Professional Guidelines and Expectations for Students in the Undergraduate Forestry Program

Department of Forestry University of Kentucky
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Our Mission

“To enhance the ecological, economic, and social benefits of forests and related natural resources to elevate the quality of life for Kentuckians and beyond.”

Introduction

The management of forests, wildlife, and all related natural resources is a serious responsibility. The faculty and staff of the Department of Forestry are entrusted with the job of educating students to be effective, innovative, and ethical stewards of our world’s natural resources. In the execution of that trust, both educators and students must adhere to principles of honor, integrity, and fairness. We strongly encourage students to begin establishing their professional identity, integrity, and conduct during their undergraduate academic career. The decisions a student makes now will be the decisions that he/she lives with for the rest of their life.

The University of Kentucky’s Department of Forestry’s undergraduate degree is a professional program designed to develop foresters, wildlife, and natural resource professionals. Students are prepared to ultimately excel in the profession; the Department provides an academically rigorous program and many opportunities for professional exposure that will greatly enhance a student’s ability to flourish. Students are expected to become fully engaged with academic studies and take full advantage of student organizations, professional development opportunities, and access to faculty and staff as mentors. The Department’s undergraduate Forestry program is accredited by the Society of American Foresters (SAF) – the association representing professional forestry in the United States. In 1948, SAF first published the SAF Code of Ethics, which inspires and guides the conduct of its members’ professional lives. It is the contract that forestry professionals use to ensure responsible, ethical, and rational behavior in their activities. As students study and prepare to become professional foresters, wildlife, and natural resources managers, they should also prepare to live by the SAF Code of Ethics that will guide their professional lives.

This document describes the standards of professionalism for students in the Department of Forestry at the University of Kentucky. Students in this department are expected to meet standards of academic and professional integrity described below. Graduates of this program will have conducted themselves in an academically professional manner and one that is consistent with the SAF Code of Ethics. In so doing, students will fulfill the ethical obligation they have to their profession, to those who came before them, and to those who will follow them. In addition, employers hiring our graduates will know they are investing resources in a person who has agreed to and set for themselves, the highest professional standard. Remember also, your instructors, as well as your colleagues, are the references these employers will use to help decide who they want to hire.

**OUR CORE VALUES**

- We treat people the way we want to be treated.
- We conduct ourselves with honor, integrity, and take responsibility for our actions.
- We emphasize professionalism and reward excellence and innovation.
- We encourage critical thinking and lifelong learning.
- We focus on serving the people and resources entrusted to our care.
Academic Integrity

Attendance Policy

Experience teaches us that the majority of a student’s academic success can be explained by their attendance and attention in class. Show up, participate, treat it like a job, and you will succeed. Professionals make it their business to be prepared and they show up on time, every time. Your personal and professional reputations depend on your showing up prepared and on time for every class. Your attendance in every class is expected of you by the Department of Forestry. It is a policy of the Department of Forestry that unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction in every forestry course. Consult each course syllabus carefully.

If you must miss a class, communicate with your instructor immediately, honestly, and seek ways to make up the material you missed. Missing a class on a day an assignment is due, or when information for an assignment is collected, may result in no grade for that assignment. Missing class for an unexcused absence is unprofessional. The instructor will determine what qualifies as an excused absence. Most faculty understand that scheduling conflicts inevitably arise; again, communicate with your instructor. Be aware that instructors also have discretion to recognize students with exceptional attendance records.

Department Honor Code

As noted in the SAF Code of Ethics, ours is a profession built and based on trust and integrity. Accordingly, the Department of Forestry has determined that the behavior of its students will be governed by an honor code. Violations of this code should be brought to the instructor’s attention and disciplinary action will be taken on a case-by-case basis with the Department of Forestry Chairperson.

Cheating and Plagiarism

As per the UK Bulletin (page 78): “Cheating is defined by its general usage. It includes, but is not limited to, the wrongfully giving, taking, or presenting any information or material by a student with the intent of aiding himself/herself or another on any academic work which is considered in any way in the determination of the final grade”.

As per the UK Bulletin (page 78): “All academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about a question of plagiarism involving their work, they are obligated to consult their instructors on the matter before submission”.

Cheating is dishonest because someone is claiming credit and knowledge they don’t possess. It is stealing because you are taking intellectual material from someone else. Cheating is unfair to
those students who work hard and put the time in to be prepared. A cheater does not learn the material and leave college prepared to be a professional. Your personal reputation, the department’s reputation, and the forestry profession’s reputation depend on all of your efforts and work being honestly performed and on giving appropriate credit to others where it is due. No material, assignment, or exam is so difficult or so important to justify cheating and damaging your academic and professional integrity. If in doubt, don’t do it.

Group and Field Work

Professional foresters, natural resource, and wildlife managers frequently hire, contract, and work with one another; they depend on each other to pull their weight and contribute their share. You are expected to conduct group work collegially, on time, thoroughly, and not risk your colleague’s reputation by making bad decisions. Your personal reputation, the department’s reputation, and the forestry profession’s reputation depend on group work being performed in a collegial and professional manner.

You will often be sent into the field to gather information according to a specific protocol, often with no one looking over your shoulder. Your personal reputation, the department’s reputation, and the forestry profession’s reputation depend on all field work being honestly and accurately completed. Violations of this standard as a professional in the real world can result in serious legal consequences. Violations of this standard will result in disciplinary action.

