

The change is approved

by the Rector's Order №501 of October 02.2024
(The effective date of the order: October 03. 2024.)

Rector, Professor Marina Pirtskhalava

University Geomedi LLC Code of Ethics

Article 1. General Provisions

1. The Code of Ethics establishes the ethical norms and rules of conduct for the personnel (academic, scientific, invited, administrative, and support staff) and students of LLC University Geomedi (hereinafter – “the University”) in accordance with the applicable legislation and the legal acts regulating the University’s activities. It also defines the disciplinary measures and procedures related to disciplinary proceedings.
2. This Code is mandatory for all personnel (academic, scientific, invited, administrative, and support staff) and students of the University.
3. The purpose of the Code of Ethics is to define the principles and norms by which the University personnel and students must act.
4. The University personnel and students are obligated to comply with this Code and be subject to disciplinary responsibilities, even without specific instruction.

Article 2. Principles of the Code of Ethics

The University personnel and students are guided by the universally recognized principles established at the University, such as: legality, independence, integrity, impartiality, fairness, professionalism, transparency, and responsibility.

Article 3. Code of Ethics for Academic, Scientific, and Invited Staff

1. Academic, scientific, and invited staff are obligated to:
 - a. Carry out their activities in accordance with the ethical norms established by this Code.
 - b. Create all necessary conditions for a proper academic environment, develop effective methods for quality teaching and fair assessment criteria, and promote the free exchange of ideas.

- c. Treat students with respect, protect their academic freedom, and support their professional development.
 - d. Act in accordance with the principles of fairness and objectivity during student assessment; evaluation must be based solely on the student's academic performance and not on personal characteristics such as gender, religion, race, personal values, political affiliation, or other factors.
 - e. Refrain from any actions that may place a student in a favorable or privileged position compared to others.
 - f. Not allow the humiliation, insult, or unjust accusation of students or colleagues; avoid the emergence of conflicts and remain respectful when offering criticism.
 - g. Promote respectful and fair relationships among colleagues.
 - h. Not disclose confidential information in their possession, except as provided by law.
 - i. Not accept gifts in connection with official duties.
 - j. Refrain from any form of aggression or discriminatory behavior on the basis of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, financial or social status, or any other grounds.
 - k. Uphold the principles of academic integrity and not use or appropriate another person's intellectual work—such as texts, ideas, concepts, or any form of data—without proper citation.
 - l. Not falsify data, information, or citations in a scientific paper.
 - m. Refrain from engaging in external activities or taking on obligations outside the University that would interfere with the proper fulfillment of their University duties.
 - n. Use University buildings, equipment, facilities, and other resources appropriately and exclusively for official purposes.
 - o. Not be present at the University under the influence of alcohol or narcotic substances. The consumption of alcohol on University premises is only permitted during official events organized by the administration.
 - p. Not smoke tobacco inside University buildings. This restriction does not apply to smoking in the University courtyard or outside the building.
 - q. Not organize or publicly promote religious or political activities on University premises.
 - r. Adhere to academic dress standards.
 - s. Treat administrative and support staff representatives with respect and fairness, and acknowledge the value of their work.
2. Violation of the rules established in the first paragraph shall result in disciplinary liability.

Article 4. Ethical Norms for Administrative and Support Staff

- 1. The administrative and support staff shall be obliged to:
 - a. Carry out their activities in accordance with the ethical norms established by this Code.
 - b. Create a moral, financial-economic, and living environment necessary for educational, scientific activities, and professional development.

