

CODE OF ETHICS AT THE LITHUANIAN UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Preamble

The purpose of the Code of Ethics of the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (hereinafter as Code) is to promote the unity of studies, science, human and animal health care, work competence, academic freedom and autonomy, to recognize, support and uphold justice, integrity, respect for human beings, tolerance, professional, scientific and civic responsibilities, the pursuit of truth, to ensure academic freedom and to create confident and creative atmosphere in the University and beyond.

The Code serves for the development of academic freedom and confident atmosphere in the University, establishes the main provisions of the relations between the University community members and their behavior, which are not directly regulated by international and national Codes, state laws, University Statute and other internal documents.

The Code is addressed to all University community members- students, lecturers, researchers, other scientists and professors emeritus, administrative and other staff (hereinafter as Community).

I. General ethical obligations and principles

All members of the university community are committed to follow these principles:

- 1.1 **The principle of personal respect.** All rights, freedoms, beliefs of all members of the University community are respected, regardless of nationality, race, gender, age, social status, religious or political beliefs; members of the University community or society are not being offended verbally or by misconduct.
- 1.2 **The principle of human dignity.** All members of University community acknowledge personal and others value, respect the identity and autonomy of every individual.
- 1.3 **The principle of autonomy.** All members of the University make independent decisions and ground their actions, based on their beliefs, values and worldviews that manifest itself through self-regulation, self-motivation and voluntary performance of duties.
- 1.4 **The principle of moral responsibility.** All members of the University community are personally responsible for their actions and decisions; No form of violence, bribery, illegal use and emission of information is tolerated.

- 1.5 **The principle of equivalence.** All members of the university community are equal and have a right to influence the decisions regarding University activities.
- 1.6 **The principle of justice.** The behavior of all members of the University community is valued equally, regardless of the position; separate attempts of the members of the University community to obtain or grant an assessment that does not conform to the established rules of the University are not tolerated. Any issues of shared values are addressed openly and publicly.
- 1.7 **The principle of honesty.** All members of the University community, while on their respective duty, comply with the integrity of scientific, pedagogical, health care and other activities. Fraud facts are publicized.
- 1.8 **The principle of solidarity.** All members of the University community protect the interests of the University and its members from violations.
- 1.9 **The principle of publicity.** The community of the University has all access to all official information that is not restricted or confidential.
- 1.10 **The principle of confidentiality.** All members of the University community respect each other's rights to privacy. A non-relative to the Code personal information concerning the members of the University community is not disclosed publicly.
- 1.11 **The principle of tolerance.** The members of the University community respect the opposite opinions and beliefs in pursuance of a peaceful and trustworthy atmosphere.

II. Separate ethical aspects:

2.1 Ethical standards of the University community

Recognizing the provisions of the Code of Ethics and main values like collaboration, self-expression, professional competence and respect for a different opinion, the University community undertakes:

- 2.1.1. to respect the rights and responsibilities of the University community;
- 2.1.2. to serve the community, regardless of the age, gender and sexual orientation, disabilities, appearance, race and ethnic dependency, religion, beliefs, political beliefs;
- 2.1.3. always act reasonably, regardless of the powers granted;
- 2.1.4. to be impartial and have no prior personal prejudices in decision making;
- 2.1.5. to make reasonable and legitimate decisions, secure its actions, the publicity of decisions, and to reason the motives for accredited decisions, in accordance with established legal acts;
- 2.1.6. to provide necessary information to the University community, Students and other persons, in accordance with established legal acts;

- 2.1.7. to protect the reputation of the University and the general interests in pursue of all activities, to contribute to the implementation of University's studies and scientific healthcare plans, to disapprove any forms of corruption, fraud or attempts to make illegal impact on any member of the University community;
- 2.1.8. to reject to vote when the issue of of financing, penalty or incentive related to a family member, a close relative or a business partner is being solved by the University authorities;
- 2.1.9. to act honestly in administration and maintenance fields;
- 2.1.10. to act impeccably, politely, to maintain a helpful approach;
- 2.1.11. to perform one's duties in a timely and professional manner, to continuously improve and develop professional skills, to be creative and progressive; to tolerate different opinions and beliefs, respect other members of the Community, students and other individuals;
- 2.1.12. to maintain the reputation of the University by withholding from unacceptable habits or behavior that are related to alcohol abuse, public consumption of tobacco products, the possession of narcotic substances or inappropriate disposal of psychotropic, toxic substances;
- 2.1.13. to protect the property of the University, not to use it for political or religious purposes, private business or personal needs, and prevent others from doing this, if this is not related to public activities of the university;
- 2.1.14. not to mention the name of the University in activities that are not related to the performance of the duties for the University, as well as in individual personal, political or religious activities and not as an employee of the University, insofar as this does not relate to the submitting of general personal information and (or) may influence other individuals in assessing claims or actions;
- 2.1.15. to encourage an agreeable atmosphere of relations and teamwork, mutual trust, no discrediting, no gossiping, no offending, no negative emotions;
- 2.1.16. to share work experience with colleagues, especially less experienced and qualified;
- 2.1.17. to solve all office disagreements mutually;
- 2.1.18. to respect managers, to properly communicate, to exercise legitimate commands, with the right to hold their opinion on all issues and express it politely;
- 2.1.19. not to disclose confidential information trusted to handle during work, not to lose it or transfer to third parties;
- 2.1.20. not to use one's authority in attempt to influence subordinates or non-subordinates to make a favorable decision for oneself, one's family members, friends or relatives;
- 2.1.21. to behave according to generally accepted code of behavior during non-working hours;

2.1.22. disputes are solved mutually; as long as the dispute is not solved, the administration of the University should be contacted in the first place.

