

# **POLICY ON STAFF AND STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS/RESPONSIBILITIES**

## **Preamble**

*Taking into account* the Vision of the University, which is to be a Top Class Institution for the pursuit of excellence in knowledge, character and service to community, and its Mission, which is to provide a conducive environment for teaching, learning, research and development, where staff and students will interact and compete effectively with their counterpart globally,

*Recognizing* that the University's core values are (a) commitment to excellence in learning and character, (b) conducive and friendly environment; (c) integrity and respect, (d) continuous improvement of staff professionalism and competence, (e) commitment to continuous improvement of all facilities and (f) enforcement of innovative culture and ethical conduct,

The University hereby formulates for implementation a Policy on Staff and Students Relationships and Responsibilities to the University as stated below:

## ***Purpose of Policy***

This policy outlines the University's expectations regarding (1) Staff's behavior among themselves, towards the students and the University and (2) Students behavior among themselves, towards Staff and the University.

## ***Scope***

This Policy applies to relationships among staff, among students, between staff and students and *vice versa*, and staff and students' conduct or behavior towards the University. It covers all areas where such relationships or behaviors can raise question of trust, confidentiality or conflict of interests. However, this policy does not cover intimate (sexual) relationships among staff and relationship between staff and students.

## ***Definition of key terms***

For the purpose of this policy:

"Bullying" includes any act, physical or otherwise, verbal or otherwise directed at or communicated to another by any means, including any form of electronic communications, which is intended to intimidate, harass, coerce and overwhelm the will of the person whom it is communicated in order to force the person to whom the act is directed to engage in any activity or take any step which the person would not ordinarily take but for the threat or intimidation, coercion, harassment, implicit in the act and in the believe that failure to comply will expose him or her to some form of danger, harm, discrimination, punishment of any kind. It is immaterial that the person being bullied does not in fact take any step required by the person bullying.

“Staff” shall include any individual who is working within the University under a formal contract of employment or as a casual paid worker (including Graduate Assistant) and any other individual (such as visiting academics) to whom the University offers any of the privileges or facilities normally available to its employees;

“Student” means any individual who is studying for an undergraduate or postgraduate qualification, or who is a student on any course or programme arranged by or through the University or any part of the University;

“Relationship” as used in this policy includes close relationship that is not intimate or sexual.

## **1. RELATIONSHIP AMONG STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY**

### **(a) Conduct of senior to colleagues and subordinates**

Senior staff position goes with high responsibilities and should therefore:

- i. Use respectful and dignify language to contemporaries and to junior colleagues in order to promote and sustain cordial relationship and uplift the morale of junior colleagues;
- ii. Not engage in any act of violence or brutality (verbal or physical) towards contemporaries and junior colleagues who are under their supervision;
- iii. Endeavor to mentor junior colleagues in their departments/units.
- iv. Be fair in official assessments of staff.
- v. Avoid conducts that are discriminatory, prejudicial and oppressive or in disregard of the interest of junior staff;
- vi. Extend opportunities to all staff in terms of training, attendance at conferences and workshops or other programmes designed for staff development;
- vii. Refrain from acts that could lead to division among staff in his or her units.

### **(b) Conduct of junior staff to senior staff or to junior colleagues**

Junior staff occupy position of responsibilities and should therefore:

- i. Demonstrate loyalty to good ethics, law abiding, diligent and respectful in conduct and words to senior colleagues and contemporaries;
- ii. Avoid creating an atmosphere of conflict in their respective units or departments, but rather promote unity and good work ethics;
- iii. Discharge their duties faithfully, diligently, honestly as is expected of all staff and provide the requisite support for senior colleagues for the progress of their units and departments;

## **2. GENERAL CONDUCT OF STAFF IN DISCHARGE OF DUTIES TO THE UNIVERSITY**

**(a) Staff conduct in the discharge of duties**

As an ambassador of the University, every member of staff has the responsibility to protect the name and image of the University. S/he should therefore be conscious of his or her behavior at all times within and outside of the University, and should conduct himself or herself with decorum at all times in recognition that to do otherwise could bring the name of the University into disrepute.

