



CODE OF ETHICS
AT
ALBANIAN UNIVERSITY

RESTRUCTURED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Preamble

Albanian University represents a complex institution, whose members have different backgrounds, cover specific roles and responsibilities, and develop diverse relations. The existence of a community means not only recognizing and respecting the rights of individual members, but also acceptance and assumption of duties and responsibilities to the University, of all its members and to the community.

Aware of the important social and educational function of Higher Education Institutions, the university reflects traditional values underlying teaching, scientific research and other activities of the university. The University is inspired by these values to ensure the prestige and its good reputation, creating an environment that is open to dialogue and oriented to correct professional and interpersonal relations, openness to exchanges with the scientific community nationally and internationally, education of the individual in all possible aspects.

Code of Ethics represents the spirit and community of the principles of behavior and criteria orienting the activity of members of the university community.

Lecturers, researchers, technical -administrative staff, students and any other members of the university, during the fulfillment of tasks within the roles and responsibilities they cover, individually or collectively, must respect, protect and support the fundamental values of the Higher Education Institutions, in particular:

- a)** prohibition of any unfair discrimination;
- b)** human dignity;
- c)** evaluation according to the skill criterion;
- d)** evaluation and respect to individual and cultural peculiarities;
- e)** responsibility and recognition of duties to the University community;
- f)** honesty, integrity and professionalism;
- g)** knowledge, high quality, support of study and scientific research;
- h)** equality, impartiality, honest cooperation and transparency.

The values manifested in this preamble set out the applicable behavioral standards regarding the interpretation of ethical issues set out in this Code and of other matters related to the University life activity.

This Code of Ethics does not replace the law but integrates the governing applicable provisions for the members of University community. It will serve as a guide to all the Albanian University staff and students regarding the daily or decision-making activity in relation to the mission, fundamental principles and values. Code of Ethics serves as a tool to encourage discussions about ethics and to improve positions or reactions in academic performance within the institution and positions outside it.

The goals of Albanian University require that everyone who works for this institution, respects and implements the highest standards of ethics and on the other hand, students as members of this community should comply with ethical rules of conduct.

Failure by the students to comply with the regulations required by this Code and the rules constitutes grounds for disciplinary action by the University management bodies referred to

Article of the Regulation and Article of the Statute of Albanian University. In relation to the violations found and established by the Council of Ethics, there will also be measures foreseen in the University Regulation until the termination of relations with the university.

Chapter I

Rules of conduct

Article 1

Prohibition of unfair discrimination

1. All members of the University have the right to be treated in the spirit of understanding, respect and equal consideration and are not discriminated against unfairly, expressly or indirectly due to grounds such as gender, race, religion, ethnicity, language, political, religious or philosophical beliefs, economic, educational, social situation or parental belonging, physical appearance, nationality, sexual orientation, personal and health conditions, pregnancy, family choices, age. Discrimination is expressed when, for at least one of the reasons provided for in paragraph 1 of this Article, an individual is treated less favorably.

2. Discrimination is indirect where an apparently impartial provision, criterion or practice may place under unfavorable position, categories of persons identified by factors listed in paragraph 1 of this Article, unless the provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means used for implementation are appropriate and necessary.

3. The University does not accept and undertakes the necessary measures to deter discriminatory or violating behavior against a member of the university community during work, from subjects assigned to higher hierarchical position or from colleagues, behaviors which are materialized in the form of psychological persecution or moral violence that worsen working conditions or compromise health, professionalism, existence or dignity of the member.

4. The University refuses any form of unreasonable social prejudice, any harassments made for one of the reasons set out in the first paragraph of this article, any discriminating, degrading, humiliating practice or ideas of moral superiority of one group compared to another group. It is the duty of the University and its members to encourage the initiatives, to support the protection and evaluation of vulnerable categories, individual and cultural diversity.

Article 2

Freedom and personal dignity

1. The University community members shall:

a) avoid any behavior that may prove to be offensive or violating or that may harm, even indirectly, the honor and reputation of colleagues, collaborators, teachers, students and any other persons having relations with the University structures;

b) avoid any kind of behavior that due to the authority by virtue of the relevant position, may cause unfair interventions with the exercise of duties falling within the responsibility of other subjects.