- c. Promote the strengthening of the University's reputation and authority in society, and show respect for the University and its traditions.
 - d. Treat colleagues and students fairly and with respect; avoid degrading, insulting, or accusing them, refrain from generating conflicts, and remain courteous when offering criticism.
 - e. Promote relationships among colleagues that are based on mutual respect and fairness.
 - f. Support the fulfillment of official duties by staff employed at the University.
 - g. Not disclose any confidential information in their possession, except in cases provided for by law.
 - h. Not use their official position for personal gain.
 - i. Not accept gifts in connection with official activities.
 - j. Not express any form of aggression or discriminatory attitude based on gender, race, religion, ethnicity, property or social status, or any other grounds.
 - k. Comply with the rules, procedures, and existing legislation established by the University.
 - l. Refrain from engaging in external activities or obligations that may interfere with the proper fulfillment of their university duties.
 - m. Use the University's buildings, equipment, devices, and other resources appropriately and exclusively for official purposes.
 - n. Not appear at the University under the influence of alcohol or narcotic substances. The consumption of alcoholic beverages on University premises is permitted only within the framework of official events organized by the administration.
 - o. Not smoke tobacco inside the University building. This restriction does not apply to smoking in the University yard or outside the building.
 - p. Not allow religious or political speeches or public appeals on University premises.
2. In case of violation of the rules established by the first paragraph, the person shall be subject to disciplinary liability.

Article 5. Ethical Norms for Students

- 1. A student shall be obliged to:
 - a. Respect the name and reputation of the University, its staff, and fellow students.
 - b. Comply with the requirements established by the applicable legislation, the University Charter, the Code of Ethics, the rules for detecting and responding to plagiarism, the contract concluded with the University, and other internal legal acts.
 - c. Take care of the property belonging to the University.
- 2. The following shall be considered inappropriate and unethical behavior for a student:
 - a. Disrupting the educational process (noise during lectures, use of mobile phones, disturbance in corridors, etc.).
 - b. Smoking tobacco inside the University building.
 - c. Bringing, distributing, and/or using alcoholic beverages, narcotic and/or psychotropic substances, firearms and/or cold weapons, gambling.

- d. Bringing and/or distributing explosive and flammable substances or items that pose a real risk of fire and/or explosion.
- e. Damaging/destroying the University's material and technical resources.
- f. Littering the University territory, damaging the appearance of the building, or damaging plants.
- g. Violence, physical and/or verbal insults against other students and staff.
- h. Use of foul language.
- i. Academic dishonesty, which includes: copying from another student's work; presenting someone else's work as their own; taking exams on behalf of another student; citing someone else's work or statements without referencing (plagiarism); stealing, destroying, or altering another student's work; attempting to obtain a grade by threatening, deceiving, or other prohibited means; falsification of their own university data.
- j. Violation of exam procedures and disruption of the examination process.

Article 6. Disciplinary Measures

- 1. In the event of violations of ethical norms and internal university legal acts by university staff and students, disciplinary measures shall be applied.
- 2. For violations of ethical norms and other applicable legal acts by staff, disciplinary measures are provided in the University's "Regulations on Internal Rules and Disciplinary Responsibility."
- 3. For violations of ethical norms and other applicable legal acts by students, the following disciplinary sanctions are envisaged:
 - a. Warning.
 - b. Reprimand.
 - c. A reprimand entered in the personal file.
 - d. Suspension of the right to a scholarship.
 - e. Termination of student status.
- 4. The disciplinary measure shall be determined based on the decision of the Ethics Commission.

Article 7. Ethics Commission

- 1. To ensure compliance with the requirements established by the Code of Ethics, an Ethics Commission shall be established at the University.
- 2. Any interested party who becomes aware of a violation may initiate a complaint. The interested party shall apply to the University Rector to request the initiation of disciplinary proceedings.
- 3. By order of the Rector, the composition of the Ethics Commission shall be approved for each specific case, excluding conflicts of interest, consisting of at least three members. In

matters related to students, a representative of the student self-government participates in the Ethics Commission.

