



Policy Number and Title:	AC 1.08 Code of Academic Ethics
Division	Academics
Policy Section:	
Applicable to:	Faculty, staff, students, and other members of the academic community
Effective:	2021-10-21
Most Recent Revision:	2021-10-14
Contact:	Academic Vice President

1. STATEMENT OF THE CODE:

LCC International University (hereinafter referred to as LCC) is an institution that is founded on Christian convictions. This is reflected in its Mission Statement, Core Values, Vision Statement, and commitment to the historic Christian faith as embodied in the Nicene and Apostles' creeds. While members of LCC's academic community recognize that ours is a diverse one, and that we share many ethical commitments with people of other faiths and convictions, we seek to reflect Christian character in all aspects of academic life, including how we teach as faculty, how we research, and how we set expectations for students. All three areas are addressed in this Code of Academic Ethics.

LCC affirms the following Core Values, which shape LCC's ethical reflection:

1. LCC believes that a liberal arts education integrates learning with all aspects of life.
2. LCC affirms a Christian worldview that invites all people to grow in truth and restoration through the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. LCC values community as a safe place where people are respected, affirmed, and empowered, so that their dignity is upheld.
4. LCC pursues relationships that are mutual, authentic, and based on trust.
5. LCC celebrates diversity of cultures and traditions, personalities and opinions.

This Code of Academic Ethics is based on the Study and Research Law of the Republic of Lithuania, Labor Code of the Republic of Lithuania, other legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania, Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania recommendations on the Preparation, Adoption and Implementation of Academic Ethics Code by Research and Higher Education Institutions of the Office of the Ombudsperson for Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania, LCC's Statute, and "LCC's "Internal System of Quality Assurance."

2. TERMINOLOGY:

1. Academic Ethics: moral values, principles, and standards of integrity that are underlined by this Code of Academic Ethics and must be observed by LCC's academic community.
2. Academic Community- LCC faculty members, including affiliate faculty, staff, students, research fellows, and professors emeriti.
3. Violation of Academic Ethics: deliberate or accidental failure to comply with this Code of Academic Ethics.

3. THE PURPOSES OF THE CODE OF ACADEMIC ETHICS:

1. To fulfill LCC's mission, which is based on Christian moral standards.
2. To promote ethical behavior of all of LCC academic community members.
3. To establish and enforce a system of academic discipline.
4. To establish and enforce a system of monitoring and supervision.
5. To maintain the good image of the institution and create greater trust of other institutions.
6. To establish norms of ethical academic behavior.
7. To identify unified, clear, and transparent standards of academic ethics for LCC's academic community.

4. PRINCIPLES OF ACADEMIC ETHICS:

General Principles of Academic Ethics:

LCC's major principles of academic ethics are drawn largely from the Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania recommendations on the Preparation, Adoption and Implementation of Academic Ethics Code by Research and Higher Education Institutions of the Office of the Ombudsperson for Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania, and are as follows:

1. Honesty: LCC expects integrity in the academic activities (teaching, studying, researching, or conducting administrative tasks) of its academic community.
2. Justice: In pursuit of justice, LCC seeks to maintain uniform institutional requirements, procedures, and practices for all academic community members.
3. Respect: Members of the academic community are expected to act respectfully towards each other, and respect human rights to express ideas or constructive criticism.
4. Responsibility: Academic community members are expected not only to comply with ethical behavior themselves, but also to encourage other members of the academic community to feel responsible for their actions, through the expression of personal and joint responsibility.
5. Equality: Academic community members are treated equally before the law and internal regulations.
6. Trust: LCC creates a culture of trust, which encourages free exchange of ideas, and gives all members of the academic community the opportunity to reach their potential.
7. Academic freedom: All members of the academic community have the freedom to teach and express scholarly viewpoints related to their field of study without fear of reprisal.
8. Transparency: While recognizing that specific individual privacy boundaries must be honored, it is nevertheless the aim to communicate forthrightly in matters that mutually affect parties, be that faculty to faculty, or faculty to student, recognizing that disclosure of self-interest can be beneficial to dialogue.

