



Jackson State University

Update: Code of Conduct & Ethics Policy
Effective Date: April 1, 2020
Revised Date: April 1, 2020
Responsible Office: Department of Human Resources - Office of the President
People Affected: All Employees

1.8 Code of Conduct & Ethics Policy

Summary:

This Code of Conduct establishes guidelines for professional conduct by those acting on behalf of the University. This is not an attempt to define specifically what one should and should not do, but to communicate the University's expectations of proper conduct and what professional conduct the University values. It is an expectation that the Code of Conduct serves as the basis, on which, employees should make decisions related to the best interests of themselves, their co-workers and the University.

Scope:

This code conduct applies to all Jackson State University employees including executive officers, faculty, staff, and other individuals employed by the University using University resources or facilities, and volunteers and representatives acting as agents of the University.

University policies, procedures, and state law serve to reinforce the concepts presented in the Code of Conduct Guide. This policy is not intended to replace, and may be supplemented by, specific University policies that have been already been adopted or may be adopted in the future. This code may be amended or supplemented at any time by the President and JSU's Executive Cabinet.

Purpose:

This code is a shared statement that serves as a guide and basis of our commitment to upholding ethical, professional, and legal behavior in support of our day-to-day activities and to achieve our mission as an institution of higher learning. While we are all individually accountable for our actions and decisions, we must also be cognizant of policies, standards, laws and regulations that holds the University accountable as a community

Ethical Standards:

I. Ethical Principles and Core Values

It is the policy of the University to conduct itself with the highest degree of integrity and honesty in all of its dealings. This is a responsibility of the University Community. Each staff member, student, faculty member and administrative employee must be bound by this common duty in the pursuit of his or her individual responsibility to the educational objectives of the University.

Professional conduct including respect for authority and for one another is basic to the general welfare and personal dignity of all persons with whom an employee comes into contact. Employee conduct that demonstrates these positive characteristics is essential to the success of Jackson State University. All members of the University are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. They should respect the privacy and reputation of co-workers and all other persons. Tact, courtesy, and kindness should be practiced by all.

II. Equal Opportunity – *Policy 2.1.1 Equal Employment Opportunity & Affirmative Action Policy*

Jackson State University is an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

III. Confidentiality – *Policy 1.8.6 Confidentiality & Maintenance of Accurate Accounts & Records*

Jackson State University takes seriously the confidential nature of non-public information regarding its employees, students, donors, and other members of the Jackson State University community. Jackson State University authorizes access to employee, student, or donor written or electronic information to the extent that is necessary to carry out job responsibilities.

IV. Sexual Harassment – *Policy 6.3 Policy Against Sexual Harassment and Gender Discrimination*

Harassment of employees or students based upon sex violates equal employment and academic opportunity. Sexual harassment is illegal and will not be tolerated by the University or any members of its community. Any employee or student who violates the University policy on sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action and possible termination or expulsion from the University.

Members of the University Community are strongly encouraged to report allegations of sexual harassment as promptly as possible to the Equal Employment/ Affirmative Action Officer (EEO/AA) in the Office of General Counsel.

VII. Relationships in the Workplace – *Policy 2.11.2 Relationships*

Romantic or amorous relationships between individuals where one party possesses direct academic, administrative, supervisory, evaluative, counseling, or extracurricular authority over the other party presents ethical and administrative problems. Therefore, all employed individuals, whether faculty, staff, or students, are prohibited to directly or indirectly supervising other individuals at the University with whom they have a sexual relationship, whether or not such relationships are consensual.

Inherent in these types of consensual relationships exist the potential for conflicts of interest, exploitation, favoritism, harassment, and bias. Furthermore, such relationships may undermine the real or perceived integrity and trust necessary for a beneficial academic or employment environment

IV. Bullying

The University community is committed to fostering a respectful and safe environment. Bullying of any form will not be tolerated. Bullying can include:

- Threatening, humiliating or intimidation behavior

- Singling out individuals by shouting at or harsh criticism
- Exclusion or social isolation
- Excessive monitoring
- Use of language or actions that embarrass or humiliate

V. Conflict of Interest – Policy 6.2 Conflict of Interest Policy

A conflict of interest can occur when a situation in which an individual's financial, professional or other personal interests may directly or indirectly affect, or have the appearance of affecting, his or her professional judgment in exercising any University duty or responsibility.

JSU employees shall not be interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract with the University other than their employment contract. Therefore, a JSU employee may not be a contractor or vendor with JSU, other than his contract of employment, or have a material financial interest in a business which is a contractor or vendor with the University.

It's important for employees to disclose any relationships, associations or activities definite, probable, and possible conflicts of interest and/or conflicts of commitment, as soon as they arise or are identified, to a designated University official for notice and evaluation.

