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The Connecticut State Colleges and Universities System

Code of Conduct

For Regents, Employees and Volunteers

THE CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR REGENTS, EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

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I. PURPOSE

Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) are committed to the highest ethical and professional standards of conduct. All members of the CSCU community have a duty to conduct themselves with integrity, to act with the highest ethical and professional standards, to exercise responsible judgment, and to demonstrate accountability and compliance with state and federal law, CSCU Board policies and procedures, and collective bargaining agreements. This Code sets forth the principles, values and standards for all members of the CSCU community.

II. SCOPE

This Code applies to the following:

- The Board of Regents for Higher Education, as both an institutional board and as individuals;
- All faculty, staff and independent contractors within the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents for Higher Education; and
- Volunteers and other representatives when speaking or acting on behalf of the Board, CSCU or any of its composite institutions.

All persons to whom this applies are hereinafter referred to collectively as "community members".

Those persons who are attending classes or enrolled in academic programs are hereinafter referred to as "students" and are governed by Board of Regents Policy: Student Code of Conduct, as may be amended from time to time. Students who are Regents are governed by this Code when engaged in matters directly related to their service as members of the Board of Regents for Higher Education.

Note: This Code reflects federal and state laws and BOR policies and procedures that currently govern the BOR and CSCU. This Code does not create any additional or different rights or duties of a substantive or procedural nature. This Code shall not abridge community members' rights to due process as guaranteed by the provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements, which shall govern the administration of this Code. Any disciplinary action shall be based upon violations of laws, policies, and collective bargaining agreements, as applicable, existing independently from this Code.

III. PRINCIPLES

The Principles that underlie this code are

- ❖ **PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING:** Reasoned argument, scholarly inquiry and human creative expression are essential to the mission of CSCU.

- ❖ **RESPECT FOR PERSONS**: A commitment to diversity, civility, inclusivity, and respect for differences is paramount.

- ❖ **RESPONSIBILITY, BENEFICENCE AND SERVICE**: Community members have a shared responsibility to provide a safe, secure, and healthy learning and working environment for all community members and students and to share CSCU's creativity with the public at large.

- ❖ **SHARED GOVERNANCE:** The Board, faculty and staff are committed to working together for the benefit of the entire CSCU community.

- ❖ **INTEGRITY**: Ethical conduct is a fundamental expectation for every community member. Community members are expected to foster a culture of ethics and compliance.

IV. VALUES

A. Pursuit of Knowledge and Learning

CSCU's orientation is to provide avenues to gain knowledge and advance learning in all of its forms. This includes maintaining appreciation for reasoned arguments to support claims of truth, the scientific method, the rigor of scholarship, the variety of human languages and cultures, and artistic expression in all of its forms.

To support the pursuit of knowledge and learning as a core value, CSCU is committed to and values the following:

1. **Academic freedom** is essential in preserving the conditions that foster open inquiry and human creative expression.

2. **Intellectual honesty** in teaching, learning, and research preserves the integrity of the scholarly process. Community members are expected to:

   a. ensure the originality of work and provide appropriate credit and reference for the work, the words, and the ideas of others;
   b. maintain faithfully the integrity of methodology and data in conducting research and the dissemination of findings;
   c. consult with and adhere to the requirements of institutional review boards, if one is conducting research on human subjects;
   d. adhere to established procedures for the humane treatment of animals, if one is conducting research on animals;
   e. fairly assign authorship credit in the dissemination of research, scholarship, and creative work.

3. **Professional standards** for many academic, student support and governance disciplines have been established and disseminated by professional associations. Faculty, staff, and Regents are expected to adhere to applicable standards.

4. **Scholarly inquiry** requires that matters that some may consider disquieting or troubling be addressed directly. Maintaining respect for the rights of others to share and to argue for a perspective or a point of view with which one disagrees is essential for preserving our institutions and System as places of critical inquiry in which fostering knowledge and learning remains a core value.

B.   **Respect for Persons**

Respect for persons means that people are entitled to full participation in our system and its colleges and universities in contexts that are free from discrimination and that people are entitled to public information to make informed decisions.

To assure respect for all persons, CSCU requires community members to support the following:

1. **Respecting diversity** and equal employment opportunity provides community members the same privileges, rights, and responsibilities regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability or other protected characteristic.

2. **Bullying, harassment, and sexual harassment** violate respect for persons and are not tolerated.

3. **Conflicts of interest** must be avoided, and it is the responsibility of community members to be familiar with the State of Connecticut and the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities Ethics Statements.

4. **Transparency** on all matters of public, institutional, and academic policy is necessary.