Article 3

Academic freedom

1. University shall be committed to create an environment that favors the ideal of freedom and individual autonomy, implied as necessary prerequisites to study, professionalism, research in a broader field, intellectual exploration and implementation of knowledge.

2. In exercising academic freedom, university members have the duty to maintain a honest and accountable behavior also through self-regulation and in particular:

- a) to support the freedom of teaching, avoiding any behaviours that may condition it;
- b) to favour the selection of different profiles, especially research-oriented ones, avoiding any interventional behaviors in the scientific activity of other members of the University community;
- c) to favour, in the case of collective researches, correct methods of the results drafted highlighting and declaring the contribution of each participant.
- d) to avoid the creation of obstacles to shift the applicants from a structure to another one;
- e) to strictly apply rules in the field of intellectual property regarding the method of publication of the results of studies and researches, attaching due importance to the results achieved by other researchers and scholars;
- f) to not use for private and personal purposes, the results achieved through the University research activity;
- g) to avoid any kind of behavior that may prevent the full exercise of the right of students to education, in the framework of didactic programs stimulated by the University for high results of the University studies;
- h) to declare the source of possible financing used for publications and researches.

3. The University members have also the duty to maintain a collaborative position and observance of the academic decisions of organizational character, issued for purposes of efficiency, equality, impartiality and transparence of the University administration.

Article 4

Copyright and the right to make use of and reproduce the work

1. Unless provided otherwise, the members of University community have the duty to comply with the standards on copyright, the right to make use of and reproduce the work.

2. The author of an intellectual work belonging to the University, has the duty not to use it for private purposes and to keep the secrecy on results achieved by it until the official publication.

3. Based on the role of social importance of scientific research, the University maintains the concept that the relevant results should contribute to the development of community welfare; intellectual property is therefore presumed in favor of the University.

4. The academic activities of scientific importance collectively conducted, shall specify which participant the specific parts refer to. For each group, it is the duty of coordinator:

- a)** to promote the conditions that each participant may act in accordance with the principles of integrity, honesty, professionalism and freedom;
- b)** to assess the individual merits and identify responsibilities for each participant;
- c)** to promote dialogue, cooperation, criticism, argument, development of ideas and professional skills, especially for the implementation of similar scientific activities or aiming at a complex and/or multidisciplinary methodology approximation.

Article 5

Conflict of interests

1. There is a conflict of interests, where the private interest of a University member, with the exception of the student, is virtually or potentially contrary to not only the economic interest of the University. This conflict is also related to the external working relations with the training entities or potentially competitive higher education institutions.

2. The private interest of not only economic nature, of a University member, may be related to:

- a)** direct interest of the person, in quality of the University member;
- b)** interest of a relative of the University member;
- c)** interest of the entities, natural person or legal entity with which the University member has working relations of economic or financial nature;
- d)** interest of the third parties, when they may consciously bring advantages to the University member.

3. The University member (who in a specific activity or circumstance has conflicting interests with those of the University itself, shall provide immediate notice to the body or responsible person or at a higher hierarchical position, or shall not participate in potential merit-based decisions.

Article 6

Nepotism and favoritism

1. The University does not tolerate the phenomenon of nepotism and favoritism, which are in contrary to human dignity, assessment of individual merits and skills, principles of honesty, integrity, professionalism, academic freedom, equality, impartiality and transparency. Academic staff and every other member of the university shall avoid such practices and refer to the Council of Ethics in cases of suspicious behavior.

2. Nepotism is applied when a lecturer, a researcher or a member of technical-administrative personnel, directly or indirectly, also through external sources, use their authority or skill to persuade to derive profits, favor positions or duties, influence the results of competitions or

selection procedures related in particular but not only, to the initial phase of the University career formation (scholarships, contracts etc).

4. In case of the academic career, nepotism is presumed in cases when:

- a)** there is similarity or compatibility between the scientific –disciplinary sector of the advocate and the advocated person; and /or
- b)** the advocated person shall carry out his activity in the field of the same department of the advocate.

4. The practices of favoring a professor versus his students shall be equally considered as nepotism, in the meaning of unfair behaviors that are contrary to the good reputation of the University, with values such as honesty and impartiality, as well as with the interest of other merit-based and excellent candidates in the beginning or during further stages of academic performance.

