

Chapter 5

RIGHTS AND DUTIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

I. INTRODUCTION

Universities are fundamental institutions where distinct but complementary actors converge: students, teacher-researchers, and administrative and technical staff. To ensure that this academic community functions harmoniously and achieves its objectives in training and research, it is essential that each member understands their rights and assumes their responsibilities. Rights and duties form the foundation of equitable and productive university life, guaranteeing both respect for individual dignity and the maintenance of high academic and ethical standards.

II. THE RIGHTS OF STUDENTS

Students, as essential members of the academic community, enjoy fundamental rights distributed across four major categories:

II.1. Quality of Education

a. Definition and Scope: Students have the right to receive high-quality university teaching that enables them to obtain a diploma of excellence. This right encompasses access to qualified instruction, modern pedagogical frameworks, and research training at the highest level. Universities must provide adequate physical and intellectual infrastructure to support this right.

b. Technological Integration: Students have the right to benefit from modern educational technologies, including digital platforms, online resources, and advanced laboratories. Universities must provide accessible and well-maintained tools that support today's teaching and

c. Practical Implementation:

- Access to qualified professors with expertise in their respective fields
- Modern lecture halls and learning spaces equipped with technological infrastructure
- Digital libraries and research databases
- Practical laboratories and experimental facilities
- Ongoing curriculum updates reflecting current knowledge

II.2. Preservation of Student Dignity

a. Protection from Discrimination: Students, as key members of the academic community, must be treated with respect and dignity. They should not face discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, political views, disability, or health. Universities are responsible for enforcing anti-discrimination policies and offering ways to report any violations.

b. Safe and Healthy Environment: Students have the right to benefit from security measures, cleanliness standards, and health protection within the university and university residences. This includes:

- Safe campus facilities and emergency protocols
- Regular maintenance of infrastructure
- Health services and preventive care
- Mental health support resources
- Safe and secure residences with appropriate living conditions
- Protection from harassment and violence

c. Psychological Well-being: Universities should foster an inclusive environment that supports students' emotional and psychological well-being through counseling services, peer support programs, and mental health initiatives.

II.3. Freedom of Expression

a. Academic Freedom and Diverse Perspectives: Students live in a broad academic environment where many ideas and viewpoints exist. Within this context, they are entitled to express their opinions freely, as long as they respect institutional rules and academic standards. This freedom of expression supports their intellectual growth and helps develop critical thinking, which is essential in higher education.

b. Student Associations and Engagement: Students have the right to create or join academic, cultural, sporting, and artistic associations. These organizations provide valuable opportunities for social engagement, professional development, and personal growth. However, these associations must remain separate from the administrative management of the university and must not interfere with institutional governance. They should operate transparently and follow university regulations.

c. Limitations and Responsibilities: While freedom of expression is protected, students must exercise this right responsibly, avoiding hate speech, harassment, or content that violates university policies or the rights of others.

II.4. Pedagogical Rights

a. Access to Course Materials and Curriculum: At the beginning of each semester, students have the right to receive complete course syllabi outlining learning objectives, assessment methods, and required materials. Pedagogical support materials such as references, publications, lecture notes, and digital resources must be made available to facilitate learning.

b. Fair Evaluation: The fundamental purpose of examinations is to assess student learning fairly and objectively. Students have the right to:

- Impartial evaluation free from prejudice or personal bias
- Clear grading criteria and rubrics
- Transparent assessment methods
- Feedback on their performance

c. Knowledge of Results: Students must receive their grades accompanied by the examination answer key and grading scale. This transparency helps students understand their

performance and identify areas for improvement. Results should be communicated within reasonable timeframes as established by pedagogical committees.

d. Right to Consult Exams: Within designated timeframes announced by pedagogical commissions, students have the right to review their examination papers. This allows them to understand where they made mistakes and to seek clarification from instructors.

e. Right of Appeal: If students believe their evaluation has been unfair or prejudicial to their rights, they have the right to file an appeal through established institutional procedures. This ensures accountability and allows for correction of potential errors or biases.

