



EVROPSKÁ UNIE
Evropské strukturální a investiční fondy
Operační program Výzkum, vývoj a vzdělávání



The Code of Conduct of the University of West Bohemia

PREAMBLE

The University of West Bohemia is an important community who meets, on its campus, in a variety of roles. For successful development of the University, the quality of interpersonal relationships and the resulting inner atmosphere in the academic community is extremely important. It is also crucial for the University to create and deepen public confidence in the academic sphere. It is therefore necessary to encourage a positive inner atmosphere, with serious and trustworthy internal and external communication, in order to develop the University environment and not permit behaviour that damages it.

The Code of Conduct (the "Code"), is one of the tools that contribute to the development of the University environment. Its purpose is to define and promote desirable ethical standards of employee behaviour and university student behaviour towards their colleagues, collaborating organizations and the wider public. The University, as a carrier of education and development in the areas of scientific and creative activity cannot be satisfied with mere compliance with legal norms and, through this Code, it sets its own standards with respect to ethics.

The University of West Bohemia is fully aware of its responsibility towards society as a whole, for which it educates young people who will one day shape society. The University is therefore fully committed to the values and principles emanating from Europe's cultural and historical heritage, such as freedom, inviolability of human dignity, respect for truth, justice, responsibility, professionalism, and critical thinking, as well as respect for other opinions and cultures. It is vital that the University should take care of these values both in day-to-day behaviour and in moments of important decision-making and addressing serious issues, in order to avoid their relativization, misinterpretation or politicization.

Article I
INTRODUCTORY PROVISIONS

1. The Code of Conduct defines the ethical principles and values to which UWB adheres. These principles and values form the ethical standard of conduct in the UWB environment.
2. The Code of Conduct is binding for all UWB staff (academics, scientists and others), and UWB students (hereinafter referred to as "individuals"). For the purposes of this Code, participants in lifelong learning are also considered students; the provisions of the Code apply to them *mutatis mutandis*.

Article II
**RELATIONSHIP OF ACADEMIC FREEDOMS AND RIGHTS
TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. The University of West Bohemia (hereinafter referred to as "UWB"), is a self-governing academic institution. As part of its academic rights, UWB creates representative academic bodies, uses academic insignia and holds academic ceremonies. As part of its academic freedom, UWB creates and implements a plan of development of educational, scientific and research activities, development and innovation, artistic and other creative activities. The following academic rights and the rights of academic staff and students are applied at UWB in accordance with this plan.
2. UWB respects the following academic freedoms and the academic rights of academic staff and students:
 - a) freedom of research and development activities and artistic creation, and publication of their results,
 - b) the freedom of teaching, consisting primarily in its openness to various scientific opinions, research and development methods and artistic styles and directions,
 - c) the right to study, including a free choice of study orientation within study programmes and the freedom to express one's own views in teaching,
 - d) the right of members of the academic community to elect representative academic bodies.
3. The academic freedoms and academic rights of academic staff and students referred to in the preceding paragraph are exercised in accordance with the ethical conduct standards defined in this Code.

Article III
GENERAL STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

1. The understanding of ethical principles at UWB is generally based on the principle of Kantian ethics: "[Act always only according to a maxim] whereby you could, at the same time, want that maxim of yours to become a universal law."¹
2. Regardless of their own concepts of morality, individuals respect the general ethical principles and principles of decent interpersonal relationships.
3. Individuals respect the basic values to which UWB is committed, in particular: freedom, equality, democracy, academic freedoms and social responsibility, professionalism, sense of discipline and economy, sustainable development in the knowledge society, the applicability of knowledge and its embedding in the regional as well as the national, European, and international environments.
4. Students respect the principles expressed in their matriculation promise and in their academic promises; they, in particular, honour UWB and do not allow their actions to damage UWB's good reputation.
5. Individuals:
 - a) act in accordance with the mission of UWB specified in its Statutes, and do not favour their interests over this mission;
 - b) respect the principles applied in the academic environment, in particular the principle of collegiality and loyalty to a particular workplace, as well as to the whole of UWB. They always act so as not to damage the good name of UWB;
 - c) take care of UWB property and do not abuse it to implement their private interests or gain personal benefit;
 - d) do not accept gifts or benefits for the performance of their activities at UWB, if such behaviour is contrary to good manners or principles and values set out in this Code;
 - e) avoid conflicts of interest. Generally, a conflict of interest means a situation in which the requirement to respect and promote the interest of UWB or its Parts may conflict with the loyalty to another institution or person. Conflicts of interest may arise, for example, in the case of parallel participation of one person in managerial positions at various levels within UWB, in the presence of close persons in managerial positions at different levels within UWB or in the case of parallel involvement of an individual in addressing a particular scientific or creative task within UWB and in another institution, unless such activity is based on a contractual relationship between UWB and the institution. If an individual becomes involved in a conflict of interest, they immediately inform their senior staff;

¹ Kant, Immanuel: *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Prague: Publisher Svoboda, p. 65.

