

ACADEMIC CULTURE AND ETHICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

In the twenty-first century, higher education institutions play a central role in shaping the intellectual, cultural, and moral foundations of societies. Universities and colleges are not only centers of scientific discovery and knowledge transfer but also powerful agents of socialization, responsible for nurturing responsible citizens, ethical professionals, and leaders of the future. Within this context, the concepts of academic culture and academic ethics occupy a vital position. These two interrelated domains define the standards of behavior, values, and practices that govern teaching, research, and community engagement in higher education.

Academic culture can be broadly defined as the system of norms, traditions, values, and practices that regulate and inspire academic life. It is expressed in the pursuit of truth, respect for intellectual diversity, commitment to rigorous inquiry, and dedication to professional growth. While academic culture is not uniform across the globe, certain universal features – such as integrity, freedom of thought, critical inquiry, and respect for evidence – form the backbone of the academic enterprise.

Academic ethics, on the other hand, refers to the set of moral principles and standards that guide conduct within the academic community. It encompasses issues such as honesty in examinations, transparency in research, avoidance of plagiarism, fairness in grading, proper attribution of authorship, responsible use of data, and respect for the dignity and rights of all members of the academic community. Ethics in higher education ensures that intellectual progress is achieved not at the expense of truth or justice but through adherence to shared moral commitments¹. The importance of cultivating academic culture and ethics cannot be overstated.

In recent decades, higher education has undergone a profound transformation driven by globalization, digital technologies, and the commercialization of research. Universities are no longer isolated ivory towers but highly interconnected institutions competing in global rankings, attracting international students, and partnering with governments and

¹ Ковальчук І. Студентська етика та академічна доброчесність: проблеми та перспективи. *Науковий вісник*. 2020. № 5. С. 112–120.

industries. While this has created new opportunities, it has also generated new ethical dilemmas: the rise of contract cheating services, the misuse of artificial intelligence, pressures to publish at any cost, and the commodification of learning. These challenges underscore the need for a renewed focus on the values that sustain trust in academic institutions.

The objective of this article is to provide a comprehensive exploration of academic culture and ethics in higher education. It seeks to examine their historical foundations, analyze key ethical challenges, investigate global perspectives, and propose strategies for fostering integrity and responsibility in academic life. The article will argue that academic culture and ethics are not peripheral concerns but essential elements of institutional excellence and social trust. Without them, higher education risks losing credibility and undermining its mission to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and the betterment of society².

The following sections will first explore the theoretical foundations of academic culture, tracing its historical development and identifying its core values. The article will then discuss the ethical dimensions of teaching and research, highlighting common forms of misconduct and their consequences. Comparative perspectives will be offered, considering how different regions and traditions address ethical challenges in academia. The role of institutions, policies, and technological tools in promoting integrity will also be examined.

1. Core values of academic culture

Academic culture refers to the set of values, norms, traditions, and practices that shape the life of a university and define how knowledge is created, shared, and preserved. It is more than a simple organizational routine; it is the intellectual spirit that guides the behaviors of students, faculty, and researchers. Academic culture includes principles such as respect for truth, the pursuit of knowledge, intellectual honesty, openness to dialogue, and the responsibility of passing knowledge to future generations³.

In higher education, academic culture functions as a framework that unites diverse individuals and disciplines under shared values. It creates an environment where freedom of thought is protected, where research is conducted with integrity, and where students are encouraged to think critically rather than merely memorize information. Unlike corporate culture, which is largely oriented toward efficiency and profit, academic culture

² Шевченко С. Академічна культура та формування професійних цінностей студентів. *Вісник вищої школи*. 2021. № 4. С. 55–63.

³ Parnter C. Academic misconduct in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*. 2020. No. 1. P. 31–45.

prioritizes the collective search for truth and the development of human potential.

For students, becoming part of academic culture means learning how to behave as members of an intellectual community: respecting others' ideas, citing sources properly, collaborating ethically, and contributing to the advancement of knowledge. For faculty, it involves balancing teaching and research with mentorship, maintaining professional standards, and nurturing curiosity and creativity.

