CODE OF ETHICS TO CHECK MALPRACTICES AND PLAGIARISM IN RESEARCH

1. Preamble

The Code of Ethics and Malpractice Policy of SJCC guides teachers, scholars, and students to be accountable for their research endeavours. In accordance with the UGC (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018 and the UGC Good Academic Research Practices (GARP) Guidelines, September 2020, staff and students are expected to maintain a high level of research integrity. The policy upholds a code of conduct in research and academic activities facilitated by SJCC, and sets out rules to deal with conflict of interest and unethical acts found in research work. Its purpose is to promote academic integrity and prevent staff and students from indulging in plagiarism or malpractice.

St. Joseph's College of Commerce (Autonomous) complies with the provisions formulated by the UGC vide its Letter Reg. UGC (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018, F.1-18/2010(CPP-II), dated 23rd July 2018. This policy has been formed considering the above regulations.

2. Scope of the Policy

As the College encourages research work at various levels of the teaching-learning process, the Code of Ethics and Malpractice Policy applies to all faculty members, scholars, and students undertaking research work individually, or in association with internal members or members of other reputed institutions.

The policy makes it mandatory for faculty members, scholars, and students to disclose their research work to the institution. Any research work involving a conflict of interest may be addressed with the help of this policy, keeping in mind the other policies of the institution.

3. Objectives of the Policy

- To prevent acts of plagiarism in any research work undertaken by faculty, scholars, and students.

- To maintain ethics in all research and academic endeavours of faculty, scholars, and students.
- To disseminate quality research findings for the development of industry, society, and government.
- To provide an SJCC-specific research framework to review and publish articles, theses, and dissertations.
- To establish a plagiarism-check mechanism to avoid malpractice at all stages of research work.
- To penalise students, scholars, and faculty who fail to adhere to this policy document.

4. Policy Guidelines

- Research Supervisors, and PG/UG HODs will act as research mentors. They will be provided a username and password to operate their personalised plagiarism-detection-software account. Training sessions will be organised periodically for all account users (research mentors) to ease use of the facility offered by the institution.
- It is the responsibility of the respective research supervisor and mentors guiding the PG and PhD project/thesis to check the research work submitted by the student/scholar before its final submission to the department or University.
- The final, approved project/thesis shall be deposited in the institutional repository to prevent duplication of research work in future years.
- Every student/research scholar shall furnish an undertaking that the project/thesis is their original work and free of any form of plagiarism. Each supervisor shall acknowledge and submit a certificate that the work done under their supervision is plagiarism-free.
- Any violation shall be brought to the attention of the Principal/Research Director and the Ethical Committee formed by the RAC, for necessary disciplinary action. A Plagiarism Disciplinary Committee constituted by the Principal/Research Director will look into all plagiarism issues and recommend suitable action against defaulters, in consultation with the RAC.

5. Penalties in Case of Plagiarism / Malpractice

The report generated through plagiarism-detection software shall be interpreted quantitatively in terms of the level of plagiarism and similarity percentage in the work. The penalty shall be decided based on the aforementioned aspects.

Case 1: Plagiarism in Submission of Theses and Dissertations by PhD Scholars and Students

Level	Similarity Percentage	Penalty
0	Up to 10%	Minor similarities — no penalty.
1	Above 10% to 40%	The student shall be asked to submit a revised script within a stipulated period not exceeding six months.
2	Above 40% to 60%	The student shall be debarred from submitting a revised script for a period of one year.
3	Above 60%	Registration of the defaulter for that programme shall be cancelled.

Case 2: Plagiarism in Academic and Research Publications (Journals, Books, Compendiums)

Level	Similarity Percentage	Penalty
0	Up to 10%	Minor similarities — no penalty.
1	Above 10% to 40%	The author shall be asked to withdraw the manuscript.
2	Above 40% to 60%	Withdraw the manuscript; denial of one annual increment; debarred from supervising any new Master's/M.Phil./PhD student for a period of two years.
3	Above 60%	Withdraw the manuscript; denial of two successive annual increments; debarred from supervising any new Master's/M.Phil./PhD student for a period of three years.

6. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Research and Academic Writing

6.1 Policy Statement

St. Joseph's College of Commerce (Autonomous) adopts a zero-tolerance threshold for AI-generated content in research and academic submissions. AI-generated content is admitted up to 0% (i.e., not permitted in any proportion) in theses, dissertations, minor/major project

reports, seminar papers, journal articles, and any other research or academic work submitted under this Code.

6.2 Coverage

This clause applies to text, data interpretation, analysis, or conclusions generated wholly or partly using Generative AI/Large Language Model tools (including but not limited to ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, Claude, and similar tools) that is presented as the author's or scholar's own original scholarship, whether or not the use is disclosed.

6.3 Detection

Originality checks conducted under this Code shall include AI-content screening alongside conventional similarity/plagiarism screening, using the tool(s) approved by the Research Centre. Every thesis, dissertation, and research submission shall be accompanied by an AI-content screening report in addition to the plagiarism report required under Section 4.

6.4 Consequence

Any research submission in which AI-generated content is detected, irrespective of the percentage identified, shall be treated as a violation of this Code and dealt with at Level 3 under the penalty framework in Section 5 (Case 1 or Case 2, as applicable), attracting the maximum penalty prescribed therein.

7. Regulatory Compliance

Aligned with Current UGC Regulations

This Code of Ethics is framed under the UGC (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018 (no subsequent amendment has superseded this regulation as of the last review) and the UGC GARP Guidelines, September 2020. Provisions concerning research misconduct involving PhD theses are additionally read together with the research-integrity and misconduct-handling requirements of the UGC (Minimum Standards and Procedure for Award of Ph.D. Degree) Regulations, 2022, which require every HEI to have a well-defined policy and procedure for handling allegations of research misconduct — a requirement this Code is designed to satisfy.

8. Enforcement

This Code applies to all staff, students, and PhD scholars registered with the Research Centre of St. Joseph's College of Commerce (Autonomous), Bengaluru. Any amendment to this Code shall be made only with the approval of the Principal in consultation with the Research Advisory Committee (RAC), and shall be notified to all stakeholders prior to taking effect.

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