2.2. Ethical standards of teaching

2.2.1 The relations between a lecturer and a student should be directed towards academic requirements. Non-academic engagement may cause conflicts of interests; therefore ambiguous relations with students should be avoided.

Contradictions of academic ethics:

- 2.2.1.1. the pursuit of an intimate relationship with a student with whom he/she is affiliated through a subject taught, scientific research or other form of direct academic relation;
- 2.2.1.2. the assumption of the role of a lecturer in regard to a family member, close acquaintance, business partner (exams, management of written tests etc) in cases when possible to avoid this role;
- 2.2.2. Acceptance of direct or indirect donations, non-academic or academic favours non-related to subjects studied from students. The publicity of confidential students data undermines the atmosphere of trust. The principle of the confidentiality of information requires:
 - 2.2.2.1. in the absence of special grounds (student consent, other legal ground), not to disclose any information about students academic evaluations or penalties to third parties;
 - 2.2.2.2. not to use private information about a student as a material for a study or analysis, unless the student has given consent;
 - 2.2.2.3. to ensure that notes and comments on a student's written work non-intended for public presentation, are not available for other.
- 2.2.3. The evaluation of student's knowledge and skills must be correct, honest and compatible with subject's goals, therefore:
 - 2.2.3.1. A lecturer must respond appropriately to the cases of bad faith, eg: plagiarism, copying, data falsification, falsification of exams or credit tests results, use of external aid during exam or test, submission of other's written work as one's own, submission of one subject written work for another;
 - 2.2.3.2. A lecturer shall make every effort to ensure academic integrity during evaluation.
 - 2.2.3.3. trust in fair evaluation is decreased in cases when students are evaluated irrespectively of their knowledge and abilities, when all students or majority of them are evaluated in highest or lowest grades, or when evaluation is performed based on the criteria non-related with subject's contents or objectives;

- 2.2.3.4. A lecturer cannot insist on personal information during students' group discussions, as well as link such information at evaluation;
- 2.2.3.5. Evaluation cannot be associated with student's participation in political or public activities which are favored by a lecturer
- 2.2.3.6. A lecturer shall make every effort to ensure the availability of studies material without breaching third party copyrights. The material will be presented in a consistent, well-defined and comprehensible manner so that it can help to achieve the highest results.

2.3. Ethical standards of studies

- 2.3.1. A student by his/her behaviour cannot disgrace the name of the University or Student.
- 2.3.2. A Student shall be well-mannered, preach healthy living, respect his/her chosen profession, boost its prestige in the society, protect his/her colleagues in cases of unreasonable intentions to discredit.
- 2.3.3. A Student shall make every effort to achieve good study results.
- 2.3.4. A Student to the extent possible assumes responsibility for the quality of studies and participates in its improvement.
- 2.3.5. A Student cannot disclose any confidential information about patients that he/she acquired during studies and must respect the beliefs and privacy of patients. A student's behaviour cannot bring any negative emotions to patients or their relatives. Patient's autonomy and a right to refuse to cooperate during studies must be respected.
- 2.3.6. A Student must be identifiable to the staff, other students, patients and their relatives in all departments of the University.
- 2.3.7. A Student must be honest during evaluations and report all cases of academic misconduct, regardless of participants (students, lecturers, doctors, researchers, student representatives) to the lecturers of the department, University's administration or Students Union.

2.4. The ethics of scientific research

- 2.4.1. All scientific processes must be based on the following principles: honest researches, respect to colleagues and those under research, academic freedom, free exchange of ideas, the pursuit of truth.
- 2.4.2. Scientific projects associated with University must comply to general interests of the University, be based on verified scientific methods and data, as well as the objective assessment of knowledge.
- 2.4.3. Scientific conclusions must be based on facts, data or arguments that can be proven and verified.