At the heart of academic culture lie core values that provide direction and legitimacy to the work of higher education institutions. These values are widely recognized across the world, though their interpretation may vary depending on cultural and institutional context. The most essential ones include:

1. Integrity – Upholding honesty in research, teaching, and learning. Integrity requires avoiding plagiarism, falsification of data, or unfair practices. It is the cornerstone of academic trust.

2. Autonomy – Academic institutions and individual scholars must be free to pursue research and teaching without external interference, while also being accountable for the quality of their work.

3. Respect – Academic culture depends on mutual respect between students and faculty, as well as respect for diversity of ideas, disciplines, and backgrounds.

4. Openness – Knowledge should be shared through publications, conferences, and dialogue. The principle of openness also underlies the global movement for open access.

5. Critical Thinking – Universities encourage questioning, debate, and skepticism. Students are taught not to accept information passively, but to evaluate arguments and evidence.

6. Responsibility – Members of the academic community carry responsibility for educating others, preserving knowledge, and using it ethically for the benefit of society.

Together, these values create a framework that distinguishes universities from other organizations. They ensure that higher education remains not only a site of learning but also a moral and cultural institution⁴.

One of the most distinctive elements of academic culture is the principle of academic freedom. It ensures that scholars can pursue research, teaching, and public expression without fear of political, religious, or economic censorship. Academic freedom allows the advancement of knowledge, even when such knowledge challenges established norms, powerful groups, or government policies.

⁴ Шевченко С. Академічна культура та формування професійних цінностей студентів. Вісник вищої школи. 2021. № 4. С. 55–63.

However, freedom is not absolute. It is closely tied to institutional responsibility. Universities must guarantee the quality of research and teaching, ensure ethical conduct, and manage public trust. For example, when faculty members exercise freedom of expression, they are expected to maintain professional standards of evidence and reasoning. Likewise, institutions must protect controversial research but also ensure that it does not harm human subjects or violate ethical norms.

This balance between freedom and responsibility is at the core of academic culture. Without freedom, universities cannot innovate; without responsibility, they risk losing credibility and public support.

Academic culture is not maintained solely by university administrations or formal policies. It lives through the daily actions of students and faculty.

Faculty members sustain academic culture by modeling intellectual honesty, engaging in research, mentoring students, and upholding disciplinary standards. Their publications, teaching practices, and professional ethics shape the image of the university⁵.

Students contribute by respecting academic rules, developing critical thinking, and participating in the intellectual life of the institution. Student clubs, debates, and peer learning initiatives all help maintain an environment of curiosity and dialogue⁶.

Importantly, academic culture is transmitted from one generation to another through socialization. New students learn the rules of citation, collaboration, and respectful communication from faculty and older peers. This intergenerational transfer ensures continuity of traditions while allowing gradual adaptation to new challenges.

Despite its strengths, academic culture faces numerous challenges in the modern world:

- Commercialization – Pressure to treat universities as businesses can shift priorities from knowledge creation to profit generation.
- Digitalization – Online learning and artificial intelligence bring opportunities but also risks, such as plagiarism facilitated by technology.
- Massification – Expanding access to higher education can dilute academic standards if institutions cannot maintain quality for large student populations.
- Political Pressures – In some regions, governments attempt to control research agendas or restrict academic freedom.
- Inequalities – Students from marginalized backgrounds may face barriers to full participation in academic life.

⁵ Ковальчук І. Студентська етика та академічна доброчесність: проблеми та перспективи. Науковий вісник. 2020. № 5. С. 112–120.

⁶ Ibid.

Addressing these challenges requires adaptive leadership, clear policies, and commitment to values. Without active defense of academic culture, universities risk losing their identity as centers of critical thought and intellectual freedom.

While academic culture emphasizes shared traditions and values, ethics provides the normative framework that determines what is considered right, fair, and responsible in academic life.

Academic ethics is not limited to avoiding misconduct; it is about cultivating integrity and responsibility in all aspects of teaching, learning, and research. For students, this means respecting rules of citation, avoiding plagiarism, and treating peers with fairness. For faculty, it involves ensuring accuracy in research, honesty in evaluation, and professionalism in interactions with students. For institutions, ethics implies creating transparent governance, protecting academic freedom, and ensuring equity⁷.

