. Successfully maintaining and running an organization requires that everyone in the organization is held to a certain set of standards. This handbook details those standards and everything in it plays an important role in ensuring that the team is successful. This handbook reflects advice from many reputable sources as well as the results of numerous lessons learned. The handbook may be modified throughout the year to capture new information to help the team grow and prosper.

FIRST Culture

We believe that it is essential that all members of Team 1410 be familiar with the vision and mission of FIRST along with the two ideals which FIRST relies upon, Coopertition™ and Gracious Professionalism™. FIRST is an acronym for “For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology”. Taken directly from the FIRST website (<http://www.usfirst.org/>), the mission of FIRST:

Our mission is to inspire young people to be science and technology leaders, by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering and technology skills, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication, and leadership.

Gracious Professionalism is part of the ethos of FIRST. It's a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community.

With Gracious Professionalism, fierce competition and mutual gain are not separate notions. Gracious professionals learn and compete like crazy, but treat one another with respect and kindness in the process. They avoid treating anyone like losers. No chest thumping tough talk, but no sticky-sweet platitudes either. Knowledge, competition, and empathy are comfortably blended.

In the long run, Gracious Professionalism is part of pursuing a meaningful life. One can add to society and enjoy the satisfaction of knowing one has acted with integrity and sensitivity.

"Coopertition® produces innovation. At FIRST, Coopertition is displaying unqualified kindness and respect in the face of fierce competition. Coopertition is founded on the concept and a philosophy that teams can and should help and

cooperate with each other even as they compete.

Coopertition involves learning from teammates. It is teaching teammates. It is learning from Mentors. And it is managing and being managed. Coopertition means competing always, but assisting and enabling others when you can."

While you don't need to memorize Coopertition™ and Gracious Professionalism™ word for word, you should be able to outline the concepts to anyone, be they prospective team members or non-technical members of the community. We also expect that all team members display Coopertition™ and Gracious Professionalism™ whenever representing the team.

Team Structure

Team leadership consists of the Captain, the Chief Engineer, and the General Manager. These positions will be filled through mentor nominations, then democratic elections at the end of each season by majority vote. The Captain is the leader of the team; he or she is responsible for representing the team to the school administration, to sponsors, and at major events and competitions. The Captain is expected to monitor all aspects of the team, including: finances, scheduling, project completion, safety, and team cohesion. The Chief Engineer is responsible for overseeing all the technical matters. The General Manager is responsible for overseeing all non-technical matters. Feel free to talk to or email any of the team leadership with any concerns relating to the team.

The team is divided into seven departments, four technical and three non-technical. Each department has a department head who is well versed in what the department does and the person to whom you should go for any matters concerning that department. The four technical departments are build, programming, electronics, and design. The three non-technical departments are outreach, events, and business.

Each project the team undertakes will have a project leader. The project leader is the person who will be held accountable by team leadership for the completion of the project. The project leader will be given the goals for the project by the team leadership and will make all decisions which are contained within the project. There are no prerequisites to being a project leader. Project leaders will be chosen based on their demonstrated interest and skill by the team leadership and mentors.

Member Expectations

Robotics is an intense extra-curricular activity that requires hard work, critical thinking and teamwork. While robotics can be a lot of fun, we expect that you put priority on grades over the team's needs. It's just like being a part of a sports team; you need to keep your grades above a C- average

(the same as the athletic requirement), two Fs will also result in ineligibility until the grades are improved. to remain a part of the team. Homework comes first; we'll have a study corner set up so that you can work on any pressing projects without distracting the rest of the team. If you have any scholastic troubles, feel free to ask anyone else on the team. We're all in it together and we want to see everyone succeed.

No one person can complete the complex challenges we work on in robotics - our success is only possible by working as a team. In order to keep projects on task, we expect all members to stay informed at all times. We expect all team members to read and understand the rules of the competition. Again, robotics is like a sporting event; rule violations will not be tolerated. Moreover, we expect everyone to understand our team's robot and competition strategy. This will be discussed during the build season. Staying informed also means checking emails on a regular basis and attending all meetings (excused absences are granted on a case by case basis). Email is the primary method for communicating important information within the team. During team meetings, members are expected to listen when anyone is speaking to the team and refrain from interruptions and side conversations. Remember: the sooner we get through announcements, the sooner we get to build robots.

