



Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute

[Formerly known as Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University]

(Declared by Govt. of India as Deemed to be University under Section 3 of UGC Act, 1956)

PO Belur Math, Dist Howrah 711202, West Bengal, India

Students' Code of Conduct

Guiding Principles

The Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute (RKMVERI) aims to actualize Swami Vivekananda's educational vision of harmoniously blending the ancient Indian spiritual wisdom and the modern scientific knowledge. In tune with this vision, the students of this institution are motivated to cultivate the great virtues of student life as emphasized in the ancient Indian tradition in conjunction with modern scientific temper and spirit of free inquiry into the truth. In doing so, we place before our students as an ideal the life of Swami Vivekananda, who harmoniously combined within himself both the traditional Eastern wisdom as well as the modern Western scientific temper and spirit of free and fearless inquiry.

The Code for Students

The Code for students developed and put forth as canons to be followed at our University is derived from the ancient Indian wisdom of Vedanta (Upanishads) wherein the following four components are considered as essential qualifications or eligibility criteria for one to be a knowledge-seeker or student eager to learn. Although these are prescribed in Vedanta as the *sine qua non* for a spiritual seeker who longs to attain ultimate spiritual illumination or liberation called *moksha*, these may also be adapted to the case of a knowledge-seeker who wants to destroy his ignorance through the light of knowledge. The four essential qualifications are:

(1) *Nityaanitya-vastu-viveka* (discrimination between the unreal and the real, the ephemeral and the constant, the perishing and permanent):

In the context of a student as a knowledge-seeker, this means that a student should clearly perceive the futility of chasing fleeting and impermanent gains that appear pleasant for some time but ultimately lead him away from the pursuit of his desired Goal which is knowledge and wisdom. The Upanishad calls it the capacity to discriminate between the *preyas* (temporarily pleasant) and *shreyas* (the ultimate good). This is the first qualification of a student as knowledge-seeker, without which he will lose the focus of his pursuit of knowledge. We have examples galore

in modern times of students getting lost in the quagmire of the endless attractions they need to encounter in life, particularly in the wake of the social media concerns that ultimately turns out to be chasing the will o' the wisp. So a student should be possessed of strong discrimination between the ephemeral concerns and lasting pursuit leading to knowledge and wisdom. The student shall strive to cultivate a habit of careful reasoning so as to distinguish between influences (external as well as internal, that is, thoughts) which are beneficial and those which are harmful to their pursuit of knowledge, and thereby avoid the common pitfalls and whirlpools wherein many a student get wrecked.

Simply put, a student should have the discriminative power to understand what is ultimately beneficial and good in the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom and what is not, albeit appearing alluring and pleasant for a temporary period. They should devote themselves focussedly to the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom, refusing to be waylaid in this pursuit by the manifold distractions that present themselves on the way.

- (2) *Ihaamutra-phala-bhoga-viraga* or *drishtaanushravika-vishaya-vitrishna* (Dispassion or disinterestedness in enjoyments that appear pleasant and pleasurable, but ultimately are detrimental to the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom):

The first qualification mentioned above talks about the discriminative capacity, while the present one is about the strength and power to be able to act upon one's convictions fearlessly without yielding to the temptations that distract the student from the goal. In fine, it is about whether the student shall be ruled by the senses or be a ruler of the senses. A sense of mastery over the senses in a *sine qua non* in any focussed pursuit, the capacity to fearlessly be able to say 'no' to one's lower mind and the outgoing senses. The power of a positive 'no' has been the subject several studies in positive psychology in recent times. The student should cultivate the right attitude and will-power necessary to pursue the goal with sincerity and dedication in the face of obstacles and difficulties, trying to awakening the tremendous strength within and progress towards manifesting the Perfection within which is the definition of education as given by Swami Vivekananda.

Simply put, the student should strive to develop the attitude of working for pure motives such as pursuit of truth, quest for knowledge and acquisition of wisdom which shall naturally bring any reward or award or lucrative position that come as concomitants to sincere striving for knowledge without being tempted to obtain these through corrupting influences such as money, fame, power, etc.

- (3) *Shat-sampatti* (the six treasures):

Six values, treasured qualities required for a student, namely,

- (i) *Shama*: Restraint over the internal organs
- (ii) *Dama*: Restraint over the external organs

Both of the above, restraint and control exercised over one's wavering and senses and the mind mean, in short, earnestly cultivating absolute purity in mind, speech and body during the student-period. The student should stay away from excessive involvement in distracting influences and engage the mind in positive thoughts that contribute to mental strength and well-being, thereby creating the right conditions to allow their minds to get immersed in academic pursuit with profound

concentration. Flowing from these two virtues is another virtue called *asteya* (literally, non-stealing) emphasized in Patanjali's Yoga sutras. In the context of a student pursuing higher education, it means striving to avoid any thought or action that involves appropriating the property of others, either physical or intellectual. The student shall not, under any circumstances whatsoever, present another's intellectual work as one's own.

