

# Ethical Policy, The College of Metaphysical Studies (TCOM)

Our College Policy of *Ethical Values and Standards of Ethical Conduct* commits everyone in the our TCOM community to the highest ethical principals in the furtherance of our Mission of providing quality education throughout the united states and abroad from a religious, peace, and metaphysical prospective.

## Standards of Ethical Conduct

*Adopted by The TCOM Advisory Council, December, 2016 This ethical policy was inspired by a California University System and is not in any way sold or used for financial purposes; it is used to reinforce the standards of the ethical conduct of all participants of TCOM.*

### **PURPOSE**

The core values of TCOM is shared by administration, instructional staff, students, advisors, and collaborators as well as the commitment to the Ethical conduct of all College activities. With this in mind, the Standards of Ethical Conduct is a statement of our certainty in ethical, legal, and professional behavior in all contexts both internally and externally.

### **APPLICABILITY**

The *Standards of this Ethical Policy* is applicable to the TCOM:

- Advisory Council
- Members
- Administration
- Instructional Staff
- Student
- Collaborators
- Partners

#### **1. DIPLOMATIC ADHERENCE**

All TCOM participants are expected to conduct themselves diplomatically, ethically, honestly and with integrity in all contexts. “This means principles of fairness, good faith and respect consistent with laws, regulations and policies that govern our conduct with others both inside and outside the community. Each situation needs to be examined in accordance with the *Standards of Ethical Conduct*. No unlawful practice or a practice at odds with these standards can be justified because of customary practice, expediency, or achieving a ‘higher’ purpose”.

#### **2. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Members of the TCOM community are expected to exercise responsibility appropriate to their position and delegated authorities. They are responsible to each other, TCOM and TCOM's sponsors both for their actions and their decisions not to act. Each individual is expected to conduct the business of the TCOM in accordance with the *Core Values* and the *Standards of Ethical Conduct*, exercising sound judgment and serving the best interests of the institution and the community.

### **3. RESPECT FOR OTHERS**

TCOM is committed to the principle of treating each community member with respect and dignity. TCOM prohibits discrimination and harassment and provides equal opportunities for all community members and applicants regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer related or genetic characteristics), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or status as a covered veteran. Further, romantic or sexual relationships between faculty responsible for academic supervision, evaluation or instruction and their students are prohibited. TCOM is committed to creating a safe and drug free workplace.

### **4. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

Institutions of higher education are subject to many of the same laws and regulations as other enterprises, as well as those particular to public entities. There are also additional requirements unique to higher education. Members of the TCOM community are expected to become familiar with the laws and regulations bearing on their areas of responsibility. Many but not all legal requirements are embodied in TCOM policies. Failure to comply can have serious adverse consequences both for individuals and for TCOM, in terms of reputation, finances and the health and safety of the community. TCOM business is to be conducted in conformance with legal requirements, including contractual commitments undertaken by individuals authorized to bind TCOM to such commitments.

The Office of the General Counsel has responsibility for interpretation of legal requirements.

### **5. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE TCOM POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND OTHER FORMS OF GUIDANCE**

TCOM policies and procedures are designed to inform our everyday responsibilities, to set minimum standards and to give TCOM community members notice of expectations. Members of the TCOM community are expected to transact all TCOM business in conformance with policies and procedures and accordingly have an obligation to become familiar with those that bear on their areas of responsibility. Each member is expected to seek clarification on a policy or other TCOM directive he or she finds to be unclear, outdated or at odds with TCOM objectives. It is not acceptable to ignore or disobey policies if one is not in agreement with them, or to avoid compliance by deliberately seeking loopholes. It is expected that those members will comply with applicable professional standards in addition to laws and regulations.

### **6. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST OR COMMITMENT**

Members of the TCOM community are expected to devote primary professional allegiance to TCOM and to the mission of teaching and public service. Outside employment must not interfere with TCOM duties. Outside professional activities, personal financial interests, or

acceptance of benefits from third parties can create actual or perceived conflicts between the TCOM's mission and an individual's private interests. TCOM community members who have certain professional or financial interests are expected to disclose them in compliance with applicable conflict of interest/conflict of commitment policies. In all matters, community members are expected to take appropriate steps, including consultation if issues are unclear, to avoid both conflicts of interest and the appearance of such conflicts.

## **7. ETHICAL CONDUCT OF RESEARCH**

All members of the TCOM community engaged in research are expected to conduct their research with integrity and intellectual honesty at all times. All those engaged in research are expected to pursue the advancement of knowledge while meeting the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, and objectivity. They are also expected to demonstrate accountability for sponsors' funds and to comply with specific terms and conditions of contracts and grants.

## **8. RECORDS: CONFIDENTIALITY/PRIVACY AND ACCESS**

TCOM is the custodian of many types of information, including that which is confidential, proprietary and private. Individuals who have access to such information are expected to be familiar and to comply with applicable laws, TCOM policies, directives and agreements pertaining to access, use, protection and disclosure of such information. Information on the TCOM's principles of privacy or on specific privacy laws may be obtained from the respective campus or laboratory information privacy office.

The public right to information access and the individual's right to privacy are both governed by state and federal law. The legal provisions are based upon the principle that access to information concerning the conduct of the people's business is a fundamental and necessary right of every person, as is the right of individuals to privacy.

## **9. INTERNAL CONTROLS**

Internal controls are the processes employed to assist with ensuring that the TCOM's business is carried out in accordance with these *Standards*, TCOM policies and procedures, applicable laws and regulations and sound business practices. They promote efficient operations, accurate financial reporting, protection of assets and responsible fiscal management. All members of the TCOM community are responsible for internal controls. Members are specifically responsible for ensuring that internal controls are established, properly documented and maintained for activities within their jurisdiction.

## **10. USE OF TCOM RESOURCES**

TCOM resources may only be used for activities on behalf of the TCOM. They may not be used for private gain or personal purposes except in limited circumstances where incidental personal use does not conflict with and is reasonable in relation to TCOM duties (e.g. telephones). Members of the TCOM community are expected to treat TCOM property with care and to adhere to laws, policies and procedures for the acquisition, use, maintenance,

record keeping and disposal of TCOM property. Cash, and other assets whether tangible or intangible; real or personal property;

- Receivables and other rights or claims against third parties;
- Effort of TCOM personnel and of any non-TCOM entity billing the TCOM for effort;
- TCOM's name;
- TCOM records, including student records; and
- The TCOM information technology infrastructure.

## **11. FINANCIAL REPORTING**

All TCOM accounting and financial records and other documents including those submitted to government agencies must be accurate, clear and complete. All published financial reports will make full, fair, accurate, timely and understandable disclosures as required under generally accepted accounting principles for government entities, bond covenant agreements and other requirements. Certain individuals with responsibility for the preparation of financial statements and disclosures, or elements thereof, may be required to make attestations in support of the *Standards*.

## **12. REPORTING VIOLATIONS AND PROTECTION FROM RETALIATION**

Members of the TCOM community are strongly encouraged to report all known or suspected improper governmental activities (IGAs) under the provisions of the *Policy on Reporting and Investigating Allegations of Suspected Improper Governmental Activities* (Whistleblower Policy). Managers and persons in supervisory roles are required to report allegations presented to them and to report suspected IGAs that come to their attention in the ordinary course of performing their supervisory duties.