

# **ETHICAL CODE**

## **MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF GDAŃSK**

### **PREAMBLE**

The transformations taking place in the political systems and moral codes of social life make it urgently necessary to recapitulate the core values and the principles of their attainment in the contemporary cultural conditions and civilisation. Establishments of higher education should embody the unquestionable ethical authority and whilst keeping pace with the times should be the haven of ethical excellence in the society, or at least strive at the excellence uncompromisingly.

A medical University of higher education has a social role to play by teaching and educating the young generation and engaging in scientific research in the spirit of truth. Because of its medical profile, the university has a specific role to play in the society, the role stemming from care for protection of human life and health irrespective of the skin colour, nationality, personal beliefs, social status, or other similar factors.

In view of the above, members of the community of the Medical University of Gdańsk, i.e. its governing bodies, employees, doctoral students and students, aware of the University's unique social mission and the burden of responsibility for accomplishing it, adopt this Code which details the core ethical values, principles, and duties defined herein to support the unyielding effort to do good. The Code complements legal and service obligations.

### **I. VALUES**

Good, Truth, Dignity, Freedom, Respect for Human Life and Fairness are values recognized by the University, which, permeating each other, create a space in which science develops and moral attitudes are formed. Translation of these values into real life determines not only the role, but also the University's position in the society, since the higher position its representatives are perceived to take in human community, the higher moral standards they should meet.

## **1. GOOD**

Good represents the rudimental value which, when seen in interpersonal relationships, always translates to openness to the needs of another human. Doing good betters the man. As the University sees it, what matters is not only the good of an individual, but also the common good of the whole academic community and the society the University serves.

## **2. TRUTH**

Truth as a cognitive value is discovered piece by piece, gradually, and arriving at it is the subject matter of all scientific research. It also plays a fundamental role in the moral life of every human being, because only by living in the truth can he fulfil himself personally and affirm the dignity of human nature.

## **3. DIGNITY**

Dignity stands for the personal value which determines the way the man should be treated and the way he himself should behave. The dignity of a human being is an inalienable value irrespective of the skin colour, sex, faith, age, social position, skills possessed, personal beliefs, etc.

## **4. FREEDOM**

Freedom denotes the liberty to make decisions and see them through. Freedom is an elementary value each human being should enjoy. Freedom of expression and freedom of conscience gain a specific dimension in the academic community. The freedom the man enjoys, however, carries responsibility for the choices made and actions taken.

## **5. RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE**

Life is an immanent value of each human being bestowed on him by nature itself. The value gains specific significance at the medical University whose mission is to serve to protect life and human health.

## **6. FAIRNESS**

Fairness is, first and foremost, respect for the right to equal and fair treatment of all members of the academic community regardless of their position and differences among them. The system of evaluation, whether of employees, doctoral students or students, must be based on criteria formulated in a clear and transparent manner. Fairness must be reflected in guaranteeing equal access to research and teaching infrastructure, to information about the functioning of the University, as well as to social support and participation in academic life.

## **II. THE PRINCIPLES**

The adopted values form the foundations for the general principles governing the University's life.

### **1. THE PRINCIPLE OF AUTONOMY**

The University defines its own mission based on independence of any political, economic, or other influences in its seeking, publishing, and teaching the scientific truth.

### **2. THE PRINCIPLE OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

The medical University operates *pro public bono*, i.e. for the common good. The teaching of the vocation, the lines of scientific research, and participation in practical medical care are targeted at the needs of the entire society. Awareness of the role should mould the attitudes of the academic community of the medical University.

### **3. THE PRINCIPLE OF HONESTY**

The University accepts diligent and decent behaviour following the adopted obligations as its elementary moral principle in the community life.

### **4. THE PRINCIPLE OF RESPECT FOR DIGNITY**

The University abides by the principle of respecting the dignity of each human being. The principle lays the foundations for any interpersonal relationships.

### **5. THE PRINCIPLE OF TOLERANCE**

In its respect for human dignity and personal freedom of each man, the University declares respect for any personal beliefs and any actions in accord with the universal values. The principle of tolerance gives, in particular, the right for each member of the academic community to freely present his or her own point of view, taking into account the rule of presenting views in accordance with current knowledge.

## **III. DUTIES**

As guidance in the pursuance of the above listed principles we here define the duties which, if performed, should build the ethical image of the Medical University of Gdańsk.

