

ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY POLICY			
Effective Date	December 11, 2017	Policy Type	Administrative
Responsibility	Director, Human Resources	Cross-Reference	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Animal Care & Animal Usage Policy 2. Conflict of Interest Policy 3. Integrity in Research and Innovation Policy 4. Intellectual Property and Ownership Policy 5. Progressive Discipline Policy 6. Research and Ethics Policy 7. Respectful Workplace Policy 8. Administrative Group Terms and Conditions of Employment 9. The following Collective Agreements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Staff Association • Alberta Union of Provincial Employees • Employees' Association
Approver	Executive Council		
Review Schedule	Every 5 years		
Appendices			

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC) requires all members of the College community to uphold high ethical standards of conduct.
- 1.2. GPRC is committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive and safe teaching, learning and working environment in which everyone behaves with integrity and respect, complies with GPRC policies, professional standards, declarations to external agencies and the rules of law.

2. Background

- 2.1. GPRC values ethical conduct in all of its operations, including academia, administration, with students, industry partners, and its relationship with the community at large.
- 2.2. Awareness of ethical obligations is fundamental to ensuring appropriate behaviours in all Institution dealings and relationships.
- 2.3. It is important to GPRC to maintain the confidence of its community and stakeholders and to uphold its reputation devoted to learning. It is committed to being ethical and credible in its relationships with employees, students, industry partners, vendors, and others.

3. Policy Objective

- 3.1. The objective of this policy is to define and explain the ethical expectations of members of the GPRC community and provide specific guidance to encourage ethical behaviour.

4. Scope

- 4.1. This policy applies to all members of the GPRC community including employees, contractors, industry partners, agents, visitors, volunteers and students of GPRC.
- 4.2. This policy applies to all locations included within the GPRC environment.
- 4.3. Not all sections of this policy are applicable to all members of the GPRC community; however, the Policy is the overarching policy document that defines ethical conduct and expected behaviours and it is supported by other GPRC policies and procedures.

5. Definitions

- 5.1. "GPRC Environment" includes all GPRC premises and campuses, as well as any off-campus sites utilized for instruction, practicums, co-op or work experience placements, and / or other locations in which an employee is working as part of his / her position.
- 5.2. "Close Personal Relationship" includes members of an individual's family and household, and those with whom they have an intimate relationship. For the purposes of this policy, members of an individual's family means an individual's spouse (including common-law), child, sibling, parent, spouse's parent, niece, nephew, aunt, uncle, grandparent, grandchild, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, step-child, step-sister, step-brother or step-parent and includes any other member of an individual's family who resides in the same household as the individual.
- 5.3. "Conflict of Commitment" exists where an employee's participation in outside activities or events significantly interferes with his/her employment responsibilities at GPRC.
- 5.4. "Conflict of Interest" exists when an individual has a significant interest, financial or otherwise, that could directly and considerably impact his/her conduct at GPRC. Generally, this may occur when the external interest provides some motivation or incentive to influence the individual's conduct, and when the individual has opportunity to make alternate decisions as a result. In short, a conflict of interest is a set of circumstances that creates a risk that professional judgement or actions will be unduly influenced by an external interest.
- 5.5. "Ethics" are commonly defined as a code of principles and concepts that govern individual behavior. Put another way, ethics are moral beliefs about right and wrong.
- 5.6. "Professional ethics" is defined as the personal and corporate rules that govern behavior within the context of a particular profession. GPRC recognizes that some employees are currently members, are eligible for membership and/or are actively fulfilling the requirements to become members and are therefore bound to the set of professional ethics that governs their designated profession(s).
- 5.7. "Members of the GPRC Community" include employees, industry partners, contractors, agents, visitors, volunteers and students of GPRC.

