

Committing to the University's Standards of Ethical Conduct

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Roadmap

1. **Introduction & Background**
2. **Supporting the University's Mission, Vision, and Guiding Commitments**
3. **University Policy 804: Standards of Ethical Conduct**
4. **Examples**
5. **Conclusion**



Introduction – Getting to know you!

How long have you been at UNC Charlotte?

- A. Less than 1 year
- B. 1-5 years
- C. 6-10 years
- D. 11+ years



Introduction – Standards of Ethical Conduct

When you think of “ethics” at a University,
what are some words or thoughts that
come to mind?



Introduction – Standards of Ethical Conduct

Do you think a University has (or should have) higher ethical standards than other industries?



Why do we need an Office of Ethics, Policy, and Compliance?

- The Office of Ethics, Policy, and Compliance promotes and supports an academic and working environment that reflects the University's commitment to maintaining the highest level of integrity and ethical standards in the conduct of its operations.
- August 2022 – Interim Director established



Supporting the University's Mission, Vision, and Guiding Commitments

- ❖ **Mission:** As North Carolina's urban research university, UNC Charlotte is a diverse and inclusive institution with local-to-global impact that transforms lives, communities, and industries through access and affordability, exemplary bachelor's, master's, doctoral, and professional programs, scholarship, creative work, innovation, and service.
- ❖ **Vision:** To be a globally recognized, emerging top-tier research university driving discovery and innovation, while advancing student access and social mobility, nurturing talent, fostering excellence, and ensuring equity.
- ❖ **Guiding Commitments:**
 - ❖ **Integrity and Respect:** Ensuring the highest academic, professional, and ethical standards and a collegial culture that embraces different perspectives, civil discourse, and free expression, where all University members are treated with respect, fairness, and dignity.



University Policy 804: Standards of Ethical Conduct

- ❖ Purpose: Pursuit of The University of North Carolina at Charlotte's mission of teaching, research, and public service requires **a shared commitment to the core values** of the University as well as a commitment to **ethical conduct in all University activities**. In that spirit, these Standards of Ethical Conduct (the Standards) are a statement of the University community's belief in **ethical, legal and professional behavior** in all dealings both inside and outside the University.



University Policy 804: Standards of Ethical Conduct – Applicable to all members of the University Community

- ❖ The Board of Trustees
- ❖ Chancellor
- ❖ Vice Chancellor
- ❖ Senior Academic and Administrative Officers
- ❖ Faculty and Other Academic Personnel
- ❖ Staff
- ❖ Students, Volunteers, Contractors, Agents
- ❖ Campuses, Campus Organizations, Foundations, Alumni Association, and other Affiliated Entities



1. Fair Dealing

- ❖ Members of the University community are expected to conduct themselves ethically, honestly, and with integrity in all dealings.
- ❖ This means that principles of fairness, good faith, and respect consistent with laws, regulations, and University policies govern our conduct with others both inside and outside the community.
- ❖ **How could this affect you?**
 - ❖ How you use someone else's copyright-protected work



2. Individual Responsibility and Accountability

- ❖ Members of the University community are expected to exercise responsibility appropriate to their positions and delegated authorities.
- ❖ They are responsible to each other, the University, and the University's stakeholders both for their actions and for their decisions not to act.
- ❖ Everyone is expected to conduct the University's business in accordance with these Standards, exercising sound judgment and serving the University and its community's best interests.
- ❖ **How could this affect you?**
 - ❖ University Compliance Program – Preventing and Detecting Criminal Conduct



3. Respect for Others

- ❖ The University is committed to the principle of treating each community member with respect and dignity.
- ❖ The University prohibits discrimination and harassment based on any status protected by law or University policy and provides equal opportunities for all community members and applicants.
- ❖ **How could this affect you?**
 - ❖ University Policy 501, Nondiscrimination
 - ❖ The procedures that apply to alleged discrimination, discriminatory harassment, and retaliation at the University are available on the [Office of Civil Rights and Title IX website](#).



4. Compliance with Laws, University Policies and Procedures, and Other Forms of Guidance

- ❖ The University is subject to many of the same laws as other enterprises, as well as those unique to public entities and higher education.
- ❖ University policies and procedures are designed to inform our everyday responsibilities, to set minimum standards, and to give University community members notice of expectations.
- ❖ **How could this affect you?**
 - ❖ Members of the University community are expected to become familiar with statutes, regulations, and University policies and procedures.
 - ❖ Failure to comply can have serious adverse consequences both for individuals and for the University, and those consequences can adversely affect the institution's reputation, financial stability, and the health and safety of the community.



