

Statement of Ethical Principles

The faculty, staff, and students of the University of Washington are heirs to a 150-year commitment to honesty and integrity in conducting our mission of education, research and public service. As trustees of that legacy, it is our responsibility to hold ourselves and one another to the highest ethical standards, guiding our quests for the discovery and dissemination of knowledge and the conduct of other University affairs with a deep respect for the rules and societal standards that define the right way to conduct our work.

This Statement of Ethical Principles is intended to form a foundation for applying the various detailed regulations and ethics programs to which members of the University community are subject. The Statement should be used as a general guide in making ethical decisions in all situations, especially those where the right answer may not be immediately apparent.

1. Conflicts of Interest and Commitment

All regents, faculty, senior officials, and staff hold positions of trust, and we should conduct our activities accordingly. We must avoid activities that would compromise the public's confidence in the University's integrity or that would impair our independence and objectivity of judgment in the discharge of our responsibilities to the University. 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 and regulatory agency policies.

2. Respect and Civility

The University community is diverse in ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, political belief, and in many other ways. As members of this community, each of us must help establish and maintain a culture of tolerance and respect for the dignity and perspectives of others and promote civility in our discourse and behavior towards one another.

3. Accountability

We should hold ourselves accountable to each other, to the University, and to the public for our actions and our omissions. Our duty includes an obligation to report suspected violations of laws, regulations, or University policies to appropriate University officials and to avoid retaliation against others who in good faith report such violations.

4. Stewardship and Use of Authority

As stewards of University resources, we each have a responsibility to ensure that all assets under our control are used prudently, ethically, and for their designated purposes. We must avoid waste of University funds, property, or facilities or their diversion for non-University purposes. Similarly, we must be careful to use the authority delegated to us so that it serves institutional, rather than personal, objectives.

5. Seeking Guidance

Whenever we, as members of the University community, are uncertain about the best way to handle a situation, we should consult with our supervisors, the Executive Director of Internal Audit, University legal counsel, or other appropriate resources.