Academic Affairs Manual (ACD)

ACD 204–02: Standards of Professional Conduct for Faculty Members and Academic Professionals

Effective: 11/1/1974 **Revised**: 7/1/2026

Purpose

To describe the Board of Regents' view of professional conduct

Sources

Arizona Board of Regents Policy Manual - 6–201; 6–202; 6–301

Academic Constitution and Bylaws

Applicability

Faculty

Academic Professionals

Policy

Reasons for a Formal Statement of Ethical Standards

The Board of Regents recognizes that faculty members in general have long adhered to a sound and honorable set of ethical standards and that these traditional standards continue to apply in today's world. It believes that, because of the size and complexity of Arizona's universities, it is appropriate to state formally these basic principles that have been informally incorporated in the academic way of life for so long. This formal statement will provide faculty members with clear-cut guidelines to follow as they carry out their heavy share of responsibility for the health and well-being of each university community. Moreover, it will help other citizens to come to a better understanding of the special burdens that they, as members of society, have placed on the faculty members of Arizona's institutions of higher learning. Faculty members discharge these special responsibilities as teachers, as scholars, and as members of their community in accordance with the following standards of professional conduct.

Special Obligations of Members of the University Community

Each member of every university community has a special obligation to preserve intellectual freedom, to practice intellectual honesty, to work for constructive and orderly change, to respect the rights and the dignity of others, to acknowledge the right of all to express differing opinions in a responsible manner, to promote conditions that foster the free exchange of ideas, to maintain the orderly processes which make possible freedom of inquiry and instruction, and to avoid any substantial disruption or material interference with the legitimate purpose and normal activities of the university.

Special Obligations of Faculty Members

Responsibilities to Students

As teachers, faculty members encourage the free pursuit of learning in students. They hold before students as best they can the scholarly standards of their discipline. They make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to assure that their evaluation of students reflects the students' true merit. They maintain a generous number of office hours to see students in order to provide opportunities for students to seek guidance under conditions of privacy. They recognize that students are individuals and are entitled to an atmosphere conducive to learning and to even-handed treatment in all respects of the teacher-student relationship.

Primary Responsibility

As scholars, faculty members are guided by a deep conviction of the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge. They bear ultimate responsibility for the integrity of the educational process, for it is they who bring to life the course they teach. It is their mastery of the subject and their scholarly competence which entitles them to their classroom and to freedom in the presentation of their subject. Thus, their primary responsibility is to seek and state the truth as they see it in the field of their competence. To this end they devote their energies to developing and improving their scholarly competence. They accept the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge.

Conduct of Courses

In particular, they accept the responsibility to conduct each course they have been assigned to teach in general conformity with the content, format, and official description of the course as established by the faculties and approved by the president and the Board of Regents. Provided they do not consume class time in holding forth on matters utterly unrelated to the subject matter, they are given the freedom to select and present the material in each course in the way they believe will best achieve the stated goals of the course. They are expected to meet and conduct their classes at all regularly scheduled times and places. The president 0r a duly appointed representative may authorize a member of the faculty to be absent from classes or to reschedule the work for reasons of health or when in the best interests of the university. Whenever emergencies such as illness or accident prevent a faculty member from meeting a scheduled class, he or she should notify the department head or chair as promptly as possible so that a replacement may be arranged.

Committee Assignments

As members of the university community, faculty members accept their share of the committee assignments and will abide by the rules and procedures contained in the *Academic Constitution and Bylaws.* (See ACD 112–01, *"Academic Constitution and Bylaws.")*

Speech as Private Citizens

Faculty members recognize that their contributions to the best interests of the university involve a variety of regular duties over and beyond the scheduled teaching activities. As members of the larger community outside the university, they have the rights and obligations of any citizen. When they speak or write as citizens, they are free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. They measure the urgency of their obligations to the community in the light of their responsibilities to their subject, to their students, to their profession, and to their university. They remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their actions and utterances. Therefore, they are at all times accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, and show respect for the opinions of others. When they speak or act as private persons, they make every effort to indicate that they are not representing their institutions or speaking in an official capacity.

Cross-Reference

See also the *Student Services Manual*—SSM 104–01*, "Student Code of Conduct* and Student Disciplinary Procedures."