4. The Ethics Commission shall receive the submitted documentation. The Commission shall decide whether to initiate disciplinary proceedings or refuse to do so.
5. The Ethics Commission is obliged to thoroughly investigate each case, considering all parties' positions, objectively and with full fairness. It shall review all available documentation and hear explanations from the interested parties.
6. Participants in the proceedings at the Ethics Commission meeting have the right to present their explanations and opinions on the circumstances of the case.
7. The Ethics Commission shall make a decision only if there is sufficient justification.
8. During disciplinary proceedings, a student has the right to: receive a written, reasoned decision regarding the initiation of disciplinary proceedings against them; attend the disciplinary hearing and exercise the right of defense; provide the Commission with any information and evidence they possess; request that the disciplinary matter be reviewed in a public session.
9. The initiation of disciplinary proceedings does not restrict the student's right to participate in the educational process, except in cases where this threatens the protection of others' rights, University property, or security.
10. The Ethics Commission is chaired by a Chairperson elected by a majority vote at the Commission meeting.
11. Ethics Commission meetings are closed, and information obtained during disciplinary proceedings is confidential.
12. The meeting is considered quorate if more than half of the members are present.
13. The Ethics Commission shall make a decision on disciplinary responsibility within one month from the submission of the complaint. The decision is made by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson's vote is decisive.
14. Minutes shall be kept at the Commission meeting. All members of the Commission shall sign the minutes.
15. The Ethics Commission's decision on disciplinary responsibility shall be submitted to the University Rector.
16. The decision made shall be communicated in writing to the interested party or parties within three days.

Article 8. Appeal of the Decision, Appeals Commission

1. University staff/students have the right to appeal the decision of the Ethics Commission if they believe it is based on incorrect facts.
2. The appeal must be filed within 2 days from the date of the decision.
3. In each specific case, an Appeals Commission is formed, the composition of which is approved by the Rector's order. No member of the Ethics Commission involved in the same case may participate in the Appeals Commission.

4. The Appeals Commission shall request all materials related to the case, hear the factual circumstances, and make a decision based on them.
5. The Appeals Commission is authorized to refuse to consider the case if the appeal does not contain arguments indicating the illegality or groundlessness of the Ethics Commission's decision.
6. After a full and objective review of the case materials, the Appeals Commission shall make a decision to either satisfy the complaint, partially satisfy it, or deny it.
7. The decision of the Appeals Commission shall be submitted to the University Rector for execution.
8. University staff/students have the right to appeal the decision made against them in court.

Article 9. Procedure for Imposing Disciplinary Responsibility

1. The decision to impose disciplinary responsibility shall be made based on a comprehensive study of the case circumstances and must be substantiated.
2. When imposing disciplinary sanctions, the nature and severity of the violation, the circumstances of its commission, the damage caused, the person's culpability and behavior must be taken into account.
3. The disciplinary measure imposed must be proportional to the disciplinary violation.
4. In each specific case, the Ethics Commission makes a decision on imposing disciplinary responsibility following this principle.
5. Only one disciplinary sanction may be applied for each violation.
6. If no new disciplinary measure is imposed on a person within one year, they shall be considered free of disciplinary responsibility.
7. In cases of violations specified in Article 5, Paragraph 2, subparagraphs "c," "d," and "z," depending on the severity of the violation, the person will receive either a "reprimand entered into the personal file" or "termination of student status." If there are signs of a criminal offense, the police will be notified.
8. For violations specified in Article 5, Paragraph 2, subparagraphs "i" and "k," the person will receive a "warning." If the student receives a scholarship, they will lose the right to that scholarship. Additionally, the work will be annulled and/or the student will be removed from the exam. For repeated offenses, the student's status will be terminated.
9. For violations specified in Article 5, Paragraph 2, subparagraphs "a," "b," "v," and "t," the person will receive a "note." For repeated offenses, depending on severity, a "warning" or "reprimand entered into the personal file" will be applied. If the student receives a scholarship, it will be revoked.
10. For violations specified in Article 5, Paragraph 2, subparagraph "e," depending on the severity of the violation, a "warning" or "reprimand entered into the personal file" will be applied. Full compensation for the damage caused will also be required.

Article 10. Final Provisions

1. Matters not regulated by this Code shall be governed by the legislation of Georgia and the University's "Internal Regulations and Disciplinary Responsibility Norms."
2. Any amendments and additions to this document shall be made by the Academic Council.
3. This Code shall enter into force immediately upon its approval by the Academic Council.