6. Guiding Principles

- 6.1. GPRC requires all members of the GPRC community to uphold fundamental principles of responsibility, honesty, transparency, and accountability.
- 6.2. GPRC employees will perform their duties with the highest of integrity.
- 6.3. GPRC community members will not engage in any behavior that interferes with or disrupts GPRC related activities. Members will not:

- 6.3.1 Attempt, encourage, or knowingly permit anyone to breach GPRC policies;
- 6.3.2 Discriminate against or harass anyone for cultural, religious, gender, lifestyle, or any other reason.
- 6.3.3 Cause or allow physical harm against any person or animal;
- 6.3.4 Use social media, computers, or other electronic means/media in a manner that violates this policy;
- 6.3.5 Use GPRC assets or resources in an abusive or fraudulent manner;
- 6.3.6 Abuse computer or network resources of GPRC, such as violation of copyright law, interference in network operations, inappropriate messaging, unauthorized use of another person's identification, and inappropriate internet searches;
- 6.3.7 Cause or allow any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance which is illegal, imprudent, indecent, or in violation of commonly accepted business practices and professional ethics;
- 6.3.8 Exploit other members of the GPRC community for personal gain;
- 6.3.9 Disseminate information that is deceptive, false, misleading or prejudicial to the interests of GPRC;
- 6.3.10 Use their authority in an excessive/abusive manner or extraordinary/contradictory demands on staff or students;
- 6.3.11 Engage in a personal relationship wherein one party is in a position of authority over another party, such as a student and his/her instructor or supervisor unless expressly approved in accordance with this Policy;
- 6.3.12 Use or permit the use of GPRC-owned equipment, material or property for personal profit, except where explicitly for intellectual property allowed by contract between GPRC and the employee;
- 6.3.13 Knowingly engage in any outside matters of financial interest incompatible with the impartial, objective and effective performance of their duties;
- 6.3.14 Represent themselves as speaking or acting on behalf of GPRC when participating in any activity as private persons;
- 6.3.15 Disrespect the confidentiality of the College, and its staff and students.
- 6.4 GPRC will respect and comply with its obligations under the law and its contractual agreements. Where there are inconsistencies between this policy and a law or contractual agreement, the law or contractual agreement will prevail.
- 6.5 Members of the GPRC community are also required to know and comply with Federal and Provincial laws and regulations and any other jurisdiction in which it conducts business.

7. Outside Interests and Impartiality

- 7.1. The primary professional responsibility of GPRC employees is to the College and this responsibility takes precedence over all other working relationships the employee may have.
- 7.2. Employees may have alternate employment and/or outside interests/activities so long as it does not cause an actual or perceived conflict of interest or conflict of commitment. Outside interest/activities refer to business interests, alternate employment by other organizations, or participation in professional associations, charitable or community organizations, and/or political parties (paid or unpaid) that may impede on an employee's time.
- 7.3. Employees should avoid alternate employment and/or outside interests/activities that interfere with or are incompatible with their duties.
- 7.4. Members of the GPRC community are not permitted to use any GPRC resources and/or information that is not publicly available in alternate employment and/or outside interests/activities.
- 7.5. Members of the GPRC community may engage in political activity as long as the activity does not impair, or be perceived to impair, their ability to carry out their employment duties in an impartial manner.
- 7.6. GPRC does not participate in municipal, provincial, or federal politics. No GPRC community member shall endorse a political party, campaign, or candidate on behalf of GPRC. No GPRC community member shall lobby for or endorse a political party or elected official using GPRC's name.
- 7.7. No member of the GPRC community will, intentionally or unintentionally, infer political support, bias, or contribution on behalf of GPRC to any political event, party, candidate or campaign. Members of the GPRC community, who contribute, participate, or voice political opinions or support must explicitly do so as individuals and not as representatives of GPRC.

8. Personal Relationships (Nepotism)

- 8.1. GPRC permits individuals in close personal relationships to be employed at the College but under strict guidelines that are designed to prevent the creation of situations where preferential treatment could exist or be perceived to exist.
- 8.2. Employees and contractors must never have influence, input or participate in decisions related to the hiring, engagement, evaluation, promotion or establishment of terms and conditions of employment and/or contracts of anyone with whom they have a close personal relationship.
- 8.3. Prospective employees, industry partners or contractors in close personal relationships with current employees are generally not eligible for hire to the business unit in which the current employee is employed if the hire creates a supervisory relationship between the two individuals.
- 8.4. In exceptional circumstances, a supervisory relationship between prospective employees or contractors in close personal relationships with current employees may be permitted if necessitated by bona fide occupational needs, unique qualifications or responsibilities. The decision to appoint shall be approved by the appropriate Vice-President in consultation with the Director, Human Resources.
- 8.5. Current employees or contractors in close personal relationships with other employees are not eligible for transfer or promotion to the department or work unit in which the other employee is employed; if the transfer or promotion creates a supervisory relationship between the two individuals, unless approved according to 8.4 above.

