



# **HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

## **ETHICAL PRINCIPLES**

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## INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions play a significant role in scientific research, publication, education, and service to society. This role imposes upon members of higher education institutions the obligation to act in accordance with ethical standards, grounded in principles of trust and a sense of responsibility.

The ethical values and principles articulated in this document provide guidance for higher education institution members in resolving ethical dilemmas encountered in the workplace, and in relationships with colleagues, students, administrators, institutions outside of higher education, and national and international communities.

Members of higher education institutions accept the principles of respecting every individual's value and dignity, pursuing truth, striving toward excellence, and fostering a democratic culture. To achieve these ideals, protecting the freedom of scientific research, learning, and teaching, and offering equal opportunities and possibilities to all, is essential. Members of higher education institutions commit to conducting all these processes guided by the ethical values and principles outlined below.

This document serves as a guide for members of higher education institutions to understand, implement, and adhere to the ethical values and principles they must meticulously follow throughout their professional lives. Any intentional or unintentional violation of the ethical values and principles specified here, whether overt or covert, may result in various sanctions.

Higher education institution members must adopt the ethical values and principles specified here as a guide to earn and maintain the trust and respect of colleagues, students, families, and others in the educational community throughout the education and teaching process. In this regard, the definitions, values, and principles detailed below establish a standard by which all educators can be evaluated from an ethical perspective.

## CHAPTER 1: DEFINITIONS, GENERAL PRINCIPLES, AND VALUES

### A. DEFINITIONS

**Ethics:** Ethics is the domain of thought wherein people reflect on the foundations of living with values and develop theoretical and social tools to distinguish right from wrong and to identify and apply appropriate behavioral norms.

**Academic Ethics:** Academic ethics refers to adhering to ethical standards in all stages of scientific work and academic activities, including the dissemination and transmission of knowledge and expertise to students, the production and assessment of scientific research, interactions with different stakeholders in society, and the promotion and advancement of scientific institutions and universities.

**Fabrication:** Fabrication refers to the creation of non-existent data and results.

**Falsification:** Falsification involves deliberately altering data or results, or omitting data.

**Duplicate Publication:** Publishing the same study in multiple publication venues.

**Salami Slicing:** Publishing a study in parts to increase the number of publications.

**Plagiarism:** Presenting others' ideas, data, works, and publications as one's own without proper attribution and citation, following scientific procedures.

**Honorary Authorship:** Appearing as an author in a study without having made a sufficient contribution (in the design of the research, data collection, evaluation, preparation, and approval of the publication).

**Ghostwriting:** Excluding someone from authorship despite their contribution to the study.

**Violation of Voluntary Participation Principle:** Forcing students or other groups of participants to partake in a study.

**Lack of Informed Consent:** Failing to provide adequate information to volunteers about the stages and risks of the study before obtaining their consent.

**Breach of Confidentiality Principle:** Sharing personal or institutional data obtained from participants without legal obligation or failing to maintain the confidentiality of participants' identities.

## **B. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

This regulatory document is based on five fundamental values and principles:

- (1) Academic Freedom and Autonomy
- (2) Academic Honesty
- (3) Responsibility and Accountability
- (4) Protection and Promotion of Fundamental Rights
- (5) Respect for Others

1. **Academic Freedom and Autonomy:** Academic freedom refers to the faculty's ability to make individual choices freely, without imposition or pressure. Academic autonomy signifies the institution's and academics' ability to determine their academic and scientific work areas and methods freely without dependency on external authorities, commands, or instructions.
2. **Academic Honesty:** Academic honesty strengthens the bonds of trust and integrity within the academic community and ensures public confidence in science and scientists. It entails adherence to ethical standards in all academic activities, including transparency and accountability.
3. **Responsibility and Accountability:** Responsibility and accountability involve taking personal and professional responsibility for scientific and academic conduct and activities, fulfilling assigned duties with necessary quality and quantity, safeguarding the institution's identity and reputation, efficiently using financial and material resources, and collaborating effectively with other individuals and units.
4. **Protection and Promotion of Fundamental Rights:** Higher education institutions protect and promote the fundamental human rights of all members and society as a whole. Individuals must ensure that their actions and decisions consistently support and enhance these rights.
5. **Respect for Others:** Universities respect and value human diversity, prohibiting discrimination and harassment. This entails treating colleagues, employees, students, stakeholders, and individuals outside the university with respect and courtesy and considering their dignity and needs in all interactions.

