

# Lehigh University: Faculty Code of Ethics<sup>1</sup>

## 2.1. Preamble

The central functions of an academic community are learning, teaching, research, scholarship, and service. By accepting membership in the University, an individual joins a community ideally characterized by free expression, free inquiry, intellectual honesty, respect for the dignity of others, openness to constructive change, and commitment to diversity and inclusion. The rights and responsibilities exercised within the community must be compatible with these qualities.

## 2.2. Commitment to Core Values

It is the intent of the Faculty Code of Ethics to uphold The [Principles of Our Equitable Community](#), to protect faculty academic freedom (R&P 2.1.1), to help preserve the highest standards of teaching and scholarship, and to advance the mission of the University as an institution of higher learning.

Moreover, it is the intent of the Faculty Code of Ethics to promote inclusive and equitable practices regarding diversity of age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital or familial status, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Diverse, inclusive, and equitable environments are drivers of innovation, creativity, and empathy.

Lehigh faculty are committed to excellence in all facets of university life—high quality educational programs, cutting-edge research, and dissemination of new knowledge—to benefit our students, the nation, and the world. To achieve excellence, faculty affirm that the following core values and conditions of campus life are essential to a functional, productive, and vibrant University.

**2.2.1. Shared Governance.** Faculty are committed to participating fully in the shared governance of Lehigh University, and will work together with its administration and staff to govern the University in a transparent, communicative, and responsible manner.

**2.2.2. Academic Freedom.** Faculty are committed to academic freedom, which enables us to freely teach our students and pursue academic knowledge within our disciplines; to conduct both basic and applied research; to develop technology; to expand the horizons of the understanding of our world; and to contribute to a greater appreciation of humanity. As part of this academic freedom, we are committed to the principle that the granting of tenure to faculty is essential for unobstructed freedom of thought, generating new ideas, and enabling unbiased discourse in our pursuit of knowledge (see R&P 2.2.1).

**2.2.3. Ethical Conduct of Research.** Faculty are committed to conducting all research at Lehigh University with the highest ethical standards and acknowledge our responsibility to

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<sup>1</sup> This document drew liberally from similar documents in the following academic institutions: Harvard University, Iowa State University, Sterling College (UK), Tulane University, University of California at Berkeley as well as the statement of Professional Ethics by the AAUP.

ethically pursue our scholarly endeavors, to be accountable for our fiscal operations, and to present our scholarly and research products in a manner beyond reproach (see also University Policy on [Ethical Conduct in Academic Research, Scholarship and Creative Activities](#)).

**2.2.4. Academic Integrity.** Faculty are committed to maintaining our professional integrity as educators and researchers. Faculty denounce any form of plagiarism, falsification of data, misrepresentation, or other acts which compromise the reputation of our collective work Lehigh University (see also University Policy on [Ethical Conduct in Academic Research, Scholarship and Creative Activities](#)).

**2.2.5. Respect for All Members of the Community.** Faculty are committed to fostering an environment of mutual respect for all members of the campus community—students, staff, faculty, and administrators. We are committed to collegiality, mutual support, and respect for cultural and disciplinary diversity, which are essential for a functional, responsive, and thriving campus climate. We are committed to the free exchange of ideas, civil discourse, and respect for differing opinions and perspectives in the pursuit of knowledge.

**2.2.6. Diversity and Inclusion.** Faculty are committed to a diverse and inclusive campus community, which brings together people of different academic disciplines, cultures, intellectual perspectives, and beliefs. We welcome students, faculty, and scholars from around the world regardless of age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital or familial status, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. It is critical to the success of Lehigh University that we open our campus to the very best faculty, staff, students, and scholars from around the world.

**2.2.7. Welcoming and Safe Campus Environment.** Faculty are committed to maintaining a campus environment that is free of threats, or other unacceptable behaviors, so that everyone is safe as they pursue their studies, conduct research, teach, or provide service. We expect that all members of the campus community will be respectful and civil.

**2.2.8. Responsibility to Manage the Curriculum.** Faculty are committed to our role at the university, in which the faculty assume responsibility to continuously manage, review, and improve the academic curricula offered at Lehigh University, ensuring relevance and high quality.