Ethics is therefore the backbone of trust in higher education. Without ethical standards, universities risk losing credibility, damaging public confidence, and failing in their mission to educate responsible citizens.

A widely accepted framework for academic ethics is the five fundamental values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.

Honesty – All members of the academic community must tell the truth in their work. Students must submit their own assignments; researchers must present accurate data.

Trust – Academic life depends on trust between students, faculty, and society. Professors trust students not to cheat, while students trust professors to grade fairly.

Fairness – Equal treatment is essential. Rules should apply consistently, and favoritism or corruption must be avoided.

Respect – Universities are diverse communities. Respect for cultural differences, intellectual opinions, and personal dignity is essential.

Responsibility – Ethical conduct requires accountability for one's actions. Students must learn independently, and faculty must uphold professional standards.

Together, these values create an ethical environment that enables learning, research, and collaboration to flourish. Violating them damages not only individual reputations but also the credibility of the institution.

Despite the emphasis on integrity, violations of academic ethics remain common in higher education. Among the most significant challenges are:

Plagiarism – Presenting someone else's work as one's own, whether through direct copying, poor paraphrasing, or failure to cite sources. With

⁷ Оленич О. Академічна культура та етика наукового дослідження у вищій освіті. *Вісник Дніпровського університету*. 2019. № 3. С. 45–56.

digital technology, plagiarism has become easier, but also easier to detect using specialized software⁸.

Cheating – Using unauthorized materials during exams, collaborating when not permitted, or receiving outside help on assignments. Cheating undermines the fairness of academic evaluation.

Fabrication and Falsification – Inventing or altering data in research or coursework. Such misconduct not only violates ethics but also damages scientific progress.

Ghostwriting and Contract Cheating – Paying others to write assignments or theses.

This practice has become a global problem, raising serious concerns about the authenticity of academic credentials.

These challenges highlight the need for strong institutional policies, ethical education, and technological tools to detect and prevent misconduct. However, prevention is not enough: students and faculty must also be taught why integrity matters, so they internalize ethical principles rather than simply avoiding punishment.

Research is one of the primary missions of higher education, and it carries specific ethical responsibilities. Universities are expected not only to produce knowledge but also to ensure that this knowledge is obtained in ways that respect human dignity, protect the environment, and maintain public trust.

Human Subjects – Any research involving people requires informed consent, confidentiality, and protection from harm. Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) or Ethics Committees are established to review and approve studies before they begin.

Data Management – Ethical research demands accuracy in collecting, analyzing, and storing data. Fabrication or manipulation of data undermines both the research itself and the broader scientific community.

Authorship and Publication – Proper recognition of contributions is a core principle. Authorship should reflect actual intellectual input, while others may be acknowledged without being listed as authors. Practices such as honorary authorship or exclusion of contributors violate ethical standards⁹.

The ethics of research are global, with guidelines provided by organizations such as the Declaration of Helsinki or the Singapore Statement on Research Integrity. Failure to follow them can lead to reputational damage, withdrawal of publications, or legal consequences.

⁸ Шевченко С. Академічна культура та формування професійних цінностей студентів. *Вісник вищої школи*. 2021. № 4. С. 55–63.

⁹ Петренко М. Етика викладання та наукової діяльності в університеті. *Освіта і наука*. 2018. № 2. С. 78–89.

The university is not only a place of research but also of education, where the teacher – student relationship plays a central role.

Ethical issues in this relationship can have lasting consequences for individuals and institutions.

Fair Evaluation – Students expect to be graded on the basis of merit, not favoritism, discrimination, or personal bias.

Professional Boundaries – Teachers must avoid relationships with students that compromise objectivity, such as financial or romantic involvement.

Mentorship – Faculty are responsible for supporting students' academic and professional growth, not exploiting them for personal gain.

Confidentiality – Teachers may have access to students' personal information and should respect privacy at all times.

Respectful, professional, and transparent relationships between faculty and students strengthen trust and uphold the credibility of higher education.

Ethics in higher education extends beyond individual behavior to include institutional commitment to equity, inclusion, and diversity. Universities serve as microcosms of society, and their ethical legitimacy depends on providing fair access and opportunities for all.