### **CORE DUTIES**

1. Seeking the truth and the courage to proclaim it
2. Respecting the core values and following the ethical principles in action, formulation and expression of views.
3. Compliance with applicable laws.
4. Upholding the principles of honesty, integrity and due diligence and accountability.

5. Furthering knowledge and skills continuously.
6. Caring about the good name, image, and prestige of the University.
7. Showing mutual respect, goodwill, and culture in the relationships with other members of the academic community.
8. Accepting functions burdened with responsibility in line with personal competencies, and not evading involvement in the works of collective bodies.
9. Inspiring and developing creativity, and building an atmosphere of harmonious development of the entire academic community.
10. Exercising the authority conferred by the academic community in an open and transparent manner.
11. Disclosure of actual and potential conflicts of interest, in particular leading to actions to the detriment of the University.
12. Demonstrating loyalty towards the academic community of the home University without transgressing on the borders of respect for human dignity and autonomy.
13. Avoiding dissemination of unverified critical information which might shape wrong opinions discordant with the actual facts.
14. Opposing firmly any form of irregularity in human relations. Accordingly, the following are considered unethical: corruption, nepotism, cronyism, embezzlement and other manifestations of dishonesty, including plagiarism, as well as discrimination, bullying, harassment, sexism and other forms of violations of personal rights.
15. Refraining from using personal role in the society for generation of private benefits contrary to the public interest.
16. Not involving scientific authority in non-scientific disputes.

### **DUTIES TOWARDS DIDACTICS**

The academic teachers:

1. Protect the dignity of their vocation with their stance and right ethical decisions made in their professional and private lives.
2. See to high quality of their teaching and to the sharing of up-to-date knowledge, broadening their own professional knowledge and perfecting their teaching skills.
3. Inspire the doctoral students and students to think independently, express their opinions, and actively participate in the teaching-learning process as well as in academic life.

4. Treat the doctoral students and students with all due respect, goodwill, and culture, refrain from undermining the authority of other academic staff, and do not formulate any categorical statements that would overrule any discussion.
5. Oppose any dishonest behaviour among the doctoral students and students in presenting their knowledge, and any other behaviour below the dignity of a member of the academic community.
6. Assess the knowledge of the doctoral students and students fairly and based only on their achievements, against uniform and clear criteria.

Moreover, it is the duty of the University's authorities to:

7. See to high quality of teaching by aligning the curricula to the current state of knowledge, selecting appropriate research and academic staff, and supporting their development.

Doctoral students and students:

8. Perform their obligation to acquire knowledge and skills diligently.
9. Treat their teachers, peers, and patients and others with the respect they deserve, without prejudice.
10. Participate in the improvement of didactics, including by submitting initiatives, expressing their opinions about the attitudes of teachers and their involvement in the teaching process.
11. They actively participate in the life of the University, including through participation in the work of its bodies.

## **THE DUTIES IN THE AREA OF RESEARCH**

1. Abiding by good customs and principles in research, especially such as selection of innovative goals, proper research methods, and fairness in presentation of the research results with full respect for the achievements of others and intellectual property.
2. Following the principles of just and fair distribution of the benefits stemming from scientific achievements among the co-authors and their colleagues.
3. Reviewing others' works and research output in accordance with own competence, with all insight, objectiveness, impartiality and fairness exerted.
4. Opposing the use of the authority ascribed to science or oneself for marketing or propaganda purposes.

In addition, it is the particular duty of the University's governing bodies to:

5. Care for the freedom of scientific research and publication of its results.
6. Care for the right climate for the development of scientific cooperation.
7. Support research by ensuring proper conditions to pursue it.

8. Conduct employee performance appraisals solely on the basis of predetermined and publicly available criteria

### **THE DUTIES IN TERMS OF THE DIAGNOSTIC AND THERAPEUTIC TASKS**

The Community of the Medical University:

1. Accepts the good of the patient as the fundamental value ultimately governing any Research, scientific and didactic actions taken within the University.
2. Is guided by current knowledge, without stopping the search.
3. Abides by the principles laid down in codes of professional conduct, especially the patients' rights, in its actions.

### **IV. CLOSING PROVISIONS**

Each community member of the Medical University of Gdańsk:

1. Covenants in his/her conscience he/she shall follow faithfully this Ethical Code.
2. Covenants he/she shall honourably accept ethical appraisal in the event he/she is in breach of the principles of this Ethical Code.