Professional Integrity

In the SAF Code of Ethics, Principles and Pledges address professional integrity and behavior. While some of these are specific to the work environment, those that are pertinent in the university environment are listed below:

Respect for Others

A professional treats others the way he or she would like to be treated – with respect. If you are talking to or treating a fellow student in a manner you would not like, you should not be engaged in the behavior. How a student treats their colleagues and fellow human beings is a standard question faculty are asked by employers when they call for references. Your personal and professional reputations depend on you treating others with respect.

Non-Hostile Work/Education Environment

As per the University Bulletin (page 78): “The University is committed to maintaining an environment free of prohibited discrimination, which includes sexual and other forms of harassment”. You will find that most employers you are likely to work for have similar policies. A professional does not engage in behavior that is offensive or that makes a person feel uncomfortable or unwelcome. Be aware that your conversations, remarks, attitudes, and behaviors have consequences for others.
Appropriate Conduct

As students, you represent the Department of Forestry as a professional in training. Remember, while you are a student, you are on the job whether you are participating in an on-campus or off-campus activity. If a specific activity would not be tolerated in a professional workplace, it will not be tolerated in the Department of Forestry. A professional is aware of their surroundings and engages in activities that enhance, rather than diminish, their reputation and the reputation of their employer.
Society of American Foresters Code of Ethics

Preamble
Service to society is the cornerstone of any profession. The profession of forestry serves society by fostering stewardship of the world's forests. Because forests provide valuable resources and perform critical ecological functions, they are vital to the wellbeing of both society and the biosphere.

Members of the Society of American Foresters have a deep and enduring love for the land, and are inspired by the profession's historic traditions, such as Gifford Pinchot's utilitarianism and Aldo Leopold's ecological conscience. In their various roles as practitioners, teachers, researchers, advisers, and administrators, foresters seek to sustain and protect a variety of forest uses and attributes, such as aesthetic values, air and water quality, biodiversity, recreation, timber production, and wildlife habitat.

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to protect and serve society by inspiring, guiding, and governing members in the conduct of their professional lives. Compliance with the code demonstrates members' respect for the land and their commitment to the long-term management of ecosystems, and ensures just and honorable professional and human relationships, mutual confidence and respect, and competent service to society.

On joining the Society of American Foresters, members assume a special responsibility to the profession and to society by promising to uphold and abide by the following:

Principles and Pledges
1. Foresters have a responsibility to manage land for both current and future generations. We pledge to practice and advocate management that will maintain the long-term capacity of the land to provide the variety of materials, uses, and values desired by landowners and society.
2. Society must respect forest landowners' rights and correspondingly, landowners have a land stewardship responsibility to society. We pledge to practice and advocate forest management in accordance with landowner objectives and professional standards, and to advise landowners of the consequences of deviating from such standards.
3. Sound science is the foundation of the forestry profession. We pledge to strive for continuous improvement of our methods and our personal knowledge and skills; to perform only those services for which we are qualified; and in the biological, physical, and social sciences to use the most appropriate data, methods, and technology.
4. Public policy related to forests must be based on both scientific principles and societal values. We pledge to use our knowledge and skills to help formulate sound forest policies and laws; to challenge and correct untrue statements about forestry; and to foster dialogue among foresters, other professionals, landowners, and the public regarding forest policies.
5. Honest and open communication, coupled with respect for information given in confidence, is essential to good service. We pledge to always present, to the best of our ability, accurate and complete information; to indicate on whose behalf any public statements are made; to fully disclose and resolve any existing or potential conflicts of interest; and to keep proprietary information confidential unless the appropriate person authorizes its disclosure.
6. Professional and civic behavior must be based on honesty, fairness, good will, and respect for the law. We pledge to conduct ourselves in a civil and dignified manner; to respect the needs, contributions, and viewpoints of others; and to give due credit to others for their methods, ideas, or assistance.

The Society of American Foresters' Bylaws specify processes through which a member's violation of the code may lead to reprimand, censure, expulsion from the Society, or other disciplinary action. Any two persons, whether or not SAF members, may charge a member with violation of the code. Such a charge must be made in writing to the SAF President and must refer to the specific Pledges alleged to have been violated.

**Faculty Commitment**

The faculty in the Department of Forestry at the University of Kentucky commit to the policies and principles of professionalism presented in this document to help students succeed academically and professionally.

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<thead>
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<th>Faculty Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terrell T. “Red” Baker, Professor</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
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<td>Mary Arthur, Professor</td>
<td>Academic Coordinator</td>
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<td>Thomas Barnes, Professor</td>
<td>Curator University Herbarium</td>
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<td>Christopher Barton, Professor</td>
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<td>Terry Conners, Associate Professor</td>
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<td>Marco Contreras, Assistant Professor</td>
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<td>John Cox, Assistant Professor</td>
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<td>Darryl Cremeans, Adjunct Instructor</td>
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<td>Michael Lacki, Professor</td>
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<td>Laura Lhotka, Adjunct Instructor</td>
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<td>Robert Paratley, Adjunct Instructor</td>
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<td>Steven Price, Assistant Professor</td>
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<td>Lynne Rieske-Kinney, Professor</td>
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<td>James Ringe, Professor</td>
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<td>Andrew Stainback, Assistant Professor</td>
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<td>Jeffrey Stringer, Professor</td>
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<td>David Wagner, Associate Professor</td>
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DEPARTMENT HONOR CODE

I uphold the values of academic and professional integrity and will not lie, cheat, or steal; nor will I tolerate those who do.

PRINTED NAME: ________________________________________________

SIGNATURE: ________________________________________________

DATE: ________________________________________________