5. Conflicts of Interest or Commitment

- ❖ Employee members of the University community are expected to devote primary professional allegiance to the University and to the mission of teaching, research and public service.
- ❖ University Policy 101.24, Conflicts of Interest or Commitment
- ❖ **How could this affect you?**
 - ❖ Outside employment
 - ❖ Outside professional activities – University Policy 102.1
 - ❖ Personal financial interests
 - ❖ Acceptance of benefits from third parties



6. Ethical Conduct of Research

- ❖ All members of the University community engaged in research are expected to always conduct their research with integrity and intellectual honesty and with appropriate regard for human and animal subjects. The University prohibits research misconduct.
- ❖ **How could this affect you?**
 - ❖ University Policy 306 – Research Utilizing Human Subjects
 - ❖ University Policy 309 – Responding to Allegations of Misconduct in Research and Scholarship
 - ❖ University Policy 310 – Laboratory Animals Used for Teaching and Research



7. Records: Confidentiality/Privacy and Access

- ❖ The University is the custodian of many types of information, including that which is confidential, proprietary, and private.
- ❖ The public right to information access and the individual's right to privacy are governed by state and Federal law, as well as by University policies and procedures.
- ❖ **How could this affect you?**
 - ❖ Computer security and privacy
 - ❖ Handling University records
 - ❖ University Policy 402; University Policy 605.2; University Policy 605.3; University Policy 605.8; University Policy 304; University Policy 311; Office of OneIT Standard for Responsible Use



8. Internal Controls

- ❖ Internal controls are the processes employed to help ensure that the University's business is carried out in accordance with these Standards, University policies and procedures, applicable laws, and sound business practices.
- ❖ **How could this affect you?**
 - ❖ All members of the University community are responsible for internal controls. Example – Controlling access to data, files, and programs
 - ❖ Any individual entrusted with funds, including principal investigators, is responsible for ensuring that adequate internal controls exist over the use and accountability of such funds.



9. Use of University Resources

- ❖ University resources are to be used solely for activities on the University's behalf.
- ❖ **How could this affect you?**
 - ❖ University resources may not be used for private gain or personal purposes except in limited circumstances permitted by existing policy where incidental personal use does not conflict with and is reasonable in relation to University duties.
 - ❖ Examples of “University Resources” can be found in the [Standards of Ethical Conduct](#).



10. Financial Reporting

- ❖ All University accounting and financial records, tax reports, expense reports, time sheets and effort reports, and other documents including those submitted to government agencies, must be accurate, clear, and complete.
- ❖ **How could this affect you?**
 - ❖ Certain individuals with responsibility for the preparation of financial statements and disclosures, or elements thereof, may be required to make attestations in support of these Standards.



11. Reporting Violations and Protection from Retaliation

- ❖ The University is obligated to investigate actions undertaken by employees in the performance of their official duties that may be unlawful, improper, or dangerous to the well-being of students, faculty, and staff, and to protect those who disclose such actions.
- ❖ Reporting parties, including managers and supervisors, will be protected from retaliation for making a good faith report under and in accordance with [University Policy 803, Reporting and Investigation of Suspected Improper Activities and Whistleblower Protection](#).
- ❖ **How could this affect you?**
 - ❖ Report known or suspected improper activities.

Ethics Point – [Make a Report](#)
844-251-1873



The Broken Laptop

- ❖ Laura, a University employee, has a school-aged son. His computer just broke, and Laura doesn't have the money to get a new one right now. She knows that if she borrowed a University laptop for a few weeks, no one would notice, and she'd be very careful not to damage it.
- ❖ **Which ethical standards address this dilemma?**
 - A. Individual Responsibility and Accountability
 - B. Use of University Resources
 - C. Financial Reporting
 - D. A & B



The Broken Laptop - continued

- ❖ Which ethical standards address this dilemma?
 - A. Individual Responsibility and Accountability
 - B. Use of University Resources
 - C. Financial Reporting
 - D. **A & B**



The Missing Gloves

- Bob, a University employee, is responsible for cleaning a laboratory building. When he arrives at the building, he realizes that he forgot the gloves and other safety equipment he is supposed to wear in certain spaces. He has seen other employees clean without their gloves before, and they seem fine.
- ❖ **Which ethical standards address this dilemma?**
 - A. Compliance with Laws, Policies, and Other Guidance
 - B. Reporting Violations (and Protection from Retaliation)
 - C. A & B
 - D. None of the above



