

# ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

**Title of Code:       CODE OF ETHICS**

**Academic Code**

Adopted by the University Council, May 15, 1968

Amendment added by Academic Senate, December 16, 1970

## **I.    Introductory Statement**

Membership in the academic profession should mean a commitment to teaching as a profession, and therefore, to attitudes and conduct appropriate to members of that profession. This code attempts to specify what some of that behavior should be with reference to the profession itself, to colleagues, students, civil service employees, and the community. It should be understood that these are suggested standards and that the responsibility for more prescriptive rules of conduct is shared by the Board of Regents, the various administrative units of the University, and the University faculty.

## **II.   Relationship of Faculty Members to the Teaching Profession**

- A. University faculty members should constantly uphold the value and dignity of the profession to which they belong. They should look upon themselves and their colleagues as seekers after knowledge and truth, and they should at all times insist on the academic freedom to pursue truth and to teach it as they perceive it to be. They should be willing to discuss controversial issues in as objective a manner as possible. When the occasion demands, they should take a stand which is in keeping with their convictions. Good judgment should prevail in their handling of such situations.
- B. Faculty members should look upon recruitment as one of the responsibilities of a professional teacher and should lend encouragement to qualified young people who indicate an interest in teaching and others who show unusual promise.
- C. A member of the University faculty should feel a responsibility for doing the finest possible job of teaching through careful attention to daily preparation, through reading, study, and objective self-appraisal. They should consistently demonstrate the best in scholarly competence and in the methodology of teaching.
- D. As seekers after truth and knowledge University faculty should be students of the latest research in their particular field. They should respect scientific inquiry as a scholarly method of discovering new knowledge. They should hold to high standards of intellectual honesty and objective criticism in their own research efforts and in evaluating the work of others.
- E. University faculty members' first responsibility is to the particular assignment for which they are employed. They should, however, feel a further obligation to their department, their college, and to the University as a whole. They should willingly assume the committee or board assignments for which they are best suited and should make every effort to contribute meaningfully to the work of such groups. They should see to it, however, that they do not become involved in these duties to the detriment of their first responsibility.

- F. Members of the University faculty should belong to and participate in those professional organizations and learned societies which are most closely related to their field of scholarly endeavor.
- G. Faculty members should respect the obligation of their contract with the University. If they decide to leave, they should give adequate notice as prescribed by the Board of Regents.

### **III. Relationship with Colleagues**

- A. Faculty members should cooperate with their colleagues and respect them as individuals. Each person has a different kind of contribution to make, and its importance should be recognized.
- B. Faculty members should attain their professional goals by ethical means. They should respect the integrity of their colleagues. In so doing, they should refrain from making rash statements in criticism of their fellows, from ascribing unworthy motives to them, and from spreading malicious gossip. They should refrain at all times from making derogatory comments about their colleagues when students are present.
- C. In the use of materials borrowed from colleagues or elsewhere in their lectures, publications, or other public presentations, faculty members should follow accepted professional practices.

### **IV. Administration-Faculty Relationships**

- A. Administrators should recognize the qualities and special characteristics of scholarly competence and they should employ prescribed FSC procedures to encourage and reward such competence.
- B. The University faculty has the right to expect a competent, frank, scholarly administration that is able to give dynamic and purposeful direction to the institution. In order to make an effective contribution toward these ends each administrator should be aware of the needs and objectives of the disciplines under his or her direction and should accept the obligation to meet the needs and to achieve the objectives.
- C. All institutional relations between faculty and administration should be professional in nature. No administrator should encourage or accept hearsay comments regarding faculty or fellow administrators. Anonymous letters should have no status whatsoever. Statements concerning the quality of people's work, their moral or professional character, or any other attribute should be given no credence unless the person making them is willing to personally support their statements and to supply evidence of their accuracy.
- D. In all cases where faculty members are accused of unprofessional or immoral conduct, the accused faculty member should be given a hearing. Persons accused should be informed before a hearing in writing of the charges against them and upon what evidence the charges are based. They should have the opportunity to be heard in their own defense by all bodies that pass judgment upon their case and they should be permitted to have with them advisors of their own choosing to act as counsel.
- E. The University Administration should take all possible steps to arbitrate within the institution differences that may arise between its faculty members.

## **V. Relationships with the Community**

- A. Faculty members should feel a responsibility to the community in which they live.
- B. As men and women of learning, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances and actions. Therefore, they should strive to be accurate, show respect for the opinions of others, and make an effort to indicate that they are not institutional spokespersons.