## **C. VALUES**

It is essential for scholars and members of higher education institutions to avoid actions contrary to ethical values. Scientific work is founded on trust. It is believed that scientific work is conducted honestly and accurately, that researchers collect data correctly, use appropriate analytical techniques and statistics, and report results appropriately.

Academic honesty is one of the most crucial values in the process of seeking knowledge. All

individuals conducting research are expected to rigorously adhere to academic honesty standards in carrying out and presenting their research. Researchers must be honest with themselves.

Commitment to professional standards forms the foundation of personal integrity in a research career. Research relies on ethical values, such as honesty, compliance with rules, openness, impartiality, reliability, and respect for others. Scientific standards entail adherence to these values throughout the research process. Transparency in sharing research tools, fairness in evaluating support offers, respect for colleagues and students, and honesty in the public sharing of research results, as well as in their preparation and presentation, are fundamental principles. Resources from research funds should be used responsibly. It is essential to adhere to research and publication ethics principles in all stages, from designing a scientific study to data collection, reporting, and publishing, and until the publication reaches the reader. Editors and reviewers must adhere to ethical principles in the publication stage of scientific research.

Failure to comply with scientific standards and violation of ethical rules can be graded. The most serious violation is scientific misconduct. Scientific misconduct includes providing false information, tampering with data, or academic theft (fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism – FFP) during the proposal, implementation, review, or reporting stages of research. The key difference between scientific misconduct and mistakes or negligence is the intent to deceive.

Academic institutions and educational institutions should be structured and managed in alignment with academic culture and values. Merit holds a unique place among academic values. Scientific merit should be the primary criterion in all aspects of academic life, including teaching, management, and academic evaluations. Academic culture and traditions play a meaningful role in management and educational ethics. Management ethics and educational ethics cannot be considered separately from scientific ethic.

## **CHAPTER TWO: RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACULTY MEMBERS**

Faculty members have responsibilities toward their colleagues, their own disciplines, the university, and society.

### **2.1 Responsibilities of Faculty Members Toward Colleagues**

Faculty members bear responsibilities toward their colleagues stemming from their membership in a scientific community.

In this regard, a faculty member:

- (a) Acts respectfully and fairly toward colleagues, whether in an academic or administrative capacity,
- (b) Defends the academic freedom rights of colleagues,
- (c) Is fair and objective when providing professional opinions or judgments about colleagues' work and refrains from making knowingly false or malicious statements about them,
- (d) Does not disclose confidential or personal information about colleagues unless legally required,
- (e) Actively assists in the professional development of colleagues.
- (f) Does not discriminate against colleagues for political reasons or based on race, language, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, physical disability, or arbitrary and personal reasons,
- (g) Does not intentionally hinder or deny colleagues the use of their professional rights and privileges,

- (h) avoids exerting undue influence or using coercive methods to impact the professional decisions of colleagues.

## **2.2 Responsibilities of Faculty Members Toward Their Own Disciplines**

Acting with a belief in the value and dignity of advancing knowledge, faculty members are aware of the special responsibility entrusted to them. Their primary responsibility toward their disciplines is to seek the truth and express it as they understand it. To this end, faculty members commit themselves to the development and improvement of their scientific expertise.

In this context, a faculty member:

- (a) Stays current in their academic field,
- (b) Maintains academic honesty in all scientific endeavors,
- (c) Avoids disparaging other disciplines or engaging in behavior that could undermine the confidence of students in other university programs and academic departments,
- (d) Does not provide misleading statements or false information about professional qualifications or intentionally conceal facts related to their competence and qualifications.
- (e) Does not accept awards, gifts, hospitality, or donations that might compromise or appear to influence their professional judgment and conduct,
- (f) Does not undertake project research, consultancy, examination, thesis, appointment, or promotion jury roles in areas outside their expertise,
- (g) Does not serve on appointment and promotion juries for individuals with whom they have a conflict of interest.

## **2.3 Responsibilities of Faculty Members Toward the University**

As members of an academic institution, faculty members strive above all to be effective educators and scholars.

In this regard, a faculty member:

- (a) Takes on the responsibility of participating in university governance at various levels, including committees, commissions, and other organizational structures,
- (b) Avoids engaging in professional activities outside the institution that are incompatible with their duties and responsibilities at the university,
- (c) Adheres to merit principles, acting objectively and fairly during recruitment, evaluation, promotion, or termination processes in line with university regulations,
- (d) Treats all department, faculty, or university personnel with respect and fairness, does not use them for personal gain or private work, and refrains from verbal or physical harassment,
- (e) Uses the university's financial resources with honesty,
- (f) Does not use institutional or professional positions for personal benefit,
- (g) Refrains from utilizing university facilities for personal gains.

