

Code of Ethics of the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION

Article 1

Introductory Provisions

- (1) The Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (hereinafter “CULS”) is one of the top centres of education, independent knowledge and other creative activities. As such, it plays an irreplaceable role in the scientific, cultural, social and economic development of society and protection of the environment.
- (2) The CULS Code of Ethics (hereinafter the “Code of Ethics”) contains the basic ethical principles of CULS leading both staff and students in their academic and other activities practiced in the university and non-university sector, in particular in terms of educational (hereinafter referred the “educational activities”), science and research, development and innovation, artistic and other creative activities (hereinafter the “creative activities”), or their actions in public areas. The ethical principles contained therein reflect the historical mission of universities as the supreme article of the educational system.
- (3) The Code of Ethics is based on generally accepted moral standards. This ethical consensus is based on knowledge concentrated in the postulate that a person has to do good, not evil. This postulate develops the maxims of the so-called golden rule providing the criteria for assessing the correctness and incorrectness and admissibility and inadmissibility of individual deeds: “Treat people the way you want to be treated. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” and the imperative of responsibility for one’s own actions. The way in which this rule is to be specifically applied in various fields of human action is found through reflections and discussions amongst people with different starting points and ideas. It generally applies that this Code of Ethics cannot replace the existing valid legal regulations and the standards governing CULS activities bound thereto. This Code therefore aims to achieve a situation wherein all who are affected by it will not act against their duties. In terms of a code of an organization such as CULS, morally wrong behaviour is such behaviour that goes against the established duties, unless such duties are contrary to the general principles of humanity.
- (4) The requirements set out by the Code of Ethics arise from general and universally accepted moral and other formal and informal principles of conduct of individuals and groups in society, taking into account the professional orientation of CULS activities.
- (5) With the support of generally accepted values of human society, which are reflected in the values applied in the CULS environment, the Code of Ethics aims to establish and maintain the required ethical standards, create a positive work and interpersonal environment, prevent conflicts of interest or conflict situations between CULS employees, between CULS staff and students, but also between CULS employees and third parties, and the Code ultimately aims to improve the relationship between the CULS academic community and the public. The purpose of the Code of Ethics is to also prevent illegal conduct of CULS and its employees and students.
- (6) The CULS Code of Ethics is binding for all CULS employees and students whilst respecting the academic freedom of members of the CULS academic community. Offenses against ethics should primarily be reflected in individual consciousness – conscience.

Article 2

Common Principles

- (1) CULS employees and students honour moral principles and rules and adhere to this Code of Ethics and rules of polite behaviour. Members of the CULS academic community adhere to the provisions of taken academic oaths; they apply their academic rights and make use of academic freedoms in these intentions.
- (2) They respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the right to life and health, personal integrity and privacy, the right to maintaining human dignity, personal honour and good reputation, freedom of thought, conscience, religion and expression, as well as freedom of independent scientific research and artistic creation. They respect freedom of speech, free exchange of ideas and information, and the principle of collegiality and academic cooperation. They avoid conduct which would violate these rights and freedoms.
- (3) They reject discrimination such as restricting and damaging certain social groups in their rights and entitlements in all forms (e.g. discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, nationality, ideology, religion, faith, opinion of the world, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical handicap, social background or financial circumstances). They treat everyone with respect regardless of socio-cultural or physical differences, thereby promoting a positive attitude towards people with specific needs.
- (4) They do not use the university campus for promoting the interests of political parties and movements.
- (5) They do not put unsuitable or inappropriate pressure on others CULS employees and students, they submit potential critical suggestions that are substantiated and they correctly exercise criticism and alternative opinions.
- (6) They protect the mission of CULS set out by Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education Institutions, as amended, and they do not put their personal interests above them. In this way they honour CULS, and they do not do anything through their actions that could damage the good reputation of CULS.
- (7) They care for the property of CULS and use it properly. They do not use the property for their personal interests and purposes, or for their personal benefit or that of third parties.
- (8) They avoid conflicts of interest, and if such a situation occurs, they inform their relevant superiors thereof in a suitable manner.
- (9) They fully devote themselves to educational and creative activities or study. They constantly deepen their knowledge and skills and share them both within and outside the academic community.
- (10) They focus on the adequacy and acceptable level of their work or study commitments both within and outside CULS. They do not endanger the good reputation of CULS and its activities through their other activities (activities other than educational and creative activities).
- (11) If they accept an academic position, membership in an academic body or management position, then they do it properly and fairly and in accordance with this Code, and they lead other CULS employees and students to respect it.

Article 3

Principles of Educational Activities

- (1) CULS employees treat students honestly, fairly and openly, and as partners. They do not humiliate them, act immorally or inappropriately toward them, or use abusive forms of coercion toward them.

- (2) They try to be an example to them through their conduct and behaviour.
- (3) When assessing their learning outcomes, they act fairly and transparently, and in accordance with legal and internal regulations.
- (4) They do not take advantage of their authority and do not request students to carry out activities that should be their own obligations, and they do not appropriate the results of the work of their students.
- (5) CULS students shall not plagiarize, and when fulfilling their duties during their studies, they shall not cheat or provide others with the opportunity to cheat. They shall not pass the work of others as their own. They shall not discredit the results of their work, or the work of their teachers and others.

