

## **Ethical Code of Nicolaus Copernicus University Employees**

### **Preamble**

Nicolaus Copernicus University is a community of scholars, students as well as administrative and service workers gathered to fulfill the University's mission adopted by the NCU Senate on 28 November 2000, which specifies its main goals:

- conducting scientific research and sharing its results,
- teaching at academic level as well as developing other forms of educational and popularizational activities meeting the society's actual and future needs and aspirations,
- training of researchers and awarding academic professional titles and degrees.

It was assumed that the realization of these objectives will be carried out in accordance with universal ethical principles as well as principles of conduct established in traditions of European universities.

The Code contains a list of principles shaping academic life, ethical values and good practice in teaching. Its essence fits into respect for legal order and ethical regulations established in European and Polish ethical codifications. We comply with the set of principles and rules listed and defined in *European Charter for Researchers* and *Code of conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers* developed following the recommendation of the European Commission of 11 March 2005. We respect the ethical code accepted by Committee of Ethics in Science by the Presidium of the Polish Academy of Science (Third Edition, 2001) titled *Code of Good Customs in Science (Dobre obyczaje w nauce. Zbiór zasada i wytycznych)*, as well as *The Code of Ethics for Research Workers* adopted by the General Assembly of Polish Academy of Sciences of 13 December 2012). We also refer to the reflections of great scientists originating from revival, development and functioning of Polish universities, included both among the famous speech of Kazimierz Twardowski *On the Dignity of the University* (Lvov 1932) and in the article of one of the founders of the University, professor Tadeusz Czeżowski, *O rzetelności, obiektywności i bezstronności w badaniach naukowych* (Toruń 1958) (in free translation *On the impartiality, reliability and objectivity in research*). The reflection on ethos of scientific community in performing its social functions is regarded as an inevitable, among codification and ethical procedures, factor of moral sensibility in compliance with outlined values, ethical principles and a set of good practices below. The present Code is compatible with *the Declaration of ethical rights and duties of the Nicolaus Copernicus University student*, adopted by the NCU Senate on 24 February 2004, as well as with *the Code of Ethics of Doctoral Student of the Nicolaus Copernicus University* adopted by the NCU Doctoral Student Council on 13 March 2012.

### **Section I Values**

1. **Truth** - is the aim of scientific research, the subject matter of the discoveries and views distributed in the scientific community, in academic education and knowledge popularized in society. Conscious disseminating false information and unjustified theories represents the biggest moral infringement that can be recognized in science. All interpersonal relations as well as moral values of every human are based on the respect for truth.
2. **Creativity** - is the basis for the multidimensional process of recognizing the reality and using scientific knowledge for common good. The creative basis and every constructive creativity in science as well as its organizational environment, serve development and are a contradiction of the stagnation by reenacting acknowledged ideas and structures in which they are tolerated.
3. **Freedom of science** - is a fundamental personal and institutional condition of conducting scientific research, teaching and popularizing scientific knowledge. The freedom is based on truth, it is a loyalty towards truth; therefore, nobody can be forced to express opinions that have no validation in scientific truth. Conflicts between freedom of science and freedom of conscience shall be resolved by discussion, in a dialogue of individual consciences.
4. **Responsibility** - it gives the sense of attachment between people and between every institution, individual as well as wide social environment, its needs and aspirations. The foundation of responsibility are both imagination and moral sensitivity enabling to predict the effects, that research and discoveries conducted may impose on health and life of people, natural environment, social peace and human well-being.
5. **Justice** - is a basic value regulating human interactions and group interactions in every community, assuming equality of all members of the community in their basic rights (safe work, clearly defined tasks, evaluation adequate to achievements, respect for human dignity). In a community diversified in terms of assignments, achievements and positions, the division of goods is based on the 'to each on its own work and merits' rule with reference to the principle of equal measure 'to each the same for the same'.
6. **Integrity** - is a form of justice providing every person of what is due; according to the law and ethics, on account of the truth and respect for people. Integrity relates to conscientiousness, reliability, righteousness in behaviour and withstands dishonesty known as fraud, which indicates lack of respect for others and for the principles the community adheres to.
7. **Professionalism** - imposes a requirement of reliable and fair dealing with matters for which the employee has necessary background and professional experience. It imposes responsibility for the effects of practising a profession or performing a function. In the academic community, it concerns conducting research, disseminating its results and teaching. It is also morally questionable to undertake tasks for performance of which they do not have necessary competences and experience.
8. **Personal dignity** - is a right of every human being for acknowledging it as a goal in itself in the world of interpersonal and institutional relations based on using and profiting. This right emerges from a natural dignity as a human of which existence should not be downsized to profits and benefits. A person multiplies his or hers innate dignity by generating values in use and dignity perfecting attitude to higher (spiritual) values, by which a person fulfills own moral dignity. Treating a person as an instrumental good is an unworthy behaviour.

