

Faculty Ethics and Academic Responsibility

Approved by faculty May 12, 2004

Purpose:

This policy describes the ethical responsibilities of our College faculty in five areas: students, scholarship, colleagues, the university, and the larger community that the university serves.

Policy Statement Justification:

The basic functions of the university are the advancement and dissemination of learning, the development of critical intelligence, creative talent, aesthetic sensibility and moral awareness in its students, and the training of citizens and professional workers for the society of which the university is a part.

The indispensable condition for the successful discharge of these functions is an atmosphere of intellectual freedom. Unless the faculty member is free to pursue the quest for knowledge and understanding, wherever it may lead, and to report and discuss findings, whatever they may be, the university faculty member cannot perform properly. The university, therefore, must provide such an atmosphere of intellectual freedom for its faculty (University Rule on Academic Freedom: 12.01.99.C1.02). The faculty, in turn, must uphold this freedom in all its actions.

Freedom entails responsibilities. Every faculty member must accept the responsibilities that are concomitant with the freedom that is enjoyed. Those responsibilities are to: (1) students, (2) scholarship, (3) colleagues, (4) the university, and (5) the larger community that the university serves.

1. Responsibilities to Students

Faculty members have the responsibility for creating in their relations with students a climate that stimulates and encourages students to learn. Faculty should exemplify high scholarly standards and respect, and foster students' freedom to choose and pursue appropriate academic goals. Faculty should:

- Encourage the free pursuit of learning in students.
- Maintain confidentiality unless otherwise required by law.
- Exemplify the best scholarly standards of the disciplines.
- Demonstrate respect for students as individuals, and adhere to one's proper role as intellectual guide and counselor.
- Make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct.
- Be fair and impartial in evaluations to assure that evaluation of students reflects the true merits of students' work and effort.
- Maintain professional behavior in the classroom.
- Avoid any exploitation of students for private advantage and acknowledge significant assistance from them.
- Protect students' academic freedom.

- Be sensitive to gender, race, religion, ethnicity, physical handicap, and age.
- Maintain an environment that is free of discrimination and sexual harassment and take all accusations of discrimination and/or sexual harassment seriously.
- Avoid threatening or abusive behavior or language.
- Not accept gifts, favors, or other offerings from students that could create a perceived or real conflict of interest.

2. Scholarly Responsibilities

The faculty member's responsibilities to scholarship derive from the university's commitment to knowledge and the advancement of learning. Thus the faculty member must strive to keep abreast of the research and scholarship that is being carried forward. Faculty should:

- Recognize their special responsibility for the advancement of knowledge.
- Seek the truth and to state the truth as one sees it.
- Improve scholarly competence.
- Exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge.
- Practice intellectual honesty, including appropriately acknowledging contributions made by students, colleagues, and others.
- Prevent intrusion of subsidiary interests in the freedom of inquiry.

3. Responsibilities to Colleagues

The faculty member's responsibilities to colleagues derive from their common membership in the community of scholars. Faculty should:

- Treat each other with dignity and respect.
- Respect and defend free inquiry by associates.
- Show professional courtesy and respect for others in exchange of criticism.
- Strive to be objective during the professional judgment of colleagues.
- Accept a fair share of the responsibilities for the governance of the university.
- Actively assist in the professional development of colleagues.
- Not knowingly misrepresent the views/positions of colleagues.
- Maintain an environment that is free of discrimination and sexual harassment and take all accusations of discrimination and/or sexual harassment seriously.
- Avoid threatening or abusive behavior or language.

4. Responsibilities to the University

The faculty member's primary responsibility to the University is to be an effective scholar and teacher. In addition, the faculty member is expected to actively participate as a citizen of the University community. Faculty should:

- Be effective in teaching, scholarship, and service.

- Adhere to university policies and regulations.
- Monitor the amount and character of any work outside the university, with due regard to responsibilities within the university.
- Give due notice to the university of pending interruption or termination of service whenever possible.
- Avoid conflicts of interest.

5. Responsibility to the Community

As members of the larger community, faculty members have the rights and prerogatives, and the obligations and duties of any citizen. These include the right to join political or other associations, to convene and conduct public meetings, and to publicize opinions on political and social issues. In any public discourse, faculty members should take care to make clear when their comments represent personal opinions and when their comments represent official University positions. Faculty should:

- Strive to conduct oneself as a responsible, productive member of the community, aware of and sensitive to the responsibilities and obligations placed on all citizens by a free society.
- Make it clear in public statements that one's personal opinions are one's own and not those of the university.
- Conduct one's public and private lives so as to avoid bringing dishonor to oneself and the university.

Faculty Actions and Reporting Procedures

Faculty members made aware of violations to this Ethics and Academic Responsibility Statement are expected to take appropriate steps to stop such behavior and/or refer a person who has been harmed by inappropriate behavior to the appropriate channels [direct supervisor, Department Chair, Dean of the College, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (faculty) or Vice President for Student Affairs (students), Director of Employee Relations Office; as per University Rules 32.01.01.C1.01 and 34.01.99.C1.01]. Any person receiving complaints of **harassment** from students, employees, or faculty, must notify the Office of Employee Relations within twenty-four hours of receiving the harassment complaint (as per University Rule 34.01.99.C1.01, paragraph 2.3). Allegations of **misconduct in university research or scholarship activities** should be reported in writing to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (as per University rule 15.99.03.C1). Faculty members who violate this Ethics and Academic Responsibility Statement may be subject to disciplinary procedures.