

Keck School of Medicine of USC

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR FACULTY¹

Preamble: The Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California (USC) is dedicated to improving the quality of life for individuals and society by promoting health, preventing and curing disease as well as caring for those who have illness, advancing biomedical research and educating tomorrow's physicians and scientists. The School is also committed to promoting and ensuring a safe and respectful educational and working environment for its faculty, staff and students, that is free of harassment, and that maintains academic freedom². The purpose of this code is to set forth with more clarity the School's expectations for the professional conduct of its faculty. This is being done to create an environment that is characterized by civility and respect for all the members of the community, that supports the mission of the school, and that is free of behaviors that undermine the school's mission.

The University and the Keck School of Medicine have in place policies and standards of conduct that govern the relationships among the members of the community. The USC Code of Ethics³ outlines standards of conduct for all employees (faculty and staff), and the Faculty Handbook⁴, as revised from time to time, addresses standards of conduct for the faculty. Faculty who practice at the Keck Medical Center are further governed by the expectations in the Keck Commitment Statement of Professional Standards⁵ and the Keck School of Medicine Faculty and Resident Guidebook for Medical Student Teaching: Policies and Procedures. This Code is not intended to supplant any policy in place, but rather to provide clear guidelines for faculty that are consistent with existing University and Keck School of Medicine policies. If the Code conflicts with the Faculty Handbook, as revised from time to time, the Faculty Handbook prevails.

Code of Professional Conduct:

In daily professional interactions, we expect that all faculty members will do the following:

1. Treat everyone (including, but not limited to, faculty, staff, trainees, volunteers, patients and their families, research participants and their families, and other health care professionals) with **respect, civility and fairness, and without bias or discrimination** based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
2. Teach, conduct research, and care for patients with competence, honesty and the highest ethical standards.

¹ This document is derived from The John Hopkins University School of Medicine Code of Professional Conduct for faculty, which can be viewed at the following website:

http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/som/faculty/policies/facultypolicies/code_of_professional_conduct.html

² *Academic Freedom:* The Keck School of Medicine is committed to the right of academic freedom and freedom of expression of its faculty, staff, and students, as that right is essential to creating an environment that assures the highest level of academic and scientific inquiry and investigation, and allows the in-depth exploration of important issues. With that right comes the responsibility to ensure that everyone has equal access to that same right. Not every situation demands taking this freedom to its most extreme limit, and so all faculty members are asked to use their best judgment in determining when and how to use this right.

³ USC Code of Ethics - https://about.usc.edu/files/2011/07/USC_Code_of_Ethics_2004.pdf

⁴ USC Faculty Handbook - <http://policy.usc.edu/faculty/faculty-handbook/>

⁵ Keck Commitment - https://issuu.com/lesliebakergraphicdesign/docs/the_keck_commitment

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3. Respect the privacy of all individuals and the confidentiality of information entrusted to them regarding individuals, The Keck School of Medicine, or The University of Southern California.
4. When in a supervisory role, provide clear direction and timely feedback as well as constructive suggestions and opportunities for improvement or remediation.
5. Resolve conflicts and counsel colleagues and subordinates in a non-threatening, constructive and private manner, when possible, and when not in conflict with other USC policies.
6. Become familiar with and follow University and School of Medicine policies and promptly address violations of institutional policies by cooperating with investigations and audits as called upon.
7. Abide strictly by USC's conflict of personal and professional interest policies
8. Faculty must not make provision of clinical care contingent upon personal business relationships with patients, research subjects, or their families.
9. Clinicians will provide high quality, kind, and considerate patient care through exhibiting excellence in all that we do, incorporating sound judgment in our decisions, and practicing civility in our interactions with respect to patients, families, and co-workers.

Part of behaving professionally includes professional accountability. Thus, all faculty members are expected to:

1. Meet all professional responsibilities and obligations, and assuring personal accountability for achieving performance expectations.
2. Maintain all licenses and certifications required for their positions, participate in education and training as necessary to maintain professional competence, and be fit for duty during work time, including on-call responsibilities.
3. Complete all required university and clinically (as required) mandated training (including, but not limited to, harassment prevention training, continuing medical education units, electronic health record training, the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee training, and/or Biosafety training) as appropriate for their job duties, and in a timely manner.
4. Disclose all conflicts of personal, professional and financial interest, as required by University policy, in a timely manner.
5. Use University and School of Medicine facilities, equipment, supplies and resources (including telecommunications and information technology resources) responsibly and for legitimate University business.
6. Establish collaborative and safe environments for co-workers, patients, and families that promote safe clinical care and inter-professional collaboration through being respectful and receptive to new ideas, providing constructive feedback, and active listening,
7. Commit to respectful interactions with colleagues, patients, and families through being courteous, mindful of language and tone.

Finally, as examples of how they demonstrate the highest degree of professionalism, Keck School of Medicine faculty must refrain from:

1. Disrespectful behavior towards co-workers, patients, and families.
2. Loss of civility that interferes with the working and learning environment (for example shouting, personal attacks or insults, throwing objects or other displays of temper).
3. Unprofessional interpersonal interactions, including requesting that professional colleagues, staff or students perform personal favors or do things that either violate policy or compliance standards.
4. Unwanted physical contact with others or threats of such contact.
5. Sexual harassment, as outlined in the Faculty Handbook, or harassment based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
6. Mistreatment of faculty, staff, students, residents and fellows, including, but not limited to, making remarks with the intent to cause offense, public embarrassment or humiliation, denying reasonable opportunities for training or advancement, or giving lower evaluations than earned.

Faculty who breach this code of professionalism may be subject to disciplinary action, as appropriate, and as specified by the Faculty Handbook, as revised from time to time.

Members of the Keck Community who observe such lapses in professional conduct in a faculty member are asked to contact the faculty member's division chief or chair, and/or to provide the information to the Keck School of Medicine Vice Dean for Faculty Affairs (fadean@usc.edu).

This Code of Professional Conduct for Faculty will be periodically reviewed, and amended as needed by the Keck School Faculty Council.

A partial list of university policies with which faculty are expected to comply may be found online at:

<http://policy.usc.edu/faculty/faculty-handbook/>

<http://ooc.usc.edu/usc-code-ethics>

<http://ooc.usc.edu/Statement-Integrity>

<http://policy.usc.edu/equal-opportunities/>

<http://policy.usc.edu/industry-relationships/>

<http://policy.usc.edu/conflict-of-interest/>