- f) respect the freedom of expression and opinion; if they express criticism, then such criticism should always be factual, reasoned and substantiated with solid arguments. Individuals should be equally critical towards the results of their own work and make sure they develop their professional capabilities, knowledge and skills;
 - g) always behave towards each other in a decent way and in accordance with generally accepted social manners. They respect and honour each other. They act so as not to damage someone else's honour, reputation or dignity;
 - h) regard any discrimination based on race, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship, religion, belief, worldview, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, social or financial status as prohibited. UWB supports a positive approach to people with special needs and creates and improves the conditions for their activity within the academic sphere.
6. UWB is committed to the principle of political neutrality of the academic sphere. The academic sphere is not used to promote or support the interests of political parties and movements.
 7. In the academic environment, sexual and gender-based harassment, i.e. conduct that is of a sexual nature and whose intent or effect is to reduce the dignity of a person and create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, or which can legitimately be perceived as a condition for decisions influencing the exercise of rights and obligations arising from legal relationships. Any sexual pressure or solicitation, or unwanted and unpleasant attention or the application of gender stereotypes to other employees or students are considered inadmissible. It is the responsibility of each individual to report such behaviour when confronted with it, to the senior employee or the Ethics Committee of UWB.
 8. When exercising functions, individuals exercise their powers responsibly and in accordance with the principles set out in the Code. In addition, they lead others to comply with the Code.
 9. If individuals encounter unethical behaviour in their surroundings, they do not tolerate it: neither out of loyalty nor for their own benefit. They always strive to remedy such behaviour and do everything possible to prevent such behaviour in the future. Employees report suspected unethical behaviour to their senior employee or the UWB Ethics Committee. Students report alleged unethical behaviour to the UWB Ethics Committee.
 10. An individual must not be exposed to any negative consequences resulting from the reporting of unethical behaviour in accordance with this Code.

Article IV
STANDARDS OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR
IN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY AND STUDY

1. Teachers develop students' knowledge and skills using all their capabilities and experience. They familiarize students with different approaches to solving problems; they are open to discussion and collaboration with students. They encourage the development of students' critical thinking and their autonomy in achieving learning goals, and assist in adding to their qualifications, and professional and personal development.
2. In front of students, teachers care about professionalism and are fully aware of the fact that through teaching, they represent the University in front of their students. By their own professionalism, they set examples for students; they always adhere to the general rules of the teaching profession as well as individual agreements regarding the fulfilment of study duties.
3. When evaluating students' work, teachers are always objective and unbiased; their assessments are carried out on the basis of transparent criteria.
4. Teachers interact with students openly and collectively. Teachers do not disrespect the results of students' work, neither do students denigrate the results of the work of teachers or other employees of UWB. Critical and well-founded criticism cannot be regarded as disparaging the work of students, teachers or other employees.
5. Teachers do not abuse their position to enforce fulfilment of any requirements beyond the properly-defined study duties. They never transfer fulfilment of their own job responsibilities to students.
6. Students use their study for personal or professional growth. They are wholeheartedly devoted to their study, actively engage with suggestions of teachers and are open to teamwork.
7. In fulfilling their course requirements, students do not cheat, nor do they help others cheat. No form of plagiarism is allowed.