- 8.6. If a close personal relationship develops between current employees or a current employee and a contractor in which a supervisory relationship exists; or, which may create a real or perceived conflict of interest, the employees must disclose the relationship immediately to their immediate supervisor(s).

9. Commitment and Compliance

- 9.1. Not all ethical violations are described explicitly in any one policy. It is imperative that all members of the GPRC community read and be compliant with the spirit and intent of the Ethics and Accountability Policy.
- 9.2. Certain members of the GPRC community may be required to certify periodically that they have read, understand and comply with the Ethics and Accountability Policy.
- 9.3. Members of the GPRC community who belong to professional associations are governed by codes of those associations. In cases where this Ethics and Accountability Policy is more specific or demanding, this Policy will prevail.
- 9.4. If a professional association's code appears to conflict with the requirements in the Ethics and Accountability Policy, the matter should be immediately brought to the attention of the Director, Human Resources.
- 9.5. Members of the GPRC community with questions about the applicability of this policy should seek guidance from the following individuals:

Member Group	Contact
Employees	Director, Human Resources
Students	Director, Student Experience
All other users	Director, Human Resources

- 9.6. If a member of the GPRC community feels that all or a part of the Ethics and Accountability Policy do not apply to them, they should raise the matter with Human Resources.

10. Redress

- 10.1. Members of the GPRC community will address concerns relating to the administration and operation of the Institution and the implementation of this Policy constructively and in accordance with appropriate internal mechanisms.
- 10.2. Members of the GPRC community who contravene this Policy may be subject to a range of corrective measures, up to and including dismissal from the Institution, in accordance with relevant collective agreements, contractual agreements and other GPRC policies.
- 10.3. Concerns about ethical violations can be raised in a number of ways, including:
- 10.3.1. Raising the concern with an immediate supervisor; or
 - 10.3.2. Notifying the Director, Human Resources; or
 - 10.3.3. Applicable Vice President; or
 - 10.3.4. President and CEO
- 10.4. The Director, Human Resources has the primary responsibility for initiating investigations.
- 10.5. All employees suspected of ethical violations are to be treated fairly and consistently, and in compliance with the collective agreements.

10.6. It is the right of every person to make a report in good faith under this Policy without fear of reprisal. Retaliation or reprisals against persons making such reports in good faith will not be tolerated.

10.7. Members of the GPRC community who witness or have knowledge of a probable contravention of the Ethics and Accountability Policy (or related policies) shall bring the concern forward.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

STAKEHOLDER	RESPONSIBILITIES
Executive Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve and formally support this policy
Director, Human Resources/Human Resources Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop, maintain, and oversee the implementation of this policy• Administer the performance management process
Employees, Students, Contractors, Industry Partners	Every employee, student, contractor or industry partner has a responsibility to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be knowledgeable of and comply with this Policy.• Comply with all policies and procedures in conducting their work.• Report ethical violations outlined in this Policy immediately.

12. Exceptions to the Policy

12.1. Exceptions to the guiding principles in this Policy are to be documented and formally approved by the President.

12.2. Policy exceptions must describe:

12.2.1. The nature of the exception

12.2.2. A reasonable explanation for why the Policy exceptions are required

12.2.3. Any risk created by the exceptions to this Policy

12.2.4. Evidence of approval by the President

13. Inquiries

13.1. Inquiries regarding this Policy can be directed to the Director, Human Resources.

14. Amendments (Revision History)

14.1. Amendments to this Policy will be published from time to time and circulated to the GPRC community.