- i. All staff shall obey the University regulations and should be equally law abiding;
- ii. They should treat one another with utmost respect, and under no circumstance should other staff engage, in the course of its duty, in physical or verbal assault with any other staff. It is therefore the responsibility of any available staff to report a situation s/he thinks may degenerate to physical assault to available senior officer or head of the unit or department;
- iii. No staff should accept bribe or request for benefit/gift as a condition for the discharge of his/her duties nor should any staff bargain for any benefit/gift that will be paid after the discharge of duty.
- iv. Where an unsolicited gift is offered to any staff after the discharge of duties, the fact of offer and acceptance thereof should be disclosed to the head of unit to which the staff belongs;
- v. A staff shall not accept a gift that is inherently coercive or may be reasonably interpreted or inducement to the staff to compromise his/her position in any future relationship with the giver, or is potentially scandalous and of such a nature that will put into question the motive for which the gift was offered in the first place;
- vi. A staff should not place himself or herself in a position where his or her personal interest will be in conflict with official duties. Without limiting the generality of these duties, a senior officer, should, for instance, alert appropriate authority the posting of a close relation (wife, husband, son-in-law, cousin etc.) to his/her department. Besides, a staff is not expected to promote a relationship with a student where s/he will be induced or forced to compromise his or her position by abusing the dictates of his or her office or engaging in acts that unfairly disregards the interests of other staff or students not involved in the relationship;
- vii. A staff is under obligation to disclose to the University a situation in which s/he is involved which necessarily involves a conflict of interest to enable the University take appropriate actions to address to possible conflict before it degenerates into a scandal;
- viii. Academic staff whose wife/husband/children are posted to them for purpose of supervision should decline and notify the relevant authority for the posting of unrelated student;

- ix. All staff must give correct information regarding their personal details especially “age”, “Health status” which they are under obligation to disclose to the University authority;
- x. Staff in possession of materials, information, records should not collude with another staff to remove such records or change the information for any purpose whatsoever, especially in order to gain any advantage which the soliciting staff would not have been entitled to;
- xi. It is the responsibility of every staff to alert the University authority of any incident that involves or will result in tampering with official record/information. The University should also ensure that the alerting staff is protected as much as practicable from any prejudice, discrimination or punishment that may result from the alert.

**(b) Possible disciplinary action for violation of this policy**

- i. The University shall take appropriate disciplinary action against any staff who repeatedly or intentionally fails to follow the dictates of this policy;
- ii. Disciplinary action will vary depending on the degree of violation;
- iii. Without prejudice to the power of a disciplinary panel constituted by the University to impose sanction under the laws of the University and any regulations made in that regard, possible consequences of violations of this policy may include:
  - (a) Warning/reprimand/query.
  - (b) Suspension.
  - (c) Termination or dismissal.
  - (d) Demotion.

**3. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STAFF AND STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY**

- i. Each member of staff should maintain professional relationship with students at all times;
- ii. Staff should ensure as much as practicable not to promote intimate personal relationship between them and the students apart from that of guidance or mentorship, in the knowledge that promoting such relationship create a conflict of interests situation and may expose or subject the affected students to discriminatory or oppressive conduct by the staff;
- iii. Staff should communicate with students in respectful and dignifying language, and should, at all times, avoid abusive and degrading/derogatory language;
- iv. Staff is at liberty to correct misbehavior by students in the course of the lectures and other interaction. In doing so, staff should recognize that only the student(s) involved should be corrected, and the choice of language for correction or other corrective action should be directed at

- the misbehaving student(s) and should be proportionate to the behavior in question;
- v. Under no circumstance should a staff intimidate or bully a student or subject any student to corporal punishment or humiliation.
  - vi. Neither staff nor student at any time exploit or endeavor to exploit the position of trust between both parties to the detriment or benefit of any other party. The fiduciary relationship between staff and students impose on them certain moral and ethical obligations;
  - vii. Staff must report for duties or to classes punctually and should avoid conduct that may cause students to wait unduly for their arrival. Where a staff is unable to attend class at all or any event required by the University, efforts should be made to communicate the fact to students to allow them utilize the time for other valuable activities;
  - viii. Staff should be sensitive and reasonable in the scheduling of appointment with student, especially part-time.

