

Case Western Reserve University Statement of Ethics

Universities seek to preserve, disseminate and advance knowledge. At Case, as elsewhere, we recognize that to fulfill these purposes requires a norm of expected conduct shared by all in the University community, governed by truthfulness, openness to new ideas, and consideration for the individual rights of others, including the right to hold and express opinions different from our own.

The university's mission rests on the premise of intellectual honesty: in the classroom, the laboratory, the office, and the solitary examination desk. Without a prevailing ethic of honor and integrity not only in scientific pursuits but also in all scholarly activity, the very search for knowledge is impaired. In these respects, each of us—especially but not exclusively faculty—must regard oneself as a mentor for others.

These principles we strive to uphold make it possible for the larger society to place trust in the degrees we confer, the research we produce, the scholarship we represent and disseminate, and the critical assessments we make of the performance of students and faculty, as well as judgments of staff and administrators.

To safeguard the standards on which we all depend, each of us must therefore accept individual responsibility for our behavior and our work, and refrain from taking credit for the work of others.



The culture of a university also requires that the rights of all be protected, particularly by those entrusted with authority for judgment of the work of others.

The university being a human community is subject to human failings, ambiguities and errors. It is therefore the responsibility of the bodies regulating the affairs of faculty, students, and staff to maintain processes for judging and resolving instances where these principles may have been violated. However, all such systems depend for their effectiveness, in turn, on the acceptance of common norms of conduct—the ties of trust which bind the university community together.

Academic Integrity Standards

Students, faculty, and administrators share responsibility for the determination and preservation of standards of academic integrity. Not only must they adhere to their own personal codes of integrity but they must also be prepared to educate others about the importance of academic integrity, to take reasonable precaution to discourage violations of academic integrity, and to adjudicate violations.

For students, education about the importance of academic integrity begins during the admissions process. The centrality of integrity to the academic enterprise is reinforced during new student orientation when students engage in discussion about academic integrity. Specific mention of academic integrity and course-specific guidelines should be presented in all classes. Programs and instruction about academic integrity guidelines also should be offered throughout the students' undergraduate career.

Faculty and students are expected to uphold standards of academic integrity by taking reasonable precaution in the academic arena. Reasonable precaution involves implementing measures that reduce the opportunities for academic misconduct but do not inhibit inquiry, create disruption or distraction in the testing environment, or create an atmosphere of mistrust.

The vitality of academic integrity is dependent upon the willingness of community members to confront instances of suspected wrongdoing. Faculty have specific responsibility to address suspected or reported violations as indicated below. All other members of the academic community are expected to report directly and confidentially their suspicion of violation to a faculty member or a dean or to approach suspected violators and to remind them of their obligation to uphold standards of academic integrity.