**2.2.9. Responsibility to Mentor Students.** Faculty are committed to our role as mentors to the students participating in our academic programs. We strive to instill in our students the values of academic integrity and professionalism throughout their studies at Lehigh University.

### **2.3. The Faculty Members' Rights and Responsibilities**

The rights and responsibilities of members of the University community are not fundamentally different from those of other members of society. In support of the University's central functions as an institution of higher learning, a major responsibility of the administration is to protect and encourage the faculty in its teaching, research, creative development, and public service. The authority to discipline faculty members in appropriate cases derives from the shared commitment by the faculty and the administration to preserve conditions hospitable to these pursuits.

### **2.3.1. Faculty Rights**

- free inquiry, exchange of ideas, and setting research agendas;
- the right to present controversial material relevant to a course of instruction;
- enjoyment of academic freedom (see R&P 2.1.1)
- participation in the governance of the University, as provided by R&P, including
  - approval of course content and manner of instruction,
  - establishment of requirements for matriculation and for degrees,
  - appointment and promotion of faculty,
  - input for the selection of chairs of departments and certain academic administrators,
  - discipline of members of the faculty, and the formulation of rules and procedures for discipline of students,
  - establishment of norms for teaching responsibilities and for evaluation of both faculty and student achievement, and
  - determination of the forms of departmental governance;
- the right to be judged by one's colleagues, in matters of promotion, tenure, and discipline, on the basis of the faculty member's professional qualifications and professional conduct in accordance with the standards and processes stated in the Rules & Procedures of the Faculty of Lehigh University and principles of fundamental fairness.

The following sections identify key faculty responsibilities but are not meant to be exhaustive. It is expected that case adjudication, the lessons of experience, and evolving standards of the profession will promote reasoned adaptation and change of this Code.

### **2.3.2. Responsibilities to the Profession**

Faculty members, guided by a deep conviction of the worth and dignity of their advancement of knowledge, recognize the special responsibilities placed upon them.

2.3.2.1. Their primary responsibility to their subject is to seek and state the truth as they see it. To this end, faculty devote their energies to developing and improving their scholarly competence in terms of research and teaching.

2.3.2.2. They accept the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge.

2.3.2.3. They practice intellectual honesty and adhere to the University Policy on [Ethical Conduct in Academic Research, Scholarship and Creative Activities](#).

### **2.3.3. Responsibilities to Undergraduate and Graduate Students**

2.3.3.1. The faculty members' central responsibility to all students is to impart a knowledge and understanding of a field of study, to develop in students appropriate and relevant skills, and to do so in accordance with the best standards of scholarship, pedagogy, and ethical standards in the discipline.

2.3.3.2. Faculty members demonstrate respect for students as individuals and adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides and counselors.

2.3.3.3. Faculty members establish and maintain an inclusive learning environment in the classroom, laboratory, and field.

2.3.3.4. Faculty members avoid any exploitation of students for personal purposes either in or out of the classroom.

2.3.3.5. Faculty members deal with students justly and impartially, regardless of their physical, mental, emotional, political, economic, social, racial, or religious characteristics or participation in extracurricular activities.

2.3.3.6. Faculty members accept and carry out faithfully those duties central to the instructional commitment they have with their students including prompt and regular meeting of classes and student advising and consultation.

2.3.3.7. Faculty members strive for a timely, just, and unprejudiced appraisal of all student work. Faculty members owe students the right of review of their work and grades given, and in case of serious grievance or dispute, the right of appeal.

2.3.3.8. Faculty members secure permission and give credit for the use of original student contributions in their lectures or publications, in the same manner and degree as for materials from other sources.

2.3.3.9. Faculty members encourage and protect honest performance by the student. They should pursue suspected cases of cheating and plagiarism by students.

2.3.3.10. Faculty members do not disclose confidential information about their students except as required by law or provided for by university regulations and procedures (see University's policy on the privacy of student records and FERPA law).

### **2.3.4. Responsibility to Other Faculty, Staff, and Administration**

2.3.4.1. Faculty members strive to treat faculty, staff and administration with respect. Our coworkers are colleagues and as such must be afforded the dignity, we claim for ourselves. Allegations of unprofessional conduct either to other colleagues or to the students are themselves unprofessional. Moreover, faculty members should consider an honest discussion with the allegedly erring colleague as a possible first step in resolution.

