



Real expectations.

Code of Conduct
Open Forum



VCU

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

overview



Why do we need a code?



Development process



Code of conduct best practices



Features of our code



Tour and Q & A

why do we need a code?

Purpose: A code of conduct should “contain and explain the behavioral expectations that an organization holds for its employees and agents.”

~Ethisphere Institute

why do we need a code?

To merge multiple resources into one unified Code of Conduct for easy reference

- *Code of Ethics*
- *VCU Creed*
- *Code of Conduct for Business Practices*
- *Policies and procedures*
- *Various VCU websites*
- *Internal contacts*

why do we need a code?

To clearly articulate existing expectations

- *Summarize our policies, ethical standards and values*
- *Provide resources for additional guidance*
- *Ensure understanding that all employees are responsible for meeting VCU's expectations*

development process



development process

Researched best practices

- *Other corporate and academic codes of conduct*
 - *Codes graded an “A” or above by **ETHISPHERE***
 - *Peer institutions*
- *Recommendations from consulting agencies*
- *Code of Conduct whitepapers*

best practices

Public Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Online availability, ease of access, downloadable and print friendly
Tone from the Top	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Letter from the president and support of senior leadership
Readability & Tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Between 8,000 – 10,000 words (our Code is 8,100)▪ Welcoming tone that is not overly formal and refrains from legal jargon▪ Readable by all employees at every level
Non-Retaliation & Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Reporting options for actual or perceived violations of the code are outlined▪ Commitment non-retaliation for good-faith reports
Values & Commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Expresses commitment to core values to all stakeholders (including employees, students, vendors and local communities)
Risk Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Address all of the core risk areas
Comprehension Aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Learning tools are provided within the Code, such as Q&As, FAQs and examples
Presentation & Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Organized and presented in an easy-to-follow fashion▪ Aesthetically appealing and logically organized with a Table of Contents and Index

development process



development process

Identified goals and objectives

- *Create a user friendly reference tool*
 - ✓ Clarify and summarize expectations
 - ✓ Provide examples
 - ✓ Provide learning aids and tools
 - ✓ Link to resources for more information
 - ✓ Intuitive organization
 - ✓ Online “living” document that can easily be updated

