
Ethical Principles in University Teaching

Policy Number: AC 135

Responsibility: Academic Dean

Ethical Principles in University Teaching

The following are principles that have been taken from “Ethical Principles in University Teaching” (*Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*), and adopted by the faculty of KETTERING COLLEGE as a statement of our own academic values and principles. They are intended to guide and inform individual faculty members as they seek to define their professional responsibilities in their role as teachers. They are also intended as an aid in designing academic and institutional policies.

1. **Demonstrates Content Competence:** A university teacher maintains a high level of subject matter knowledge and ensures that course content is current, accurate, representative, and appropriate to the position of the course within the student’s program of studies.
2. **Exhibits Pedagogical Competence:** A pedagogically competent teacher communicates the objectives of the course to students, is aware of alternative instructional methods or strategies, and selects methods of instruction that, according to research evidence (including personal or self-reflective research), are effective in helping students to achieve the course objectives.
3. **Tactfully Approaches Sensitive Topics:** Topics that students are likely to find sensitive or discomfoting are dealt with in an open, honest, and positive way.
4. **Fosters Student Development:** The overriding responsibility of the teacher is to contribute to the intellectual development of the student, at least in the context of the teacher’s own area of expertise, and to avoid actions such as exploitation and discrimination that detract from student development.

5. **Avoids Dual Relationships with Students:** To avoid conflict of interest, a teacher does not enter into dual-role relationships with students that are likely to detract from student development or lead to actual or perceived favoritism on the part of the teacher.
6. **Ensures Confidentiality:** Student grades, attendance records, and private communications are treated as confidential materials, and are released only with student consent, or for legitimate academic purposes, or if there are reasonable grounds for believing that releasing such information will be beneficial to the student or will prevent harm to others.
7. **Demonstrates Respect for colleagues:** A university teacher respects the dignity of her or his colleagues and works cooperatively with colleagues in the interest of fostering student development.
8. **Conducts Valid Assessment of Students:** Given the importance of assessment of student performance in university teaching and in students' lives and careers, instructors are responsible for taking adequate steps to ensure that assessment of students is valid, open, fair, and congruent with course objectives.
9. **Exhibits Respect for Institution:** In the interests of student development, a university teacher is aware of and respects the educational goals, policies, and standards of the institution in which he or she teaches.

Faculty and others who are interested in the full document prepared by the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education may consult the Society's web site: http://cfl.mcmaster.ca/programs/faculty_and_instructors/ethical_principles.html

The full document develops the principles in greater detail.

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REPLACES: N/A

APPROVED BY:

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