

## Code of Ethics

### Introduction

Silver Oak University (SOU) is committed to achieving academic excellence by providing top-tier education and conducting original, impactful research that addresses industrial and societal challenges. To uphold these standards, SOU expects the highest level of academic integrity and research ethics from every member of its community, including students, faculty, and staff.

Academic integrity involves adhering to core academic values and ethical conduct, while research ethics encompass established practices that promote awareness and accountability among researchers. These principles ensure that research projects undergo thorough scrutiny and that all members of the academic community fulfill their responsibilities to society. This policy applies to all students, faculty, and staff at SOU involved in research activities.

This policy covers the following:

1. Research Ethics
2. Anti-Plagiarism policy

### Research Ethics – General Guidelines

- Faculty members must uphold honesty, integrity, and sincerity in their research, ensuring the reliability and trust of the university remain uncompromised.
- Researchers are required to retain raw data from research activities or projects for with the university.
- Research objectives should aim to benefit both society and industry, avoiding any social harm.



- Researchers should select appropriate methods based on their professional expertise.
- Researchers must ensure factual accuracy and avoid any falsification, fabrication, distortion, suppression, or misinterpretation of data.
- Researchers should anticipate the potential impact of research on participants and strive to minimize any disadvantages to individuals or groups involved.
- Researchers should disseminate findings responsibly and ensure their methodologies and results are open to discussion and peer review.
- Proper credit must be given to previous research as a source of knowledge, data, concepts, and methodology in all outputs.
- All contributors should be credited according to their contributions. If a student or faculty/staff member contributed to a project, their name should be included in the authorship of any resulting publication based on their level of contribution.
- The order of authorship should be established early in the research process. All authors must review the completed work and take full responsibility for the data, interpretations, and conclusions.
- The most significant contributor should be the first author, particularly in papers derived from a Master's or Ph.D. thesis, where the student should be the first author and the supervisor the corresponding author.
- Honorary authorship is not permitted.
- The names of all contributors should be listed according to the guidelines of the relevant journal.
- The university affiliation should be cited according to the prescribed format. Students must obtain the supervisor's consent before publishing their thesis or dissertation work unless otherwise stipulated.



- Any potentially patentable inventions must be disclosed to the university.
- Faculty and staff must update their university affiliation on various research platforms, such as ResearchGate and Google Scholar.
- To uphold academic integrity and research ethics, panels are established at university level.

### **Anti-plagiarism Policy**

Plagiarism is a severe violation of academic integrity and ethics. Engaging in plagiarism undermines the core values of the university and damages the individual's credibility within the research community. The university enforces a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism, and any instance is considered serious misconduct, subject to strict disciplinary action.

Plagiarism is using, presenting, or publishing the work of another person as your own without proper citation or acknowledgement. Plagiarism is the act of using others' words or ideas without proper reference or citation. It is very important to give credit, where it is due, to the other person by acknowledging the source of that information.

All published and unpublished material, materials downloaded from the internet, copied from lecture handouts, or any other source, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered by this definition. Following and such other acts as prescribed by the university from time to time shall be considered the act of plagiarism: Submitting someone else's work as your own.

- Paraphrasing or copying ideas from someone else's work without giving due credit.
- Stealing unpublished raw data and publishing it without giving due credit.
- Failing to put the words/idea/ information within quotes "..."
- Giving incorrect information about the source of the quoted material.



- Changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit.
- Copying many ideas or words from a source that make up the majority of your work irrespective of whether you have given credit or not.
- Writing or reusing one's own words, images etc. from previously published texts is known as self-plagiarism.
- Images are also a form of scientific data and ideally need to be presented as such. Manipulating an image related to your research and publishing the same, therefore, will fall under the ambit of research misconduct which comes under plagiarism.
- Presenting the same research findings at more than one conference (encore abstracts) is permissible only if: Copyright requirements are respected, Prior presentations are disclosed.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all written and unwritten, published and unpublished works produced at or for SOU. Written works include academic and research publications, intellectual property (IPR) such as research papers, books, articles, assignments, project reports, theses (Master's and Ph.D.), research reports, patents, copyrights, and design registrations. Unpublished works also encompass experimental data. The plagiarism policy is applicable to all members of the SOU community, including students, faculty, and staff. Deans, HOI and Heads of Departments (HODs) are responsible for ensuring that information about plagiarism is effectively communicated.

## **Reporting instances of plagiarism**

- It shall be the responsibility of the supervisor/corresponding author to check the paper/thesis etc. for plagiarism.



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- The document should be subjected to appropriate plagiarism software prescribed by the university and the supervisor should check the content manually too.
- If plagiarism is detected, the head of the department will send his/her report based on software results to the respective faculty members.
- The IQAC shall also be responsible for monitoring the quality of published and unpublished work including thesis.

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