

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

The George Washington University dedicates itself to furthering human well-being. To do this, the University must maintain the confidence of the local, national, and worldwide communities. For the University to maintain this confidence, trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the University should strive to maintain the highest level of ethics in all of their actions on behalf of the University, and must comply with University policies as well as external laws and regulations. This Statement of Ethical Principles sets forth standards of ethical conduct to which all persons acting on the University's behalf should aspire. The Statement should be used as a general guide in making ethical decisions in all situations, especially those where the "right" answer is not always clear.

These standards are intended to provide a summary of ethical principles of conduct and to encourage each of us to maintain heightened awareness of their existence. These Principles are also stated, clarified and implemented in several separate policies and procedures of the University. Violations of University policies will be subject to disciplinary action as provided in those policies. Please see www.policy.gwu.edu for the latest full listing of University policies.

Integrity and
Respect

The University community is diverse -- in race, background, age, religion, and in many other ways. The personal actions of each community member establish and maintain the culture of tolerance and respect for which we strive. The University is committed to free inquiry, free expression, and the vigorous discussion and debate on which the advancement of its educational mission depends. At the same time, trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the University should respect the rights and dignity of others regardless of their differences, and must conscientiously comply with nondiscrimination policies adopted by the University.

Responsibility and
Accountability

University trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the University should assume and exercise responsibility appropriate to their positions and roles. We are accountable to each other, to the University, and to ourselves for our actions and our decisions not to act. When roles or responsibilities are unclear, we should take it upon ourselves to obtain clarity. We should exercise sound professional judgment in the performance of our responsibilities, to the best of our ability.

Conflicts of Interest
and Commitment

All trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the University hold positions of trust, and should conduct their activities accordingly. Activities that impair or appear to impair the ability to perform our duties or affect independence and objectivity of judgment in the

discharge of our responsibilities to the University should be avoided. We should demonstrate sensitivity in identifying potential conflicts of interest, whether of a financial, personal, or professional nature. Conflicts of interest must be disclosed, reviewed, and appropriately managed or eliminated in accordance with the reporting and other provisions of applicable University policies.

Harassment and Abuse of Power

The University supports an environment in which harassment of others is not tolerated. Trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the University may not use positions of authority to violate or to influence others to violate laws, regulations or University policies.

Stewardship

As stewards of University resources, all trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the University have a responsibility to ensure that all University resources are used prudently, ethically, and for their designated purposes. We have a responsibility to contributors to the University, including federal, state, and local governments, to treat University property with care, and to expend funds prudently. We should avoid waste and improper use, and should not use tangible or intangible University assets, funds, property, or facilities for our personal benefit or for the benefit of a non-University organization without proper approval. Our acts should reflect the recognition of a special obligation to use University property responsibly and consistent with the tax-exempt status conferred on the University in light of its educational, research, and service missions. It is imperative that those with access to confidential, proprietary, or private information not make unauthorized disclosures or use of this information.

Reporting

All trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the University are expected to report violations of laws, regulations or University policies to appropriate University officials, e.g., the employee's dean, department chair or other supervisor, senior University administrator, University Compliance & Privacy Office, or Office of General Counsel. Confidentiality of individuals reporting violations of these standards will be maintained to the extent possible.