III. The Duties of Students

In exchange for these rights, students assume essential duties that contribute to the proper functioning of the institution.

III.1. Respect for the Academic Community

a. Organizational Compliance: As essential members of the academic community, students must respect the institutional organization and established regulations. This includes compliance with academic calendars, class schedules, and procedural requirements established by the university.

b. Mutual Respect: Students must respect the dignity, integrity, and rights of all members of the academic community—fellow students, professors, and administrative staff. This includes respecting each person's right to free expression and maintaining professional and courteous interactions.

c. Civic Responsibility: As active participants in academic life, students should demonstrate civic responsibility, maintain high moral standards, and conduct themselves appropriately. This includes:

- Being punctual and prepared for classes
- Maintaining professional attire where required
- Participating constructively in academic discussions
- Supporting institutional initiatives and community building

III.2. Academic Integrity (Probité Pédagogique)

a. Intellectual Honesty: Students must demonstrate complete integrity and honesty in their pursuit of knowledge. This fundamental principle means never resorting to fraudulent methods, plagiarism, or scientific theft. Academic integrity is the cornerstone of legitimate education and institutional credibility.

b. Prevention of Academic Dishonesty: Students must abstain from:

- Cheating on examinations
- Plagiarizing written work or improperly using sources without citation
- Submitting work produced by others as their own
- Fabricating data or research results
- Engaging in unauthorized collaboration

c. Accurate Administrative Information: Students must provide accurate and precise information during enrollment and re-enrollment processes. All submitted documents must be truthful, and students must fulfill all administrative obligations to the institution, including payment of fees and timely submission of required documentation.

d. Respect for Institutional Decisions: Students must respect and comply with the results and decisions of examination committees and disciplinary bodies, even when disappointed with outcomes.

III.3. Preservation of Facilities and Resources

a. Stewardship of Physical Infrastructure: University students must preserve the public facilities and infrastructure provided for their studies, including classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and recreational spaces. These resources are shared community assets that must be maintained for the benefit of all students.

b. Care for Equipment and Materials: Students must take proper care of equipment, technology, materials, and resources provided for their educational use. This includes returning borrowed items, preventing damage, and reporting maintenance issues promptly.

c. Safety and Security Compliance: Students must respect established safety and security rules to maintain a secure learning environment for themselves and others. This includes:

- Following emergency procedures
- Reporting hazardous conditions
- Adhering to laboratory safety protocols
- Respecting restricted areas
- Maintaining cleanliness and hygiene standards

III.4. Responsibility and Discipline

a. Personal Accountability: Students are fully responsible for their actions on campus. When infractions occur, students must accept responsibility and participate cooperatively in institutional processes.

b. Due Process: When a student commits an offense, they are officially informed of the allegations and the evidence against them. This ensures transparency and fairness in disciplinary proceedings.

c. Disciplinary Procedures: Students who commit infractions are referred to a disciplinary committee, which conducts a fair investigation and determines appropriate consequences according to:

- The severity of the offense
- Relevant institutional policies and procedures
- Established precedents
- Mitigating or aggravating circumstances

d. Progressive Sanctions: Disciplinary sanctions increase progressively based on the nature and severity of misconduct:

- Informal warnings for minor infractions
- Written reprimands
- Academic penalties or grade reductions

- Suspension from certain facilities or programs
- Temporary suspension from the institution
- Permanent expulsion for serious violations

IV. THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF TEACHER-RESEARCHERS

IV.1. Foundational Role and Mission

a. **Central Importance:** Teacher-researchers serve as the cornerstone for training the nation's elite and cadre. They are the fundamental force for establishing and advancing scientific research across all domains that contribute principally to national renewal, prosperity, and progress. Scientific research itself is the measure of national advancement and international competitiveness. Therefore, society has a vested interest in enabling teacher-researchers to fulfill their critical mission.

b. **Dual Responsibilities:** Teacher-researchers juggle complex responsibilities:

- Teaching students and transmitting knowledge
- Conducting original research and advancing disciplines
- Mentoring and supervising student researchers
- Contributing to institutional governance
- Engaging in academic service and professional development

IV.2. Rights of Teacher-Researchers

Teacher-researchers, as essential contributors to institutional missions, benefit from substantial rights enabling them to exercise their functions effectively.