development process

Researched
best
practices

**Vetted through
Culture
Subcommittee**

Reviewed by
key
stakeholders

Benchmarked
our Code



Identified
goals and
objectives

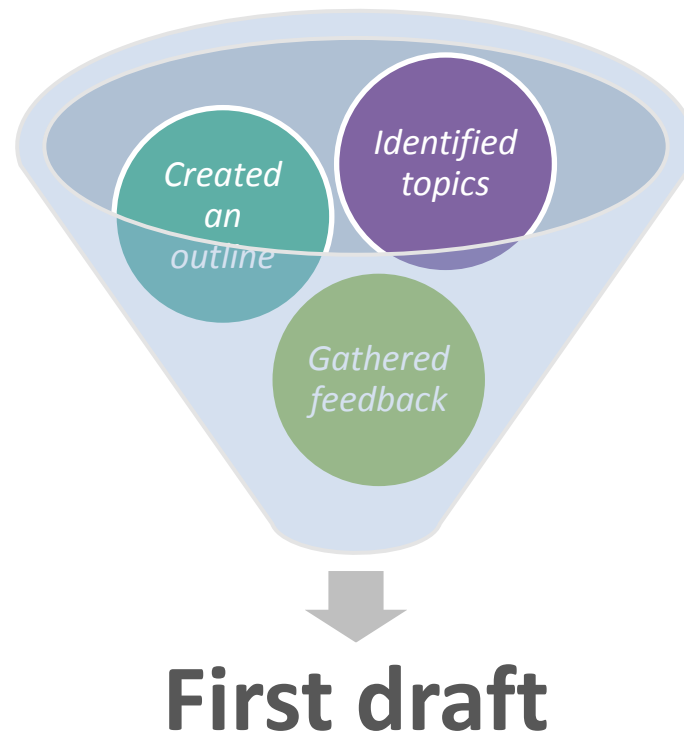
Drafted
our
Code of
Conduct

Revised
draft

Gathering
feedback
from all
employees

development process

Vetted through CAC Culture Subcommittee



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development process

Draft reviewed by key stakeholders

- *Collected feedback from:*
 - *Compliance Advisory Committee*
 - *Senior leadership including*
 - *General Counsel*
 - *President*
- *Incorporated suggestions*
- *Revision reviewed by senior leadership*

development process

Researched
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**Benchmarked
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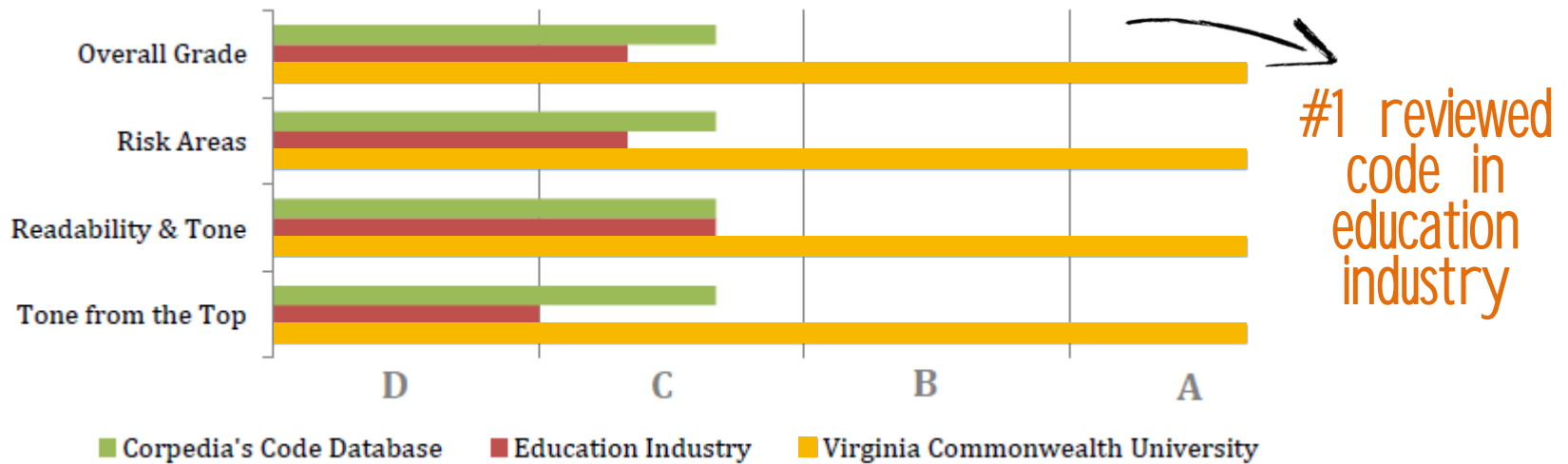
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draft

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development process

Code benchmark performed by **corpedia** 
ETHICS. ELEVATED.

A VCU's Draft Code of Conduct Overall Grade



development process



organization & key features



ethical behavior

we are committed to an environment of uncompromising integrity and ethical conduct

