



Ethical Conduct Standards: Guidance for University Members



Office of Compliance, Investigations and Ethics



University of
Pittsburgh

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I. PREAMBLE

The University of Pittsburgh thrives by forging new paths to mold better futures and by embracing each setback as fuel for something greater. At our core, we're focused on human impact and the relentless pursuit of change, for good. It is with that pursuit in mind that this collection of ethical standards is presented; intended for use by university members, including staff, faculty, and third-party vendors. At the University of Pittsburgh, progress is always in progress.

II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE/VALUES

Our purpose is to improve lives and communities – at every scale – by creating knowledge and leveraging our expertise to tackle some of society's greatest and most pressing challenges.

The following standards have been compiled for use as a resource by employees in all areas of the university, to unify us under the ethical expectations of the University, allowing us to better embody Pitt's universal values of:

- Academic Excellence
- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Inclusion
- Sustainability; and
- Community

We are proud of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni, and hope you take pride in being associated with a community of learners who work together to attain common goals. We encourage you to use these standards as a guide for how to ethically contribute to our community.

III. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

a. **Forged in Individuality:** Standards relating to diversity, inclusion, equity, privacy, and respectful interaction among university members.

- We will promote the values of equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic and cultural diversity.
- We will maintain a community free from harassment.
- We will afford the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services regardless of ability status.

- We will respect the privacy of one another and maintain the privacy and confidentiality of personal information and educational records.
- We will not engage in retaliation against any person who speaks up or provides information in good faith about an instance of wrongdoing or conduct inconsistent with these standards.

Related University Policies:

- [AC 07 Access to and Release of Educational Records](#)
- [CS 07 Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action](#)
- [CS 08 Notice of Privacy Practices for Protected Health Information \(PHI\) Pursuant to HIPAA](#)
- [CS 27 Title IX Policy](#)

b. Forged in Integrity: Standards relating to ethical decision making, collaboration, and relationships.

- We will act in good faith with due regard for the best interests of the institution.
- We will uphold academic freedom.
- We will avoid both actual conflicts of interest and the appearance of such conflicts and devote our primary professional allegiance to the University and its mission of teaching, research, and public service.
- We will be good stewards of university resources and ensure that they are used on behalf of the university.
- We will not use our positions with the university for our own private gain or to give the appearance of University sanction.
- We will not use our titles or positions for personal promotion.
- We will not use university funds, facilities, or services to participate in political campaigns or make political contributions.
- We will ensure that if our personal social media activity references our university affiliation, that we will be responsible for content and use appropriate disclaimers.
- We will ensure that accounting and financial records are accurate, clear, and complete.
- We will ensure that certifications are accurately and honestly made.

Related University Policies:

- [ER 03 Conflict of Interest for University of Pittsburgh Employees](#)
- [CS 02 Consensual Relationships](#)
- [AC 39 Guidelines on Academic Integrity – Student and Faculty Obligations and Hearing](#)
- [CS 20 Sexual Misconduct](#)

c. Forged in Responsibility: Standards relating to university citizenship, health, and safety.

- We will abide by federal, state, and local laws.
- We will abide by university and departmental policies that affect our campus roles.
- We will promote and maintain a drug-free workplace.
- We will work to actively prevent and report violent, threatening, or intimidating behavior.
- We will promptly report all crimes occurring on campus to the University of Pittsburgh Police Department.
- We will make immediate report of suspected child abuse to both Childline and to the University of Pittsburgh Police Department or the Office of University Counsel.

Related University Policies:

- [AO 07 Campus Crime Awareness: Crime Reporting, Crime Alerts, and Emergency Notification](#)
- [CS 04 Drug-Free Workplace/Drug-Free Schools](#)
- [CS 17 Protection of Children from Abuse](#)
- [AC 61 Student Immunizations](#)

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

a. Education and Training

- All new staff and faculty will receive training regarding these ethical standards and related policies and will acknowledge completion of training.
- Thereafter on an annual basis all university members will receive ethics training.

- The Office of Compliance, Investigations & Ethics is a resource to all University members regarding compliance with or questions about the University's ethical standards.

b. Reporting

- Any concerns or reports regarding the University's ethical standards should be made to the [Pitt Concern Connection](#). Reports can be made anonymously and will be routed to the appropriate university departments for review and timely response.
- Reporting parties can expect to be protected against retaliation.