5. When proving the cases of nepotism and favoritism, the Council of Ethics shall consider the context and circumstances, in order to maintain the balance of different values in question and to avoid unfair discriminations of the candidates who are merit-based and excellent.

Article 7

Abuse of office

1. No University member can exercise, directly or indirectly, the authority he/she has due to his/her own academic position or due to his/her office, in order to oblige the other members of University to carry out actions or advantageous services for the first ones, save the cases when the actions or services constitute a legal obligation of the second ones Abuse may be also verified through behaviors, which though not illegal, are manifestly contrary to the spirit of University standards and regulations.

Article 8

Use of University sources

1. Members of the University should use the resources made available by the University, with a sense of responsibility and care, in order to be able to justify spending and provide proper documentation or report at the request of the University.

2. No member is allowed to use or give to persons or external entities search tools, spaces or human material or financial resources of the University for personal purposes and / or for purposes other than those of the University, unless it is expressly authorized.

Article 9

Use of name and reputation of the University

1.All members of the University community have the duty to respect the good reputation and not to affect the reputation of the institution.

2. Unless when authorized in writing, no University member can:

- a) appropriately use the distinguishing signs and name/reputation of the University;
- b) use the name of University in professional, employment associations and activities, commitments or other external/foreign activities of also a non-profit nature;
- c) express in the name and on behalf of the University, views of personal character.

Article 10

Gifts and benefits

1. The members of the University have the duty not to encourage and refuse any kind of offer of non-symbolic gifts or benefits that may influence, even indirectly, the development of University activities.

2. Members may accept gifts, voluntary benefits or gifts of symbolic value given during cultural meetings, public scientific conferences or visits, and always when the acceptance does not affect the development of university activities.

Article 11

Confidential Information

1. All members of the university have the following duties:

- a) Comply with the confidentiality of legal persons or entities with which the university holds and exchanges protected information;
- b) Keep confidential information of the office, protected data or information of confidential nature obtained in the course of performing institutional tasks, the disclosure of which in any form of official publication, may unfairly violate the interest of the university and / or third parties.

Article 12

Justification of Decisions

1. The members of the University shall always provide objective justification of important decisions, including those affecting the positions or careers issues of other members of the university, and those dealing with the description or promotion of educational activities.

Article 13

Cooperation Agreements

1. Pursuant to Article 47 of the Statute, the University may enter into agreements with public and private subjects, domestic and foreign, for academic and scientific cooperation, and activities of common interest, in accordance with the principles of transparency, publicity, autonomy and ethics.

RULES OF ETHICS FOR ACADEMIC STAFF MEMBERS

CHAPTER II

Article 14

Basic principles of the code of ethics

- 1.** The academic staff shall follow and apply the highest standards of the code of ethics. They shall act in a professional way and make available their theoretical and practical knowledge to the learning process, seriously and impartially.
- 2.** The academic staff shall stimulate polite and respectful behavior with their colleagues, institutional administration and students. They shall, through their behavior, motivate the efforts and dedication of their staff to a better performance of their responsibilities.
- 3.** The academic staff shall take into consideration the character of their function and behave in such a way to preserve and foster the confidence of students and their associated social groups. They shall be aware of their responsibility in the education and training of future generations.
- 4.** The academic staff shall be independent when selecting the methods to fulfill their target functions, which must comply with the legal provisions and internal rules of the Albanian University.

Article 15

Relations with students

The lecturer shall:

- 1.** Respect the opinions of all students (in each study cycle), their autonomy and dignity.
- 2.** Respect personality of students regardless of age, race, religion, gender, etc.
- 3.** Help, support or advice the education of students, in terms of education process, if necessary.
- 4.** Have an obligation to ensure the highest quality of teaching to promote maximal use of intellectual values of the students, high academic results and high level of qualification.
- 5.** Have an obligation to be fair and impartial in the evaluation of the level of education and not allow the evaluation to be violated by influence of external factors.

Article 16

Presence at work, ethical behavior and respect

Presence of student at work shall be appropriate, and it shall demonstrate:

- a)** Constant care and seriousness of their outer appearance;
- b)** Necessary level of personal hygiene;

- c) Comply with necessary dress requirements in university premises; Dress should be in accordance with the university status and consistent with the purpose of participation of the student in the educational process;
- d) Focus on the way of communication and presence in institution premises.