IV.2.1. Academic Freedom and Independence

a. **Protection from Interference:** Higher education institutions must guarantee that teacher-researchers can exercise their functions fully while adhering to the university's ethical charter and applicable laws. This means protection from undue political, administrative, or external pressures that might compromise academic integrity or research independence.

b. **Freedom of Inquiry:** Teacher-researchers have the right to choose research topics and methodologies based on scientific merit and intellectual curiosity, provided such research aligns with ethical standards and institutional policies.

c. **Freedom of Teaching:** Within established curricula, teacher-researchers have significant discretion in determining pedagogical approaches, interpretive frameworks, and critical content. They should be free from censorship or mandated ideological positions.

IV.2.2. Transparent Administrative Processes

a. **Fair Procedures:** All matters concerning program definition, curriculum design, research priorities, resource allocation, and extracurricular activities must be governed by transparent mechanisms. Teacher-researchers should:

- Participate in decision-making processes affecting their work
- Access clear criteria for administrative decisions
- Understand how resources are distributed

- Be informed of policy changes in advance
- b. **Administrative Assignment:** When teacher-researchers' expertise is sought for administrative tasks, they must receive clear role descriptions, adequate resources, and reasonable time allocations. Administrative effectiveness is expected while maintaining teaching and research responsibilities.

IV.3. Fair Evaluation and Assessment

a. **Academic Criteria Only:** Evaluation and assessment of teacher-researchers' work should be based exclusively on academic criteria encompassing:

- Quality and originality of research
- Teaching effectiveness and student feedback
- Scholarly publications and intellectual contributions
- Professional development and innovation
- Service to the discipline and institution

b. **No Non-Academic Criteria:** Evaluation must exclude personal characteristics, political beliefs, religious views, family connections, or other non-academic factors. This ensures objective assessment and professional advancement based on merit.

c. **Regular Feedback:** Teacher-researchers should receive periodic feedback on their performance to support professional development and identify areas for improvement.

IV.4. Adequate Working Conditions and Resources

a. **Physical and Infrastructure Needs:** Institutions must provide:

- Appropriate office and laboratory spaces
- Modern equipment and technology
- Reliable internet connectivity
- Access to research databases and journals
- Maintenance and technical support

b. **Time for Core Responsibilities:** Teacher-researchers require adequate time to:

- Prepare and deliver courses
- Conduct research and scholarly work
- Mentor and advise students
- Engage in professional development

c. **Financial Support:** Research support including funding for equipment, travel to conferences, publication costs, and graduate assistant support enhances research productivity and visibility.

IV.5. Professional Development and Continuing Education

a. **Access to Training:** Institutions must support continuous professional development through:

- Conference participation and travel support
- Sabbatical leave for intensive research or study
- Workshops and seminars in pedagogical innovation

- Advanced training in discipline-specific methodologies
- Technological skills development

b. Periodic Knowledge Renewal: Teacher-researchers should have structured opportunities to update their expertise and knowledge, ensuring their teaching reflects current developments in their fields.

c. Career Progression Support: Clear pathways for promotion, tenure, and professional advancement should be based on demonstrated excellence and institutional needs.

IV.6. Appropriate Compensation

a. Fair Remuneration: Compensation should reflect:

- The importance of the teaching-research function in society
- The responsibility for training future leaders and researchers
- The complexity and demands of the dual role
- Comparable positions in related fields
- Institutional financial capacity

b. Benefits and Security: Teacher-researchers should receive appropriate benefits including health insurance, retirement provisions, and employment security consistent with their important societal role.