Principles of Pedagogical Ethics:

All members of the LCC academic community are expected to be committed to LCC's mission to provide "Christian liberal arts education within a diverse learning community that transforms people for servant leadership." For teaching members of our community, our Mission Statement and Core Values should be reflected in their interactions with students, both inside and outside the classroom. Above all, teaching faculty are to seek to treat all others, including students, with grace, kindness, and respect.

LCC's expectations are that faculty will...

1. Treat students with respect by managing courses well. This includes being on time for classes, being well-prepared, giving clear instructions for assignments, providing timely feedback on students' work, grading according to clear criteria, making grades available to students, and being available to students outside of class during appropriate office hours.
2. Be impartial toward students in how they grade coursework and how they treat individual students; faculty members are expected to ensure equal learning opportunities for all students, regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, faith, political preferences, sexual orientation, age, and social status.
3. Ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to LCC's programs and activities, as underlined in the LCC "Students with Disabilities" policy.
4. Model the academic integrity they expect from students, avoiding plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty.
5. Encourage discussion and questions from students without demeaning or belittling the opinions of others.
6. Be supportive of LCC and other staff and faculty members by not engaging in gossip, divulging confidential matters, or making internal disputes public.
7. Maintain the confidentiality of student data, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation.
8. Be willing to serve the academic community, as needed, in ways that go beyond teaching, such as serving on committees, being a student advisor, attending faculty meetings, and contributing to the flourishing of their departments.
9. Avoid the cultivation or the appearance of exclusive or romantic relationships with students, as underlined in the "Relationships with Students" policy.
10. Distance themselves from university activities leading to circumstances in which conflicts of interest between academic community member's private and LCC interests could arise, ex. compromise judgement and decision in a workplace.
11. Fully comply with all policies of LCC's Human Resources office.

Principles of Research Ethics:

Research activity of LCC academic community members shall be based on integrity, social responsibility, and ethical treatment of humans and animals.

LCC academic community members are expected to avoid the following activities (list may include, but is not limited to the following):

1. Plagiarism:

- a. Using the exact words of a published or unpublished author without quotation marks and/or without making reference to the source of these words.
- b. Using another individual's written work and presenting it as one's own (e.g., via a ghostwriter).
- c. Duplicating a table, graph, or diagram, in whole or in part, without reference to the source.
- d. Paraphrasing the conceptual framework, research design, interpretation, or any other ideas of another person, whether written or verbal (e.g., personal communications, ideas from a verbal presentation) without reference to the source.

2. Falsification of teaching, research, or study content, images, data, equipment, or processes with inaccuracies:

- a. Suppression of data, data masking (falsification of real data by reducing the array of data or omitting data which does not correspond to the desired conclusions or results).
- b. Data falsification (unjustified manipulation of research data to create a misleading impression).

3. Fabrication (falsehood of data, experiments, or other relevant information in an application, study, or study report).
4. Harking- omitting the results of the research which do not support the hypothesis or fabrication of the hypothesis based on the results of the research).
5. Invented authorship (inclusion of a non-existent person in the co-authorship of a research work or inclusion of a co-author without his/her consent).

Ensuring Research Ethics:

LCC's Institutional Review Board (IRB). All LCC academic community members, as well as external researchers, who wish to conduct research that will be published outside the university or used for a thesis or business plan that involves human participants and/or the use of animals must submit an application and supplementary materials such as instruments to be used, a sample of the Informed Consent Form, and Permission to Collect Data Letter (if research participants are from institutions other than LCC) to LCC's Institutional Review Board. The research is allowed to be conducted only after the approval from IRB is received.