RULES OF ETHICS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ADMINISTRATION

CHAPTER III

Article 17

Basic standards of behavior

- 1.** Members of the administration of the institution shall be required to apply the highest standards of ethical behavior consistent with the integrity, impartiality and maturity values. Above all, when performing their duties, they shall be faithful to university values, and focus on objectives, purposes and principles of its activity.
- 2.** Albanian University shall support the privacy of administration staff and does not interfere in their personal life or their behavior inside and outside the workplace. However, the status of administration staff is associated with some obligations related to their behavior, both in and out the work premises. University shall attach great importance to the implementation by the administration staff, of all laws and regulations in force, and shall not accept any actions that could be perceived as abuse of prestige of the institution and its academic staff.
- 3.** Official behavior shall be always characterized by objectivity and professionalism. Members of the administration shall not allow that their personal relations and consideration, including their prejudices, orientation or favoritism, influence the results of official duties. They shall equally avoid situations that create conflicts of interest.
- 4.** Administration staff shall never go beyond the authority given by their function. They shall remain responsible even when delegating tasks to others and they are expected to exercise proper supervision and control within the scope of their responsibility.
- 5.** During their period of employment in the Albanian University, the administration staff of the institution shall responsible that all resources of the institution are properly allocated in support of fulfilment of its official tasks. Also, in terms of efficient use of available resources to the institution, the administration staff shall be dedicated on a full time basis only to official activities of the University.

RULES OF ETHICS FOR THE STUDENTS OF ALBANIAN UNIVERSITY

CHAPTER IV

Code of Ethics is a set of norms to be applied by all university students sharing a collective responsibility to maintain high ethical professional standards in the relations with each other, and with the staff and others:

Students of the Albanian University represent the academic product and it is their ethical obligation to promote and reach high academic achievements, as well as commit themselves to a successful fulfillment of professional qualification.

In order to create and maintain the best possible academic environment, students shall adhere to standards of professionalism and ethical behavior. Ethical behavior and respect for everyone shall be essential to enhance the level of education and reduce misunderstandings. Each student shall recognize its moral and professional responsibility and strongly maintain the tradition of compliance with rules of the Code of Ethics which will lead to higher levels of professional performance.

Article 18

Ethical standards of student behavior

Students shall:

1. Meet their academic obligations to the environment to pursue the necessary intellectual development for their successful implementation;
2. Create and maintain relationships with other students, based on the status of ethical behavior of students, honesty, mutual respect and open-mindedness;
3. Maintain the reputation and the good name of the academic staff internally and externally;
4. Strictly comply with the obligations to an efficient academic process, as provided for in the rules of the institution;
5. Implement the ethics of relations with academic professors, as provided for in the Chapter III of this Code, based on respect for the instructor's knowledge and personality, and free and courageous expression of their opinions both in and out academic premises;
6. Make no improper behaviors towards the staff members and other students. Criticism should be made in a private place;
7. Understand that any form of harassment related to race, sex, color, religion, age, origin, health conditions is considered non ethical;
8. Respect the rights and safety of other persons at school
9. Address the disagreements between the school and the student to a responsible person, going also through the hierarchical levels of problem solving.
10. Show self-constraint against any action that could undermine their authority.

Students shall not:

11. Possess or use firearms or cold steel weapons within the territory of the University;
12. Possess, use or sell drugs illegally in or out the premises of the University;
13. Participate in fraud attempts or violation of the rules of the academic process;

14. Submit written or laboratory papers as his own projects, when they know that they are of another person;
15. Steal items, destroy school property or someone else's properties;
16. Make pressures, threaten, abuse or similar behavior against a person who is responsible to report the Council of Ethics;
17. Hide evidence or give false evidence on an ethical and professional complaint, which is first seen and investigated;
18. Act in a way which indirectly interferes with academic teaching, research or management processes.

Article 19

Presence in school, ethical behavior and respect

Presence of students in academic premises shall be appropriate, and it shall demonstrate:

- e) Constant care and seriousness of their outer appearance;
- f) Necessary level of personal hygiene;
- g) Meeting necessary dress requirements in university premises; Dress should be in accordance with the university status and consistent with the purpose of participation of the student in the educational process;
- h) Focus on the way of communication and presence in institution premises.

