



CODE OF ETHICS IN RESEARCH (RESEARCH ETHICAL POLICY)

1. Introduction

The Research Ethics Policy sets out the principles underpinning the ethical conduct of research and defines the process and principles for the objective and rigorous ethical review of research which falls in line with the research mission of the Stella Maris College (SMC).

1.1 SMC Research Mission: As an academic community of engaged scholars, we are committed to advancing research insight and debate in sciences and Arts. As a community of scholars, we believe in transferring our academic pool of knowledge to connect with areas of industry and social service within the local and the global contexts. We also seek to enrich policy debates at the international, national and local levels in adherence to the principle of Research Ethics.

Stella Maris College is committed to support all research activities to create and advance knowledge, and to improve the quality of research through the discovery, dissemination and use of research in various disciplines. The College constantly strives to enhance research and innovation and believes that research activity should be based on honesty, originality and genuineness by adhering to the parameters of professional ethics and quality.

1.2 Besides enhancing knowledge capital, the objective of a researcher should also be to conduct research that serves the interests of humanity and environment without causing harm to anyone.

1.3 To promote quality and standards in academic research, and to create a culture of integrity in the same, the following code of ethics has been formulated.

1.4 **Plagiarism:** All researchers are expected to know the rules and regulations regarding plagiarism. Due acknowledgement and citations should be given while referring to published data. The research work should be original and the content should be validated with accepted software. While applying for research grant proposals, care should be taken to propose only original projects. The student papers submitted for academic credit should also follow the same guidelines.

1.5 **Ethics in Data Accountability:** The research observations should be based on accurate data recording and reports. Accountability in data collection and interpretation is the responsibility of the researcher. Manipulation of data is considered as misconduct in



research. Research data collected through projects funded by the college or by external agency, where the college is the grantee institution, is the property of the institution and not the researcher. The granting agency provides the funding to the college who is the grantee and the college is accountable for the utilisation of funds and the submission of the report by the Principal Investigator (PI). The Principal Investigator and the Co-Investigator are responsible for the integrity of the data and submission of reports on time, to the funding agencies. After the publication of the research findings, the research data may be made available on request to co-researchers for dissemination of knowledge.

1.6 Publications: The author of the publication should be the person / those persons who have made significant contribution to the research work through design, planning, execution and compilation of the work. In the publications, due acknowledgement should be given to centres/research labs/funding agency/any other facility that has been used for conducting the research work. Ethically, the same article should not be submitted to two different journals for publication at the same time. After due communication from the earlier journal, it can be submitted to a different journal.

1.7 Intellectual Property Rights (IPR): Intellectual Property Protection is critical to fostering innovation. Without protection of ideas, researchers do not reap the full benefits of their inventions and this acts as an incentive to enhance research & development. If there is any possibility that a copyright or patent application might arise from the research conducted in the college, the researcher should seek permission from the institution for further action.

1.8 Standards of Academic Integrity: The College is primarily a teaching institution and is dedicated to teaching and research. The faculty are expected to conform to the highest standards of professionalism in carrying out their duties in furtherance of the College vision and mission. Every member has a duty to avoid conflicts of interest between their various responsibilities and to comply with rules of the College. The Ethical Committee should provide supervision and guidance to the team members for a transparent mode of action in the group.

1.9 Research Ethics for Animals: Researchers must have respect for animals' worth, regardless of their utility value, and for animals' interests as living, sentient creatures. Researchers must be respectful when choosing their topic and methods, and when disseminating their research. Researchers must provide care that is adapted to. Researchers are responsible for studying whether there are alternatives to experiments on animals.



Alternative options must be prioritised if the same knowledge can be acquired without using laboratory animals.

- 1.10 **Research Ethics involving Human beings:** Research ethics govern the standards of conduct for scientific researchers. It is important to adhere to ethical principles in order to protect the dignity, rights and welfare of research participants. As such, all research involving human beings should be reviewed by an ethics committee to ensure that the appropriate ethical standards are being upheld. Discussion of the ethical principles of beneficence, justice and autonomy are central to ethical review.