9. **Respect for each person** - especially disordered, moribund, disabled, requiring aid, connects with a care for protecting a person's life and health as well as soothing one's anguish, respecting one's dignity and values important for the person, protecting his or her physical, mental, social and spiritual needs.
10. **The University as a common good** - it is an institution with a public authority of a place in which one can pursue efforts to freely, creatively, responsibly and decently create real, reliable, original, fair and impartial work within a society of play of interests and ideological disputes of the parties taking place in the society. The University's prosperity composes of employees' multigenerational scientific, educational and organizational achievements. The prosperity is not only a sum of institutionalized achievements, but also an accumulated value of consciences and scientists' stances. Material resources of the University are a part of its goods.

## **Section II**

### **Ethical principles - duties**

Basing on the declared values, we adhere to the following ethical principles of Nicolaus Copernicus University employees.

## **Chapter I**

### **General ethical duties**

1. **Respect for the rights and norms of human ethics** based on equal treatment of the rights and dignity of all members of academic community as well as behaviour worthy of a scientist or an employee of the University title in external relations.
2. **Fair proceedings** based on respect for the work, merits and positions of the academic community members as well as **display of kindness** by readiness for effective help for all partners - protegees, subordinates, doctoral students and all academic community.
3. **Maintaining connections** with retired employees by enabling them to participate in scientific and social life of the University, utilizing their experience and their willingness to help, as well as providing guardianship over them and their creative and organizational heritage.
4. **Hospitality** towards employees and students from other research and education centres in the country and abroad by displaying kindness and necessary guidance.
5. **Loyalty towards the University** - protecting its good reputation and firm objecting to breaching general and professional principles of ethics in the environment.
6. **Responsible treatment of safety regulations** for health and life protection of the employees, associates and students.
7. **Respect for the University's intellectual and material resources**, library collections and infrastructure, taking care of the equipment and energy.
8. **Withstanding possible pathological behaviours** in the sphere of interpersonal relations on various fields of academic life, exceptionally:
  - 8.1. **Discrimination** of people and groups with regard to race, gender or sexual orientation, religion, world outlook and ideological or political beliefs within the law.
  - 8.2. **Workplace harassment**, humiliation of partners, subordinates, doctoral students, students, administrative workers and other staff.

- 8.3. **Unreliability and dishonesty** in conducting research, its publication, appropriating other's achievements, plagiarising and cheating by students, falsifying scientific and didactic documentation.
  - 8.4. **Flouting the law and general ethical and work ethic norms** including corruption and denoting a conflict of interests.
  - 8.5. **Using the University's good reputation and its resources in executing tasks and works delegated to other** entities, especially competitive entities.
9. **Concern for a moral atmosphere** in internal relations at the University is employee's responsibility especially of the people holding managerial positions.