V. Obligations of Teacher-Researchers

With extensive rights come corresponding responsibilities. Teacher-researchers must serve as models of ethical conduct and professional excellence.

V.1. Exemplary Personal and Professional Conduct

a. Personal Integrity: Teacher-researchers must be references of competence, morality, integrity, and tolerance. They embody the institution's values and reflect its image to internal and external communities.

b. Professional Ethical Standards: As university members, teacher-researchers are responsible for upholding principles of academic ethics and professional conduct. They must:

- Act with care, diligence, competence, and good faith
- Maintain professional independence in research and teaching
- Avoid conflicts of interest
- Disclose potential biases or competing interests
- Adhere to institutional policies and professional codes of conduct

V.2. High Standards of Professional Activity

a. Excellence in Teaching: Teacher-researchers must:

- Clearly articulate pedagogical objectives for their courses
- Employ effective teaching methods and current knowledge
- Respect pedagogical progressions (frequency, duration, grading standards)
- Provide constructive feedback on student work
- Remain available to students for consultation and support
- Continuously improve teaching methods

b. Objective Student Assessment: Teachers must evaluate student performance:

- Based on clearly established criteria known to students
- With fairness and consistency
- Free from personal bias or prejudice
- Using multiple assessment methods when appropriate
- Within reasonable timeframes

c. Consultation and Review Processes: Before finalizing grades, teachers should:

- Allow students to review their work and understand assessments
- Consult with students about significant concerns
- Consider student explanations for performance issues
- Maintain professional but supportive relationships

V.3. Research Integrity and Academic Honesty

a. Rigorous Research Standards: Teacher-researchers must:

- Ground research in sincere pursuit of knowledge
- Respect evidence and logical reasoning
- Follow rigorous methodological standards
- Avoid data fabrication or falsification
- Acknowledge limitations and uncertainties

b. Citation and Attribution: All sources must be properly cited, and credit given to:

- Original researchers whose work is referenced
- Students whose work is included or discussed
- Colleagues who contributed ideas or assistance

c. Plagiarism as Grave Misconduct: Plagiarism is an unforgivable major fault. Submitting others' work as one's own, whether published or unpublished, represents a serious violation of academic integrity and can result in expulsion or loss of academic standing.

d. Collaborative Research Ethics: When conducting collaborative research, teacher-researchers must:

- Ensure all participants clearly understand their roles
- Distribute authorship credit fairly
- Disclose funding sources and potential conflicts
- Follow applicable research regulations and ethical guidelines

V.4. Confidentiality and Professional Discretion

a. Institutional Confidentiality: All meetings, deliberations, and discussions within institutional bodies must remain confidential. Teacher-researchers who serve on committees, evaluations boards, or other bodies must:

- Not disclose confidential information
- Respect the privacy of individuals discussed
- Maintain professional discretion

b. Student Information Privacy: Sensitive student information regarding grades, health, family situations, or disciplinary matters must be protected and discussed only with authorized personnel.

c. Research Confidentiality: When research involves human subjects, students, or sensitive data, appropriate confidentiality protections must be maintained according to ethical guidelines and legal requirements.

V.5. Professional Conscience and Ethical Behavior

a. Self-Governance: Professional conscience serves as the primary guardian of teacher-researchers, ensuring they do not violate their duties. Teacher-researchers should:

- Regularly examine their own conduct and decisions
- Correct errors and address concerns promptly
- Maintain high ethical standards even when unobserved
- Model ethical behavior for students and colleagues

b. Accountability: Teacher-researchers should accept responsibility for:

- Their decisions and recommendations
- Fairness in evaluations
- Accurate representation of information
- Professional conduct

V.6. Transparent and Just Decision-Making

a. Transparency Principle: All decisions affecting teacher-researchers' work should follow transparent processes with:

- Clear criteria announced in advance
- Fair procedures ensuring due process
- Opportunity for input or response
- Documented decision rationales

b. Right of Appeal: When dissatisfied with institutional decisions, teacher-researchers should have:

- Clear appeal mechanisms
- Opportunity to present their perspective
- Independent review of decisions
- Timely resolution processes

V.7. Responsible Use of Authority and Resources

a. No Abuse of Power: Teacher-researchers must not:

- Use their position for personal advantage
- Exploit students or subordinates
- Demand work beyond job descriptions
- Use authority to coerce opinions or behaviors
- Engage in sexual harassment or misconduct

b. Honest Financial Management: When entrusted with university funds, research budgets, or departmental resources, teacher-researchers must:

- Use funds only for intended purposes
- Maintain accurate records
- Avoid wasteful or inappropriate spending
- Comply with audit procedures
- Report financial irregularities

V.8. Professional Presence and Availability

a. Institutional Presence: Teacher-researchers should be present and engaged within their institutions:

- Maintaining regular office hours
- Being accessible to students and colleagues
- Participating in departmental and institutional activities
- Contributing to academic community life

b. Fulfillment of Responsibilities: Beyond teaching and research, teacher-researchers should:

- Participate in evaluation of academic activities
- Contribute to curriculum development
- Mentor junior faculty and students
- Engage in professional service
- Support institutional mission

V.9. Continuous Professional Growth

a. Professional Development: Teacher-researchers must act as education professionals by:

- Staying current with innovations in their fields
- Regularly updating knowledge and teaching methods
- Practicing self-evaluation and critical reflection
- Demonstrating autonomy and responsibility
- Engaging in lifelong learning

b. Methodological Currency: Research and teaching methods must reflect:

- Current best practices
- Recent disciplinary developments
- Pedagogical innovations
- Technological advances where appropriate

V.10. Ethical Teaching and Research Practice

a. Universal Ethical Norms: All teaching and research must conform to:

- Universally recognized ethical and professional standards
- Institutional ethics guidelines

- Applicable laws and regulations
- Discipline-specific codes of conduct

b. Freedom from Propaganda and Bias: Teacher-researchers must completely abstain from:

- Religious propaganda or advocacy
- Ideological indoctrination
- Political pressure or influence
- Personal agenda promotion
- Prejudiced or discriminatory content

c. Scientific Integrity: The mission is to present effective science and communicate scientific knowledge:

- Accurately reflecting current evidence
- Acknowledging uncertainty and debate
- Respecting alternative viewpoints
- Following accepted research methodologies

d. Academic Community Standards: Teaching and research should occur in:

- A clear atmosphere of professional respect
- An environment of sophisticated scientific ethics
- A context permitting free exchange of ideas and knowledge
- An atmosphere of complete justice and equity
- An inclusive environment without exception or bias

VI. Obligations of Administrative and Technical Staff

Administrative and technical staff have important responsibilities to fulfill their mission of supporting academic functions.

VI.1. Integrity, Honesty, and Loyalty

a. Commitment to Institutional Mission: Staff should demonstrate:

- Dedication to institutional objectives
- Honest and sincere work
- Loyalty to employer and colleagues
- Pride in work quality
- Support for institutional values

b. Respect for Work Schedules and Policies: Staff must:

- Maintain regular attendance
- Arrive on time for scheduled hours
- Follow institutional policies and procedures
- Respect confidentiality agreements
- Adhere to workplace conduct standards

c. Preservation of Resources: Staff must:

- Use institutional property appropriately
- Minimize waste and inefficiency
- Maintain equipment properly
- Report damage or loss promptly
- Ensure institutional resources are used for authorized purposes

VI.2. Security and Safety Compliance

a. Institutional Safety: Staff must avoid all actions threatening institutional security, including:

- Unauthorized access to restricted areas
- Breach of security protocols
- Negligent supervision of facilities
- Failure to report safety hazards

b. Regulatory Compliance: Staff must respect and implement:

- All laws and regulations
- Institutional ordinances and directives
- Administrative decisions and policies
- Safety procedures and emergency protocols