2. Procedures and Guidelines

The procedure instituted in pursuit of this policy are intended to facilitate, not inhibit, research and to promote a culture within the College whereby researchers conscientiously reflect on the ethical implications of their research

3. Office of Research Integrity

Stella Maris College has created the Office of Research Integrity (ORI) as the organizational entity responsible for the implementation of the following guidelines.

- 3.1 Develop materials for training on research integrity, ethical behaviour, and good research practices. This training will provide the substantive knowledge, skills, and competencies for a researcher with regard to research integrity and ethics.
- 3.2 The Office of Research Integrity (ORI) promotes the following values in the conduct and management of research
- 3.2.1 **Ethics:** Research is conducted in an ethical manner ensuring dignity, rights, safety, and privacy within the researcher ecosystem.
- 3.2.2 **Rigour:** Research ensures high quality design, reliable data, the appropriate use of methods, rigorous and careful analysis, and transparent reporting and interpretation of the results.
- 3.2.3 **Relevance:** In the endeavour of expanding the knowledge-base and understanding the environment and ecosystem, research advances the short-and long-term goals of science and society.
- 3.2.4 **Transparency:** Honesty is promoted through transparency in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting, and communicating research in a fair, comprehensive, and unbiased fashion.



- 3.2.5 **Respect:** The process of research is aligned with the norms and traditions of society and its cultural heritage, with respect for colleagues, research participants, and the environment.
- 3.2.6 **Impartiality:** Objectivity and lack of bias are the core principles of research. Researchers should avoid conflicts of interest in setting research priorities, establishing research collaborations, choosing research questions, and interpreting and assessing the implications of the research results.
- 3.2.7 **Independence:** Research functions must be insulated from both the appearance and the reality of undue influence of funders or other non-researchers with a stake in the outcome of the research. To promote objectivity, researchers should be allowed independence in the design, conduct, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of the research and research findings.
- 3.2.8 **Accountability:** Research will comply with both the spirit and the letter of relevant rules and procedures such as regulations governing professional standards. The ORI will publish and make readily accessible such rules, roles, and procedures that will ensure that instances of alleged misconduct or malfeasance are rare. If and when they occur, they are effectively and promptly addressed in a fair and timely fashion with sensitivity towards the rights of all concerned. Integrity in research implies that these values permeate every aspect and are upheld by all involved in the research enterprise.

4. Basic principles of Ethical Research are

- 4.1 **Autonomy:** The participant must normally be as aware as possible of what the research is for and be free to take part in it without coercion or penalty for not taking part, and also free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without a threat of any adverse effect.
- 4.2 **Beneficence:** is a concept in research ethics which states that researchers should have the welfare of the research participant as a goal. The research must be worthwhile in itself and have beneficial value and impact on society.
- 4.3 **Non-maleficence:** Any possible harm must be avoided or at least mitigated by robust precautions.
- 4.4 **Confidentiality:** Personal data must remain unknown to all but the research team (unless the participant agrees otherwise or in cases where there is an overriding public interest or where participants wish their voices to be heard and identified).



4.5 **Integrity:** The researcher must be open about any actual or potential conflicts of interest, and conduct their research in a way that meets recognised standards of research

4.6 **A Research Ethical Committee** is a group of people appointed to review research proposals to assess formally if the research is ethical. This means the research must conform to recognised ethical standards, which includes respecting the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of the people who take part.

4.6.1 The Ethical Committee is responsible for the ethical evaluation of research projects.

4.6.2 All researchers must respect and welcome the contribution of the Ethical committee.

4.6.3 The Ethical committee is responsible to raise awareness with regards to malpractices in research promoting and recommending Research Integrity in all endeavours.

4.6.4 Find strategic and effective ways to curb plagiarism.

4.6.5 Educate and inform researchers on the importance of Intellectual Property Rights.

Research Ethical Advisory Committee Members 2023 – 2024

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1. Dr. Sr. Stella Mary fmm, Principal and Chief Advisor
2. Sr. Judith Anita Gonsalves fmm, Secretary

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2. Dr. Nageswari, Editor, Oxford University Press (OUP), Chennai
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