

# GENERAL ETHICS PRINCIPLES GUIDE

## Preface

This General Ethics Principles Guide (referred to as “Ethics Guide”) describes the standards of practice expected of all full and part-time faculty, staff and students (collectively referred to as “members”) within the College of Education (“COE”) at the University of Houston. This document contains principles that are considered the hallmark of our profession, and the members of the COE are expected to commit themselves to meeting the needs of all members of our academic community by adhering to this Ethics Guide.

Therefore, COE members should uphold the six principles in the Ethics Guide considered to be the shared set of values and expectations in promoting a healthy work and learning environment. Although these six principles are aspirational, members should consider them in arriving at ethical courses of action (American Psychological Association, 2017). The Ethics Guide is based on the belief that as members of an international academic community, we have a responsibility to ensure an educational setting that promotes diversity, freedom of thought and expression, and instills integrity and respect for all members. The Ethics Guide requires a personal commitment and ongoing effort to behave ethically and to promote and foster ethical behavior by all (American Psychological Association, 2017).

### **Principle 1 - College of Education members will treat all people with dignity and respect.**

Rationale: As part of an international community, our foundational principle is one where all parties within our College treat each other in a dignified, respectful and courteous manner with a key focus on protecting freedom of expression in teaching, research and service. Dignity and respect are broad in scope, including basic human rights regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, ability status, nationality/immigration status, gender, religion, political affiliation, or any aspect of cultural background.

### **Principle 2 – College of Education members will foster healthy and caring relationships.**

Rationale: To build professional relationships that promote collegiality, regardless of the members’ positions within the College, all members should respect and appreciate the diversity among each other’s backgrounds, family structures and philosophies. Promotion of a healthy and caring environment includes having compassion and empathy for situations that may cause a temporary hardship on fellow members of our community. The relationship extends to the communities the COE serves, including our research and educational partners at the local, state, national and international levels.

### **Principle 3 – College of Education members will leverage change to strive for excellence.**

Rationale: As technology, research, pedagogical strategies and community members change, the COE also must change and grow. The members will leverage this change to strive for excellence in all academic and community endeavors including research, teaching and service.

### **Principle 4 - College of Education members will serve the profession with integrity.**

Rationale: Integrity is a personal quality related to doing the right thing in a reliable way. Integrity plays a role in building collegiality within the COE as it is known to increase performance, trust, quality of life and valuation of all members.

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## **Principle 5 - College of Education members will communicate clearly and openly.**

Rationale: Communication is critical to the advancement of ideas that make a global impact. The members are committed to open, transparent and honest discourse of thoughts regardless of topic. Listening to the opinions, facts and alternative ideas of our colleagues promotes a true academic environment whereby members can learn and grow in a safe environment. To this end, the COE establishes clearly written policies and procedures to promote an environment of trust and confidence to safeguard the positive relationships for which members strive.

## **Principle 6 - College of Education members will promote trust and confidence.**

Rationale: Trust is essential to the building of healthy relationships. When members trust the leaders, the other members and the processes (e.g., regulations and their implementation), confidence in the system is gained and true progress toward common goals can be obtained. Members show trust and confidence in the system when all members are consistent in action, flexible in thought and open in all areas of academic, administrative policies and research endeavors. Promoting trust and confidence is shown in the quality and diversity of the work produced at all levels.

## **College of Education Ethics Guide and the University of Houston**

The University of Houston maintains an Ethics Kit (<http://www.uhsystem.edu/board-of-regents/code-of-ethics/>), which covers a high standard of ethical conduct reflected in both state law and Board of Regents policies. All members of COE also will adhere to the University's Code of Ethics. Each member has a University Handbook found on the Provost Office's website.

- **Faculty** have a handbook that contains specific information that is related to both the University and College Ethics Guide. Faculty are encouraged to visit the Provost Office's website (<http://www.uh.edu/faculty-staff/>) to review the handbook.
- **Staff** have a handbook that contains specific information that is related to both the University and College Ethics Guide. Staff are encouraged to visit the Provost Office's website (<http://www.uh.edu/faculty-staff/>) to review the handbook.
- **Student** handbooks contain specific information that is related to both the University and College Ethics Guide. Students are encouraged to visit the program area on the College of Education website to review the handbook specific to their program of study.

*This General Ethics Principles Guide was developed through the College of Education's strategic planning process and approved by Dean Robert McPherson. It was published on the College's intranet and distributed to faculty, staff and students in November 2017.*