CHAPTER V

Implementing provisions

Article 20

Respect for and violation of the code of ethics

1. In accordance with the definitions in the Preamble and Chapter I - V, it is the task of academic staff, researchers, technical and administrative staff, students, and any other member of the university, to:
 - a. Recognize this code and the practice of its interpretation;
 - b. Become familiar with the rules of conduct set out in this code and the practices arising from its interpretation;
 - c. Address to the Council of Ethics for counseling on implementation of this code, or appropriate behavior in relation to matters specified in this Code;
 - d. Apply this code and its interpretive practices.
2. A Council of Ethics is set up at the university, operating in accordance with the definitions set forth in Article 23 of the Statute of Albanian University.
3. The Council of Ethics, after the examination of the complaints related to violations of the norms of the Code of Ethics, and those provided for in the Article 51 of the Rules of the

University, shall take appropriate measures or give recommendations based on violations committed.

4. The Council of Ethics, when exercising its functions, may require support from the administrative offices of the university and may use consulting experts appointed by the Council itself.

5. Members of the Council of Ethics and appointed assistants are responsible for protecting privacy and confidentiality of informations related to issues they are made aware due to their duties.

6. The decisions of the Council of Ethics shall be based on grounded justification.

Article 21

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Disciplinary procedures governing the discipline of any member of the university community regulated by the Code of Ethics, charged with violation of articles of this code, consist as follows:

A. Complaints

A complaint is a letter addressed to the President of the Code of Ethics identifying a violation of the norms of the Code of Ethics to be considered by the Council. First, the chairman establish a commission to investigate on this issue. A complaint can be filed by any employed student or member of the school. Complaints should be addressed as a letter to the Chairman of the Council of Ethics, and it shall be forwarded to the chair of the Commission for Incidents within two weeks from the incident. The complaint shall describe all the facts regarding the violation of norms of the Code of Ethics. During the investigation on the issue, the student or university employee, may not be suspended from the education process or school program.

B. The investigation and clarification by the Commission for Incidents

Once a written complaint is filed and delivered, within five working days, the Chairman of the Commission for Incidents, shall:

1. Start the investigation, with at least the presence of three members of the Commission.
2. Draft a letter of the student or university employee being charged, with the date, time and place of the incident, with related testimony and evidences.
3. The document given to the university community member being charged for violation, shall also contain the following elements:
 - a. a letter of complaint
 - b. a letter which informs the student that he/she may choose whether or not he/she will be present during the writing;
 - c. The list of witnesses who will submit evidence in support of the complaint;

- d. The list of violations by the student or employee, if he/she is guilty.

When called as a witness, the claimant shall submit to the committee hearings, the whole documentation, evidence or other witnesses he thinks they are relevant to his complaint.

The university student or employee against whom a complaint is filed, may not have a lawyer present, but he may have a member of the school or another student in a consulting role or emotional support. He can submit all the evidence, witnesses or documents which are in his favor Commission for Incident (CI). CI can ask all witnesses regardless of evidence rules applied in trials normally developed by courts. No protocol is kept, but CI Secretary can take some summarized notes. Finally CI sends a written recommendation to the chairman of the Council of Ethics and a majority vote is enough to be brought to a conclusion.

C. Possible recommendations of the Commission for Incidents

1. The student has not acted or no sufficient evidence is in place to prove that he/she has acted in an unethical way;
2. The student has acted in an unprofessional and unethical way, and he/she shall consult the Chairman of the Board of Ethics;
3. The student has committed an unethical and unprofessional violation, and it shall be attached to his/her file up to his graduation.

Finally, the Chairman of the Commission for Incidents informs the claimant and respondent parties for the letter of recommendation, and asks them within seven days to have a response from the respondent party, which may be:

- a. To accept the CI recommendation
- b. To appeal the CI decision.

If the claimant appeals, the Chairman of the Commission for Incidents, in charge of clarifying the appeal, shall proceed by forwarding it together with all collected evidence, in a judgment process as follows.

D. Judgment by the Council of Ethics (CE)

CE Chairman notifies the parties to submit a written document with the time, date, place of the hearing and a copy of the complaint file. Sessions will be held no later than 15 days from the expiry of the appeal period against the CE recommendation. The claimant or the respondent may have an attorney present during the hearing, acting as an advisor to the person concerned, who may submit all documents or witnesses in his favor.

