

Respectful Behavior Policy

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Freedom of expression and vigorous debate are crucial to scholarly exchange. The North American Society for Oceanic History strongly values mutual respect and strives to provide an environment for exchange that is free from bias and intimidation. The Society is dedicated to securing a safe, hospitable, and productive environment for everyone. Accordingly, the Society deplores all harassment and is sensitive to the harm suffered by persons who experience it, and we will act swiftly to investigate and address issues brought to our attention. We expect speakers and questioners at our meetings to demonstrate self-control and civility, even in the midst of strong disagreement, and not to engage in ad hominem attacks. Furthermore, we expect those participating in the Society's meetings and events to treat others with respect and not to engage in behavior that is discriminatory, intimidating, threatening, or harassing. This expectation applies to our speakers, staff, volunteers, and attendees. Potential contexts include, but are not restricted to, face-to-face interactions, correspondence, including email, and the use of social media.

Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Standards

The Society prohibits any unwelcome conduct that is based on an individual's sex (including pregnancy), gender identity and/or expression, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status, veteran status, disability, or employment status and that creates an environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive. Harassment may include such actions as:

1. inappropriate physical contact;
2. inappropriate jokes or verbal kidding or teasing;
3. verbal abuse and epithets;
4. degrading comments;
5. the display of offensive or sexually suggestive objects or pictures;
6. conduct or comments of a lewd or lascivious nature, including subtle pressure for sexual activity;
7. repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; and
8. any other conduct that the individual (or group of individuals) might reasonably find to be intimidating, hostile, offensive, coercive, or threatening.

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature or consensual personal and social relationships.

Retaliation in any form for the reporting of an incident of unwelcome conduct shall also be considered harassment and will not be tolerated.

These guidelines apply to all interactions between individuals associated with the Society in any capacity engaged in professional intellectual/academic exchanges in sessions and outside them, to include both sponsored and informal social events surrounding Society conferences and activities.

Respectful Behavior Review Committee

The Society shall elect an Ombudsperson, who shall maintain a pool of volunteers from among the general members of the Society. In the case of a reported violation, the Ombudsperson shall select a three-person committee from this pool to consider the complaint, taking care to ensure appropriate diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Ombudsperson will attend Council meetings for the purpose of delivering the annual report described below.

Reporting

If an individual or group of individuals believes that they have experienced any violation of this

policy at a Society meeting or event, the person or group should report the incident immediately to the Society Ombudsperson. Although anyone may seek advice from the Ombudsperson, only the individual or individuals alleging that they have been harassed may file a complaint. The Ombudsperson shall listen to the grievance, describe the policy and procedures, outline issues of privacy and confidentiality, and discuss possible courses of action regarding the filing or non-filing of a formal complaint. The Ombudsperson shall take all reasonable efforts to maintain in strict confidence the identity of individuals reporting an incident and the person or persons implicated in an incident. The Ombudsperson shall prepare for Council annually an aggregate, anonymized summary of all such reported incidents. If an individual elects to file a formal complaint, that person must describe the incident in a non-confidential written statement delivered to the Ombudsperson within sixty (60) calendar days of the alleged conduct and preferably immediately following the incident. The Ombudsperson will provide the statement concurrently to the accused party or parties and to the three-person Respectful Behavior Review Committee. The accused party may elect to file a written response, and if so, the written response must be filed with the Ombudsperson within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the initial written complaint. The Chair of the Committee shall contact both parties to discuss the incident and determine whether there is a mutually acceptable resolution. If no such resolution can be found, the Committee shall determine whether the incident constituted harassment under the terms of this Policy. If the Committee determines the incident constituted harassment, it shall furnish a report of the incident, the Committee's findings, and a recommended sanction, if any, to the Secretary of the Council within sixty (60) days.

All details of the allegation, including any correspondence, responses, and the committee's deliberations, shall be kept confidential within the committee and held by the Ombudsperson.

In the case of behavior which may present an ongoing danger, venue security and/or local law enforcement will immediately be alerted.

In the case of behavior that appears to violate the law, local law enforcement will be alerted in lieu of or in addition to the above internal reporting policy with the alleging individual's consent.

In the case of an individual who has been found in violation of Title IX or other anti-discrimination or harassment policies at another institution or within another academic organization, when such a finding is brought to the attention of the Committee and verified, the individual will thenceforward be banned from participating in Society events in any capacity.

Sanctions

The Council shall consider the case. If a majority of the entire Council concurs with the recommendations of the Committee, the Council shall issue a written reprimand including any sanctions banning the individual from future meetings, removing or barring the individual from leadership positions within the Society, and/or revoking the individual's membership. In especially egregious cases, the Council may also notify relevant authorities at the perpetrator's home institution. The Secretary of the Council will report the outcome to all parties involved, which is final, and shall maintain a record of the outcome independent of the Council minutes.

Professional Norms

For the norms that shape the professional conduct of some of the disciplines represented by the Society's members, see, for example, the statement of the [American Historical Association \(AHA\)](#), the Society for American Archaeology (SAA)'s [Ethics in Professional Archaeology](#) statement, the Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA)'s [Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy](#), the Advisory Council on Underwater Archaeology (ACUA)'s [Ethics and Museum Standards](#), and the Modern Language Association (MLA)'s [Statement of Professional Ethics](#).