AU-Code of Professional Ethics B.E.2553

Whereas it is deemed appropriate, Assumption University Council, empowered under provisions in Article 34 (2) of the Private Higher Education Institutions Act B.E.2546, additionally modified (copy no.2) B.E.2550 and the resolution of the University Council in the meeting of 2/2553 on May 20, 2553, hereby formulates regulations of AU-Code of Professional Ethics B.E. 2553 as follows:

Lecturers of Assumption University must exhibit high levels of professional competence and ethical conduct, not only to merit the confidence and respect of the students and their parents who they have to serve, but also to be able to act as their role models. In the Thai context, university lecturers are considered to be a privileged class. Correspondingly, both as professionals and as educators they are expected to have a high sense of moral values and a common standard of behavior.

All AU lecturers are expected to comply both with the letter and spirit of the ethical standards set forth in the current text, henceforth referred to as the "Code of Professional Ethics." Or "The Code" for short. The Code is expressed in the form of a set of enforceable and mandatory Rules (See further). These Rules prescribe the ethical conduct required of every lecturer, regardless of her/his occupational position. Any individual subject to this Code who violates a Rule will be exposed to the possibility of disciplinary actions. Do remember however that the goal of the Code is to prevent unethical conduct before it occurs.

This Code text will keep referring to just "the lecturers" but it is understood also to apply (mutatis mutandis) to the Deans, Associate and Assistant Deans, Chairpersons, etc. in the exercise of the duties and tasks as related to their function.

All violations of the Rules will be handled by especially nominated ad hoc committees. Such committees will be in charge of the responsibility of investigating and adjudicating alleged Rule violations and of proposing appropriate penalties. Disciplinary sanctions will be imposed as warranted by the severity of the offense and its circumstances, but in accordance with the published AU procedures and penalties (see reference 1) and within the framework of due process and equal protection under the law.

When there is a reason for the lecturer to feel uncertain about the ethical propriety of a specific activity or type of conduct, the said lecturer should refrain from engaging in any such activity or conduct until the matter has been duly clarified. Any lecturer who needs assistance in interpreting the Code is encouraged to request an advisory opinion from the AU Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM).

Code of Professional Ethics

As stated the Code of Professional Ethics is expressed in the form of a set of enforceable and mandatory Rules. Many of these Rules touch upon subjects and topics treated more extensively or more explicitly in earlier ABAC or Assumption University publications. (See the References 1, 2 and 3)

Rule 1 : The AU lecturer has the duty to familiarize himself or herself with all the Rules of conduct as prescribed in the Code of Professional Ethics and to abide by them.

Rule 2 : The lecturer shall competently, faithfully and consistently discharge her/his teaching duties and related responsibilities.

Rule 3 : The lecturer shall support all the university efforts aimed at improvements in teaching, learning and research, as well as those rendering services to the public or supporting and promoting Thai tradition and culture. In particular, the lecturer shall cooperate with all internal operations aimed at improving the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the university, such as quality assurance operations, good governance, one- and five-year planning, etc.

Rule 4 : The lecturer shall support all the policies and practices of the university which provide individual
lecturers with opportunities to update and to advance their professional competence and their academic achievements.

Rule 5: The lecturer shall support the development, the improvement, and the enforcement of the Code Rules and in particular those aimed at fostering ethical conduct among the lecturers.

Rule 6: The lecturer shall, in the conduct of her/his professional activities, not engage in any act of a dishonest, deceitful or fraudulent nature.

Rule 7: The lecturer shall not allow the pursuit of financial gain or any other personal benefit to interfere with her/his exercise of sound professional judgment and honest practice.

Rule 8: A lecturer shall not withhold any information or assistance, officially requested by the ad hoc committees mentioned in the introduction or by any other regulatory university authorities charged with investigating or prosecuting an alleged violation of the Code.

Jurisdiction and Composition of the ad hoc Committees.

Every investigation of an alleged violation of the Code of Professional Ethics and its Rules of Conduct will be carried out by an ad hoc committee of (in principle) five persons. This ad hoc committee will have a chairperson appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. This chairperson, in turn, will recruit four more members for the committee and propose them as member-candidates to the said Vice President for his/her approval and their formal nomination.

The committee shall have the responsibility for:

(i) Investigating all matters involving the alleged Code violation;
(ii) Submitting in writing the result of its investigation;
(iii) Proposing appropriate disciplinary actions or penalties;

As the result of its investigating experiences, the ad hoc committee member may suggest amendments to the current Code, to its procedures or to the disciplinary actions and penalties which they entail.

Procedural Steps for Code Complaints.

(i) Complaints alleging a violation of the Code of Professional Ethics must be submitted in writing to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

(ii) For any complaint that is deemed receivable, the said Vice-President will appoint an ad hoc committee chairperson who, in turn, will recruit the other ad hoc committee members and propose them to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs for his/her approval and formal nomination.

(iii) Any person accused of a Code violation has the right to request an appearance in person before the ad hoc committee in order to explain his/her version of the facts.

(iv) Upon the conclusion of its investigation, the chairperson of the ad hoc committee will prepare a report of the committee’s activities and its conclusions and submit it to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

(v) Any lecturer stricken by an adverse decision of an ad hoc committee, shall be given a period of 30 working days within which he or she can address a (motivated) request for a revision of his case to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

Penalties

A) If the ad hoc committee determines that a complaint merits a disciplinary action, it may recommend an appropriate penalty.
B) The severity of the penalty proposed shall be commensurate with the severity of the offense committed. Also the extent to which the violation reflects on the likelihood of future professional misconduct should play a role.

C) Penalties that may be imposed are in essence those of article 33 of the Regulations referred to in reference 1. One thus meets in ascending order of severity:
- a verbal private admonition,
- a verbal reprimand in the form of an informal rebuke,
- a formal censure in the form of a written warning (with or without a probation clause),
- the imposition of a leave of absence without salary,
- the imposition of a (specified) deduction from the salary,
- the cancellation of the yearly meritorious service salary bonus,
- a decrease in salary step(s),
- a termination of the employment contract.

D) All the proceedings, correspondence and decisions related to a breach of the Code of Professional Ethics as handled by an ad hoc committee shall in principle be kept confidential between the parties involved. However, if it can serve a higher purpose, the Vice-President for Academic Affairs may decide on a case-by-case basis to disclose the decision and the penalties imposed by the ad hoc committee.

E) Complaints involving an alleged violation of the Code of Professional Ethics by members of the ad hoc committee themselves, shall be submitted to the AU Ombudsman.

Enforcement

A) These regulations shall become effective from the day following the date of the announcement of the regulations.

B) The President of Assumption University shall enforce these regulations and shall have the authority to issue orders and announcements of the execution of these regulations.

Given on September 27, 2010

Rev. Bro. Sirichai Fonseka, f.s.g.
Chairman, Assumption University Council

References:
1. Assumption University Regulations Governing the Principles of Job Performance of Lecturers and Officers (B.E.2535)
2. Assumption University Faculty Manual, 1995
3. ABAC Academic Standards, April 1994