

## **Code of Ethical Practices and Business Conduct Meadville Lombard Theological School**

### **Preamble**

The trustees, faculty, staff and volunteers of the Meadville Lombard Theological School (or the “school”) can only achieve the school’s mission through adherence to the highest ethical standards. Donors can support the school only if they have confidence that the trustees, faculty, staff and volunteers are good stewards of resources and uphold rigorous standards of conduct. This Code of Ethical Practices and Business Conduct is part of a continuing institutional conversation about the best culture, practices, and conduct that will enable the school to achieve its mission.

### **A. Personal and Professional Integrity**

All trustees, faculty, staff and volunteers of the school must act with honesty and integrity in all their dealings as representatives of the organization. The organization shall promote a working environment that values respect, fairness, antiracism/anti-oppression, and integrity.

### **B. Mission**

At Meadville Lombard Theological School we educate students in the Unitarian Universalist tradition to embody the liberal religious tradition in Unitarian Universalist congregations and wherever else they are called to serve. We do this in order to take into the world our Unitarian Universalist vision of justice, equity, and passion.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for setting and reinterpreting the mission and strategic direction of the school.

### **C. Governance**

In addition to setting and reinterpreting mission and strategic direction, the Board of Trustees is responsible for the oversight of the school’s programs, finances, operations, and policies in support of that mission. Specifically, the Board of Trustees shall work to ensure that:

- The trustees have the requisite skills, experience, and commitment to carry out their duties and that all trustees understand and fulfill their governance duties acting for the benefit of the organization and its public purpose;
- The board has a conflict of interest policy for how conflicts of interest are to be avoided or appropriately managed through disclosure, recusal or other means;
- The school conducts all transactions and dealings with integrity and honesty;

- The board is responsible for the hiring, firing, and regular review of the performance of the president and that the compensation of the president is reasonable and appropriate;
- The president and appropriate staff provide the board with timely and comprehensive information so that the board can effectively carry out its duties;
- The school promotes working relationships with trustees, faculty, staff, volunteers, students, and donors that are based on the standards of the Personal and Professional Integrity described above;
- The school is fair and inclusive in its hiring and promotion policies and practices for all faculty and staff positions;
- The most significant policies of the school are in writing, clearly articulated and officially adopted;
- The resources of the school are responsibly and prudently managed; and
- The organization has the capacity to carry out its programs effectively.

#### **D. Legal Compliance**

The school shall maintain effective processes and expend sufficient resources in order that it will be in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

#### **E. Responsible Stewardship**

The school shall manage its funds responsibly and prudently, reflecting these considerations:

- It spends a reasonable percentage of its annual budget on the academic programs through which the school achieves its mission;
- It spends an adequate amount on administrative expenses to ensure effective accounting systems, internal controls, competent staff, and other expenditures critical to professional management;
- It does not accumulate operating funds excessively;
- It prudently draws from endowment funds consistent with donor intent and to support the mission of the organization in perpetuity;
- It ensures that all spending practices and policies are fair, reasonable and appropriate to fulfill the mission of the organization; and
- All financial reports are factually accurate and complete in all material respects.

#### **F. Openness and Disclosure**

The school shall provide timely information about its governance and operations to its stakeholders and be responsive in a timely manner to reasonable requests for information. Specifically, the school shall work to ensure that:

- All information about the school fully and honestly reflects the policies and practices of the organization;

- Basic informational data about the school, including the names and contact information for the school’s trustees and officers, Form 990, audited financial statements, and key policies such as the Code of Ethical Practices and Business Conduct, and Conflict of Interest, is posted on the organization’s website or otherwise is available to the public; and
- All financial, organizational, and program reports are complete and accurate in all material respects.

### **G. Program and Organizational Evaluation**

The school shall regularly review program and organizational effectiveness and have mechanisms to incorporate lessons learned into future programs. Specifically, the school shall:

- Be committed to improving program and organizational effectiveness and developing mechanisms to promote learning from its activities and the field; and
- Be responsive to changes in theological education and to the needs of the Unitarian Universalist community.

### **H. Inclusiveness and Diversity**

The school shall promote inclusiveness, anti-racism and anti-oppression in its policies and programs. The school’s trustees, faculty, students, staff, volunteers and honorary degree recipients shall reflect diversity in order to enrich the school’s programmatic effectiveness and to reflect its values. The school shall take meaningful steps to promote inclusiveness where applicable in its recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of trustees, faculty, staff, volunteers and students.

### **I. Fund Raising**

Fund raising shall be conducted to enhance the resources available to support the school’s mission. In raising such funds, the school shall reflect the importance of long-term relationships with donors to the long-term success of the school and respect the rights of donors. Donors shall have the right:

- To be informed of the mission of the school, the way the resources will be used and the school’s capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes;
- To learn about the school’s relationship with Unitarian Universalism;
- To have all solicitation materials be honest;
- To expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities;
- To be assured gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given;
- To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition;
- To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers;

- To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and, if requested, with confidentiality;
- To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that the school may intend to share;
- To be informed of the identity of the board of trustees;
- To have access to the school's most recent audited financial statements on request; and
- To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature.

### **Administrative Oversight and Supportive Policies**

The executive committee of the board shall have administrative oversight for this Code and shall periodically review its effectiveness. The trustees and administration may create additional policies, as needed, to supplement this Code.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees

November 3, 2006