Equity ensures that all students, regardless of background, have equal access to resources and opportunities.

Inclusion promotes a campus environment where differences are respected, and marginalized voices are heard.

Diversity enriches the learning experience by exposing students and faculty to multiple perspectives, cultures, and traditions.

Discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, disability, or socioeconomic status violates ethical principles and weakens academic communities. Therefore, universities must implement policies, support services, and awareness programs to cultivate a climate of fairness and respect¹⁰.

Universities require leaders who embody ethical values in their decisions and governance. Ethical leadership means more than compliance with laws and regulations; it involves setting an example, promoting transparency, and creating a culture where integrity is rewarded.

Key responsibilities of ethical leaders include:

1. Promoting academic freedom while ensuring accountability.
2. Establishing clear codes of conduct for faculty, staff, and students.
3. Addressing misconduct promptly and fairly.
4. Encouraging open dialogue and protecting whistleblowers.
5. Balancing institutional growth with social responsibility.

¹⁰ McHaney R. Academic integrity: Information systems education. *Journal of Information Systems Education*. 2016. 27(3). P. 1–10.

When leadership fails to uphold ethical standards, corruption, favoritism, or abuse of power can damage the reputation and mission of the institution. Conversely, strong ethical leadership inspires trust and strengthens academic culture.

Building an ethical academic environment requires deliberate strategies at multiple levels:

- Codes of Conduct – Clear institutional policies that outline acceptable behavior and consequences of violations.
- Education and Training – Workshops, seminars, and courses on academic integrity for both students and faculty.
- Technology – Tools such as plagiarism detection software or secure exam platforms.
- Mentoring Systems – Faculty guidance for students on research ethics and professional standards.

Recognition and Incentives – Acknowledging ethical behavior through awards, scholarships, or promotions¹¹.

- Global Collaboration – Sharing best practices across institutions and participating in international initiatives.
- Ethical culture cannot be imposed by punishment alone; it must be cultivated through awareness, encouragement, and shared responsibility.

2. Research ethics and faculty responsibilities on the example of Oles Honchar Dnipro National University

Oles Honchar Dnipro National University (DNU), established in 1918, stands as a prominent educational institution in Ukraine. This article delves into the evolution of DNU's academic culture and ethical standards, highlighting its commitment to academic integrity, research ethics, and the cultivation of a responsible academic community.

Over the decades, the university has evolved into a leading center for higher education and research in Ukraine. Central to its mission is the promotion of a robust academic culture and adherence to ethical standards in all facets of university life.

Throughout its history, DNU has emphasized the importance of academic freedom, critical thinking, and the pursuit of knowledge. These principles have been integral to the university's academic culture, guiding its development and shaping its reputation as a leading educational institution in Ukraine¹².

DNU has established comprehensive policies to uphold academic integrity and prevent misconduct. The university's Academic Integrity Council, chaired by Associate Professor, Vice-rector for Research oversees the implementation

¹¹ Newton P. Academic integrity: A quantitative study of confidence and ability. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*. 2016, 41(2). P. 1–15.

¹² Oles Honchar Dnipro National University. URL: <https://www.dnu.dp.ua/en>

of these policies. The council is responsible for addressing cases of plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty.

Manuscripts submitted for publication are screened for plagiarism to ensure originality and uphold the university's standards of academic ethics.

Research at DNU is governed by strict ethical guidelines to ensure the integrity and credibility of scholarly work. Faculty members are expected to adhere to these standards, which include obtaining informed consent from research participants, ensuring confidentiality, and avoiding data fabrication. The university provides training and resources to support faculty in conducting ethical research and to promote awareness of ethical issues in research practices.

Students at DNU are actively engaged in promoting academic integrity through various initiatives. The university organizes workshops, seminars, and discussions on topics related to academic ethics, encouraging students to reflect on their responsibilities as members of the academic community. Additionally, student representatives participate in the Academic Integrity Council, providing a student perspective on ethical issues and contributing to the development of policies and practices that promote academic honesty.