2.3.4.2. Faculty members should acknowledge indebtedness to colleagues and other scholars by proper citation.

2.3.4.3. Faculty members should strive to be objective in professional judgment of colleagues.

2.3.4.4. Faculty members should accept a fair share of faculty responsibility for the governance of the institution. Those new to leadership roles should seek out and adopt best practices for their positions and routinely seek feedback on their performance from both subordinates and superiors.

### **2.3.5. Responsibility to the University**

2.3.5.1. When faculty members engage in activities outside the university, it is their responsibility to make it clear, when circumstances require, that they are acting as individuals and not as representatives of the university.

2.3.5.2. Faculty members maintain in strict confidence all departmental or university matters agreed to be confidential through departmental and university policy. If any issue or matter is of such a nature that a faculty member, as a matter of conscience, must speak out, this intention should be stated beforehand to all concerned.

2.3.5.3. Faculty shall not use University resources or facilities on a significant scale for personal or commercial purposes (see University Policy in conflict of interest in research & R&P section 2.5).

## **DRAFT--Framework for Procedures for Faculty Code of Ethics**

### **Getting the information to faculty:**

All current faculty will have to vote on whether or not we adopt the Faculty Code of Ethics (section 2 of R&P). Assuming it is approved, all faculty must be made aware of the changes to R&P and to the process for reporting/responding to violations.

All incoming faculty will read the Code of Ethics and sign a document saying they will adhere to them. This is to make sure all new faculty are aware of the Code and reporting structure.

### **Framework: Process for reporting infractions against the Faculty Code of Ethics**

Any individual that believes that a faculty member, including any serving as an academic administrator, has violated the Faculty Code of Ethics should report the offense. A description of how to report follows.

All formal allegations are directed to the Provost and are reviewed by Equal Opportunity Compliance Coordinator and University Counsel and are directed to the appropriate structures to deal with them:

- Cases that seem to involve infractions of the [University's Policy Harassment and Non-Discrimination](#) (Title IX) are handled by the Equal Opportunity Compliance Coordinator (EOCC) already in place as specified in this policy.
- Cases that fall under the [Ethical Conduct in Academic research, scholarship, and creative activities](#) are handled the structure already in place as specified in this policy.
- Infractions against the Faculty Code of Ethics should be brought to the Deputy Provost for Faculty Affairs. *[This process needs to be put in place, and our ideas are outlined here for discussion]*
  - To the extent possible, intra-departmental violations should be handled by the Department Chair and/or appropriate Dean. If the violation is not handled to the satisfaction of involved parties, a formal report should be made to the Deputy Provost for Faculty Affairs. Alternatively, a formal report to the DPFA can be made directly by the involved party.
- The Deputy Provost of Academic Affairs will engage trained faculty mediators to investigate the reported offense. Based on their findings, the faculty investigators will make a recommendation for the outcome to the Deputy Provost. In consultation with the Provost, a determination for the course of action will be determined.
- Outcomes (described further below) could include any of the following (or a combination): transfer to the appropriate campus office (i.e. EOCC or VPR), no action,

recommendation for mediation between involved parties, recommendation for training via Human Resources, a written warning, a written censure, suspension without pay, dismissal for cause. Note that repeat offenders should expect more serious outcomes with subsequent offenses.

- Recommendation for mediation involves both parties agreeing to discuss the nature of the offense in the presence of a trained faculty mediator.
- Recommendation for training via Human Resources involves advising the either or both parties to participate in an appropriate training program.
- A written warning constitutes communication of the nature of the misconduct, the method of correction, and the consequence of continued misconduct. A copy of the warning will be maintained in the offices of the Deputy Provost of Academic Affairs and the appropriate Dean's Office.
- A written censure constitutes communication of Institutional rebuke that contains a description of the censured misconduct. If a censure is issued, a repeat offense will be followed by either suspension without pay or dismissal for cause. A copy of the censure will be maintained in the offices of the DPFA and the appropriate Dean's office.
- Suspension without pay means disciplinary suspension without regular salary for a stated period of time. Unless otherwise noted, the terms of a suspension will include loss of normal employee privileges (i.e. access to University property) (add appropriate R&P section).
- Dismissal for cause means termination of employment (see R&P 2.2.11).

Faculty have the opportunity for appeal via the Faculty Personnel Committee.