

**A RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES (05/3)**

**WHEREAS,** the University Administration has proposed to adopt a “Statement of Ethical Principles” covering trustees, senior officials, faculty, staff and others acting on the University’s behalf, and the Administration has requested the Faculty Senate’s recommendations on the proposed Statement; and

**WHEREAS,** the Faculty Senate understands that the Statement of Ethical Principles is intended to set forth aspirational guidelines for conduct and is not intended to provide an independent basis for imposing sanctions or taking other disciplinary actions against faculty members; and

**WHEREAS,** the Statement of Ethical Principles expressly refers to established policies and procedures adopted by the University with the Faculty Senate’s advice and endorsement;

**WHEREAS,** the Faculty Senate understands that the Statement of Ethical Principles is not intended to supersede or modify any of the established policies or procedures of the University, including without limitation the Faculty Code, the Faculty Organization Plan and the Faculty Handbook; and

**WHEREAS,** the Faculty Senate’s Committee on Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom has reviewed the proposed Statement of Ethical Principles and has endorsed the Statement (with modifications) in the form attached to this Resolution as Exhibit A; and

**WHEREAS,** the Faculty Senate believes that it would be desirable for the University to adopt a Statement of Ethical Principles in the form attached hereto as Exhibit A, subject to the Faculty Senate’s understandings set forth above concerning the intent and application of the Statement; **NOW,  
THEREFORE**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY:**

- (1) That the Faculty Senate endorses the “The George Washington University Statement of Ethical Principles,” in the form attached to this Resolution as Exhibit A, as a statement of aspirational guidelines for the conduct of trustees, senior officials, faculty members, staff and others acting on the University’s behalf; and
- (2) That the Faculty Senate expresses its specific understandings that
  - (a) the Statement of Ethical Principles does not provide an

independent basis for imposing sanctions or taking other disciplinary actions against faculty members, and (b) the Statement of Ethical Principles does not supersede or modify any of the established policies or procedures of the University, including without limitation the Faculty Code, the Faculty Organization Plan and the Faculty Handbook; and

- (3) That the Faculty Senate understands and expects that any proposal to make substantive changes to the Statement of Ethical Principles will be presented to the Faculty Senate for its review and recommendations in keeping with the procedures leading to the adoption of this Resolution.

Faculty Senate Committee on Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom  
November 1, 2005

Adopted, with the Statement of Ethical Principles (Exhibit A) as amended,  
December 9, 2005

# Exhibit A

Faculty Senate's 12/9/05 Changes to PEAFC Committee Proposed Draft 11/1/05

**[DRAFT--DISCUSSION DOCUMENT**  
**GW STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES]**

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

The George Washington University dedicates itself to furthering human well-being. To do this, GW must maintain the confidence of the local, national, and worldwide communities. For GW to maintain this confidence, trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of The George Washington University should strive to maintain the highest level of ethics in all of their actions on behalf of the University, and must comply with GW policies as well as external laws and regulations. This Statement of Ethical Principles sets forth standards of ethical conduct to which all persons acting on the University's behalf should aspire. The Statement should be used as a general guide in making ethical decisions in all situations, especially those where the "right" answer is not always clear.

These standards are intended to provide a summary of ethical principles of conduct and to encourage each of us to maintain heightened awareness of their existence. These Principles are also stated, clarified and implemented in several separate policies and procedures of the University. Violations of GW policies will be subject to disciplinary action as provided in those policies. Please see [www.policy.gwu.edu](http://www.policy.gwu.edu) for the latest full listing of GW policies.

Integrity and Respect

The GW community is diverse -- in race, background, age, religion, and in many other ways. The personal actions of each community member establish and maintain the culture of tolerance and respect for which we strive. The University is committed to free inquiry, free expression, and the vigorous discussion and debate on which the advancement of its educational mission depends. At the same time, trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, ~~and~~ staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the University should respect the rights and dignity of others regardless of their differences, and must conscientiously comply with nondiscrimination policies adopted by the University. ~~Harassment along sexual, racial, or political lines has no place in our community.~~

Responsibility and Accountability

GW trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the University ~~and officials~~ should assume and exercise responsibility appropriate to their positions and roles. We are accountable to each other, to the University, and to ourselves for our actions and our decisions not to act. When roles or

responsibilities are unclear, we should take it upon ourselves to obtain clarity. We should exercise sound **business** professional judgment in the performance of our responsibilities, to the best of our ability.

Conflicts of Interest and Commitment

All ~~executive officers~~ trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the University hold positions of trust, and should conduct their activities accordingly. Activities that impair or appear to impair the ability to perform our duties or affect independence and objectivity of judgment in the discharge of our responsibilities to the University should be avoided. We should demonstrate sensitivity in identifying potential conflicts of interest, whether of a financial, personal, or professional nature. Conflicts of interest must be disclosed, reviewed, and appropriately managed or eliminated, in accordance with the reporting and other provisions of applicable University policies.

Harassment and Abuse of Power

GW supports an environment in which harassment of others is not tolerated. ~~Executive officers~~ Trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the University may not use positions of authority to violate or to influence others to violate laws, regulations or University policies.

Stewardship

As stewards of University resources, all ~~executive officers~~ trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the University have a responsibility to ensure that all University resources are used prudently, ethically, and for their designated purposes. We have a responsibility to contributors to the University, including federal, state, and local governments, to treat University property with care, and to expend funds prudently. We should avoid waste and improper use, and should not use tangible or intangible University assets, funds, property, or facilities for our personal benefit or for the benefit of a non-University organization without proper approval. Our acts should reflect the recognition of a special obligation to use University property responsibly and consistent with the tax-exempt status conferred on the University in light of its educational, research, and service missions. It is imperative that those with access to confidential, proprietary, or private information not make unauthorized disclosures or use of this information.

Reporting

All ~~executive officers~~ trustees, senior officials, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on

behalf of the University are expected to report violations of laws, regulations or University policies to appropriate University officials, e.g., the employee's dean, department chair or other supervisor, senior University administrator, University Compliance & Privacy Office, or Office of General Counsel. Confidentiality of individuals reporting violations of these standards will be maintained to the extent possible.

Portions of this Statement of Ethical Principles were derived from similar statements adopted by Cornell University and Yale University, and are used with their permission, which GW gratefully acknowledges.