Code of Conduct for the Wharton Democratic Committee

I. Preamble

The Wharton Democratic Committee (the "Committee") is dedicated to promoting the principles of the Democratic Party: equality, justice, liberty, opportunity, and democracy. This Code of Conduct sets forth the standards of behavior expected of all Committee members, officers, and volunteers to ensure an inclusive, respectful, professional, and ethical environment.

By participating in the Committee, all individuals agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

II. Core Values and Principles

All individuals representing the Committee shall conduct themselves with integrity, professionalism, and respect for all people, embodying the following core values:

1. **Integrity and Accountability:** Act honestly, transparently, and in good faith, prioritizing the interests of the Democratic Party and the public over personal gain.
2. **Respect and Inclusion:** Foster an environment that is welcoming, safe, and free from harassment, discrimination, or intimidation.
3. **Fairness and Equity:** Promote equal opportunity and fair treatment for all members, candidates, and constituents, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, socio-economic status, or national origin.
4. **Responsible Stewardship:** Use Committee resources (funds, property, time, and information) prudently, legally, and solely for approved Committee purposes.

III. Standards of Behavior

A. Respect and Non-Discrimination

- **Prohibited Conduct:** Discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying, verbal abuse, or physical aggression toward any individual is strictly prohibited.
- **Welcoming Environment:** Members shall use welcoming, inclusive, and professional language in all Committee-related communications and interactions. Disagreements on policy or strategy should be constructive and focused on issues, not personal attacks.
- **Boundaries:** Members must respect the personal boundaries of others. Non-consensual physical contact is strictly prohibited.

B. Meetings and Deliberation

- **Orderly Conduct:** Members shall adhere to the official rules of order (e.g., *Robert's Rules of Order*) during all formal meetings and show respect for the presiding officer and the decision-making process.
- **Constructive Debate:** Members are encouraged to engage in robust debate but must avoid disruptive behavior, grandstanding, or hostile language that prevents others from being heard.
- **Confidentiality:** Matters deemed confidential by the Committee's leadership or executive board must remain confidential. This includes internal strategy, personnel matters, and private communications.

C. Financial and Legal Compliance

- **Legal Compliance:** All Committee activities, including fundraising, expenditures, and campaigning, must strictly comply with all applicable New Jersey state and federal election, campaign finance, and ethics laws.
- **Misuse of Assets:** Committee funds, equipment, mailing lists, and other assets may not be used for personal benefit or for any purpose other than the authorized business of the Committee.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Members shall disclose any personal or financial interest that could reasonably appear to influence their decision-making on a Committee matter. Members with a direct conflict of interest must recuse themselves from discussion and voting on that matter.

D. Public and Digital Representation

- **Official Voice:** Only duly authorized officers or spokespersons may speak on behalf of the Committee in official press releases, interviews, or public statements.
- **Online Conduct:** Committee members must maintain professionalism and respect in all digital forums related to the Committee (social media, email, group chats). The rules against harassment and discrimination apply equally to online interactions.
- **Misinformation:** Members shall avoid the deliberate dissemination of false or misleading information ("misinformation" or "disinformation") concerning candidates, elected officials, or the political process.

IV. Reporting and Enforcement

A. Reporting Violations

Any member who experiences or witnesses a potential violation of this Code of Conduct should promptly report it to the Chair or Vice-Chair.

B. Investigation and Review

1. The Executive Committee will review all complaints promptly and confidentially.
2. The accused member will be informed of the nature of the complaint and given an opportunity to respond.
3. An investigation may be conducted, which may include interviewing relevant parties.

C. Consequences of Violation

If the Executive Committee determines that a violation of this Code of Conduct has occurred, appropriate corrective action will be taken. Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- A verbal or written warning.
- Suspension of privileges (e.g., attending meetings, speaking at events).
- Mandatory training or mediation.
- Temporary suspension from the Committee.
- Removal from office or expulsion from the Committee, as provided by the Committee's bylaws.

All decisions regarding a violation shall be final and implemented in accordance with the Committee's bylaws.

I have read, understand and will abide by this policy.

Date: _____

_____ _____

Print Name **Sign Name:**