Turnitin: All students are given the opportunity to scan their written class work (e.g., papers and final projects) through the anti-plagiarism system "Turnitin," which is freely available at LCC. Other members of academic community are also encouraged to conduct self-check of their research through Turnitin system.

Principles of Student Academic Ethics:

LCC seeks to be an institution that incorporates Christian character into all its decisions, activities and programs. Thus, academic integrity is of highest importance. Students and faculty work together in relationships based on trust. Trust and integrity are essential to strong character and responsible citizenship.

As students accomplish academic work, LCC wants them to develop integrity, trust, and strong character. LCC encourages students to develop their own thinking and make their own conclusions based on their own research. Each student's writing, assignments, and other work should reflect that student's thought and effort. LCC believes that each student should be rewarded for his or her own work and shouldn't benefit from work that is not his or her own or work that is done dishonestly.

Therefore, LCC identifies the following possible academic ethic violations and consequences for them:

1. Plagiarism:

Any of the following violations are deemed instances of plagiarism:

- a. Using the exact words of a published or unpublished author without quotation marks and/or without making reference to the source of these words.
- b. Using another student's research or writing assignment (in whole or in part) and submitting it as one's own work.
- c. Using another individual's written work and presenting it as one's own. For example, using a ghostwriter or having another individual revise or copyedit work to the extent that it is no longer recognizable as the student's genuine work.
- d. Duplicating a table, graph, or diagram, in whole or in part, without reference to the source.

- e. Paraphrasing the conceptual framework, research design, interpretation, or any other ideas of another person, whether written or verbal (ex. personal communications, ideas from a verbal presentation) without reference to the source.
- f. Duplicating work from a previous or current course for another course without proper citation.

Work may be deemed minimally plagiarized or substantially plagiarized at the instructor's discretion with reference to the descriptions of these in the Faculty Handbook and the Student Handbook. Where a paper is deemed by the instructor to be minimally plagiarized, the instructor will require the paper to be rewritten in correct form, with a grade reduction as penalty. The grade reduction is to be determined by the instructor. Where the assignment is deemed by the instructor to be substantially plagiarized, the paper will be given a 0% with no possibility for regaining those points. The instructor will submit an Academic Misconduct Incident Report <https://lcc.lt/academics/forms-requests> to the Registrar along with the plagiarized paper.

2. Cheating:

Any of the following violations are deemed instances of cheating:

- a. Copying the answers of another student in any test, examination, or take-home assignment.
- b. Using materials in an examination or test other than those approved by the instructor.

If a student cheats during a quiz, test, or final examination, the student's examination may be removed. The student receives a 0% for the examination. The instructor will submit an Academic Misconduct Incident Report <https://lcc.lt/academics/forms-requests> to the Registrar along with the quiz, test, or final examination.

3. Other Academic Misconduct:

Other types of academic misconduct include:

- a. Fabricating evidence or statistics which supposedly represent original research.
- b. Returning a test for a proposed grade improvement without having changed any information on that test after it was marked or scored.
- c. Submitting the same paper or portions thereof for more than one class or assignment, without approval by the instructors involved.
- d. Knowingly contributing to another student's cheating or plagiarism by sharing, for the purpose of deceit, material with another student.
- e. Harking- omitting the results of the research which do not support the hypothesis or fabrication of the hypothesis based on the results of the research).
- f. Invented authorship (inclusion of a non-existent person in the co-authorship of a research work or inclusion of a co-author without his/her consent).
- g. Contract cheating- asking another person to complete student's assignment, when student submits it as their own for a credit. This includes paying another person to complete an assignment for a student, asking a friend or a family member to complete an assignment for a student for free, swapping assignments with another student, downloading an assignment from internet sources.
- h. Any other actions that compromise academic integrity.

If a student commits an act of academic misconduct the instructor will submit an Academic Misconduct Incident Report <https://lcc.lt/academics/forms-requests> to the Registrar with a description and supporting documentation describing the misconduct, and Registrar's office passes it on to the Vice President for Academics.