Article V
STANDARDS OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

1. UWB respects the plurality of scientific and creative fields and approaches to research and creative tasks.

2. Individuals:

- a) focus their research or creative activities on expanding the frontiers of human knowledge, and on developing artistic and cultural values, and the general education level. They always make sure that the results of their research or creative activity serve the benefit of society;
- b) seek to ensure that, in addition to the professional public, also the general public gets acquainted with research results. Direct communication with the public aids in better understanding of the interests and concerns of the public in the areas of scientific and creative activity;
- c) are conscientious in their research, take into account current knowledge in the given field of science, with emphasis on ensuring that the results of their research can be reviewed, and respect other principles of professional ethics in the given field of science. If they discover a mistake in their publications, they take all necessary and possible steps to remedy it, do not try to conceal or mask it or transfer the responsibility for the mistake to someone else;
- d) maintain an overview of the current state of research in order to avoid duplication of previously achieved research results. They do not repeatedly publish the same research results, nor do they purposely fragment the results of their research into a larger number of publications in order to artificially increase the number of published outputs;
- e) observe the principles of intellectual property protection. They do not present the results of research or creative activity of others as their own results. They never commit plagiarism. They respect citation policies and practices that apply in the given field;
- f) perform research or creative activities at UWB and ascribe the results of this activity to their workplace or Faculty. They never ascribe research results achieved at UWB in favour of another institution;
- g) publish the results of their research or creative activities on field-relevant and serious publishing platforms. They avoid publishing within platforms of so-called predatory publishers and journals;
- h) are open to teamwork. They do not assume the results obtained in the framework of team cooperation to be their own results; they acknowledge co-authorship to all who have been involved in the achievement of the results. Within the team, they communicate in a matter-of-fact manner and do not engage in defamation or humiliation of team members;
- i) in their roles as research or creative activity assessors, members of academic and professional committees or evaluators of scientific project proposals always observe professional considerations. When evaluating the scientific or creative activity of others, they are always objective and unbiased and follow the rules set for the

evaluation. They do not deliberately prolong the evaluation period in order to benefit themselves or benefit third parties.

Article VI UWB ETHICS COMMITTEE

1. In order to address complaints about unethical behaviour, the Ethics Committee of UWB (hereinafter referred to as the "Committee") is established.
2. The Committee monitors compliance with the ethical standards set out in this Code. As part of its activities, the Committee accepts and deals with suggestions from UWB staff and students concerning alleged violations of ethical standards at UWB. Suggestions to the Committee are sent to etikom@rek.zcu.cz. An individual who believes he/she has encountered unethical behaviour may contact the Committee. In the case of employees, supposedly unethical behaviour should be reported first to a senior employee and only after, if necessary, to the Committee. This does not apply in cases where the allegedly unethical conduct was committed by a senior employee.
3. Individuals may send suggestions to the Committee identifying the conduct they consider unethical and the person or persons engaged in the behaviour. The Committee discusses all the suggestions received.
4. The Committee consists of six permanent members and a maximum of four members appointed to discuss a specific suggestion (hereinafter referred to as "*ad hoc* members"). An employee or a student of UWB can become a member of the Committee. Membership in the Committee is incompatible with membership in the UWB management and management roles in the University Parts.
5. The representation of men and women among the permanent members of the Committee must be equal.
6. Permanent members of the Committee are appointed by the Rector. The term of office of permanent members of the Committee is no more than four years. The term of office begins three months after the Rector's term of office and ends three months after the end of the Rector's term of office.
7. *Ad hoc* members of the Committee are appointed by the Rector based on a proposal from the permanent members of the Committee. The term of office of an *ad hoc* member begins with the appointment and ends at the time of the decision on the matter for which the *ad hoc* member was appointed. At least one *ad hoc* member for each of the student-related suggestions being discussed is a student.

8. Members of the Committee, upon taking office, sign a confidentiality statement regarding the facts learned about when the Committee discusses suggestions.
9. A member of the Committee may surrender his/her office at any time.
10. Membership in the Committee expires upon the expiration date of its term of office. Membership in the Committee also expires if the member ceases to be a UWB employee or student.
11. The Rector dismisses a member of the Committee from office if he/she is reasonably suspected of unlawful or unethical behaviour.
12. The Rector appoints the Chair of the Committee from among the permanent members. The Committee meetings are convened by the Chair as needed on the basis of suggestions received, at least once a year.
13. The Committee decides whether or not the conduct of the individual in question was ethical. The decision must contain, in addition to the verdict, a proper statement of reasons. The Committee's decision is always given to the attention of the Rector. In the event that an employee's conduct is assessed, the Committee's decision is given to the attention of his/her superior and the Head of the respective University Part. If a student's conduct is assessed, the decision of the Committee is given to the attention of the Head of the respective University Part.
14. The Committee's deliberations are not public. The Committee may, if it finds it appropriate and if all persons concerned so agree, publish its decisions, including justifications. When making a decision public, the protection of personal data must be respected.
15. The procedural aspects of the Committee's deliberations are determined in the Ethics Committee's Rules of Procedure. The Rules of Procedure are approved by the permanent members of the Committee following the proposal from the Chair of the Committee. An absolute majority of all permanent members of the Committee is necessary for approvals.
16. The Committee prepares a Report on its Activity once a year and submits it to the Academic Senate of UWB and to the attention of the Rector.

doc. Dr. RNDr. Miroslav Holeček

rector