VI.3. Exemplary Conduct and Professionalism

a. Moral and Ethical Behavior: Staff must:

- Conduct themselves with good morality and integrity
- Demonstrate honorable behavior inside and outside the institution
- Avoid actions incompatible with their position
- Represent the institution professionally
- Model ethical behavior for others

b. Professional Relationships: Staff should:

- Treat all colleagues and customers professionally
- Avoid favoritism or inappropriate relationships
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Resolve conflicts constructively
- Support collaborative work environments

VI.4. Professional Confidentiality

a. Confidentiality Commitment: Staff must be committed to professional secrecy:

- Not disclosing confidential documents or information
- Protecting student, faculty, and institutional privacy
- Respecting sensitive personnel matters
- Limiting information sharing to those with legitimate need

b. Exceptions: Information may be disclosed only when:

- Required by law or regulation
- Necessary to fulfill job responsibilities
- Authorized by appropriate authority
- Needed to prevent harm to self or others

VI. 5. Comprehensive Service Delivery

a. Information and Services: Staff must ensure:

- All requested information is provided to community members
- Services are delivered completely and accurately
- Documents are processed thoroughly
- Questions are answered or appropriately referred
- Special needs are accommodated

b. Coordination and Follow-up: Staff should:

- Coordinate between departments for complex requests
- Follow up on unresolved issues
- Maintain communication with service recipients
- Document interactions appropriately
- Meet service commitments

VI.6. High-Quality Public Service

a. Courteous and Respectful Conduct: All interactions with students, faculty, and others should be characterized by:

- Politeness and courtesy
- Genuine respect and consideration
- Active listening
- Professional demeanor
- Friendly and approachable manner

b. Diligence and Efficiency: Staff should demonstrate:

- Promptness in handling requests
- Efficient processing of documents
- Rapid response to inquiries
- Minimal delays in service delivery
- Completion of work on schedule

c. Information Access: Staff must provide all information that community members are entitled to obtain:

- Academic records (with appropriate authorization)
- Institutional policies and procedures
- Contact information and office hours

- Application procedures and deadlines
- Rights and responsibilities information

VI.7. Respect for Professional Domains

a. Non-Interference in Academic Functions: Administrative staff must:

- Respect the academic independence of faculty and students
- Avoid directing or influencing pedagogical decisions
- Support faculty research and teaching choices
- Not censor or suppress academic content
- Maintain appropriate boundaries between administration and academics

b. Administrative Leadership Responsibility: Senior administration must:

- Establish policies supporting academic freedom
- Protect faculty from inappropriate interference
- Ensure transparent processes for academic matters
- Maintain institutional integrity and purpose

VII.CONCLUSION

The comprehensive system of rights and duties in higher education creates a framework for institutional excellence, personal integrity, and mutual respect. Each member of the academic community students, teacher-researchers, and administrative staff plays a vital role in fulfilling the university's mission of teaching, research, and service.

Students' rights to quality education, dignity, freedom of expression, and fair evaluation support their development as informed citizens and future leaders. These rights are balanced by duties emphasizing academic integrity, respect for community, care for shared resources, and personal responsibility.

Teacher-researchers, as architects of knowledge and mentors of future generations, require substantial rights protecting academic freedom, supporting research excellence, and ensuring fair evaluation. These rights enable them to fulfill their demanding roles and contribute to societal advancement through both teaching and discovery.

Administrative and technical staff, though sometimes overlooked, create the conditions enabling teaching and research to flourish. Their rights to equitable treatment, professional development, and safe working conditions reflect their essential contributions. Their duties of integrity, efficiency, and respectful service ensure the institution functions smoothly and serves all community members effectively.

When all members of the academic community understand and embrace their rights and responsibilities, universities can achieve their highest purposes: advancing human knowledge, developing informed and ethical citizens, and contributing to the intellectual, cultural, and economic advancement of society. This reciprocal system of rights and duties constitutes the ethical foundation of academic excellence.