our culture

we are committed to a civil and professional working environment

expectations

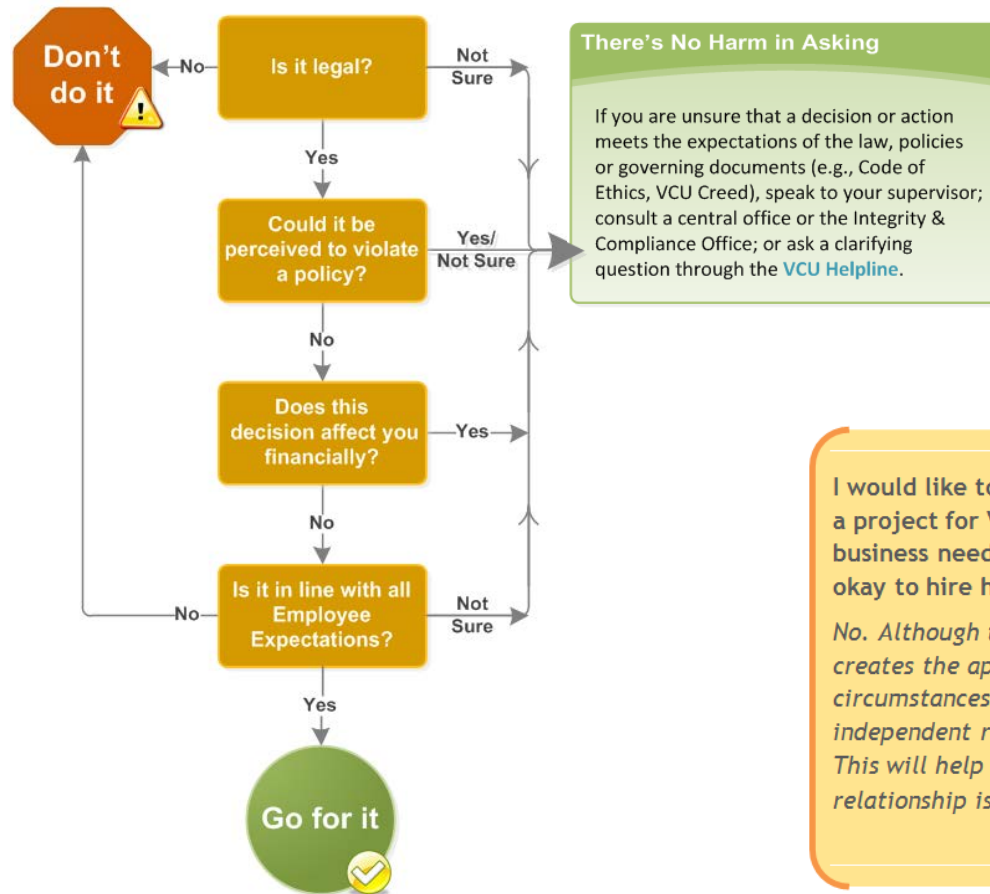
we are committed to employee conduct consistent with our mission and values

further guidance & resources

we are committed to providing our employees with the tools for success

organization & key features

ethical decision framework



Related policies:

- [Computer and Network Resources Use](#)
- [Leave and Time Reporting](#)
- [Maintenance and Release of Employment and Personal Information](#)

I would like to hire my spouse's company to work on a project for VCU. Since it is for a legitimate business need and I can get a discounted price, is it okay to hire him/her?

No. Although the work is legitimate, this situation creates the appearance of a conflict. Disclose the circumstances to senior leadership so that an independent review can be done prior to purchase. This will help protect you, your spouse and VCU if the relationship is ever called into question.

Q&A

feedback/questions?

www.codeofconduct.vcu.edu

Frequently Asked Questions

Who must follow our Code of Conduct?

Will our Code of Conduct include all laws, policies and values I should know?

Where can I share comments or ask questions about the draft code?

Feedback

We encourage you to attend one of the open forums above to learn more about our draft code and ask questions; however, you may also share your feedback using the form below.
** Required*

Name *
First and Last Name

VCU Email Address
(Optional)

Please select one: *

Question
 Comment

Please share your question or comment in the space below. *
We will do our very best to reply to questions. Depending on volume, there may be a delay. Thank you for your patience.



Jaycee L. Dempsey, MBA, CCEP
University Integrity & Compliance Analyst
Integrity and Compliance Office
Department of Assurance Services
p: 804.828.2028 | ucompliance@vcu.edu