

# Code of Ethics

Illinois Institute of Technology

As valued members of the IIT community, we—trustees, suppliers, students, staff, faculty, donors, alumni, and administrators—have become beneficiaries of what our predecessors made and stewards for our successors. For each of us, the benefit derived from association with IIT depends largely on the conduct of others. If we each do as we should, all associated with IIT should have reason for satisfaction. If even a few fail, the benefits of association will be less and we will pass to our successors less than we might have otherwise. This code of ethics should help us all conduct ourselves as we should:

**1. Academic excellence.** Because IIT's reputation depends in large part on the quality of the students it graduates, the research it performs, and the scholarship it publishes, we should help students, faculty, and researchers do the best work they can—and attract to IIT those who can do even better.

**2. Academic freedom.** We should give every student a fair opportunity to learn, every faculty member a fair opportunity to teach, and every member of the IIT community a fair opportunity to explore, enlarge, and evaluate human invention and knowledge.

**3. Academic responsibility.** We should maintain appropriate standards of accuracy, reliability, credit, candor, and confidentiality in our own work, whether for publication or internal use in class or office.

**4. Human dignity.** Because every member of the IIT community deserves the respect due every person, we should treat everyone associated with IIT fairly—avoiding harassment, unjust discrimination, arbitrary treatment, and intimidation in our own conduct and not tolerating them in the conduct of others.

**4.1. Mutual respect.** We should recognize the contribution to education, invention, research, scholarship, and governance that differences in perspective, experience, and history offer.

**4.2. Diversity.** We should cultivate an environment in which differences in perspective, experience, and history can flourish individually and combine productively in common projects.

**4.3. Community and criticism.** Because opinions in any healthy community tend to differ, with wisdom never anyone's monopoly, we should consult those whom our decisions may affect, suggest to appropriate persons opportunities for improving IIT when we think we see them, offer our suggestions in ways unlikely to distract from merit, accept the dissent of others from our views as an opportunity to learn, and protect dissenters even from mistreatment their dissent seems to have provoked.

**5. Institutional responsibility.** When holding any office or other position of special trust within IIT, we should always act in good faith, exercising at least as much care as an ordinarily prudent person in like circumstances would when seeking to serve the best interests of IIT.

**5.1. Stewardship.** We should use IIT resources prudently, taking care to know what laws and other regulations apply.

**5.2. Honesty.** We should avoid false or misleading statements in any official IIT activity.

**5.3. Conflict of Interest.** When acting on behalf of IIT, we should avoid influences that may undermine the independence of our judgment; or if we cannot avoid such influence, should disclose them to those who should know and seek means to annul their harmful effects.

**5.4. Conduct of others.** When we observe what seems to be others taking IIT resources for personal use or otherwise misusing them, we should so inform them and, should that not end the apparent misuse, notify an appropriate authority if significance warrants.

**6. Supporting personal integrity.** If we become aware of any member of the IIT community who perceives a conflict between personal convictions and what is required under IIT's rules, we should help identify ways to arrive at a reasonable and just resolution.

**7. Civic responsibility.** We should conduct IIT activities in ways that at least preserve the quality of life in our neighborhood and should, in addition, as circumstances allow, improve our neighborhood, city, state, country, and world.

**8. Work-life concerns.** We should conduct IIT activities in ways that allow every member of the IIT community to honor outside commitments properly without slighting IIT.

**9. Sense of pride and ownership.** We should give every member of the IIT community—administrators, alumni, donors, faculty, staff, students, suppliers, and trustees—opportunities to help improve IIT. We should not take a complaint about IIT outside until we have given those at IIT a fair opportunity to resolve it properly.

### **How to Use this Code**

This code consists of a preamble and nine sections. The preamble explains the purpose of the code and provides a principle for applying the general rules in the nine sections to specific situations: *interpret the rules so as to pass on to our successors an IIT at least as good as we found it*. Some sections include subsections. The rules in these

subsections provide a *partial* interpretation of the section's general rule. Each subsection is a reminder of a domain of conduct requiring extra caution. This code is not a moral algorithm, a substitute for deliberation, or an ordinary regulation designed for external enforcement, but an overarching guide to conscientious deliberation. It is supposed to capture what we now believe is how we would like others associated with IIT or other members of the IIT community to act, how we would like IIT as an institution to act, and how we too are willing to act—both directly and by helping others to do the same. This code is, of course, subject to revision in light of experience. Indeed, we should undertake a systematic review of it every few years.

Contact: Vivian Weil, CSEP