## **2.4 Responsibilities of Faculty Members Toward Society**

Faculty members hold responsibilities toward various segments of society. They assess the priority of these responsibilities in light of their obligations to students, colleagues, their discipline, and their institution.

In this context, a faculty member:

- (a) Strives to play an active role in enhancing the economic, cultural, and intellectual capacity of society,

- (b) Distinguishes between scientific findings and personal opinions in public statements,
- (c) Exercises caution in differentiating between their own views and the official views of the university in any public discourse, explicitly stating when their views as a university staff member differ from their personal opinions regarding research, teaching, service, and professional duties,
- (d) Accepts serving society as a social responsibility, acknowledging the contributions made to their own development,
- (e) Undertakes, voluntarily, necessary educational and service efforts to raise awareness in their field of work.

### **CHAPTER 3: ETHICS IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, PUBLICATION, AND EVALUATION**

Scientific ethics encompass scientific research, the publication of research results, and the processes of scientific evaluation.

#### **3.1 Scientific Research and Publication Ethics**

Scientific research involves identifying a problem and investigating, examining, and evaluating it through universal scientific methods. The fundamental principles to be applied in scientific research include having the necessary competence in designing and conducting the research, maintaining self-criticism, honesty, and transparency during the research and analysis of findings, and respecting the work of those who have conducted or are conducting similar research. The three key principles of scientific research ethics are approaching the research problem honestly, reporting research results openly and honestly, and recognizing the contributions of everyone involved in the research.

A scientific study must adhere to research methodology and research ethics. Before beginning the research, the roles and distribution of all rights that arise from publications should be clearly defined. Misrepresenting data, fabricating false data, or using someone else's data without permission constitutes an ethical violation. All sources and methods used for data collection and analysis, including electronic ones, must be presented in the study.

The purpose of scientific publication is to disseminate produced and developed knowledge for sharing, thereby advancing science for the benefit of humanity. A scientific publication prepared for this purpose should ensure that the information within is accurate and complete, does not deliberately omit information, adheres to "scientific ethics" during the stages of data production and development, and presents information and data organized within a scientific framework. The content of the publication should be unbiased and unaffected by personal interests, concerns, political views, or beliefs. All sources used in the publication must be appropriately cited, and those who contributed to the creation, compilation, measurement, and preparation of information in the publication should be acknowledged as authors or in a note of thanks.

Forms of plagiarism include presenting someone else's work (written, printed, or electronic) and artistic applications as one's own, presenting a portion of it without proper citation as though it were original, or presenting findings or artistic applications without clearly indicating that they are quotes (such as by changing the font, italicizing, putting in quotes, marking in the text, or referencing in footnotes or the bibliography). Plagiarism also includes rephrasing or paraphrasing information, ideas, or applications to appear as one's own. Providing incomplete information when citing, failing to give the correct details for citations, or using a source without attribution due to a lapse in memory (subconscious illusion) are subtle forms of plagiarism.

An abstract presented at a conference or meeting does not prevent the publication from being submitted for printing. However, it must be specified in the application that the publication was

presented at a conference or meeting. Republishing a study in different languages is acceptable, but when applying for publication, information about the initial publication must be provided, and the original publication must be cited. Authors must also provide detailed information about other publications in progress in different languages or similar publications in the submission process.

Authorship rights must be observed in publications. Authorship, as defined by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, requires taking responsibility and assuming duties at all stages of the research and publication. To prevent potential disputes later, it is advisable to determine at the outset of the study who will be considered authors, supporters, or recipients of acknowledgments. The order of names should reflect the extent of contribution to the research.

### **3.2 Scientific Evaluation Ethics**

Certain fundamental ethical values and principles must be observed in evaluating publications, academic promotions, expert reviews, examination juries, and journal peer reviews.

In this context, a faculty member:

- (a) Acts independently and impartially,
- (b) Behaves honestly, tells the truth, and demonstrates sensitivity in respecting confidentiality principles,
- (c) Acts according to the principle of equality,
- (d) Avoids prejudices, behaves consistently, and ensures clarity, conciseness, and openness in scientific evaluations,
- (e) Adheres to the time allocated for evaluation and, in the evaluation process, does not merely criticize but also provides constructive feedback and suggestions,
- (f) Does not misuse peer review duties for personal gain through inspiration or intellectual theft,
- (g) Does not obstruct or delay the publication of an article unless scientific requirements warrant it,
- (h) Does not deviate from scientific requirements when assigning reviewers, taking care to assign those working in the relevant field as reviewers,
- (i) Refuses evaluation requests outside their area of expertise.



