

VCOM Statement on Professional and Ethical Behavior of Faculty

VCOM's Statement on Professional Ethics that follows sets forth those general standards that serve as a reminder of the variety of responsibilities assumed by all members of the faculty. In the enforcement of ethical standards, the academic profession differs from those of law and medicine, in that the academic profession, as an institution of higher learning, provides an assurance of professional standards to its students and the community and so handles questions concerning propriety of conduct of its faculty group.

VCOM on-campus full and part-time faculty are required to sign this statement at the time of hire.

1. Faculty, guided by a deep conviction of the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge, recognize the special responsibilities placed upon them. Their primary responsibility to their subject is to seek and to state the truth as they see it. To this end faculty devote their energies to developing and improving their scholarly competence. They accept the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. They practice intellectual honesty. Faculty do not accept monetary reimbursement, gifts or other incentives outside of their faculty salary for teaching or research activities. Although faculty may follow subsidiary interests, these interests must never seriously hamper or compromise their freedom of inquiry. Faculty should not accept monetary gifts or other tangible income from pharmaceutical or proprietary product companies without prior consultation with VCOM's Provost or Campus Dean.
2. As teachers, faculty encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students. They hold before them the best scholarly and ethical standards of their discipline. Faculty demonstrate respect for students as individuals and adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides and counselors. Faculty make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to ensure that their evaluations of students reflect each student's true merit. They respect the confidential nature of the relationship between professor and student. They avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students. They acknowledge significant academic or scholarly assistance from students.
3. As colleagues, faculty have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of scholars. Faculty do not discriminate against or harass colleagues. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates, even when it leads to findings and conclusions that differ from their own. In the exchange of criticism and ideas faculty show due respect for the opinions of others. Faculty acknowledge academic debt and strive to be objective in their professional judgment of colleagues. Faculty accept their share of faculty responsibilities for the governance of their institution.
4. As members of an academic institution, faculty seek above all to be effective teachers and scholars. Although faculty observe the stated regulations of the institution, provided that the regulations do not contravene academic freedom, they maintain their right to criticize and to seek revision. Faculty give due regard to their paramount responsibilities within their institution in determining the amount and character of work done outside it. When considering the interruption or termination of their service, faculty recognize the effect of their decision upon the program of the institution and give due notice of their intentions.
5. As members of their community, faculty have the rights and obligations of other citizens. Faculty

measure the urgency of these obligations in the light of their responsibilities to their subject, to their students, to their profession, and to their institution. When they speak or act as private persons, they avoid creating the impression of speaking or acting for their college. As citizens engaged in a profession that depends upon freedom for its health and integrity, faculty have a particular obligation to promote conditions of free inquiry and to further public understanding of academic freedom.

The VCOM statement is patterned after the American Association of University Faculty Statement on Ethics and has been formatted to reflect VCOM faculty expectations.

With this signature I, as VCOM faculty, indicate that I have read the above statement and the section in the *VCOM Faculty Handbook* pertaining to faculty responsibilities, professional expectations, and misconduct and disciplinary procedures. I agree to adhere to this statement and to avoid any and all misconduct as detailed in this *VCOM Faculty Handbook*.

Faculty Printed Name

Faculty Signature

Date