

# PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

## CODE OF ETHICS

### I. INTRODUCTION

Pepperdine University is a Christian University committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and Christian values. Members of the Pepperdine University community—faculty, staff, students, administrators, members of the Board of Regents, members of the University’s advisory boards, and volunteers—are responsible for maintaining the standards of the institution and of the various communities in which they live. We value integrity, honesty, and fairness and strive to integrate these values into our daily practices.

Our ethical expectations are found in Holy Scripture, the University Mission Statement, the founding vision of George Pepperdine, and the University Affirmation Statement. Holy Scripture provides the ultimate source for our ethical standards, including the two great commands taught by Jesus: the duty to love God and love one’s neighbor as one’s self (Matthew 22: 37-40).

In this spirit, we commit ourselves to the highest standards of ethical conduct. We act with integrity; we treat others with respect and dignity; we carefully steward the University’s resources; we avoid conflicts of interest or commitment; we maintain confidentiality; and we comply with legal and professional obligations. We are individually accountable for our own actions, and we are collectively accountable for upholding these standards of behavior and complying with all applicable laws, policies, standards, and regulations. While human and therefore fallible, we constantly strive to meet our ethical expectations. Moreover, because the Pepperdine community is composed of many distinct constituencies, we understand that, beyond the general ethical principles outlined in this document, we may be subject to additional rules of conduct specific to our respective roles within the community.

### II. ACTING WITH INTEGRITY

We seek to be people who are honorable, forthright, and upright at all times. Our commitment to integrity demands more than mere satisfaction of legal and ethical obligations, although we comply with the law and conform to the highest standards of ethical conduct. Our commitment to integrity means that we actively discern what is right from what is wrong; that what we do flows directly from who we are; that we seek consistency between our inner self and our outward conduct. We value people; we speak the truth; we have the courage of our convictions; and we keep our commitments. We do not condone any form of dishonesty—such as fraud, theft, cheating, or plagiarism—as described more specifically in student, faculty, and staff handbooks and policies.

### III. TREATING OTHERS WITH RESPECT AND DIGNITY

Members of the community are committed to principles of equality and fairness. We follow the profound truth found in the Golden Rule, “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you” (Matthew 7:12).

We do not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of any status or condition protected by applicable federal or state law. Consistent with our affiliation with the Churches of Christ and our faith heritage, we do seek to hire and promote persons who support the goals and mission of the University, including, but not limited to, those who are members of the Churches of Christ.

We respect the inherent worth of each member of the community. We do not engage in any forms of harassment of others. Those in positions of authority, including administrators, supervisors, faculty members, and student leaders exercise their authority fairly and appropriately.

Other expectations about how we treat others with respect and dignity can be found in University policies and in each school's faculty and student handbooks.

#### **IV. STEWARDING THE UNIVERSITY'S RESOURCES**

We are good stewards of the University resources entrusted to us and we prepare accurate and clear reports about those resources. University resources are reserved for business purposes on behalf of the University. We exercise reasonable judgment in the use of University resources, acting with care and prudence. We do not use University resources for personal gain.

We prepare correct and clear financial records and research reports. All entries in University books and accounts accurately reflect each transaction. In reporting on the University's resources, we do not hide, conceal, or mislead; and we promptly report such misconduct when it is discovered.

#### **V. AVOIDING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND COMMITMENT**

We do not have direct or indirect interests or commitments, financial or otherwise, which conflict with the proper discharge of our duties to the University. The primary professional allegiance of all full-time employees lies with Pepperdine University and the advancement of its mission. We do not solicit or accept any gift, service, or favor that might reasonably influence the discharge of our duties or that we know or should know is being offered with the intent to influence our official conduct. We do not accept other employment or engage in business or professional activities outside of the University when such work might reasonably cause real or apparent conflicts of interest or conflicts of commitment. We do not transact business in our official capacity with any business entity of which we are an officer, agent, or member, or in which we own a substantial interest without the explicit prior knowledge and approval of the appropriate senior University officer. We disclose potential conflicts of interest to the appropriate supervisor or officer as soon as possible after we realize that a conflict may have arisen. Additional information is located in the University conflicts of interest policy.

#### **VI. MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY**

We observe and respect the confidentiality rights of all other members of the community, and this duty continues even after we are no longer affiliated with the University. This

right of confidentiality applies to all academic, financial, health-related, personnel, or other non-public information protected either by law or by University policy. However, the right does not preclude the consensual release of information or the disclosure of information within the University when there is a legitimate need for its disclosure. E-mail or other uses of the University's computers or computer network are for business purposes and are not presumed confidential. Additional information is located in the University's Computer and Network Responsible Usage Policy.

## **VII. COMPLYING WITH LEGAL AND PROFESSIONAL OBLIGATIONS**

We comply with all state and federal laws and conform to the highest standards of professional conduct. We transact University business in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and University policies and procedures. We do not misrepresent our status or authority in our dealings with others. To the extent that we belong to professions that are governed by standards specific to the profession (such as attorneys, psychologists, or certified public accountants), we adhere to such professional standards. We conduct ourselves in accordance with professional principles for scholarly work, including upholding academic codes of conduct and professional standards for research.

## **VIII. REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE**

In order to maintain the integrity of the community, we report observed or suspected violations of this code of ethics with a spirit of fairness, honesty, and respect for the rights of others. Those who report alleged misconduct and those against whom allegations are reported are afforded all rights provided by University policies, as well as all applicable state and federal laws. Those who are found to have violated this code will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, termination of employment, or termination of relationship. Information about reporting violations of this code may be found in the University policy "How to Report a Violation of the Code of Ethics."

## **IX. CONCLUSION**

We are governed by an ethos of care and respect, virtues that transcend the provisions of this code. We are called to something greater and nobler than mere compliance with the law or a written code of ethics. We are called "to live a life worthy of the calling [we] have received . . . , bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:1-2). We are called to "dedicate ourselves anew to the great cause of beautiful Christian living" (George Pepperdine's Dedicatory Address). We are called, ultimately, to lives of service (University Affirmation Statement). As the University motto instructs us: "Freely ye received, freely give."

*Effective January 2, 2007*