- (iii) *Uparati*: One-pointed concentration without any distraction
- (iv) *Titiksha*: Forbearance—the capacity to be able to bear patiently all the difficulties, trials and tribulations, face the obstacles that inevitably are likely to confront a person seriously pursuing a higher goal in life
- (v) *Shraddha*: the power of conviction to develop deeper insights into the various truths and discoveries made over the millennia by great minds devoted to the subject as authentically documented in the literature concerning the subject and as expounded by the teacher, always willing to let go of personal biases, pet ideas, predilections not based on reason, etc.
- (vi) *Samadhana*: Calmness and tranquility of mind that leads to newer insights because the Knowledge within flashes when the mind becomes calm, pure and concentrated.

(4) *Mumukshutva*: Intense longing to learn and excel in the subject of one's study, quest for truth and acquisition of knowledge being the overwhelming motivation for the pursuit of study.

The following three fundamental values in a sense subsume the essential qualities elaborately discussed above:

(1) Truth and honesty:

The student shall strive to put into practice truthfulness in thought, word and deed, so that this pervades every action in life, whether it be work on academic assignments or interaction with other students or with faculty, staff and other individuals. In every situation, the student shall follow in letter and spirit the institute guidelines, instructions of the teacher, as well as their own sense of appropriateness and fair-play and refrain from cheating, falsification of data, dishonest collaboration, claiming credit for the work done by others, etc. To sum up, the student shall place the practice of truthfulness higher than the pursuit of temporary success.

(2) Purity and self-control:

Practice of purity in mind, speech and body is of immense importance while living as a student who is essentially a traveller in the path of higher knowledge and wisdom. Frittering away the energies of the body, speech and mind in debasing sensual pursuits in the name of relaxation leads to depletion of valuable energy, fatigue, loss of focus often derailing the student from his goal which is one-pointed pursuit of knowledge.

(3) Selflessness and harmony:

However much one may be intelligent and hard-working, everything comes to naught if one is selfish, always eager to receive and grab rather than willing to give and share. Selfishness is like bad odour which puts one off, makes one detestable. Remember the poignant and powerful exhortation of Albert Einstein: "A hundred times a day I remind myself that my inner and outer life depends upon the labours of other men,

living and dead and that I should give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving." It is in giving that one receives more, it is in sharing one feels the joy of positive growth and it is in pouring one's heart and mind expecting nothing in return that one finds fulfilment. As a great thinker put it: "Empty yourself in order to receive the Immeasurable."

All students should follow the University Honour Code, given in the Annexure below, meant to actualize Swami Vivekananda's educational vision of manifestation of the potential Perfection already within.

Honour Code for Students

Definition

The Honour Code for Students is the University's guidelines for students in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in all endeavours, including academic work, in order to uphold the mission, vision and values of the University, build and maintain an honourable campus and commit to the overall well-being of the University community.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity, an integral part of Honour Code, is an undertaking of the students, individually and collectively:

- That they will not give or receive aid in examinations and tests;
- That they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work and home work, in the preparation of reports/project work, or in any other work that will be used as the basis of grading, without acknowledgement and explicit permission of the teacher;
- That they will not present whole or any part of others' academic work in their academic assignments without giving proper reference and acknowledgement, nor submit one piece of work in more than one courses/assignments without explicit permission of teacher;
- That they will not engage in forgery or falsification of data, reports or academic content;
- That they will do their share and take an active part in seeing to it that themselves and others uphold the spirit and letter of the Honour Code;
- That they will, upon witnessing or suspecting a violation of the Academic Integrity, take necessary steps to address it, such as reminding the suspect/ violator about the Honor Code, inform a teacher or university administrator about the case, etc.

Violations

Examples of conduct that are regarded as being in violation of Honour Code include but are not limited to copying from another's examination paper or allowing another to copy from one's own paper, unpermitted collaboration, plagiarism, revising and resubmitting a test or examination answer paper for re-grading without the instructors knowledge and consent, giving or receiving unpermitted aid on a take-home examination, representing as one's own work the work of another, giving or receiving aid on an academic assignment under

circumstances in which a reasonable person should have known that such aid was not permitted.

Penalties for Violations

The minimum standard penalty for a first time offense might include a one-term suspension from the University and/or two week (48 hours) of community service. In addition, most faculty members might issue an "F" (fail) or "NC" (no credit) for the course in which the violation occurred. The minimum standard penalty for multiple violations (e.g. cheating more than once in the same course) is a one year suspension and/or four weeks (96 hours) or more of community service. The University reserves the right to decide the penalties for violating the honour code.