Oles Honchar Dnipro National University (DNU) upholds rigorous standards of research ethics and faculty responsibilities, aligning with international best practices and national regulations. These standards are integral to maintaining academic integrity, fostering trust in scholarly work, and ensuring the ethical treatment of research subjects.

Faculty members and researchers are expected to maintain confidentiality during the peer review process and avoid conflicts of interest. For instance, editors and reviewers must not use unpublished information from manuscripts for personal research without the author's consent, and they should evaluate manuscripts based on their academic merit, not the author's identity.

Faculty members are responsible for promoting ethical research practices within their departments¹³.

This includes educating students and junior researchers about ethical conduct, supervising research to ensure compliance with ethical guidelines, and leading by example in their own research endeavors.

Faculty are expected to disclose any conflicts of interest and to be transparent about funding sources and potential biases in their research. This transparency helps maintain the credibility of their work and the trust of the academic community.

Faculty members play a crucial role in guiding students and researchers through the publication process, ensuring that manuscripts are original, properly cited, and free from ethical violations. They are also responsible for

¹³ Oles Honchar Dnipro National University. URL: <https://www.dnu.dp.ua/en>

addressing any ethical concerns that arise during the publication process, such as allegations of misconduct or disputes over authorship.

DNU provides robust support for ethical research through its Academic Integrity Council, which oversees ethical standards and handles complaints related to research misconduct. The university also offers training and resources to help faculty and researchers navigate ethical challenges in their work.

As for academic culture at DNU, it encompasses shared values, norms, practices, and attitudes that guide the university community in research, teaching, and service¹⁴.

Academic integrity is a cornerstone of DNU's academic culture. Students and faculty are expected to produce original work, properly attribute sources, and avoid plagiarism or academic misconduct. Integrity extends to research practices, including the honest reporting of data and transparent publication. For example, DNU encourages the use of plagiarism detection software and adherence to ethical research standards, ensuring that both teaching and research maintain credibility.

Research ethics at DNU ensures that all scholarly activities adhere to legal and moral standards.

Faculty and students must comply with university guidelines when conducting experiments, collecting data, or publishing results. Ethical research requires:

- Obtaining informed consent from human participants.
- Ensuring humane treatment of animals in laboratory studies.
- Avoiding conflicts of interest.
- Accurate reporting of data without fabrication or manipulation.

DNU emphasizes responsible authorship and publication ethics. Faculty guide students on proper citation practices, avoidance of duplicate publications, and acknowledgment of collaborators' contributions. Academic journals affiliated with the university follow internationally recognized ethical standards, including those recommended by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Faculty and students are required to maintain confidentiality during peer review processes and research collaborations. Objectivity is paramount; research must be evaluated based on scientific merit rather than personal relationships or biases. Reviewers and editors are prohibited from using unpublished data for personal advantage, reinforcing a culture of fairness and trust¹⁵.

Faculty members at DNU play a crucial role in fostering both academic culture and research ethics. Their responsibilities include:

¹⁴ Oles Honchar Dnipro National University. URL: <https://www.dnu.dp.ua/en>

¹⁵ Ibid.

1. Mentorship: Guiding students and junior researchers in ethical research conduct.

2. Supervision: Ensuring that all research projects comply with ethical and legal standards.

3. Role Modeling: Demonstrating integrity, transparency, and accountability in their own research.

4. Training and Workshops: Organizing seminars on research ethics, plagiarism prevention, and responsible data management.

5. These responsibilities create a scholarly environment in which ethical behavior and academic rigor are deeply embedded in the university's culture.

DNU provides robust institutional support to uphold academic and research ethics, including:

1. An Academic Integrity Council to address cases of misconduct.

2. Access to resources and training materials on ethical research practices.

3. Guidelines for handling disputes over authorship, data ownership, and research misconduct.

4. Encouragement of international collaboration and adherence to global ethical standards.

5. Through these measures, the university ensures that all members of the academic community operate within a framework of ethical responsibility¹⁶.

Academic honesty is a core expectation for all students at DNU. This principle encompasses:

- Original Work: Students must submit their own work in assignments, projects, and theses. Copying or paraphrasing without proper citation is considered a violation of academic integrity.

- Proper Citation: Correctly referencing sources in essays, lab reports, and research papers is mandatory to acknowledge the intellectual contributions of others.

