



**SILESIA  
UNIVERSITY  
IN OPAVA**

## **Code of Ethics of the Silesian University in Opava**



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## **Article 1 Preamble**

- 1) This Code of Ethics (hereinafter referred to as the "Code") formulates in accordance with Article 14, paragraph 1 of the Rules of the Quality Assurance of Educational, Creative, and Related Activities and Internal Assessment of Educational, Creative, and Related Activities of the Silesian University in Opava (hereinafter referred to as the "University") the basic principles of good manners and proper behaviour at work and study at the University.
- 2) The Code applies to all University employees and students and is binding on them. In the event of a serious violation of the principles of the Code, the provisions of the Student Disciplinary Code or the Labour Code shall apply.
- 3) The Code is based mainly on the following materials:
  - a) the Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic of 17 August 2005 No. 1005, in which it took into consideration the Ethical Framework of Research, and on the recommendations of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic,
  - b) the recommended Code of Ethics for University Academics, approved at the 5th session of the assembly of the Council of Higher Education Institutions on 17 May 2007,
  - c) the Code of Ethics for Researchers at the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, approved at the XLIX meeting of the Academic Assembly of the ASCR on 15 December 2016,
  - d) the European Commission documents: European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

## **Article 2 General principles**

- 1) The University employees and students shall
  - a) be guided by the basic human moral principles and principles set out in this Code in their work or study,
  - b) respect the mission of the University enshrined in the Statute of the Silesian University and participate in its implementation through their actions,

- c) be aware that they represent the good name of the University and refrain from actions that could damage it,
  - d) regard pedagogical, scientific, artistic, and creative work in general as an integral contribution to the development of human knowledge, culture, innovation, and the common good; they shall defend it against unfair challenge or abuse; they shall carefully observe and disseminate the principles of reliable and trustworthy scientific, artistic, and other creative work in public as well as among their co-workers and University students,
  - e) advocate freedom of thought, expression, exchange of views, and information,
  - f) respect the equal rights of all in terms of access to information, education, and employment,
  - g) treat others with respect regardless of their origin, race, religion, ideology, nationality, age, gender, health disadvantage, sexual orientation, or social status,
  - h) contribute to ensuring equal opportunities for the sensory impaired and physically handicapped by respecting their specific communication needs and, by creating the necessary technical and organizational conditions, they shall promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and ensure the removal of barriers leading to discrimination and exclusion; they shall support positive attitudes of the academic community towards the disabled, thus facilitating their independent and full participation in academic and public life,
  - i) not use the academic ground to promote the interests of political parties or movements,
  - j) not misuse the University's property but take proper care of it; they shall not use information technologies and other University facilities for private interests or personal benefit, or for the benefit of third parties,
  - k) respect the protection of personal data in their work or study and treat personal data in such a way as to reduce the risk of their possible misuse,
  - l) not advocate or cover up a conduct that is inconsistent with the principles mentioned in this Code, not even by pointing out the necessary obedience or loyalty,
  - m) not hesitate to report violations of this Code to the appropriate authorities if they are aware of them.
- 2) In addition, the University academic employee shall
- a) require the observance of the principles of this Code from his/her co-workers and students; he/she shall actively influence especially the students in this manner and set an example to them in this regard,
  - b) not allow for a conflict of interest arising from his/her position at the University and related activities and his/her private interest,
  - c) be engaged in the activities performed at the University with full work and personal commitment. As a rule, the sum of all his/her working hours as an academic employee in employment relationships shall not exceed the amount of 1.5 times the workload,
  - d) oppose the unethical and inappropriate use of scientific knowledge,
  - e) expand and deepen his/her knowledge and strive to improve his/her professional skills and abilities in the field of general pedagogical work,
  - f) maintain a critical attitude towards his/her own knowledge and results as well as the results of his/her co-workers and shall be open to discussion and factual arguments,
  - g) reject the use of unscientific approaches and racist, nationalist, ideological, political, and religious aspects in his/her pedagogical and scientific or other creative work; he/she shall reject anything that may offend human dignity or endanger the development of human society,

- h) recognize and disseminate the principles of trustworthy, credible scientific work in the scientific community and reject any scientific dishonesty as well as violation of the principles mentioned in this Code.