5. **Fair evaluations** of faculty, staff and students should be reasoned and conducted based on specified criteria.

6. **Controversy** may arise as community members balance inclusivity, diversity, and the pursuit of knowledge and learning, in which people with diverse ideologies and perspectives are encouraged to speak freely and openly.   Community members should be vigilant in protecting all populations from intolerance.

C.   Responsibility, Beneficence and Service

Within the CSCU System, higher education is open to all. The sharing of knowledge and learning within our institutions requires us to welcome and provide service to the students that come to us and also to contribute to the culture and the institutions in our local communities and in the wider world.

Beneficence and service requires outreach to create a welcoming and encouraging environment for students, parents, and members of the community, being a good steward of public resources, and maintaining healthy, inclusive and safe workplaces.

D.   Shared Governance

CSCU institutions are built on traditions and practices of shared governance. Faculty members are the experts in their specific disciplines and practices, and maintain certain responsibilities in their disciplinary areas in matters related to programs and curriculum.

Faculty and staff are elected by their colleagues to serve on key governance committees at their campuses. Many academic and institutional policies are subject to faculty and staff review and comment, and people should be free to voice their views and their

dissent. Faculty and staff are also key contributors in the hiring and performance review of their colleagues.

At the system level, to facilitate policy research and decision making for CSCU and/or its constituent units, the President or his/her designees may appoint various CSCU bodies such as councils, committees, task forces, etc.

V. <u>STANDARDS</u>

To accomplish the purposes of this Code and its underlying principles and values, every community member is responsible for the following:

A. **<u>Uphold Ethical Standards and Integrity</u>**: Ethical conduct is a fundamental expectation for every community member. Community members are expected to:

1. Act according to the highest ethical and professional standards of conduct

2. Comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies and protocols

3. Satisfy obligations owed to students, advisees, and colleagues

4. Conscientiously fulfill CSCU responsibilities

5. Use CSCU property, equipment, finances, materials, electronic and other systems, and other resources only for legitimate CSCU purposes

6. Propose, conduct, and report research with integrity and honesty

7. Maintain the integrity and accuracy of all documents and records

8. Avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest

9. Communicate ethical standards of conduct through instruction and by example

B. **<u>Maintain and Treat Others with Dignity, Respect and Civility</u>**: CSCU and its institutions are committed to diversity and respect for differences. Community members are expected to:

1. Be respectful of the right of others to express their opinions

2. Extend fundamental fairness to all persons

3. Avoid all forms of bullying and harassment, illegal discrimination, threats, or violence

4. Support conflict resolution

5. Provide equal access to programs, facilities, resources, and employment

6. Ensure that personal or familial relationships do not interfere with objective judgment in decisions affecting employment

7. Protect rights to individual and institutional intellectual property

8. Foster an environment where people feel empowered to make decisions

9. Refrain from engaging in consensual, dating, sexual or romantic relationships particularly as prohibited per BOR policy in all instance where a supervising, evaluating, instructing or other unequal balance of power is present

C. **Lead Responsibly with Accountability**: Regents, executive leadership, managers, supervisors, faculty, staff and advisors are entrusted with significant leadership responsibility. Community members are expected to:

1. Ensure access to and delivery of proper training and guidance on applicable workplace and educational rules, policies, and procedures

2. Judiciously manage public, private, and confidential information and follow due process and clear evaluation standards

3. Avoid favoritism or the appearance of favoritism

4. Work collaboratively with others for the good of students and the community at large

5. Review performance conscientiously and impartially

6. Be personally accountable for individual actions

7. Nurture intellectual growth and professional development

8. Encourage a healthy, innovative, and productive atmosphere that encourages dialogue and is responsive to concerns

9. Follow sound financial practices, including accurate financial reporting, processes to protect assets, and responsible fiscal management and internal controls

10. Engage in appropriate accounting and monitoring

11. Maintain data security regarding access, use, protection, disclosure, retention, and disposal of public, private, and confidential information

12. Follow safe workplace practices, including participating in applicable education sessions, using appropriate personal safety equipment, reporting accidents, injuries and unsafe situations, and complying with mandated safety protocols

VI. NON-RETALIATION

CSCU policy prohibits retaliation when compliance concerns are reported in good faith to supervisors, faculty, administrators, or any appropriate agency outside of CSCU. If you feel that you have been subjected to retaliation, you should contact CSCU Human Resources at 860-723-0252 or the CSCU Office of Legal Affairs at CSCU-Legal@ct.edu. The office that was contacted will respond to reports to resolve compliance issues.