## Chapter II

### Duties of researchers

1. **Adhering to scientific truth**, critical and rational inquisitiveness, objectivism, reliability, impartiality in scientific research, its dissemination and popularization.
2. **Constant care for personal scientific development**, perfecting and updating own knowledge, methodological experience, publishing achievements, informing on dissemination of own research and its results.
3. **Respect for and protection of freedom of education** in pursuing the truth and serving society among what is considered as science. Attempts of non-scientific interference in the theme and methodology of the research, by the institution and persons relying on external values towards science, should be settled in a scientific discourse and an ethical dialogue based on meritorical arguments.
4. **Scientific responsibility** both in conducting research as well as its dissemination which connects to a requirement of caution against threats and damages which a research process (experiments) and its results may impose on one hand, on researchers, and on the other, on natural and social environment.
5. **Conducting research with respect for human dignity**, in particular in situations where the subject of research is a human itself. This especially concerns scientific research in clinical sciences in which wending to a diseased well-being (care for his/her health, life and ease of the pain) and care for satisfying his/her physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs applies.
6. **Educating young generation of scientists** with reference to their right to scientific development, participation in widely understood international exchange and, in consequence, to promotion. It is related to a requirement of their just evaluation and a dissent to indulgence towards nepotism as an unjustified, on basis of merit, tool for building of a career of related persons.
7. **Reliable and fair reviewing of research projects and scientific achievements of other researchers** following the rules of scientific criticism and avoiding of conflict of interests.
8. **Showing respect for the scientific achievements of colleagues and for their professional and moral dignity.**
9. **Withstanding possible pathological behaviours** such as:
  - 9.1. Autopromotion through creating an impression of notable scientific achievements based mainly on quantitative criteria created in the course of multiplying them with not exceptionally creative and reproductive works carrying features of plagiarism, autoplagerism as well as conceptual plagiarism, fraudulent acquisition of achievements of partners which emerged as a result of group work.

- 9.2. Unreliable and bias publishing, research and promotional reviews
- 9.3. Abuse of degrees and scientific titles as well as the University's brand for preaching subjective ideological beliefs.

### **Chapter III**

#### **Duties of academic teachers**

1. **Dissemination in teaching the truth and valid methods of coming to it** - teaching scientific criticism, accepting only the statements that are justified, openness to criticism and discussion, independent thinking and courage to express own scientific views.
2. **Treating students respectfully** - fair evaluation of their knowledge, skills, supporting prosocial and friendly behaviour, showing kindness and avoiding any discrimination, providing necessary aid in situations that require it.
3. **Treating every person in educational space respectfully, especially in clinical sciences education** by giving example of respect for human dignity through care for patients well-being, health, life and alleviating the suffering, meeting patient's physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs.
4. Taking care for improving educating and methods of evaluating its effects.
5. **Respect for student's right for privacy** in the scope of knowledge the teacher obtained on the student during the course of education.
6. **Abiding by the deadlines** of consultation, evaluating papers and submitting grades as well as its fair argumentation.
7. **Withstanding pathological behaviours in didactics and education** such as:
  - 7.1. **Taking liberties** with students, interacting intimately and favouring them for non-substantive reasons.
  - 7.2. **Tutoring own students**, collecting remuneration in return for help in writing periodic papers or writing dissertations for money.
  - 7.3. **Humiliating students**, not respecting their time.
  - 7.4. **Using students** for work and services not related to didactic processes.

### **Chapter IV**

#### **Duties of administrative workers and attendants**

1. **Ethical leadership** as compliance with the law and ethical norms as well as care for proper moral atmosphere as a fundamental obligation of employees on a managerial positions at the University.
2. **Professionalism and willingness to help** in cooperation as well as co-responsibility in effective fulfilling of the University's mission and current assignments realization as a fundamental duty of administrative workers and staff.
3. **Loyalty** towards the University and its honourable representation in external relations.
4. **Particular care for the University's resources protection** in terms of library stocks, infrastructure and assets.
5. **Withstanding of possible pathological behaviours** in access to worksites and performing functions, harassment in employment, using material resources of the University for non-academic purposes.

### **Section III**

#### **Implementation and Application of the Code**

1. The NCU Rector and subsidiary authorities of the University oblige all employees to get acquainted with the Code in order to understand and apply it.
2. Periodic analyses of evaluation of the ethical Code should become a good practise at the University and its faculties. It should become an indicator of responsibility of their heads for ethical and moral climate.
3. The Code does not interfere with the domain of specialized ethical codifications in empirical sciences connected with people and animal life protection, in social research and other special roles fulfilled by researchers and academic teachers. The duties stemming from the *Medical Code of Ethics* as well as ethical regulations of public confidence professions or resulting from the performance of public roles outside of the University have a particularly separate dimension. The Code is also not interfering with theological research sphere in the scope concerning their fundamental religious foundations and institutional subjection of ecclesial nature.