## **VI. Involvement in Political Activities**

- A. Outside the classroom the faculty member has the same right as any other citizen to participate in political activities. Partisan political activity is defined as running for political office with a party label; service on a party committee; or actively supporting a partisan candidate for public office through public speaking, serving on a committee, circulating nominating petitions, canvassing, and other similar activities. Faculty members have a special obligation to refrain from political partisanship in their instructional duties.
- B. A faculty member who becomes a candidate for a political office should notify the President in writing of this decision. If the office sought is local, no other action is necessary except assurance to the President that the contemplated activity will not interfere with the faculty member's academic responsibilities. When the office sought is state or national, then the President may request the faculty member to apply for a leave of absence without pay during the period of the campaign or later, when such activity would be expected to take a substantial amount of the faculty member's time.

## **VII. Relationship with Students**

- A. Faculty members should encourage the free pursuit of learning by all of their students. They should strive to hold before their students the scholarly standards of their discipline. They should prepare adequately for each class and strive to develop within students the motivation to work up to their potentials. Faculty members should keep regular office hours during which students may meet with them, and they should try in other ways to have out of class contacts with students which will serve to augment the formal classroom learning experience.
- B. Faculty members should make every reasonable effort to create a climate which fosters honest academic conduct. To this end they should carefully scrutinize their methods of teaching, their assignments, and their system of evaluation in order to ensure that they do encourage honesty in students. Should faculty members detect signs of plagiarism or cheating, it is their obligation to investigate thoroughly and take appropriate measures.
- C. Evaluation of students is an important part of the learning process and it should add to the students' understanding of themselves, as well as the content of the course. The course and the evaluation process exist to enhance students' intellectual development. Faculty members should grade students on the basis of their course performance.

- D. Faculty members should respect the confidential nature of their relationship with students. All information about student views, beliefs, activities, and political association which is acquired through the teacher-student relationship, should be kept confidential. Written records are to be kept only to the extent that they are necessary in assisting students in achieving their educational goals. When records are no longer relevant to this purpose, they should be destroyed. However, judgments of an individual student's abilities and character which are requested by the student should be provided.
- E. The faculty member should avoid an exploitation of students for his or her private advantage both in and outside the classroom. It is expected that the student's assistance in writing of a book, article, paper, etc., be properly acknowledged.
- F. Faculty members should be as diligent in protecting the academic freedom of their students as they are their own.

### **RESOLUTION OF STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE:**

(Amendment to Code of Ethics adopted by Academic Senate, December 16, 1970)

1. Faculty members in their assigned teaching should adhere to the course content approved by committees responsible to the University for determining curricula. Irrelevancy should be avoided.
2. Faculty members should clearly explain to their students the objectives of the course. Teaching should be designed to meet those objectives whether through lecture, demonstration, performance, assignment, or examination.
3. Faculty members should clearly explain to their students methods of evaluation for the final grade. Since the evaluation process exists to enhance the student's intellectual development, grades and criticisms of papers, projects, and examinations should be returned to the student for inspection and discussion as soon as possible considering the faculty member's other professional obligations. Final exams, if administered, should be returned to the student or retained for one term, permitting the opportunity for student review with the instructor if the student desires. It is expected that faculty members will collect sufficient data on the performance of students to justify the final grade. Evaluation of students and award of credit must be based on professionally judged academic performance and not on matters irrelevant to that performance, such as personality, race, religion, sex, degree of political activism or personal beliefs.
4. Faculty members should regularly meet their assigned classes as scheduled. Faculty members who are absent from their duties because of illness should report the fact immediately to their department chairperson. Faculty members who are absent for any reason other than illness, as for attending a professional meeting, should complete a Notice of Absence from Regular Duties form and file it with their department chairperson for prior approval.
5. Faculty members are responsible for communications to their classes policy regarding attendance and consequences of student non-compliance with this policy.

6. Faculty members are expected to post and observe a reasonable number of regular office hours, during which time they are available for student conferences. Faculty should announce office location and hours to their classes. Additional appointment time should be made available when mutually convenient to faculty and students in instances where student schedules conflict with regular office hours.
7. While faculty members' obligations to the community, like rights within the community, cannot be less than those of any citizen, they should not utilize the services of the University in pursuing non-academic concerns.
8. Membership in the academic community imposes on faculty members an obligation to respect the dignity of others, to acknowledge their right to express differing opinions, and to foster and defend intellectual honesty, freedom of inquiry and instruction, and free expression on and off the campus. The expression of dissent and the attempt to produce change, therefore, may not be carried out in ways which injure individuals, damage institutional facilities or disrupt the classes on one's colleagues. Nor should faculty members incite acts of violence to individuals, acts of destruction of property, or acts which interfere with academic freedom.