1. The judgment is a process which can take decisions by majority vote. It may produce a recommendation for the person against whom the complaint of violation of the norms of the Code of Ethics is filed.
2. The judgment should be divided into two tracks: a.) first, a definition whether the student or university employee has or has not violated the code; b) second, a definition of the relevant act or violation.

3. All members of the Council of Ethics shall vote one by one, based on the questions, and a majority vote shall decide whether a violation of the norms of the Code is in place or a recommendation should be sent to the CE.
4. **When defining a violation, the Council of Ethics may consider the previous disciplinary records received by the student or employee member at this university.**
5. **If the majority of the Councils of Ethics comes to the conclusion that it cannot establish as to whether or not a violation of the Code of Ethics is or is not made, or whether to forward or not a recommendation concerning the person subject to complaint review, no notes will be reflected in his disciplinary file.**
6. **Neither the student or employee member of this university to whom a complaint is filed to the Council of Ethics of the university, nor the lawyer or any other supporting person shall be present during the decision made by the commission.**

Recommendations

Any conclusion, reached by the Council of Ethics after a hearing and review of all verbal or written evidence, whether the student or employee of the university has violated the Code of Ethics, or when the corresponding act shall be proven by the CE, shall be followed by a decision which shall reflect the violation of the Code of Ethics and related evidence to prove it. Within 10 days from receipt of notice, the decision may be appealed to the Dean of the main unit.

Decisions

1. The Dean shall make a final decision, whether there is a lack of disrespect of ethical norms of the Code, or any other additional evidence may be required to assist in taking this decision.
2. If the Dean decides that there is no violation of norms of the Code of Ethics, then nothing shall be recorded in the student's disciplinary file.
3. Student or employee of this university, asked by the Council of Ethics to give explanations on the complaint against him for violation of norms of the Code of Ethics, shall be informed of the decision taken by the Dean within 10 days after the appeal for the decision taken by the CE.

Appeal

The appeal to the decision taken by the Dean, within 5 days after the decision is issued, shall include any other evidence or material not previously attached to the file. The Dean takes a final decision within 10 days from the claimant's appeal.

ACTS AND VIOLATIONS

Recommended acts and violations by the EC and decided by the Dean shall be appropriate and logical. **These are as follows:**

CONSULTING

The student will be consulted with members of the Commission or with other persons authorized by the Commission. Advice/ consulting is not considered a penalty or fault and not recorded in the student's disciplinary file. It applies to precede a violation of the norms of the Code of Ethics.

RE-SITTING EXAMS

The student will be required to resit the exam or any other procedure in connection with violation of the norms of the Code of Ethics. These can be recorded on the student's disciplinary file, but it may be deleted after his graduation and are not given as a reference to the student.

TEMPORARY WARNING NOTICE

Students will take a written warning notice from the Council of Ethics, signed by the chairman. A copy of it shall be attached to the student's file. It is not given as reference after graduation and it is deleted from the file only when the student has not committed any other violation of the Code.

WARNING NOTICE

The student will receive a warning notice from the Commission signed by the chairman. It is attached to the file and is given as a reference by schools after graduation.

REPEAT OF SEMESTER

The student is required to repeat the semester or academic year if within that time he has committed any violation of the norms of the Code of Ethics. This act is recorded in the student's permanent file and is given as reference after graduation.

INDEMNIFICATION

If the student damages any objects belonging to the University, he shall indemnify it within a definite term. This is part of the file and is referred after school completion.

EXCLUSION WITH A POSSIBILITY OF RE-APPLICATION

The student is suspended from the program and may be allowed to apply again next year, but this may be part of his file and is referred after school.

PERMANENT EXCLUSION

The student is suspended from the ongoing program and is not allowed to apply to our school, upon proposal made by the Dean of the unit pursuant to Article 51 of the Regulation of Albanian University.

Article 21

Publication and implementation of the Code of Ethics

1. It is the duty of the University to promote the distribution of this Code to the widest level possible through publications of communications, meetings, teaching activities and any other appropriate means.
2. The University shall immediately interfere with any means deemed necessary for the implementation of this Code, if necessary.

Rector