- Examination Conduct: Cheating, unauthorized collaboration, or using prohibited resources during exams is strictly prohibited.

- To enforce these standards, DNU employs plagiarism detection software for all major academic submissions, including undergraduate and graduate theses¹⁷.

This system not only discourages misconduct but also teaches students the importance of intellectual honesty.

¹⁶ Oles Honchar Dnipro National University. URL: <https://www.dnu.dp.ua/en>

¹⁷ Ibid.

Students participating in research projects are trained to adhere to ethical standards from the beginning of their academic journey. Key practices include:

1. **Informed Consent:** When conducting surveys or experiments involving human participants, students must obtain informed consent, ensuring participants understand the study's purpose and their rights.

2. **Confidentiality:** Student researchers are responsible for protecting personal information collected during their studies, maintaining privacy and data security.

3. **Responsible Data Handling:** Students are instructed to collect, store, and analyze research data accurately, avoiding fabrication or manipulation of results.

4. **Faculty mentorship** plays a critical role in guiding students through these processes, ensuring that ethical practices are integrated into their academic training¹⁸.

Beyond coursework and research, students at DNU are expected to demonstrate integrity in all aspects of university life, including:

1. **Respect for Others:** Treating peers, faculty, and staff with respect, valuing diverse perspectives, and fostering a collaborative learning environment.

2. **Civic Responsibility:** Participating in community service, volunteer projects, and university governance with honesty and commitment.

3. **Digital Ethics:** Using digital resources responsibly, avoiding plagiarism in online submissions, and respecting copyright laws.

DNU maintains a clear disciplinary framework for ethical violations. Students found guilty of academic misconduct may face:

- Warnings or mandatory ethics training;
- Grade penalties for assignments or exams;
- Suspension or expulsion in severe or repeated cases.

This framework emphasizes accountability and teaches students that ethical behavior is a foundational aspect of professional and academic success.

The university promotes student ethics through multiple initiatives:

Workshops and Seminars: Regular sessions on academic integrity, research ethics, and responsible use of technology.

Orientation Programs: First-year students receive guidance on university values, ethical standards, and expectations for scholarly conduct.

Mentorship Programs: Senior students and faculty mentors model ethical behavior, providing guidance on ethical decision-making in research and daily academic life.

¹⁸ Oles Honchar Dnipro National University. URL: <https://www.dnu.dp.ua/en>

Through these initiatives, DNU cultivates a student body that understands the importance of integrity, responsibility, and ethical conduct in both academic and professional contexts¹⁹.

A practical example is the implementation of peer-reviewed student research projects in the Faculty of Social Sciences. Students submit research proposals, receive feedback on ethical considerations, and present findings in student-led conferences. This process teaches accountability, responsible data handling, and the value of peer evaluation in upholding research ethics.

In the Faculty of Applied Mathematics and Information Technologies, students conducting their undergraduate theses are required to submit a research plan that includes:

1. **Ethical Data Collection:** Students developing machine learning algorithms for healthcare applications must anonymize patient data.

No identifying information is allowed, and access is restricted to the student and supervising faculty.

2. **Faculty Oversight:** Supervisors review the methodology for ethical compliance before research begins. Any deviation, such as using unapproved datasets, is immediately addressed.

3. **Responsible Publication:** Students presenting results at university conferences must cite datasets, tools, and software libraries used, avoiding any form of misrepresentation.

This process teaches students the importance of transparency and accountability from the outset of their research careers.

Students in the Faculty of Chemistry and Biology engage in laboratory experiments with chemical reagents and biological samples. Ethical training includes:

1. **Safe Handling of Materials:** Students follow strict protocols to prevent accidents and environmental harm.

2. **Animal Research Guidelines:** When experiments involve model organisms, students learn to minimize pain and stress, follow humane euthanasia procedures, and keep detailed records.

3. **Accurate Reporting:** Lab results are recorded meticulously. Fabrication or manipulation of data is considered a serious offense, and students are trained to correct mistakes transparently.