VII. REPORTING NON-COMPLIANCE OPTIONS

Reports of compliance violations may be directed to the campus Human Resources office, CSCU Human Resources at 860-723-0252 or CSCU Legal Affairs at CSCU-Legal@ct.edu or by phone to 860-723-0114.

If you prefer to contact an outside organization the State Auditors of Public Accounts are authorized under the Whistle Blower Act, Section 4-61dd of the Connecticut General Statutes, to receive reports concerning corruption, unethical practices mismanagement, violation of State laws and regulations, gross waste of funds, abuse of authority or danger to the public safety in any State department or agency. Reports filed with the State Auditors are shared with the Attorney General, but may otherwise be held in confidence, if reasonable. You may file a complaint with the State Auditors by calling 860-240-5369 or toll free at 800-797-1702 or file on the web www.cga.ct.gov

If the matter you wish to report to an outside agency involves fraud against the federal government, you may contact the US Department of Justice under the Federal False Claims Act (31 USC section 3729-3733).

VIII. WAIVER

To the extent that there exists authority to waive any provisions of this Code of Conduct, such waivers may only be granted in writing at the sole discretion of the CSCU President.

IX.   IMPLEMENTATION

The President or his/her designee shall ensure that appropriate administrative policies are maintained to support this Code, and shall effectively promulgate this Code and any related administrative policies or procedures through appropriate and periodic explanation and education.

This Code of Conduct does not address every conceivable situation or ethical circumstance that may arise. Community members are expected to exercise good judgment absent specific guidance from this policy or other applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies and protocols.

Specific questions regarding this Code of Conduct should be directed to the individual campus' Director of Human Resources, CSCU Office of Human Resources, CSCU Legal Affairs, or other appropriate office. Contact information for your location shall be provided below:
1) Campus Director of Human Resources
2) CSCU Vice President of Human Resources
3) CSCU Office of Legal Affairs

X.   ANNUAL NOTICE AND TRAINING

All Community members, Board of Regents members, independent contractors and volunteers shall be made aware of the Code of Conduct and be reminded annually of its scope and purpose through formal notice and training opportunities.

XI.   MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

The Code of Conduct is not an employment contract and does not supersede any provision or process provided by any employee's collective bargaining agreement or otherwise provided by law. This Code of Conduct may be modified, amended or revised at any time by the Board of Regents.

XII.   PARTIAL LISTING OF SOURCES

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=6cf6a13718d882722093bb967c9cf6a0&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title34/34cfr99_main_02.tpl

State Code of Ethics for Public Officials http://www.ct.gov/ethics/lib/ethics/guides/2016/public_officials_and_state_employees_guide_rev_2016.pdf

General Statutes §§ 1-79 to 1-90a https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_010.htm#sec_1-79
State Human Rights and Opportunities, Conn. Gen. Stat 46a-51 through 46a-125 https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/title_46a.htm

State Freedom of Information Act, http://www.ct.gov/foi/cwp/view.asp?a=4163&Q=507660

State Record Retention and Disposition https://ctstatelibrary.org/publicrecords/state

Connecticut Executive Order No. 16, issued by Governor John G. Rowland on August 4, 1999 http://www.ct.gov/opm/lib/opm/olr/wpv/exc16.pdf

BOR Affirmative Action Policy Statements http://www.ct.edu/files/policies/4.5%20Affirmative%20Action%20Policy%20Statement.pdf

BOR Consensual Relationships Policy http://www.ct.edu/files/policies/4.3%20Consensual%20Relationships%20Policy.pdf

BOR Ethics Statement http://www.ct.edu/files/policies/4.7%20Ethics%20Statement.pdf

BOR Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Notice and Directory Information Policy http://www.ct.edu/files/policies/2.2%20FERPA%20and%20Directory%20Info.pdf

BOR Human Resources Policy Manual http://www.ct.edu/files/policies/4.8%20HR%20Policies%20for%20Mgmt%20Conf%20Employees.pdf

BOR IT Acceptable Use Policy http://www.ct.edu/files/policies/5.3.a%20Acceptable%20Use%20IT-001.pdf

BOR IT Electronic Communication Policy
http://www.ct.edu/files/policies/5.3.b%20Electronic%20Communication%20%20IT-002.pdf

BOR Nepotism in Employment Policy
http://www.ct.edu/files/policies/4.6%20Nepotism%20in%20Employment.pdf

BOR Faculty Consulting and Research Policy
http://www.ct.edu/files/policies/4.4%20Faculty%20Consulting%20&%20Research.pdf

AAUP Policy Documents & Reports, 10th Edition, see also,
https://www.aaup.org/reports-publications/publications/redbook