



EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

ETHICS POLICY

Purpose:

Savannah State University is committed to create an environment wherein the highest ethical and professional standards of conduct are the expectation and the hallmark of our academic enterprise. Accomplishing this purpose demands integrity, good judgment and dedication to service from all members of the Savannah State University's community.

Savannah State University values its employees and believes that each person is accountable for his/her actions. It also recognizes a shared set of core values and ethical conduct to which each member of the SSU community must embrace. Furthermore, SSU acknowledges that an organizational culture grounded in trust is essential to supporting these core values and ethical conduct.

The following Statement of Core Values and Code of Conduct are intended to build, maintain and protect that trust, recognizing that each member of the SSU community is responsible for doing his/her part by upholding the highest standards of competence and character.

The SSU Ethics Policy applies to all members of the SSU community. The community includes:

1. All individuals employed by, or acting on behalf of, the institution, including volunteers, vendors and contractors, and
2. Members of the governing boards and employees of all cooperative organizations affiliated with the institution.

All individuals employed by the institution in any capacity shall participate in USG Ethics Policy training, and shall certify compliance with the USG Ethics Policy on a periodic basis. Cooperative organizations, vendors and contractors shall certify compliance with the USG Ethics Policy by written agreement.

This Policy governs only official conduct performed by or on behalf of the institution. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action including dismissal or termination.

Statement of Core Values and Code of Conduct:

Core Values:

Every member of the SSU community is required to adhere to the Statement of Core Values – Integrity, Excellence, Accountability and Respect – that form and guide the daily work of the Institution.

1. Integrity – We will be honest, fair, impartial and unbiased in our dealings both with and on behalf of SSU.
2. Excellence – We will perform our duties to foster a culture of excellence and high quality in everything we do.

3. Accountability – We firmly believe that education in the form of scholarship, research, teaching, service and developing others is a public trust. We will live up to this trust through safeguarding our resources and being good stewards of the human, intellectual, physical and fiscal resources given to our care.
4. Respect – We recognize the inherent dignity and rights of every person, and we will do our utmost to fulfill our resulting responsibility to treat each person with fairness, compassion and decency.

Code of Conduct:

Savannah State University recognizes that each employee attempts to live by his or her own values, beliefs and ethical decision-making processes. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to guide employees in applying the underlying Statement of Core Values to the decisions and choices that are made in the course of everyday endeavor (on and off the campus) consistent with this Ethics Policy.

1. Uphold the highest standards of intellectual honesty and integrity in the conduct of teaching, research, service and grants administration.
2. Act as good stewards of the resources and information entrusted to our care.
3. Perform assigned duties and professional responsibilities in such a manner so as to further the mission of the Institution.
4. Treat fellow employees, students and the public with dignity and respect.
5. Refrain from discriminating against harassing or threatening others.
6. Comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations and professional standards.
7. Respect the intellectual property rights of others.
8. Avoid improper political activities as defined in State and SSU Policy.
9. Protect human health and safety and the environment in all SSU operations and activities.
10. Report wrongdoing to the proper authorities; refrain from retaliating against those who do report violations; and cooperate fully with authorized investigations.
11. Disclose and avoid improper conflicts of interest.
12. Refrain from accepting any gift or thing of value in those instances prohibited by State or SSU policy.
13. Not use our position or authority improperly to advance the interests of a friend or relative.
14. Act in the interest of the University, its students and its mission as a whole as opposed to the perceived interests of individual departments, areas of responsibility or territorial concerns.

The Statement of Core Values and Code of Conduct do not address every conceivable situation or ethical dilemmas that may be faced by members of the SSU community. Members of the SSU community are expected to exercise good judgment absent specific guidance from this policy or other applicable laws, rules and regulations.

MANDATORY ETHICS TRAINING: The Board of Regents approved a System wide Ethics Policy in 2008. The Ethics Policy is part of a three-pronged approach the University System is taking to ensure ethical conduct by USG faculty, staff, administrators, vendors, contractors, and members of the Board of Regents. This on line training is mandatory for all University System staff and faculty and must be taken within 90 days of initial hire. A minimum score of 80% on the Ethics Course Assessment and the Ethics Policy Compliance Agreement is needed to successfully complete this mandatory course.