4. These practices instill discipline, attention to detail, and ethical responsibility in future scientists²⁰.

Many DNU courses require group projects. Ethical practices in collaborative work include:

- **Fair Contribution:** Each member's work is clearly documented, and credit is fairly distributed in presentations and reports.

¹⁹ Oles Honchar Dnipro National University. URL: <https://www.dnu.dp.ua/en>

²⁰ Ibid.

- **Conflict Resolution:** Students are encouraged to discuss disputes openly and, if necessary, seek guidance from faculty mentors.
- **Digital Ethics:** In shared digital platforms (e.g., Google Docs), students respect intellectual property rights and do not copy or overwrite others' contributions without permission.

Students participate in community-based research, such as environmental studies, educational programs, or public health surveys. Ethical conduct includes:

1. **Transparency with Community Participants:** Students explain the goals of the research and how the results will be used.
2. **Responsible Reporting:** Findings are communicated truthfully without exaggeration or misrepresentation, ensuring that communities are not misled.
3. **Social Responsibility:** Projects are designed to benefit local communities, teaching students that research ethics extend beyond compliance to include societal impact.
4. For instance, students in the Environmental Studies program conducted a water quality assessment in Dnipro city neighborhoods. They ensured local residents understood the study, obtained verbal or written consent, and presented results in public forums without compromising individual privacy²¹.

With the rise of online learning and digital research tools:

1. Students in the Faculty of Information Systems are trained to avoid plagiarism in code and digital content.
2. When using online datasets, they ensure licenses and permissions are respected.
3. For e-learning submissions, students are taught about cybersecurity, privacy, and digital citizenship, ensuring ethical behavior in virtual academic environments.

These examples reflect the modern challenges of student ethics and the proactive approach DNU takes to address them.

In many faculties, students participate in peer review of each other's research proposals before submission:

Constructive Feedback: Students are instructed to provide honest, constructive critiques without personal bias.

Confidentiality: Reviewers maintain confidentiality and do not share proposals outside the review process.

Avoiding Conflicts of Interest: Students who have close friendships or competing projects recuse themselves from reviewing to maintain fairness.

²¹ Oles Honchar Dnipro National University. URL: <https://www.dnu.dp.ua/en>

This practice develops critical thinking, integrity, and respect for intellectual property.

DNU encourages students to participate in science fairs, hackathons, and innovation contests. Ethical behavior is emphasized:

Originality: Projects must be independently created by the participants. Submission of pre-existing work without acknowledgment is prohibited.

Transparency of Methodology: Students clearly document methods, data sources, and results.

Collaboration Ethics: Team members acknowledge contributions, and all data used from external sources is cited properly.

For example, a student team in the Engineering Faculty developing a solar-powered water purification system documented every step of their testing and cited all reference materials, earning recognition at a national innovation competition.

Students conducting field research or internships in local organizations, hospitals, or schools adhere to strict ethical rules:

Respect for Privacy: When interviewing or observing individuals, students ensure anonymity and do not disclose private information.

Informed Participation: Field participants are fully informed about the student's research purpose and have the right to decline participation²².

Professional Conduct: Students behave responsibly, avoiding actions that could damage the reputation of the university or the host organization.

A case in point is psychology students conducting stress studies in local schools. They obtained parental consent, anonymized participants' data, and submitted reports with no personal identifiers.

DNU students increasingly engage in joint research projects with international universities. Ethical standards include:

Acknowledgment of All Contributors: Students credit international collaborators, avoiding disputes over authorship.

Compliance with International Regulations: Students adhere to both Ukrainian and partner-country research guidelines.

Cultural Sensitivity: Students respect local norms and ethical expectations when conducting research abroad.

For instance, students participating in Erasmus+ programs submit proposals reviewed by both DNU supervisors and partner university faculty to ensure cross-border ethical compliance.

As technology becomes central to education, students working on digital platforms, AI, or big data projects are trained to act ethically:

Privacy Protection: They anonymize datasets containing personal information.

²² Oles Honchar Dnipro National University. URL: <https://www.dnu.dp.ua/en>

1. Avoiding Bias: Students are instructed to detect and minimize bias in AI models or data analyses.

2. Transparency: They document algorithms, assumptions, and limitations, ensuring reproducibility and accountability.

3. An example is a data science project analyzing social media trends for marketing research. Students carefully removed identifying data and openly reported potential limitations of their analysis²³.