### **Article 3**

#### **Principles in pedagogical work**

- 1) In his/her pedagogical work, the University employee shall
  - a) always treat students on the basis of an objective, correct, demanding, but also sensitive evaluation of their abilities, knowledge, diligence, and other personality characteristics,
  - b) act impartially and objectively when classifying study results; in relation to students, he/she shall always apply an equal attitude and collegial approach,
  - c) communicate with students in an open and fair manner, he/she shall not resort to their underestimation, humiliation, or any contempt,
  - d) pass on his/her knowledge, skills, and experience to students by word of mouth and personal example,
  - e) be responsible for observing the rules of organizing and the quality of teaching of his/her students as well as the management of beginning researchers and its adaptation to current results of scientific knowledge,
  - f) teach his/her students, develop their independent critical thinking, and a responsible approach to work; he/she shall respect their right to free expression of opinions, be a personal example of the fulfillment of moral principles in education,
  - g) support the building of a relationship between the teacher and the student based on mutual respect and trust through his/her actions and attitudes,
  - h) set an example for students, teach them the principles of team and individual academic work.
- 2) The University student shall
  - a) not commit plagiarism or otherwise pass on the work of others as his/her own,
  - b) not cheat in the study checks and shall not give the opportunity to cheat to others,
  - c) not disparage the results of the work of his/her teacher or others.

### **Article 4**

#### **Principles for scientific, artistic and other creative work**

- 1) In his/her scientific, artistic, or other creative work, the University employee or student shall
  - a) focus his/her activities on the extension of the boundaries of human knowledge, the development of artistic and cultural values, and education; he/she shall ensure that his/her practically applicable results serve the benefit of society,
  - b) ensure that his/her activities do not endanger the society, environment, or cultural and ethical values,
  - c) be responsible for the accuracy and objectivity of the research he/she conducts and be aware of the limitations of the research methods used,
  - d) be based on the general principles (Article 2) while respecting the specifics of his/her discipline in obtaining, selecting, and evaluating data,
  - e) accept responsibility for the quality and authenticity of the results of his/her scientific, artistic, and other creative activities; when publishing knowledge and results on a particular



- problem, he/she shall be responsible for their completeness and verifiability and shall interpret them without distortion,
- f) retain, after publication, the primary data and documentation of all significant results for the usual period of the particular discipline, unless otherwise required by other obligations or regulations,
  - g) be responsible for the efficient and effective use of funds and human resources for research, and shall not duplicate research carried out elsewhere unless it is necessary to verify, supplement, or compare the results,
  - h) not withhold the results of research obtained from public funding but shall pass on the results of his/her non-confidential research to the professional public and deliberately acquaint the general public with them only after their publication in the specialised press,
  - i) reflect the latest developments in his/her field in the scientific, artistic, or other creative activities,
  - j) not provide the results of the creative activities achieved on the premises of the University using its technical, administrative, or financial background to third parties for personal gain.
- 2) When making the results of his/her scientific, artistic, or other creative work public, the University employee or student
- a) may be listed as the author or co-author of a publication only if he/she contributes creatively to its creation, such as the design and conduct of studies and experiments, the analysis, interpretation, theoretical processing, or modelling of data or the writing of a publication, and if he/she agrees with being a co-author,
  - b) shall acknowledge the scientific contribution of his/her predecessors and colleagues to the researched problem on which he/she directly follows up in the publication; and when citing the findings and knowledge of other authors, he/she makes a clear reference to the relevant source,
  - c) shall cite also substantial works that are not in accordance with his/her own results and conclusions,
  - d) if he/she finds a significant error in the published data, he/she shall take appropriate steps, e.g. he/she shall have errata or another correction printed,
  - e) shall not unnecessarily divide results and knowledge into multiple publications in order to artificially increase the number of works,
  - f) shall not publish in an ethically questionable manner and shall not use ethically questionable publishing platforms,
  - g) shall publish with the aim of passing on the results and findings to the professional public, not only for the purpose of reporting the works as scientific outputs.
- 3) In the assessment, evaluation, external examiner, and expert activities, the University employee or student shall
- a) perform the assessment or other evaluation activity assigned to him/her in person,
  - b) protect the intellectual property of the authors of the assessed manuscripts, project proposals, and reports under review; he/she shall not use the data contained in the evaluated documents for any purpose other than the preparation of an expert opinion and shall not provide them to a third party,
  - c) not intentionally prolong the evaluation of the assessed work in order to achieve his/her own benefits or benefits for a third party,

- d) refuse to draw up an expert opinion, the conclusions of which could be influenced by his/her personal interest, or shall make this clear in advance; other conscious conflicts of interest shall also be avoided,
  - e) prepare expert opinions responsibly and only in the area of his/her field and shall not subject to any external pressures that could affect the meaning of this opinion,
  - f) base his/her evaluation and opposition proceedings on objective criteria, observe the rules of the contracting authority, and require the same from other participants in the given proceedings.
- 4) The following, in particular, shall be deemed to be incompatible with the principles of ethical conduct in scientific, artistic, or other creative work: fraud, deception, plagiarism, falsification, distortion, deliberate deception, and alienation, at any stage of the scientific, artistic, or other creative work process from the intention to the publication of the results.