#### **4. RELATIONSHIPS AMONG STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY**

##### ***Preamble***

This policy recognize that the University has put in place regulations that guide the conduct of students especially in relation to social and other forms of misconduct for which penalties are already prescribed. Notwithstanding, the University deems it necessary to set out its expectation of how students should relate among themselves as members of the University community.

- i. Students are expected to accord themselves the due respect they deserve as members of the University community. As a result, no student shall harass, bully, oppress, intimidate and discriminate against another student;
- ii. Students are to recognize and respect the right of others to life, privacy, freedom of expression, freedom of religion and to the dignity of their persons. No student shall therefore engage in any conduct that may undermine or compromise the enjoyment of any of these rights by other students;
- iii. No student shall take nude pictures of another or take picture that portray the other student in a compromising posture without the student's consent and post same on any social platform in order to disparage or smear the image or character of that other student;
- iv. Students must register for all their courses at the right and appropriate time to prevent avoidable penalties;
- v. As good ambassador of the University, students must extend support to one another;

- vi. No student shall coerce or intimidate/compel another student by any means to become a member of any unlawful association/group (by whatever name called).

## **5. STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE UNIVERSITY**

### **(a) Students' Responsibilities To The University**

- i. Students' should recognize that they are ambassadors of the University and, as such, they should conduct themselves in a manner that will uphold the good image of the University and foster academics, learning and peaceful social interactions;
- ii. All students must, at all times, endeavor to preserve and maintain the properties of the University which they come in contact with, realizing that some of those properties are part of the facilities deployed for their training and development, while other properties are deployed for the achievement of University goals;
- iii. The University recognizes and respects the right of students to associate and to air their grievances on matters that affects their learning and welfare through appropriate channels put in place by the University. As a result, the University expects students to desist from activities or conducts that may undermine peaceful co-existence in the University or lead to disturbance of activities in the University community and destruction of University properties;
- iv. Students must always be punctual at lectures and other events at which their attendance is required;
- v. Students should conduct themselves with decorum and must at all times respect the class and lecturers during lectures and in other interactions with both academic and non-academic staff;
- vi. Student should dress decently to classes and other University functions requiring their presence or participation;
- vii. Students should at all times adhere to the dress code of the University;
- viii. Students should desist from activities that could violate the integrity of their classes especially the use of phones (chatting, taking selfies, making videos, etc.) while classes are ongoing and from posting any picture or video taken in the course of lectures on social media platform in order to achieve mischievous ends;
- ix. In interacting with staff/lectures, students should be polite, respectful and conduct themselves appropriately;
- x. Students must exhibit high degree of integrity and must not engage in plagiarism, by presenting the work of others as theirs in the preparation and submission of projects or any written assignment, in recognizing that such behavior violates the copyright of others which the law protects, just as it amounts to dishonesty on the part of students engaging in it;

- xi. Students should at all times obey all the University regulations;
- xii. No student should post any material on the internet or any social media platform about the University, its principal officers, lecturers, and other members of staff of the University in order to disparage, ridicule, shame or disgrace such principal officer, lecturers, or member of staff or undermine the good image of the University.

**6. POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR VIOLATION OF THE POLICY**

- i. While it is recognized that some of the conducts expected of students toward one another, to Staff and University are contained in the students' handbook and are being enforced as part of misconducts for which appropriate penalties are prescribed, it is hereby noted that violation of any part of this policy as they relate to students shall subject the student to disciplinary actions for appropriate punishment.
- ii. Possible punishment that may be imposed on any student who violates this policy shall vary depending on the conduct. Such punishment shall include, but not limited to:
  - (a) Expulsion;
  - (b) Rustication;
  - (c) Warning.

*Senate Approved Date: November 29, 2017*