Article 4

Principles of Creative Activities

- (1) As part of creative activities, CULS academic and scientific staff and CULS students shall be open to teamwork and professional discussions within and outside of the CULS academic community. They communicate openly and factually with correct arguments with the support of indisputable facts, without humiliating others or discrediting their activities.
- (2) They shall not discredit scientific procedures and they respect other scientific opinions, as well as the pluralism of scientific and creative disciplines.
- (3) They behave reasonably critically towards colleagues, and they apply criticism toward their own creative activities and themselves.
- (4) During creative activities, they reflect the latest trends in the field, are responsible for the adequacy, accuracy and objectivity of the methods used, and they ensure that the results of creative activities are not distorted. They look after data or researched materials and their accurate description, protection and archiving. They ensure that the procedures and results of scientific and creative work can be subject to review, and they abide by the rules of professional ethics specific to the relevant field.
- (5) They protect and respect intellectual property and they shall ensure that the proper affiliation of the results of creative activities is specified. They shall not publish outcomes in an ethically dubious way. They shall not claim the results of the work of others or plagiarize.
- (6) The heads of research teams shall ensure correctness and openness within communication, and they shall not use autocratic management methods. They shall ensure that the requirements for performance and professional competition do not lead to dishonest conduct.
- (7) CULS academics and scientific staff prepare expert assessments or scientific and other expert opinions with full responsibility, independence, with the pursuit of objectivity and in light of the current level of knowledge, and without purposeful distortion or influence of outside interests. When evaluating, they shall proceed factually and use standard criteria and procedures, and they shall guarantee evaluations and conclusions through their professional honour.

Article 5

Ethics Committee

- (1) The Ethics Committee is established for the assessment of suggestions regarding compliance with the Code of Ethics.

- (2) The Committee has seven members. The Rector appoints and dismisses the Chairman and six Committee members; the term of office is four years. The Rector appoints four members of the Committee, including the Chairman, upon the proposal of the Rector's Advisory Board, and three Committee members, one of which is a CULS student, upon the proposal of the CULS Academic Senate.
- (3) An appointed member of the Committee must agree with the membership in advance and must undertake to maintain confidentiality about all confidential or otherwise sensitive issues regarding the discussed suggestions; this provision shall apply similarly with regard to the Chairman of the Committee.
- (4) In order to evaluate a specific case, upon the proposal of the Chairman of the Committee, the Rector may appoint other Committee members ad hoc with an advisory capacity; the provisions of paragraph 3 of this Article shall apply similarly for such members.
- (5) Before the expiration of a term of office, the position of a member of the Committee shall be terminated via a resignation from the position, or through dismissal by the Rector.
- (6) If termination of office of a member of the Committee occurs before the expiration of his or her term of office, a new member shall only be appointed for the remainder of the relevant term of office upon the proposal of the body that originally proposed the member of the Committee whose position expired.
- (7) The Committee shall meet as necessary. Meetings are convened and chaired by the Chairman of the Committee or his or her authorized member of the Committee. The Chairman is obliged to convene the Committee meeting if at least two members of the Committee request as such.
- (8) At the latest at its second meeting, the Committee shall prepare, approve and submit for publication on the CULS website the Rules of Procedure of the Ethics Committee, which shall contain, among other things, the procedures for discussion and approval of the outputs of the Committee. An annex to the Rules of Procedure shall be the procedure for submitting suggestions to the Ethics Committee by CULS employees and students, which shall be published on the CULS website.
- (9) The Committee shall discuss the submissions of CULS employees and students that relate to adherence to the Code of Ethics. Suggestions shall be submitted to the Chairman of the Committee in writing.
- (10) Individual submissions shall be assessed by the Committee at its earliest meeting, the Committee shall decide on the best method for resolving the submissions. The Committee shall drop submissions not directly associated with the Code of Ethics without the need for a substantive debate about the submissions.
- (11) The Committee's meetings shall not be public. If necessary, the Committee shall be entitled to request other potential documents, including opinions or statements.
- (12) The Committee shall make a written statement regarding every discussed submission. The statements shall include the standpoints of the Committee.
- (13) The Chairman and every member of the Committee each have one vote. At least four votes are required in order to adopt a motion for a resolution. The voting shall be secret upon the proposal of the Chairman or any member of the Committee.
- (14) The Committee's statement shall be sent to the submitter, involved parties, to the Rector and to the Chairman of the CULS Academic Senate.
- (15) With the exception of confidential information, and whilst maintaining the relevant provisions of Act No. 101/2000 Coll., on the Protection of Personal Data, as amended, the Committee's statement shall be published on the CULS website.

Article 6
Closing Provisions

- (1) All amendments to the Code of Ethics are subject to approval by the CULS Academic Senate.
- (2) This Code of Ethics was approved by the CULS Academic Senate on 11 October 2016.
- (3) This Code of Ethics shall become valid and effective on the date of its announcement.

In Prague, on 8 November 2016

Prof. Ing. Jiří Balík, CSc., dr. h. c.
Rector
In his own hand