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## ATSU Code of Ethical Standards 10-220

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**APPROVAL:** *Signature on file with HR*

**DATE:** February 12, 2018

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### PURPOSE

As a learning-centered university dedicated to preparing highly competent healthcare professionals, all members of the A.T. Still University (ATSU) community must promote and adhere to the highest ethical standards of professional, academic, and community conduct. Portions of this policy were extrapolated from the Statement of Professional Ethics of the American Association of University Professors.

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### POLICY

**A. Scope of policy**

This code of ethical standards applies to all “members of the ATSU community,” including:

1. Faculty and staff;
2. Contractors, consultants, and vendors doing business with or on behalf of ATSU; and
3. Individuals who perform services for ATSU as volunteers and who assert an association with ATSU.

**B. Respect for and compliance with the law and ATSU policies**

ATSU is committed to compliance with all laws (including but not limited to, FERPA and HIPAA), regulations, and ATSU policies and procedures. ATSU will not tolerate illegal or unethical conduct, including but not limited to, theft, fraud, or other financial irregularity, misuse of University resources, misuse of grant funds, unlawful discrimination (including sexual harassment), crimes of violence, or conflicts of interest. Each ATSU community member is expected to be familiar with and comply with both the spirit and the letter of all laws, regulations, policies, and procedures applicable to his/her position and duties. All university-wide policies are located on the Human Resources page of the ATSU portal. ATSU will provide education and training to promote awareness and to monitor and promote compliance.

**C. Reporting potential violations**

1. All reports, questions, and concerns about legality or propriety of any action or failure to take action by or on behalf of ATSU should be referred to an immediate supervisor, Human Resources, or the Office of the Vice President & General Counsel.
2. Every ATSU community member is responsible to report any potential wrongdoing. Not reporting may be cause for discipline.
3. All inquiries and good faith reports of suspected non-compliance may be made free from fear of retaliation.
4. While open, full-disclosure reporting is strongly preferred, anonymous, confidential reporting is available through a 24-hour telephone service at 1-855-FRAUD-HL or through the secure online reporting form at <http://www.fraudhl.com>. Reference Company ID (“ATSU”) when making a report. Be aware reporting anonymously may hinder an investigation.
5. ATSU will investigate all reports of suspected non-compliance, regardless of source, and implement corrective action or disciplinary action when necessary.
6. Reported behavior should be evaluated under the guidelines for conduct established by ATSU policies 90-

**D. Support of ATSU's mission and avoidance of conflicts of interest**

ATSU is a not-for-profit institution dedicated to teaching and scholarly activity. Every ATSU community member is expected to faithfully carry out his/her professional duties in furtherance of ATSU's mission. Every member has a duty to avoid conflicts between his/her personal interests and official responsibilities and to comply with ATSU and applicable school/college codes and guidelines for reporting and reviewing actual and potential conflicts of interest. Additionally, a member may not utilize his/her position with ATSU for his/her personal benefit or the benefit of family or friends. Members are also expected to consider and avoid not only an actual conflict but also the appearance of a conflict of interest. Please see ATSU policy 10-212: *Conflict of Interest* and ATSU policy 20-117: *Financial Conflict of Interest in Research*.

**E. Academic integrity**

1. Each ATSU community member involved in teaching and scholarly activities is expected to conform to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.
2. ATSU respects the following rights of members involved in teaching and scholarly activity:
  - a. opportunity for free inquiry and the free exchange of ideas in his/her subject area;
  - b. privilege to present controversial material relevant to a course of instruction for which s/he has responsibility;
  - c. responsibility to indicate uncertainties or limitations in teaching; and
  - d. responsibility to conduct valid research and publish or distribute genuine results.
3. Activities such as plagiarism, misrepresentation, and falsification of data are expressly prohibited. All research must be conducted in strict conformity with the applicable ATSU policies, procedures, and approvals and requirements of all governmental and private research sponsors.

**F. Respect for the rights and dignity of others**

1. ATSU is committed to a policy of equal treatment, opportunity, and respect in its relations with faculty, administrators, staff, students, and others who come into contact with ATSU.
2. All ATSU community members share in the responsibility for maintaining a climate of mutual respect, while upholding free and open discussion of ideas.
3. Communication in any format with all persons, including employees, students, guests and third parties, should be conducted professionally in the spirit of collegiality, civility, and decency.
4. Severe or persistent misconduct that harms, intimidates, offends, degrades, or humiliates (sometimes referred to as bullying or intimidation) an ATSU community member, whether verbal, physical, or otherwise, should be reported as outlined in Part C of this policy.
5. Disputes among employees should be resolved involving the smallest number of individuals necessary.
6. Communication regarding issues or problems with or among employees should be shared with an immediate supervisor or Human Resources. Such communication should not include other employees, students, or third parties.

**G. Ethical code of faculty activity**

Faculty will assure a principal proportion of their professional effort will be devoted to accomplishing the mission of ATSU. Faculty will seek to be effective teachers and scholars and help ATSU professionally with committees and courses or research/scholarly improvements. While some faculty may engage in significant professional activities outside ATSU, each will commit to the effort required to capably and completely perform his/her assigned duties within ATSU.

**H. Standards for interactions with students**

1. Students are a vital component of the academic setting at ATSU. ATSU community members are encouraged to develop and maintain professional, collegial relationships with students.
2. ATSU faculty may not engage in consensual romantic or sexual relationships with students due to the inherent imbalance of power present in all such relationships.

3. Consensual romantic or sexual relationships between current ATSU staff and current ATSU students are discouraged but not expressly prohibited. Any consensual romantic or sexual relationship between a current ATSU student and an ATSU staff member should be reported by the staff member to Human Resources immediately.
  - a. Human Resources should evaluate responsibilities of the staff member with regard to potential influence over the student's academics, placement for rotation/residency, potential career, etc.
  - b. Human Resources has full discretion to prohibit relationships between staff members and students which create potential conflict or improper imbalances of power. In such cases, Human Resources may recommend a course of action to mitigate such a conflict or power imbalance. Recommended courses of action may include an adjustment of the staff member's responsibilities, transfer of the staff member to another work area, or prohibition of the relationship.
  - c. Failure to disclose existing relationships, or to comply with Human Resources recommendations, may result in disciplinary action consistent with part C of this policy.
4. Certain exceptions to standards for interactions with students may apply if a student's spouse/partner is employed by ATSU during the academic tenure of the student. In such cases, ATSU will ensure no student spouse/partner is employed in any capacity where the student spouse/partner may evaluate, supervise, or advise students as a part of an ATSU program.

**I. Ethical standards of community conduct**

ATSU community members have the same rights and responsibilities as all U.S. citizens, and all members are expected to uphold and obey local, state, and federal laws. Members are free to express their views and to participate in political and social processes of the community. However, when they speak or act in their capacity as private citizens, members should avoid creating the impression they speak for or represent ATSU. Constitutionally guaranteed freedom of expression does not supersede ATSU's responsibility to discipline a member for violations of the ethical standards outlined above.

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**RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. Each ATSU community members is responsible for understanding and complying with his/her rights and responsibilities as outlined in this policy.
- B. Each ATSU community member is responsible to report any observed behavior or information relating to potential violations of this policy consistent with Part C, "Reporting potential violations," outlined above.
- C. Each ATSU community member is responsible to cooperate with any investigation arising from a report of non-compliance with this policy.
- D. Human Resources and the Office of the Vice President & General Counsel are responsible for promoting awareness and appropriate application and enforcement of this policy.