- 2.4.4. During scientific resources, researchers should not misuse the resources of the University, falsify empirical data; they should prevent procession of negligent collection of data or experimentations, negligent data analysis, and not to commit any kind of plagiarism or cheating in academic performance;
- 2.4.5. A researcher must not use his/her authority in attempt to restrict academic freedom. A researcher cannot disclose, lose or transmit any confidential information trusted to him/her.
- 2.4.6. A researcher must respect and properly assess the contribution of himself/herself, other researchers and students in joint scientific works and their results. Cooperation must be based on good faith, courtesy, tolerance and joint authorship.
- 2.4.7. A researcher must openly, politely, without any personal criticism express his/her disagreement with colleagues' opinions or notes about scientific results.
- 2.4.8. The results of scientific processes cannot be used for any advertising, propaganda of ideological and political beliefs, or any disgrace of other people beliefs.
- 2.4.9. Ongoing clinical, epidemiological and social researches must be authorized for a completion of biomedical research and (or) for procession of personal data (if required).
- 2.4.10. Experimental studies with animals can only be performed with the permission of Lithuanian Ethics Committee for Laboratory Animal Use at the State Food and Veterinary Service.

2.5. The ethics of licensing services

- 2.5.1. Except as provided in established legal acts, no work of colleagues should be discussed with third parties, patients or students.
- 2.5.2. Upon performing licensing at the University, the staff should avoid disclosure of patients' data that can help identify a person, during trainings or students training.
- 2.5.3. Staff of the university pursuing licensed activities must seek professional knowledge and practical skills to assist patients and colleagues.
- 2.5.4. Staff of the University and post-graduate students must declare licensed activities carried out outside of the institutions and its departments, and update declaration in case of any changes in the activities.
- 2.5.5. Staff of the university pursuing licensed activities as University staff should not participate in private or other practices, receive compensation if that causes conflict of interests, assumptions to use research at the university for personal interests, discredits the name and authority of the university or interferes with proper exercise of duties.
- 2.5.6. Staff of the university pursuing licensed activities and participating in outsourced clinical and pre-clinical trials, should avoid conflicts or cases which make

presumptions for measuring activities as conflict of interests (family members and relatives cannot act as trial sponsors and researchers).

- 2.5.7. Staff pursuing licensed activities while communicating with third parties (e.g. companies, individuals etc.) should try to avoid any conflict of public and private interests, as well as any activities that can harm the reputation of the university.

III. Implementation of the Code

- 3.1. The provisions of the Code are made known to the community of the university through public announcement at University's internet website. The community must comply to the set standards of behaviour.
- 3.2. The Code is supervised by the University's Senate Commission of Legislation and Ethics (hereinafter as Commission), which acts under regulations confirmed by Senate and its regulations.
- 3.3. The Commission shall consider all proposals to improve the Code of Ethics or will initiate its editions or amendments and will submit them for the approval of the Senate.
- 3.4. The Commission shall accept and consider all statements based on breach of the provisions of the Code of Ethics made by the members of the Community of the University.
- 3.5. Any member or student of the Community of the University can submit all statements regarding the breach of The Code made by a member of the University's community.
- 3.6. Reported breaches of the Ethics must have occurred no earlier than a year ago. Statements regarding the breach are submitted to the President of the Commission in writing. Only motivated statements shall be accepted. Anonymous statements shall not be considered,
- 3.7. Grounds for initiating the examination of the breach of the Code of Ethics:
 - 3.7.1. written statement by person (applicant);
 - 3.7.2. information provided in mass media or other publicly available information about violated rights of citizens or other persons in the University.
- 3.8. The Commission must examine statements received, make decisions and respond in writing (signed the President of the Commission) to the applicant or interested party within 30 calendar days after the receipt of statement or initiation of proceeding when publicly available information is the grounds for the statement. The deadline can be extended in case of motivated decision of the Commission.
- 3.9. The member of University community who is the subject of the statement or information, will be informed about the content (a copy of the statement will be provided). Explanations in writing have to be submitted within 5 days of notification day.
- 3.10. The member of the University community will have a right to attend the meeting of the Commission when a case of the statement or provided information will be considered. If the member being considered is a member of a Trade Union, a Representative of the Trade Union can also attend the meetings of the Commission. If a student is being considered in the Commission, a representative of the Students Union will attend the meetings.

- 3.11. The members of the Commission shall respect the confidentiality and shall not disclose any information regarding the investigation.
- 3.12. The decisions of the Commission acting as surveillance authority of the Code are of an advisory nature. The Rector of the University will be informed about the decisions taken. If the behaviour of the person considered is in breach with the Code of Ethics, the Commission has a right to propose to the Rector of the University to impose one of the following disciplinary penalties (if he/she has not been subject to disciplinary penalties beforehand):
 - 3.12.1. Students- notice, reprimand, strict reprimand, dismissal from the University;
 - 3.12.2. University community members- notice, reprimand, redundancy.
- 3.13. The Commission shall publicly announce its decisions (personal info is censored).
- 3.14. The principles and guidelines of ethic behaviour shall be formed by decisions of the Commission (which state that there was or where was no breach of the Code), the explanations and notes of the Code prepared by the initiatives of the Commission.

IV. Final provisions

- 4.1. The Code of Ethics is publicly available on the University's website.
- 4.2. Every member and student of the University community shall follow the Code of Ethics in his/her activities.
- 4.3. If a member of the University community or a student's behavior in administrative and academic activities is not governed by laws, the University Statute or this Code of Ethics, he shall observe general ethical principles.