## **Article 5**

### **Principles of behaviour towards students and co-workers**

- 1) The University employee shall
  - a) recruit students and co-workers on the basis of an objective evaluation of their intellectual, ethical, and personal characteristics; when selecting co-workers or setting up work, research, or project teams, he/she shall seek to take into account gender balance,
  - b) ensure correctness and openness in mutual communication and avoid unreasonably autocratic management methods when leading a work, research, or project team,
  - c) assess his/her students and co-workers on the basis of the results achieved and treat them fairly; he/she shall not require from them activities that belong to his/her own duties. He/she shall not impose on them requirements disproportionate to their abilities and capabilities; he/she must be sure that if he/she entrusts another person with a certain aspect of his/her work, that person will have the necessary skills to perform it,
  - d) support the professional growth of students and subordinate employees, their research and publication activities as well as international contacts; he/she shall not appropriate the results of their work but list them among the authors of a publication or similar work, if they have creatively contributed to its creation,
  - e) draw the consequences of any unethical behaviour of his/her co-workers and students,
  - f) act professionally, without distorting emotions and pursuing his/her own private interests,
  - g) handle his/her work affairs responsibly, without undue delay,
  - h) respect the knowledge and experience of other employees and students,
  - i) pass on his/her expertise and experience related to his/her work to less experienced and novice co-workers.
- 2) The University employees and students shall respect the right to freedom of scientific research and artistic creation, to the free expression of opinion and free communication. These aspects of academic freedom must be applied only
  - a) in full accordance with the development strategy and focus of the University's educational and creative activities,
  - b) in accordance with general moral principles and generally accepted customs of work ethics in educational and creative activities,
  - c) in accordance with the rules of moral conduct expressed in this Code,



- d) while respecting the restrictions imposed by the rules that result from the internal regulations of the University.

## **Article 6**

### **Procedure for dealing with breaches of ethical principles**

- 1) In case of a suspected violation of the Code of Ethics by another employee or student, the employees, students, and other persons may file a complaint, notification, or suggestion in a written, oral, or electronic form to a superior at any stage of the proceedings or to the relevant registry office in accordance with the Rector's applicable directive for handling complaints, notifications, suggestions delivered to the Silesian University in Opava.
- 2) Depending on the seriousness and nature of the possible breach of the principles of this Code, such notification may be dealt with
  - a) directly at the relevant workplace of the University, at the level of its organizational structure, always one degree higher than that in which the disputes occurred; ad hoc committees (commissions) may be set up at the appropriate level to deal with them,
  - b) in the Ethics Committee of the University, if the solution is beyond the relevant workplace or if the parties of the dispute are not satisfied with the conclusions reached at the workplace.
- 3) The notification is usually handled in cooperation with all parties involved, taking into consideration the highest possible level of privacy protection. The conclusions of the solution must be communicated to all involved and must include remedial action if a breach of ethical principles is identified. In justified cases, the provisions of the Disciplinary Code and the Labour Code may be applied.
- 4) The University employees may also seek the advice or assistance of the University Ombudsman, should they have doubts about the observance of their rights or the ethical principles of this Code.

## **Article 7**

### **Common provisions**

- 1) University constituents may adopt their own codes of ethics (hereinafter referred to as the "constituent codes of ethics"), reflecting the additional specifics of the fields of education and scientific, artistic, or other creative activities in the constituents. The constituent codes of ethics must comply with this Code.
- 2) The constituent of the University that adopts the constituent code of ethics shall establish a constituent ethics committee, which assesses possible violations of the constituent code of ethics.
- 3) The constituent code of ethics shall be issued in the Czech and English language. At the University faculty, it shall be approved by the academic senate of the faculty after its discussion in the scientific council of the faculty; at the University institute, it shall be submitted for approval by the Rector on the proposal of the director and after its discussion in the scientific council of the University institute.
- 4) Both this Code and the codes of ethics referred to in paragraph 1 shall be published in the public part of the University's website in the Czech and English version.

## **Article 8**

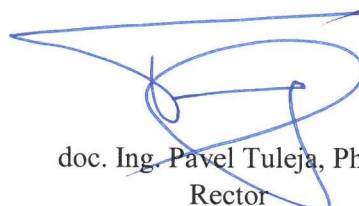
### **Final provisions**

## **Article 8**

### **Final provisions**

- 1) This Code was discussed by the Rector's Collegium on 5 October 2021, the University Scientific Council on 5 October 2021, the Internal Evaluation Council on 12 October 2021, and approved by the University Academic Senate on 7 December 2021.
- 2) The Code of Ethics of the Silesian University in Opava of 30 October 2017 is repealed.
- 3) This Code shall enter into force on the day of its publication in accordance with Article 7, paragraph 4.
- 4) This Code shall enter into force on 1 January 2022.

In Opava on - 2 -03- 2022



doc. Ing. Pavel Tuleja, Ph.D.  
Rector



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