Students involved in student councils, academic committees, or clubs are expected to model ethical behavior:

- Fair Decision-Making: Council members make decisions based on merit, not favoritism.

- Transparency and Accountability: Financial and organizational decisions are documented and reported to members.

- Conflict Resolution: Disputes are resolved respectfully and according to established rules.

This ensures that ethical principles extend beyond academics into leadership and civic responsibility.

CONCLUSIONS

Academic culture and ethics are fundamental to the quality and credibility of higher education. They shape the behavior, values, and responsibilities of both students and faculty, ensuring that teaching, learning, and research are conducted with integrity, transparency, and respect. At Oles Honchar Dnipro National University, ethical standards are integrated into all aspects of academic life – from coursework and research projects to community engagement and international collaborations.

The university emphasizes academic integrity through policies on plagiarism prevention, ethical research practices, and proper citation standards. Students and faculty are trained to produce original work, report results accurately, and acknowledge the contributions of others, fostering a climate of trust and respect. Faculty mentorship is central to this process, as professors model ethical behavior, guide students through ethical dilemmas, and oversee research projects to ensure compliance with national and international standards.

Students are actively engaged in ethical learning and research practices. They participate in laboratory experiments, field research, community projects, and digital research initiatives with a strong emphasis on honesty, confidentiality, and respect for human and animal subjects. Collaborative projects, peer reviews, and student leadership activities also teach responsibility, fairness, and accountability, preparing students to act ethically in their future professional and academic careers.

²³ Oles Honchar Dnipro National University. URL: <https://www.dnu.dp.ua/en>

Institutional support structures, such as the Ethics Committee, Academic Integrity Council, and workshops on research ethics, provide guidance and oversight, ensuring that ethical standards are not only expected but enforced. International collaborations further strengthen the university's commitment to ethics by exposing students and faculty to diverse cultural perspectives and global research standards.

In summary, the integration of academic culture and ethics at DNU ensures a scholarly environment of excellence, accountability, and social responsibility. It prepares graduates to become competent professionals, innovative researchers, and responsible citizens who contribute positively to society. Upholding these values in higher education is essential for fostering innovation, maintaining credibility, and sustaining public trust in academic institutions.

Ultimately, academic culture and ethics are not peripheral concerns but integral to the mission of higher education. They underpin every aspect of university life from teaching and research to governance and community engagement – ensuring that higher education institutions like DNU continue to produce not only knowledge but also ethically responsible leaders of tomorrow.

In conclusion, academic culture and ethics at Oles Honchar Dnipro National University exemplify how higher education institutions can cultivate an environment of excellence, trust, and social responsibility. Upholding these principles is essential for maintaining the credibility of academic work, fostering innovation, and ensuring that the university continues to produce well-rounded, ethically responsible graduates. As higher education faces global challenges – including technological advancements, international collaboration, and increasing social responsibility – the integration of academic culture and ethics remains crucial for sustaining the long-term quality, relevance, and societal impact of universities.

SUMMARY

This article examines the academic culture and research ethics in higher education, focusing on Oles Honchar Dnipro National University (DNU). The research problem addressed is the challenge of maintaining academic integrity and ethical standards in teaching, research, and student engagement. Higher education institutions often face issues such as plagiarism, data manipulation, and unethical authorship practices. This study analyzes the institutional policies, faculty responsibilities, and student practices that shape ethical behavior at DNU. It highlights the role of faculty mentorship in guiding students to conduct research responsibly and uphold integrity in their academic work. The article also explores how students are trained to respect intellectual property, maintain confidentiality, and act ethically

in collaborative and field research. Institutional mechanisms, such as Ethics Committees and Academic Integrity Councils, provide oversight and promote a culture of accountability. The research results show that embedding ethics into teaching, research, and community engagement fosters a trustworthy, professional, and socially responsible academic environment. The findings indicate that students who are guided by these principles develop critical thinking, accountability, and civic responsibility. Overall, the study concludes that academic culture and ethics at DNU are essential for producing competent professionals, innovative researchers, and responsible members of society.

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