Discipline and Penalties:

Two instances of substantial plagiarism, or an instance of substantial plagiarism combined with any other form of cheating or academic misconduct within a single class, will result in failure of the course, a warning letter to the student, and a disciplinary meeting with the Academic Vice President. Two instances of substantial plagiarism, or an instance of substantial plagiarism combined with any other form of cheating or academic misconduct within two different classes, will result in a warning letter to the student and a disciplinary meeting with the Academic Vice President. A third instance of substantial plagiarism, cheating, or other academic misconduct results in dismissal from the university.

5. MONITORING AND SUPERVISION OF THE CODE OF ACADEMIC ETHICS:

To encourage adherence to these expectations, LCC has implemented the following procedures.

Course evaluations

Course evaluations are completed by students for every course for every faculty member. These course evaluations are reviewed for general affirmation as well as concerns and provide an opportunity for discussion between the Department Chair and faculty member. As an ongoing quality assurance measure, trend data are gathered and analyzed. Summaries of all evaluations are kept in the faculty member's file in the office of the Registrar.

Grade appeal process

A student who believes that he or she has been given a grade unfairly must follow these steps in sequence:

- a. Submit a written appeal to the instructor who gave the grade, stating the reason(s) the student feels a change of grade is warranted. Schedule a conference with the instructor, at which time the instructor will explain to the student how the student's grade was determined. The registrar can assist students in contacting an instructor.
- b. If the instructor does not believe that a change in grade is warranted, and the student wishes to continue with the appeal, the student may submit a written appeal to the office of the Academic Vice President. The instructor may be asked to review the basis used in determining the grade and report the review to the Academic Vice President.
- c. Grade appeals must be submitted to the instructor and resolved not later than the 14th day after students receive their grades. If the instructor does not believe that a change in grade is warranted, students may appeal to the Academic Vice President by the 21st day after they receive their grades. The Academic Vice President will inform students of the final decision not later than the 28th day after the appeal is received.

Academic Ethics Committee

If a member of academic community believes that another member of academic community (except a student) has violated the terms of this Code, that member of academic community must submit a complaint to the Academic Ethics Committee; the committee in its turn will hear the complaint, investigate it, and make a recommendation for further action.

Composition of the committee: The members of the Committee should have impeccable reputation and be selected as follows:

- a. A chairperson of Academic Council (two-year term).
- b. A representative from LCC's Human Resources department (two-year term).
- c. A Research Council chairperson (two-year term).
- d. A chairperson of the Institutional Review Board (two-year term).

- e. Social partner (depending on a case).
- f. **Note:** *In the first year after the committee's formation, to avoid most members leaving the committee at the same time, the initial Academic Council and Research Council members will serve a one-year term.*

Appointment of members of the Committee:

The members of Academic Ethics Committee are appointed by Academic Council and are recorded in the Academic Council Meeting minutes.

Removal of a member of the Committee:

The member of Academic Ethics Committee may be removed for one of the following three reasons: 1) the member of the committee resigns, and submits an official resignation letter to Academic Council, 2) the job contract of the member of the committee is terminated, 3) the member of the committee has been admitted of violation of articles of this Code.

Terms of service: The term of service on the committee is one year, although members can serve longer. The Academic Ethics Committee appoints a chairperson each year.

Duties of the committee: The committee should meet at least twice- in the beginning of the academic year- to acquaint new members with procedures, appoint a chairperson for the year, in the beginning of the second semester- to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the norms of the Code, and to make any recommendations for the amending of this code. Beyond this annual meeting, the committee convenes only as needed to investigate complaints. At the end of each academic year, the chairperson of the committee should submit a report summarizing the University's compliance with the code and noting the number of complaints, if any, submitted to the committee during the year; this report will be submitted to Academic Vice President.

Rights of the Committee- to ask for experts' advice, if ex. the violation has been done interinstitutionally- to notify another institution about it.