## **CHAPTER 4: ETHICS IN EDUCATION AND TEACHING**

### **4.1 Responsibilities of Faculty Members in the Educational Process**

Faculty members are required to adhere to ethical values and principles throughout the educational process. In this regard, a faculty member:

- (a) Delivers courses in accordance with the content approved by the relevant academic committees,
- (b) Provides support and assistance to students with disabilities as required by relevant laws,
- (c) Attends classes at the designated times and places as specified in the course schedule,
- (d) Prepares a written course syllabus for each class and makes it accessible to all students from the first class onward. A course syllabus should include the following information:
  - General course information (course code and title, prerequisites, weekly schedule, instructor's name, office number, phone number, email address, etc.),
  - Course objectives previously approved by the department or academic unit,
  - Teaching methods (lectures, discussions, lab work, etc.),
  - Required materials for the course (books, pamphlets, library resources, etc.),
  - Main and supplementary topics covered in the course,
  - Required readings, written assignments, or oral exercises and their estimated due dates,
  - Methods and criteria used to evaluate students' academic performance,
  - Explanations regarding academic honesty and consequences of dishonest behavior,
  - The instructor's office hours,
- (e) Does not disclose students' grades without a court order or written permission from the student, as mandated by relevant laws. Grades should only be accessible to university administration, the faculty member, and relevant personnel for educational and legal purposes,
- (f) Does not miss classes or related university duties without permission from authorized entities or valid reasons.

### **4.2 Responsibilities of Faculty Members Toward Students**

As instructors, faculty members respect their students and demonstrate full commitment to their roles as intellectual guides and advisors. In this regard, faculty members:

- (a) Create an environment that encourages and inspires students to engage in research and learning,
- (b) Encourage students to learn the fundamental values and principles of the profession or discipline, freely express their ideas, and think independently,
- (c) Clearly define the learning outcomes for each course or program, establish the requirements, and set criteria for success,
- (d) Evaluate students' work and performance fairly, impartially, and honestly, offering assessments that contribute to students' learning, and provide timely and constructive feedback,
- (e) Evaluate and announce students' assignments and exam results promptly,
- (f) Protect students' freedom to learn and does not allow practices that may harm their rights to education,
- (g) Consider students' feedback regarding the course,
- (h) Respect students' privacy concerning their personal information, keeping it confidential except where disclosure is legally required,
- (i) Inform students of the professional and intellectual responsibilities they must uphold in their educational process, other activities, or public services,

- (j) Do not exploit students for personal gain or present joint work without acknowledging students' contributions,
- (k) Act fairly and objectively when providing references for students,
- (l) Avoid personal relationships with students that exceed the boundaries of professional conduct.
- (m) Recognize that any form of harassment is unacceptable and act accordingly,
- (n) Continually enhance expertise through research in their field to ensure that students receive current and high-quality education,
- (o) Acknowledge students' diverse abilities and characteristics and strive to contribute to each student's intellectual and personal development,
- (p) Show respect for students' emotions and thoughts when addressing sensitive topics,
- (q) Set an example for students, encouraging them to uphold high professional ethical standards and achieve well-rounded development,
- (r) Foster mutual respect among students and between students and faculty members,
- (s) Take care to protect students from environments that may hinder their learning or pose risks to their health and safety,
- (t) Do not accept any gifts or favors from students.

## **CHAPTER 5: ETHICS IN SERVICE**

### **5.1 Ethical Values and Principles in the Provision of Services by Faculty Members**

Faculty members must consider certain ethical values and principles when providing services. In this regard, faculty members:

- (a) Act according to principles of legality, justice, equality, and honesty in their actions and services within the scope of public service. They do not discriminate based on language, religion, philosophical beliefs, political views, race, gender, or similar reasons and do not engage in behaviors that violate or restrict human rights and freedoms or that hinder equal opportunities,
- (b) Show sensitivity to social issues (environment, health, education, justice, etc.) with consideration for the benefit of humanity,
- (c) Do not neglect their obligations to the university to participate in any outside activity or work,
- (d) Conduct income-generating activities outside the university in accordance with current legal regulations and the principle of integrity,
- (e) Avoid engaging in commercial advertising,
- (f) Do not use their institutional and professional title and position for personal gain,
- (g) Protect the university's reputation and status within society when participating in external activities,
- (h) Present their views to the public in a fair, accurate, complete, and objective manner,
- (i) Refrain from activities that could jeopardize their honesty and impartiality,
- (j) Conduct public services in accordance with defined standards and procedures, providing necessary explanations to those benefiting from the services throughout the service period,
- (k) Avoid arbitrary behavior, pressure, insult, and threatening practices, do not prepare reports without clear and definite evidence, and do not request or accept services, benefits, or similar advantages that are not allowed by regulations,
- (l) Refer matters outside their authority to the relevant department or authorized individual,
- (m) Inform the authorities if asked to participate in actions or illegal acts incompatible with ethical principles, or if they become aware of or witness such actions during their service,
- (n) Act with caution to avoid conflicts of interest, taking necessary steps to prevent conflicts and informing relevant individuals immediately if one is identified,
- (o) Do not use their position, title, or authority to obtain benefits for themselves, relatives, or third parties or to act as an intermediary,
- (p) Avoid selling or distributing their own or others' books, journals, cassettes, CDs, and similar products for profit by using their position, title, and authority,

