



I. Employee Conduct and Behavior Expectations

A. Background and Preamble

University of Western States (UWS) promotes a professional environment exhibited through respectful actions and personal accountability. UWS employees are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with university policies and procedures and demonstrate the values upon which these policies and procedures are founded. The expectations for employee conduct and behavior are grounded in a commitment to the UWS core values:

- **Best Practices:** We maintain high standards by using and integrating evidence across multiple disciplines.
- **Curiosity:** We are innovative, open-minded, and forward-thinking.
- **Inclusiveness:** We are respectful, mindful, and welcoming of different ways of being, thinking, and doing.
- **Professionalism:** We are responsible, respectful, and accountable.
- **Student Focus:** We work for the common good of students' academic and professional success.
- **Whole-Person Health:** We promote physical, mental, and emotional wellness in all facets of the UWS experience.

B. Expectations

In alignment with the core values, the university expects all employees to cooperate in maintaining a quality work environment. Mutual commitment and responsibility best serve the interests of the university and its employees. To achieve this sense of community and mutual commitment, all university employees are expected to:

- Be personally accountable for individual actions.
- Take ownership of speech, conduct, demeanor, and deliverables.
- Treat and speak to all members of the university community fairly, equitably, and courteously.
- Recognize and acknowledge the different perspectives, backgrounds, or experiences of individuals, departments, and groups on campus.
- Address and refer to members of the university community by their preferred name and pronoun.
- Demonstrate mutual respect and consideration for members of the university community.
- Maintain professionalism when engaging with members of the university community.
- Engage in civil and collaborative relationships with colleagues even if they disagree on something, have different perspectives, or have different communication or leadership styles.
- Share information with colleagues and departments to enhance collaboration and cooperation.
- Adapt to changes to meet shifting departmental and institutional demands and participate in implementing changes by modifying processes and procedures.
- Utilize the resources and training provided by the university to maximize productivity and professional development.
- Promote high standards of performance in themselves and among colleagues.
- Participate in performance evaluation processes, as required.
- Comply with university policies and procedures.



- Report issues of ethical considerations, conflicts of interest, and/or other concerns with the proper personnel, as necessary.

II. Prohibited Conduct

The following behavior is prohibited for all UWS employees in both physical and online environments:

A. Unprofessionalism

Engaging in unprofessional behaviors in the workplace, including, but not limited to the following behaviors:

- Shouting, raised voice, yelling, or screaming.
- Threatening language or implicit threats (such as “you’ll be sorry” or “this isn’t over”).
- Abusive, degrading, disparaging, or demeaning comments.
- Profane, vulgar, or offensive language.
- Sexual, racial, or religious jokes or innuendo.
- Discriminatory or harassing behavior or language.
- Threats or similar intimidating behavior, as reasonably perceived by the recipient (e.g., moving closer aggressively).
- Unreasonable refusal to perform job tasks or cooperate with others in carrying out assigned duties.
- Invading personal space or privacy.

The university expects employees to exhibit professionalism in communications and behavior. Professional communications and behaviors are the only acceptable forms of interaction in university business settings, including university clinics. When differences of opinions occur, constructive, legitimate, and respectful forms of communication are considered appropriate. Rude or unprofessional behavior is not permitted.

B. Plagiarism or Copyright Violations

Engaging in conduct in violation of university [Policy 1024 Copyright Violation](#).

C. Misrepresentation (Online or On-Campus Settings)

1. Making, possessing, or using any falsified university document or record; or, altering any university document or record, including identification cards.
2. Knowingly providing false information, submitting false or altered documents, or making a false report to the university personnel in bad faith.
3. Using, or facilitating the use of a university employee ID, username, or any other access controls, whether physically, virtually, or electronically, by any person other than the assigned individual. This includes using another individual’s access to gain admission to, access, or participate in university systems.
4. Misrepresenting oneself as a licensed, registered, or certified health care provider.

D. Unacceptable Use of Information Technology

Engaging in conduct as prohibited under university [Policy 3601 Acceptable Use of Information](#) and/or [Policy 3603 Access to Electronic Records](#).

Policy 1006 Employee Conduct and Behavior Expectations

Established: 10/12/1977

Revision History: 11/17/2022



E. Use of Tobacco or Marijuana on University Grounds

Engaging in conduct in violation of university [Policy 1017 Tobacco and Marijuana-Free Campus](#).

F. Drugs, Narcotics, and Alcohol

Engaging in behavior prohibited under university [Policy 1008 Drugs and Alcohol](#).

G. Harassment and Discrimination

Engaging in harassing or discriminatory behavior or actions prohibited under university [Policy 1004 Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment](#). Procedures for resolving allegations of harassment or discrimination are defined and guided by Policy 1004. Allegations of conduct that could constitute a violation of both this policy and Policy 1004 are resolved according to the latter policy.

H. Sexual Harassment or Misconduct

Engaging in behavior prohibited under university [Policy 1016 Title IX Sexual Harassment](#), which includes procedures for resolving allegations of sexual harassment and misconduct. Allegations of conduct that could constitute a violation of both this policy and Policy 1016 are resolved according to the latter policy.

I. Bullying, Threatening, and Abusive Behavior

Engaging in or threatening to engage in behavior(s) that, by virtue of their intensity, repetitiveness, or otherwise, endanger or compromise the health, safety or well-being of oneself, another person, or the general university community, or that disrupt the effective continuation of the educational process for individual employees or for the general university community. This behavior includes, but is not limited to, threatening, tormenting, mocking, intimidating, maliciously or inappropriately ridiculing another's work or comments beyond the scope of scholarly inquiry, and exploiting known psychological or physical vulnerabilities or impairments. Such behavior may occur physically, virtually, or electronically.