Governing principles of the committee: Members of the committee should seek to be impartial, should maintain confidentiality of all information, should be thoughtful listeners, and should commit to resolving issues in the shortest possible time.

Procedure for submitting complaints:

If a member of the LCC academic community (Person A) believes that another member (Person B) has violated the articles of this Code, if possible, Person A should seek first to address this concern with Person B directly and privately. This is in recognition that some concerns may be the result of misunderstandings or incomplete knowledge. However, this suggestion should not apply if Person A feels threatened in some way by Person B, and those in a subordinate relationship are not required to directly confront their supervisors.

If Person A believes that his or her concern related to academic ethics merits further investigation, Person A can submit a complaint to a member of the Academic Ethics Committee in person, or via email ethics@lcc.lt. Academic Ethics Committee chairperson should be the recipient of emails sent to this address.

The Academic Ethics Committee will not accept anonymous complaints. However, the Academic Ethics Committee will maintain strict confidentiality with regard to all information pertaining to the complaint, and—as appropriate—keep Person A's identity from Person B.

Investigation of complaints:

Upon receiving a complaint, the chairperson should meet first with Person A to learn more details and ascertain appropriate subsequent measures. This meeting should take place within a week of receiving the complaint, if possible. The chairperson may consult with other members of the Academic Ethics Committee about these measures.

The chairperson should inform Person B of the nature of the complaint and request information from Person B. Person B can request a personal meeting with the chairperson or the full Academic Ethics Committee or can choose to submit a written statement to the committee.

The chairperson can, if warranted, seek information from other involved people, maintaining as much confidentiality as possible.

Once the chairperson has received complete statements from Person A and Person B, the chairperson convenes the Academic Ethics Committee to weigh the merits of the complaint. The committee should seek to come to a consensus regarding whether the Code of Academic Ethics has been violated, if it was a serious violation, etc., but can vote if consensus cannot be reached.

If the Academic Ethics Committee determines that no violation of this code has occurred, a written statement with that decision is provided to both Person A and Person B. with 20 business days.

If the Academic Ethics Committee determines that Person B has violated the Code of Academic Ethics, a written statement with that decision is provided to both Person A and Person B. The Academic Ethics Committee does not have the power to terminate employment of a faculty or staff member. However, the written statement of the committee's decision will be provided to both Person B's immediate supervisor and to LCC's Human Resources department. Further action, if any, will be determined by that department, and among other panalties may include the following actions: rejection of promotion, rejection of sabbatical leave; in case of a serious violation or second or third violation- recommendation to Human Resources office for dismissal.

6. CREATION AND REVIEW OF THE CODE OF ACADEMIC ETHICS:

The creation and establishment of the Code of Academic Ethics shall be initiated by Academic Administration, Academic Council, President's Cabinet, or other body of the University.

The development of the Code of Academic Ethics shall be prepared by the Academic Ethics Code Working Group, which should be appointed by Academic VP, and consist of the representatives of Academic Council, of representatives of Research Council, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, representatives from Human Resources Office.

The Code of Academic Ethics can be reviewed and changed if:

- a. There is a change in Lithuanian legislation or national court practice.
- b. The Academic Ethics Committee determines that the Code of Academic Ethics should be amended.

c. The Academic Ethics Code Working Group shall present the project of the Code to the academic community during the All staff/faculty assembly and consider including the ideas posed by the academic community.

The Code of Academic Ethics and its amendments shall be confirmed by Academic Council and approved by President's Cabinet.

The approved Code of Academic Ethics shall be posted on LCC's webpage, as well as discussed with the whole academic community during the "All Staff/Faculty Assembly."

7. FINAL PROVISIONS:

The university implements the Code of Academic Ethics by its free will.

The Code of Academic Ethics is written in two languages, English and Lithuanian, which have equal legal standing.

By acceptance of the Code of Academic Ethics, Academic Integrity policy will be voided.