VI. Health and Safety

The University takes reasonable actions to protect each employee on the job, but safety must also be observed by each employee. All member of the University Community are requested to cooperate with administrative personnel by observing safety rules, by working carefully, and by promoting safety among fellow workers.

It is the responsibility of employees of the University to see that they are not contributing to the creation of an unsafe condition and to remove or report to the supervisor any condition that they feel might be unreasonably dangerous. Employees who are involved in preventable accidents or other safety violations will be subject to disciplinary actions.

Campus emergency operations will be conducted within the framework of the University guidelines. Emergencies are any situations that cause or threaten to cause loss of life or physical property, or other significant risk that threaten the general safety and welfare of individuals working in and around Jackson State University (e.g. severe weather, fires, explosions, accidents, or vehicular mishaps). In case of a campus emergency, call Campus Police at 601-979-2580

VII. Duty to Cooperate

Every member of the University Community has a duty to cooperate with the University in the initiation and defense of actual or contemplated litigation affecting the interests of the University and in the conduct of any investigation of the University, including a violation of this Code of Ethics and Conduct. Suspected violations of Mississippi State Ethics laws should be forwarded to the University's Office of General Counsel.

Employee Responsibility:

I. External Communication on Behalf of the Company

Copies of all publicity representing the University must be submitted to the Director of University Communications and/or assigned Department of Public Relations staff for approval before it is released to the news media. No administrator, faculty, or staff member has the authority to make official statements to the news media regarding the institution without the approval of the President of the University.

II. FERPA

The University respects that once a student reaches the age of 18 years of age is an "eligible student," or attends a postsecondary institution, rights formerly given to parents under FERPA transfer to the student. The "eligible student" has the right to have access to his or her education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, the right to have control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the records (except in certain circumstances specified in the FERPA regulations, some of which are discussed below), and the right to file a complaint with the Department.

III. Record Keeping – *Policy 1.8.6 Confidentiality & Maintenance of Accurate Accounts & Records*

The University is committed to maintaining and providing truthful information and documentation in support of institutional activities and transactions. All supporting documentation must accurately reflect all actions, communications or decided.

All University research records are the property of the Jackson State University regardless of their physical location, even when they are in the possession of individuals, and may not be permanently removed from the University, destroyed or otherwise used without proper authorization. All University records are retained in accordance with all federal and state laws/regulations, terms and conditions of award and agreements and this policy.

IV. Recording Devices on University Premise – *Policy 2.11.5 Recording Devices on University Premises*

As a general rule, recording devices and camera-equipped devices (including mobile communication devices) and their uses are restricted in accordance with state and federal regulatory guidelines concerning unauthorized surveillance. Employees shall not use the picture-taking functionality of mobile communication devices in the workplace to image confidential information or other restricted documents without authorization, or to capture images of persons without their knowledge when a reasonable expectation of privacy exists. Designated research areas and classrooms may only allow recording devices with the express prior consent of the department manager, faculty member, or supervising administrator.

Employees are also prohibited from arranging for others, including non-employees, to do any recording of conversations, phone calls, or other work activities without prior notice and authorization as discussed above. The University shall not be liable for the loss or damage of personal cell phones or other recording devices brought into the workplace. Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination depending on the severity of the infraction.

V. University Registered Trademarks – *Policy 5.1.2 University Registered Trademarks*

The Jackson State University name, seal, logo, mascot, and associated graphics are registered trademarks with the United States Patent and Trademark Office. All uses of the names and trademarks are approved and monitored through the JSU Licensing Program. All request(s) to utilize or reproduce Jackson State University registered trademarks internally or externally must be approved through the Department of Contractual Services. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary actions or terminations.

VI. Protection and Proper Use of Company Assets – *Policy 1.8.3 Proper Use of University Resources*

University resources shall not be used for other than their intended purpose. We shall manage those resources prudently and not for our personal use. Employees shall ensure proper approvals are obtained prior to using facilities or granting use to University facilities. Individuals seeking use of a University facility should contact the Department of Events.

VII. Information Technology Data Compliance

Personnel, student, financial, and medical information contained within the University's information systems is considered confidential. This confidential information and any other information made confidential by law is limited to those individuals whose position requires use of this information. Employee granted access to such information agree to treat all information as confidential and will use this information to fulfill job responsibilities only. Employee must not share access to, print, copy, or disclose confidential information to the University's employees, students, or anyone else with no business need for it. This includes information concerning the University's students, employees, vendors, consultants, contractors, and donors. Employees are not to share username and password with anyone.

VIII. Use of Social Media – *Policy 2.11.4 Personal Communications and Social Networking*

Personal use of blogs and other social networking sites should not be utilized during work time. Employees should use their best judgment when expressing views in a blog or online site to ensure that their personal views are not construed as representing the views of the University. If information is published on a personal blog or networking site, such posting must not contain confidential, copyrighted, or trademarked information or marks of the University absent specific written consent or license. Furthermore, employees should be aware that their online presence and actions may reflect positively or negatively upon the University, and care should therefore be taken to conduct one's self in an appropriate manner.

IX. Educational Benefits and Opportunities

No member of the University Community shall deny a student fair access to educational opportunities and benefits available at the University. Invidious harassment, discrimination, or intimidation of students that deny or impede their right of access to these benefits and opportunities will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action.

X. Government Relations

All members of the University Community are expected to conform their actions to the requirements of the

law. Illegal or unethical conduct by University employees, whether on or off campus, may reflect unfavorably on the University or be relevant to an employee's fitness for a particular position. Any misconduct which violates this Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy may be considered by the University for evaluation and/or employment action purposes.

If JSU is requesting Government funding or the award of a Government contract or grant, JSU (including its representatives) has an affirmative obligation to make full, accurate, and honest representations concerning all relevant information submitted to or requested by the Government. All record keeping and accounts must be in accord with generally accepted accounting principles and otherwise in compliance with all pertinent Government directives and regulations.

XII. Employment Practices and Public Relations

No member of the University Community shall engage in any employment practice that is a violation of Federal law, Mississippi law, or the law of any other local jurisdiction where the University may have employees conducting business. Every member of the University community is expected to treat each other and members of the public with courtesy, professionalism, and civility.

XIII. Relevant Mississippi Ethics Laws

JSU employees shall not be interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract with the University other than their employment contract. Therefore, a JSU employee may not be a contractor or vendor with JSU, other than his contract of employment, or have a material financial interest in a business which is a contractor or vendor with the University. An employee has a material financial interest in a contract if a personal and pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, accrues to the public servant or relative, either individually or in combination with each other. It is not considered a material financial interest where ownership in a company benefiting from a contract is extremely small and not influential, as set forth in Miss. Code Ann. §§ 25-4-103 and 25-4-105.

No person may intentionally use or disclose information gained because of his official position or employment as a public servant in any way that could result in pecuniary benefit for himself, any relative, or any other person, if the information has not been communicated to the public or is not public information.

Any contract made in violation of state ethics law may be declared void and the contractor or subcontractor shall retain or receive only the reasonable value, with no increment for profit or commission, of the property or the services furnished prior to the date of receiving notice that the contract has been voided. Any person violating a state ethics law shall be punished as provided for in Miss. Code Ann. §§ 25-4-109 and 25-4-111. Executive directors and heads of state agencies, including presidents and trustees of state-supported colleges, who are paid from state funds must file a statement of economic interest as required by Miss. Code Ann. §§ 25-4-25 and 25-4-27.

Administration:

I. Reporting Known or Suspected Violation

The University encourages all employees to ask questions and raise issues in good faith without fear of retaliation. In the interest of the University and its faculty, staff, and students, individuals who have

knowledge of specific acts which they reasonably believe violate the University policy, law or violate the spirit of this code are strongly encouraged to disclose those acts to an appropriate University official. All good faith reports are treated seriously and investigated thoroughly.

All members of the University community are expected to abide by state and federal laws and regulations as well as University policies. No one should be compelled to violate a law or University policy. Deans, directors, department/unit heads and other administrators who have knowledge of specific acts which they reasonably believe violate the law or University policy must disclose those acts to an appropriate University official.

To report a concern

- Speak with your manager
- Contact Human Resources
- Contact Ethics Line

II. No Retaliation/Whistleblower *(will create a new policy number)*

The University seeks to create an environment where individuals can report unlawful activity or non-compliant activity without fear of reprisal. Retaliation is illegal and will not be tolerated by the University. Similarly, persons who use this process to bring bad faith allegations against an employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

Individuals who report a concern in good faith cannot be subjected to any adverse action including;

- Unfair dismissal, demotion or suspension
- Bullying and harassment of any form
- Exclusionary behavior
- Any behavior that singles out the person unfairly

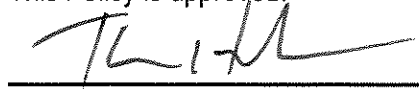
III. Violation of the Code

Confirmed violations will result in appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment or other relationships with the University. In some circumstances, civil and criminal charges and penalties may apply.

IV. Acknowledgment of the Code through Certification

As member of the Jackson State University community, you must read and sign the Annual Code of Conduct Compliance Certification attesting your commitment to adhere to the Jackson State University Code of Conduct. Adherence to this Code also makes you responsible for bringing suspected violations of applicable standards, policies, laws or regulations to the attention of the appropriate cognizant office. Raising such concerns is a service to the University and does not jeopardize one's position or employment.

This Policy is approved:



Signature Line



Date of Signature

Mr. Thomas Hudson, Acting President

Printed Name and Title

This Policy has been reviewed and approved as to legal compliance:



Signature Line



Date of Signature

Edward Watson, General Counsel

Printed Name and Title