1. Engaging in abusive behavior, whether physically, virtually, or electronically, toward a university employee or university contractor acting in performance of their duties.
2. Engaging in physical violence, actual or threatened, against any individual or group of persons.

J. Hazing

Taking any action or creating any situation, intentionally or unintentionally, whether on or off university premises including actions conducted by virtual or electronic means, and whether presented as optional or required, to produce: (a) mental, physical, or emotional discomfort; (b) servitude; (c) degradation; (d) embarrassment; (e) harassment; (f) ridicule; or (g) to cause or encourage violation of law or UWS policy, for the purpose of initiation into, affiliation with, or admission to, or as a condition for continued membership in, a group or organization, regardless of an individual's willingness to participate.

K. Destruction of Property

Vandalizing, damaging, destroying, defacing, or tampering with university property or the property of other members of the UWS community.



L. Theft and Unauthorized Taking

1. Taking (e.g., stealing, theft) of property or services without permission from the owner, regardless of intent to return the item.
2. Knowingly possessing, selling, or distributing stolen property or materials.

M. Disorderly Conduct

1. Disorderly, disruptive, or antagonizing behavior that interferes with the safety, security, health, or welfare of the community, and/or the regular operations of the university.
2. Behaviors that, by virtue of their intensity and/or repetitiveness, interfere with an educational activity (e.g., classroom, remote or online learning environments, lecture, workshop). This includes but is not limited to:
 - Persistently talking and/or creating noise in a manner that obstructs the learning process;
 - Repeatedly interrupting others in a manner that obstructs the learning process; or
 - Deliberately engaging in behaviors that unreasonably and illegitimately distract from or interfere with the educational experience.

N. Failure to Comply

1. Failure to comply with any disciplinary sanctions imposed in accordance with university policies.
2. Failure to comply with university requirements and procedures, or any related government orders issued concerning public health.

O. Misuse of University Properties

1. Entering or remaining on or in any part of any university premises or spaces including online or virtual classrooms, without proper authorization.
2. Use of university property or space, including virtual spaces and platforms, without proper authorization.
3. Solicitation, use of university facilities, resources or services, or misappropriation of the university name, for the purpose of conducting business or non-profit endeavors not otherwise authorized or sponsored by the university.

P. Weapons and Related Items

Engaging in conduct as prohibited under university [Policy 1018 Weapons on Campus](#).

Q. Retaliation

Participating in any adverse action against an individual for making a report of prohibited conduct or participating in any proceeding under this policy. Retaliation includes threatening, intimidating, harassing or any other conduct that would discourage a reasonable person from engaging in activity protected under this policy or other university policies.

R. Violations of the Conduct and Behavior Expectations

Violating expectations under section I, B “Employee Conduct and Behavior Expectations.”



III. To Whom these Conduct and Behavior Expectations Applies

The employee conduct and behavior expectations apply to all university employees, who work both remotely and on-campus. For the purposes of this policy, a university employee is defined as any individual who has an active employment or contractual status with the university, including student workers, and to individuals who provide volunteer service to the university, including trustees, preceptors, and clinical supervisors.

The employee conduct expectations apply to performance or behaviors that take place: (a) within the campus context including remote or online environments, (b) at clinical sites, (c) at university-sponsored events, (d) and through electronic media or other electronic formats.

IV. Reporting an Employee Conduct or Behavior Concern

Any UWS student, employee, contractor, trustee, or patient who believes that one or more employee(s) has violated the employee conduct and behavior expectations may file a written or verbal report to:

Cindy Leger
Director of Human Resources
Cleger@uws.edu
971-418 - 9017

Upon receipt of a report of an alleged violation of the employee conduct and behavior expectations, the Director of Human Resources, or designee, reviews the report to determine if (a) additional information is needed, and (b) the complaint or allegation is a violation of the employee conduct and behavior expectations or needs to be referred to another university policy or procedure. In cases in which the conduct is or may be a safety or security threat, the university may take interim actions to mitigate risk to the employee and/or the university community.

V. Corrective Action of a Violation of Employee Conduct and Behavior Expectations

The Executive Director of Human Resources (or designee) may collect additional information, including speaking with witnesses. Following the collection of information, a written incident report outlining the incident, evidence, and other information will be created and provided to appropriate parties. The university reserves the right to facilitate an investigation.

The Director of Human Resources (or designee) collaborates with the employee's supervisor to determine an appropriate corrective action in accordance with the [UWS Employee Handbook](#).

Progressive discipline identifies, discusses, and corrects behaviors or issues that affect an employee's work conduct or performance. Progressive discipline may include counseling, verbal warning, written warning, final warning, and/or termination (see [UWS Employee Handbook](#) for definitions). The university reserves the right to immediately terminate an employee or skip any step(s) in the progressive discipline process.



The determination of an appropriate progressive discipline is based on an assessment of the:

- Nature of the violation,
- Context in which it occurred,
- Frequency of the behavior or violation in question,
- Severity and pervasiveness of the behavior per violation in question, and
- Most appropriate forum to redress behavior and/or violation.

Related Policies: [Policy 1004 Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment](#)
[Policy 1008 Drugs and Alcohol](#)
[Policy 1016 Title IX Sexual Harassment](#)
[Policy 1017 Tobacco and Marijuana-Free Campus](#)
[Policy 1018 Weapons on Campus](#)
[Policy 1024 Copyright Violation](#)
[Policy 1230 Academic Integrity](#)
[Policy 3601 Acceptable Use of Information](#)
[Policy 3603 Access to Electronic Resources](#)

Keywords: employee behavior, employee conduct, progressive discipline