The Missing Gloves - continued

- ❖ Which ethical standards address this dilemma?
 - A. Compliance with Laws, Policies, and Other Guidance
 - B. Reporting Violations (and Protection from Retaliation)
 - C. **A & B**
 - D. None of the above



The Glowing Recommendation

- ❖ Jamie is an Associate Professor in the College of Computing and Informatics. One of their research assistants, Cody, is applying for jobs and asked Jamie if they could write a letter of recommendation. Jamie jokes with Cody that it will “cost” a free breakfast.
- ❖ **Are there any ethical issues with Jamie’s response?**
 - A. No, because Jamie agreed to write the letter without receiving a free breakfast.
 - B. Yes, because this response gives the appearance of conditioning the letter on accepting a gift.
 - C. Yes, because Jamie can never accept a gift from a research assistant.
 - D. No, because Jamie can always accept a gift from a research assistant.



The Glowing Recommendation - continued

- ❖ Are there any ethical issues with Jamie's response?
 - A. No, because Jamie agreed to write the letter without receiving a free breakfast.
 - B. **Yes, because this response gives the appearance of conditioning the letter on accepting a gift.**
 - C. Yes, because Jamie can never accept a gift from a research assistant.
 - D. No, because Jamie can always accept a gift from a research assistant.



The Conflict of Interest

- ❖ Jane's spouse owns a private company that periodically provides services to UNC Charlotte. Recently, Jane's spouse won a bid to provide a service within the Cato College of Education.
- ❖ Jane works within Cato and is an Assistant Professor within the Department of Reading and Elementary Education.
- ❖ All contract services provided by Jane's spouse to Cato/UNC Charlotte are overseen by a unit managed independently from Jane's unit.



The Conflict of Interest - continued

- ❖ Which facts present ethical issues with Jane's spouse providing services to UNC Charlotte/Cato College of Education? (check all that apply)
 - A. Jane's spouse does not provide services to Jane's unit.
 - B. Jane works within Cato, the same college contracting with her spouse.
 - C. Jane's spouse has an equity/ownership interest in the company.
 - D. Jane did not negotiate the contract on the University's behalf.



The Conflict of Interest - continued

- ❖ Which facts present ethical issues with Jane's spouse providing services to UNC Charlotte/Cato College of Education? (check all that apply)
 - A. Jane's spouse does not provide services to Jane's unit.
 - B. Jane works within Cato, the same college contracting with her spouse.**
 - C. Jane's spouse has an equity/ownership interest in the company.**
 - D. Jane did not negotiate the contract on the University's behalf.



The Conflict of Interest - continued

- ❖ [N.C.G.S. 138A-36\(a\)](#) generally prohibits public servants from participating in an official action if that public servant or a person with which the public servant is associated “may incur a reasonably foreseeable financial benefit” which would impair the public servant’s “independence of judgment” or otherwise influence the public servant’s participation in that official action.
- ❖ University Policy 101.24 – Category II
 - ❖ An equity or ownership interest in a publicly or non-publicly-traded entity or enterprise held by a faculty or staff member, or a member of their immediate family, that does business with the University or is related to their university employment responsibilities.



The Conflict of Interest - continued

- ❖ Jane's spouse's ownership would restrict her from taking official action that would provide a "reasonably foreseeable" financial benefit to her spouse's company to the extent that benefit would influence her official actions.
- ❖ In this case, the official actions are the responsibility of another unit, and Jane would not be participating in such official actions.
- ❖ University Policy 101.24 – Category II
 - ❖ "Relationships that may be allowed following administrative review and analysis. Such relationships may necessitate supervisory procedures be put in place to prevent bias or inappropriate activities and to ensure academic standards and institutional integrity."



How to Report a Concern

- ❖ Talk to your supervisor
- ❖ Contact Human Resources, Office of Legal Affairs, Office of Internal Audit, or Office of Ethics, Policy, and Compliance
- ❖ Ethics Point
 - ❖ Anonymous and Confidential Reporting
 - ❖ Available at compliance.charlotte.edu and internalaudit.charlotte.edu
 - ❖ Service provided by an external vendor
 - ❖ Reports may be made by secure website or telephone (844) 251-1873



Thank you for your time!