We expect all members to participate during every meeting or event they attend. If you don't know what to do, talk to one of the team leaders: it's our job to make sure that everyone is productive during meetings. Additionally, stick to your own projects: parts, tools, and assemblies that are not your responsibility should be left undisturbed. Besides staying on task, interfering with someone else's project could damage some or disrupt someone else's work. At the end of the work session, students are expected to help clean up.

Code of Conduct

We are a robotics TEAM; it is important to remember that it would be impossible to do what we do alone. We need designers as much as builders, technology buffs as much as marketers, and mentors as much as students. Everyone here brings a unique set of skills and perspectives and deserves to be treated with the same level of respect, whatever the situation may be. Also, please remember that the adults on the team are volunteers and are not receiving any pay to come and be part of the team. We expect everyone to be reasonably friendly with EVERYONE else on the team. Animosities should be left at the door.

Due to the nature of FRC, the team will be traveling, fundraising, and working with the community throughout the year. Whenever we are outside of our workroom, it is expected that all members show respect to the people and places we go and are able to behave seriously when representing the team.

It is important that everyone is having a good time. The team is united by a mutual love for what we do. If that bond is strained the team starts falling apart. If you ever have frustrations, problems, or

concerns about the *team*, please talk to a student leader or a mentor as soon as possible.

Build Season

The build season is the six weeks we get between the Kickoff (when the game is announced worldwide) and the bag and tag date (when we have to literally put the robot in a giant plastic bag and stop working on it). The Kickoff is the first Saturday in January. During the build season, the team goes from meeting once or twice a week to meeting every day Monday through Saturday. Everyone will not need to be present for every meeting; each department and project team will keep its own schedule. During the build season, we will be staying for dinner on a daily basis and we would ask that everyone's family to contribute at least one meal. Sign up for this will take place in December, before the build season. If you are unable to do this, please let the team leadership know.

Dues and Fees

Due to the expenses that come with running a team, we expect all members to pay a due of \$25. This will go towards things like French Fry Friday and fun team outings. Dues are \$25 and must be paid by November 30th. If you cannot pay this due, please talk to team leadership. Team members will also be contribute a meal during the build season (See "Build Season" section). Beyond this membership due, there are no mandatory fees for being on the team. However, we may require that everyone pitch in or pay their own way for social events and travel tournaments.

Safety Culture

In addition to emphasizing good character, FIRST also promotes working safely. Many of the tools we work with are dangerous. For this reason, we expect members to always be aware to their surroundings and have read the team safety manual. When working with any chemicals, robots, machinery or power tools, members must wear safety equipment and have a mentor who is trained in using the equipment safely supervising. Members are expected to bring their own safety glasses - all other safety equipment will be provided by the team. Because we work with dangerous tools and travel, we ask that parents provide an emergency contact phone number in the unlikely event of injury.

Attendance

Because of the intensive nature of robotics, we expect our members to make every meeting possible. If you are going to miss a meeting, please let team leadership know at least 24 hours in advance via email (contact@frc1410.org). If you miss a meeting, it is your responsibility to find out

what happened at the meeting. *We require that members make 75% of all meetings to be considered an active member of the team.* If you have a problem making this number of meetings, let us know and we'll work it out. Everyone will sign in as they arrive and sign out before they leave. If you do not sign in and out, you will not be counted as having attended the meeting.

Member Contract

By signing this contract, as a member of FRC Team 1410, I agree that:

- I will strive to learn something new during team participation (this does NOT need to be purely technical knowledge).
- I have read and understood the Team Handbook and Safety Manual.
- I will behave respectfully at all times towards my fellow teammates and mentors.
- I will positively represent the team during any events outside of the workroom.
- I will work hard and stay on task during meetings.
- I will attend at least 75% of the meetings.
- I will wear safety equipment when using tools and will only use power tools with mentor supervision.
- I will pay the \$25 membership due by November 30th.
- I will keep up with team communications and understand that it is my responsibility to catch up on any information I miss.
- I will not forget to have fun.

Student Name:

Student Signature:

Date:

By signing this contract, as parent of a member of FRC Team 1410, I agree that I understand the commitment which my student is making.

Parent Name:

Parent Signature:

Date:

Student Email Address:

Student Phone Number

Parent Email Address:

Parent Phone Number

Emergency Phone Number:

