

*Approved pursuant to the resolution #23/1
of the representative board of TSMU
Dated by March 1, 2013*

**Code of Ethics
LEPL – Tbilisi State Medical University**

Article 1. General Provisions

1.1. Code of ethics of the LEPL – Tbilisi State Medical University (hereinafter referred to as - University) is developed within the frameworks of authority granted to the university.

1.2 Code of ethics establishes ethical standards of university, determines rules of conduct of the personnel and students of the university in accordance to the requirements of active legislation and regulatory administrative acts of the university activities.

1.3 Code applies to TSMU staff, administrative officials, auxiliary staff, and TSMU students. University personnel comprises of academic staff, teacher, also any other person invited for the participation in academic or/and scientific and research process. Administrative/auxiliary personnel means administrative/auxiliary personnel determined in accordance to the charter of TSMU. Requirements established pursuant to the code of ethics relates to students of all academic degree (among them to Master’s and Doctoral students). Also, to residents, persons with a status of learner (listener) and free learner (listener); persons, who study or undergo training at any departments or centers of the university.

Article 2. Application of Code of Ethics

2.1 Code of ethics is applied together with the administrative acts approved by the university.

2.2 Standards established in accordance to the code of ethics may be the basis for the decisions (disciplinary, administrative or contractual relation) of university administrative bodies, only if it is directly established pursuant to the appropriate administrative acts and labor agreement of the university.

Article 3. Principles of Code of Ethics

3.1 Personnel, administrative officials, auxiliary personnel and students of TSMU apply the principles generally acknowledged at the university, as:

3.1.1. Legitimacy;

3.1.2. Justice;

3.1.3. Professionalism;

3.1.4. Independence.

Article 4. Obligation of the Personnel of University

4.1 Obligations determined pursuant to this article apply to the personnel of university within the scope of their competence determined under legislation and agreement.

4.2. TSMU Staff:

4.2.1. Principal duty of TSMU staff is to provide students with qualified knowledge through modern means of teaching and research. Staff should be aware that human qualities and civic values should serve as role models for students;

4.2.2. Activity of TSMU personnel and relation with students is to be based on academic and ethical standards;

4.2.3. TSMU Staff should provide all conditions for providing the perfect academic environment, develop effective methods of quality teaching, and establish fair evaluation criteria;

4.2.4. Personnel of TSMU should manage education process in accordance to the curriculum approved by the university, provide academic supervision to student, maintain its academic freedom, facilitate in free sharing of opinions and respect them;

4.2.5. In the process of student evaluation, TSMU staff must adhere to the principles of fairness and objectivity. Evaluations should be free from biases related to religion, race, political affiliation, or other subjective factors. Grades should be based solely on the student's academic performance;

4.2.6. TSMU staff should not take any action that would place a student in a privileged or disadvantaged position compared to others;

4.2.7. University staff are prohibited from accepting gifts in connection with their official activities, including monetary gifts;

4.2.8. Deleted; (06/07/2018; N23/9)

4.2.9. Personnel of TSMU should not disclose confidential information about students, including details about their personal life, political or religious opinions, except in cases determined by legislation.

4.3. TSMU staff is prohibited from:

4.3.1. Using students' abilities for personal benefits.

4.3.2. Discriminating against students on the basis of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, marital status, age, or any other basis.

4.3.3. Engaging in relationships with students that may compromise objective and fair assessment of the student or create a conflict situation.

4.3.4. Engaging in behavior inside and outside the university that may undermine or threaten the prestige of the university.

4.3.5. Engaging in behavior unsuitable for the position. Unsuitable behavior includes any action, directly or indirectly, that may negatively affect the quality of academic, research, and treatment processes, violate labor discipline, or fail to comply with the requirements set forth by the university statutes and Internal Regulations.

4.3.6. Influencing the student's exam results, including biased assessment, covering up instances of plagiarism, forgery, and similar violations, absenteeism or tardiness, concealing cases of academic dishonesty, providing inaccurate information to the faculty including personal data, damaging the reputation of Georgia or the university in society, and violating accepted moral norms are all prohibited; (07/06/2018 N23/9)

4.3.6.1 When presenting to the public through media channels, academic staff should identify themselves by their academic position held at the University. (23.12.14 #23/10)

4.4. University personnel must prioritize the efficient use of their time and resources towards enhancing professionalism and conducting their activities with honesty and integrity.

4.5 University personnel are obliged to:

4.5.1. Uphold the academic freedom of colleagues and students.

4.5.2. Treat colleagues respectfully and fairly.

4.5.3. Refrain from making false or groundless assessments.

4.5.4. Provide constructive criticism.

4.5.5. Not overlook instances of threats, insults, or humiliation expressed verbally or through actions on university premises, and to take appropriate action in response.

4.5.6. Refrain from misrepresenting or providing false opinions of colleagues to bolster personal positions.

4.5.7. Actively support colleagues in their professional development.

4.5.8. Using the original findings of colleagues or other scientists must always be accompanied by appropriate citations, whether in oral or written form.

4.5.9. Avoid making rude comments about the teaching or research methods of the colleagues.

4.5.10. Refrain from abusing or making anonymous accusations against colleagues.

4.5.11. Actively participate in university activities as per approved regulations, including involvement in governing bodies, without compromising primary responsibilities.

4.5.12. To use the university's facilities, equipment, and resources responsibly and efficiently. To allocate university-paid working hours, human resources, and intellectual property strictly for official purposes, except when explicitly authorized otherwise.

4.5.12¹. Members of governing bodies and attendees at meetings must adhere to a formal dress code (e.g., classic suit, tie, shirt, skirt, trousers) and switch off cell phones during meetings. Leaving the meeting hall or engaging in conversation during meetings is prohibited, except under special circumstances. (23/12/2014; N23/10)

4.5.13. Obey the requirements of current legislation, the university statute administrative acts, and the code of ethics.

Article 5. Administrative and Auxiliary Personnel

5.1. The obligation of administrative and auxiliary personnel is to create an essential moral, financial-economic, and comfortable environment at the university conducive to academic research activity and professional development.

5.2. Administrative and auxiliary personnel are required to respect the university's traditions and treat university employees and students kindly and fairly. Administrative personnel should develop policies to eliminate discrimination against employees and students based on gender, age, race, ethnicity, political affiliation, or religion.

5.3. The activities of administrative and auxiliary personnel should adhere to ethical standards, honesty, and professionalism. They should contribute to enhancing the university's reputation and authority in society.

5.4. Administrative and auxiliary personnel must comply with the rules approved by the university and current legislation.

5.5. Administrative and auxiliary personnel are obligated to maintain confidentiality regarding any confidential information obtained during their professional activities, except in cases permitted by law.

5.6. Administrative and auxiliary personnel should effectively utilize the university's resources, including property, working time, intellectual abilities, and others, for the benefit of the university.

5.7. Non-compliance with the requirements established in accordance with the code of ethics is considered a violation of the position regulated by the university's charter and relevant administrative acts.

Article 6. Student Obligations

6.1. The student is obligated to:

6.1.1. Adhere to the requirements of current legislation, the university statute internal regulations, administrative acts, and the code of ethics of TSMU.

6.1.2. Respect university personnel and fellow students, maintaining generally accepted moral norms in all interactions.

6.1.3. Refrain from behaviors that may endanger the university or damage its reputation.

6.2. Improper and unethical behavior of students includes:

6.2.1. Disrupting the educational process (e.g., creating noise, using cell phones and etc.).

6.2.2. Smoking tobacco on university premises and in areas owned or utilized by the university. (07/06/2018 N23/9)

6.2.3. Bringing, distributing, and/or using alcoholic beverages in the university premises without permission from the administration of TSMU (07/06/2018 N23/9)

6.2.4. Engaging in gambling activities on university premises.

6.2.5. Intentionally damaging university property or inventory.

6.2.6. Bringing, distributing, and/or using narcotic and/or psychotropic substances on university premises.

6.2.7. Possessing and/or using firearms and/or cold weapons on university premises.

6.2.8. Engaging in violence or verbally abusing other students, as well as representatives of academic, administrative, and support staff.

6.3. All students of the university are required to carry a student status or identity card when entering university premises. This card must be presented to administrative staff, academic staff, or security officers upon request. (05/12/2014 N23/9)

6.4. Students are prohibited from engaging in academic dishonesty, which includes:

6.4.1. Plagiarizing or using unauthorized materials during exams or assignments (books, summaries, communicating with others, etc.).

6.4.2. Taking exams on behalf of another student.

6.4.3. Obtaining confidential information or material related to an exam, or using such material obtained from others without acknowledging the source.

6.4.4. Presenting someone else's work as their own.

6.4.5. Falsifying university data (including grades received).

6.4.6. Assisting other students in academic dishonesty.

6.4.7. Falsifying factual information or any other type of data during research activities.

6.4.8. Using confidential information in personal academic work.

6.5. Disciplinary actions against students are determined by the faculty board in accordance with the university statute, internal regulations, code of ethics of TSMU, and Georgian law on higher

education. Students have the right to attend the discussion of their case and to exercise other rights as provided by law.

Article 7. Ethics Committee

7.1. To ensure compliance with the requirements set forth in the code of ethics, the university establishes an ethics committee.

7.2. The committee consists of permanent and variable (ad hoc) members (depending on the specific issue).

7.3 The composition of the Committee is approved by the order of the Rector for each specific case, ensuring there are no conflicts of interest.

7.4. Permanent members of the commission include:

7.4.1. Vice-rector – Chairman of the Commission; 7.4.2. Representative from the Quality Assurance Service; 7.4.3. Head of the Rector's Office – Secretary of the Commission; 7.4.4. Representative from the Legal Service.

7.4. Permanent members of the committee include:

7.4.1. Vice-Rector – Chairman of the Committee;

7.4.2. Representative of the Quality Assurance Service;

7.4.3. Head of the Rector's Office – Secretary of the Committee;

7.4.4. Representative of the Legal Service.

7.5 Depending on the specifics of the case, the variable (ad hoc) members of the committee may include:

7.5.1 Representatives from the faculty, direction and/or department, postgraduate /research institutions;

7.5.2. Representative from the HR Service;

7.5.3. Representative from student self-governance;

7.5.4. Invited expert.

7.6. The committee convenes within a period of 2 weeks after receiving information (application, complaint) regarding a violation of the code of ethics.

7.7. Any representative of the university's administrative, academic, teaching, support staff, as well as a student who can substantiate a violation of ethics norms, can raise the issue. (12.02.2024; 23/3).

7.8. A meeting is considered valid if more than half of the members are present. Decisions are made by majority vote. In case of a tie, the chairman of the commission has the deciding vote.

7.9. Protocols are drafted during the commission session. The protocols are signed by all members of the commission.

7.10 If there is disagreement among the members of the committee, the dissenting opinion of the member shall be documented (written form) and appended to the committee decision.

7.11 The committee provides the individual whose case is being considered an opportunity to present their own explanation.

7.12 The committee reaches a decision only with proper justification.

7.13 For employees, the commission communicates its decision to the university rector, and for students, to the council of the relevant faculty.

7.14 The decision of the commission serves as a recommendation.

Article 8. Liability Measures

8.1 The measures of disciplinary responsibility shall be applied to the university employee:

- a) Warning;
- b) Reprimand;
- c) Dismissal; (12.02.2024; N23/3).

8.2 Measure of disciplinary responsibility to the employee of university is determined under the order of rector.

8.2.1 When a student commits a disciplinary violation, the recommendation of the Ethics Committee, along with the administrative proceedings, is submitted to the relevant faculty council. The faculty council is authorized to implement one of the following disciplinary measures:

- a) Note
 - b) Reprimand
 - c) Expulsion
- (12.02.2024; N23/3).

8.3 Interested person/persons are to be informed in writing with regard to the made decision within 3 days term.