- (q) Do not use official or confidential information obtained during or as a result of their duties for economic, political, or social benefit for themselves, relatives, or third parties, whether directly or indirectly. They do not disclose such information to any institution, organization, or individual outside of authorized authorities during or after their tenure,
- (r) Do not accept any gifts, directly or indirectly, from real or legal persons with whom they have a business, service, or interest relationship concerning their duties, for themselves, relatives, or third parties,
- (s) Avoid waste and extravagance in using public buildings, vehicles, and other public assets and resources. They act effectively, efficiently, and prudently with time, resources, workforce, and opportunities.

## **CHAPTER 6: ETHICS IN ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION**

Academic institution administrators must demonstrate a firm and determined stance toward individuals violating the principles of scientific ethics, regardless of their position. Everyone must protect and defend academic ethical principles under all circumstances, without exemption from external scrutiny. Confidentiality and the presumption of innocence must be strictly observed in all investigations and inquiries.

Scientific productivity is unattainable in environments lacking trust, peace, and harmony. Administrators must ensure a peaceful and secure academic environment. It is the responsibility of management to provide the necessary physical conditions, research environment, technical support, and staff.

Ethics committees established in higher education institutions to examine unethical attitudes and behaviors must act independently and impartially, and institutional administrators must stand by the decisions made in the context of shared responsibility.

Higher education institution administrators are also bound to adhere to ethical values and principles. In this regard, administrators:

- (a) Recognize the personal honor and professional dignity of faculty members and believe that ethical principles are indispensable and non-transferable values,
- (b) Do not discriminate among faculty members based on religion, race, language, ethnicity, or gender,
- (c) Work to achieve academic autonomy, considering respect for academic freedom and diverse thoughts and opinions as a core value of university life,
- (d) Base evaluations of faculty appointment and promotion applications on academic performance criteria accepted by the university senate and do not deviate from professional standards in recruitment, promotion, and appointments. They exercise maximum diligence to prevent the violation of the principle of merit in specific qualification descriptions in academic unit job postings,
- (e) Declare that nepotism, bribery, harassment, and bullying are serious ethical violations and prioritize combating these issues within university life,
- (f) Take every measure for education, awareness, and information to ensure that behaviors such as harassment, bullying, and intimidation are entirely outside of academic life and commit to solidarity with those subjected to such behaviors,
- (g) Act according to the principles of equality and merit when facilitating faculty participation in scientific activities, both domestically and internationally,
- (h) Avoid restrictions on personnel rights that harm career advancement,
- (i) Ensure the protection of the legal rights arising from faculty members' contributions in science, arts, research, and publication,

- (j) Distribute the teaching load and additional teaching requests of faculty members and academic unit managers equitably, considering the expertise and competence of faculty members,
- (k) Treat students, employees, and faculty members as equal individuals, regardless of status or role,
- (l) Are attentive to taking necessary measures against any discrimination arising from gender inequality,
- (m) In the use of university resources and management of university affairs, all administrators act transparently and accountably, open to legal scrutiny,
- (n) Do not disclose confidential information obtained during their duties to unauthorized persons without permission,
- (o) Do not accept gifts, loans, or gratuities from any person, company, or organization involved in or seeking to conduct business with the university for personal benefit,
- (p) Ensure appropriate conditions for the independent work of ethics committees, implement ethics committee decisions fairly, and do not remain silent in the face of unethical attitudes and behaviors. Individuals found to have committed ethical violations are not given administrative duties. If unethical behavior is identified during their tenure, necessary actions are taken, and they are removed from administrative positions,
- (q) Ensure the timely and proper implementation of court decisions, as required by constitutional and legal obligations,
- (r) Maintain neutrality in relations with political bodies and other civil society organizations.