

Institution Policy Code of Conduct

Policy Information

- **Issue Date:** October 25, 2017
- **Primary Contact:** Director of Human Resources and EEO Officer
- **Senior Administration:** Director of Human Resources and EEO Officer
- **Responsible Office:** Human Resources

Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to promote the Institution's commitment to effective communications and respectful behaviors and relationships throughout the Institution, and, at the same time, protection of academic freedom and the highest standards of teaching and scholarship. These commitments are reflected in many of the Institution's policies and procedures. Those policies and procedures serve the dual purposes of delineating the Institution's core values and promoting conformance to applicable laws and regulations.

The Institution is committed to maintaining an equitable, positive, respectful working and learning environment and is committed to an environment free of illegal discrimination, harassment, bullying and/or conflicts of interest or conflicts of commitment. The Institution maintains its commitment to tenure track and tenured employees, as it relates to academic freedom and expects all employees and affiliates to adhere to a standard of professional conduct and integrity.

Inherent in the conditions of employment and affiliation with the Institution are professional responsibilities of all employees and affiliates and the expectation that all will adhere to high standards of professional conduct, integrity and acceptable behavior.

All employees and affiliates are free to express their views and to participate in political processes of their communities. When they act or speak in their personal and private capacities, they should deliberately avoid creating the impression that they represent the Institution.

Acceptable conduct and behavior are mandatory in character. Unacceptable conduct and behavior have minimum levels below which Employees and affiliates cannot fall without being subject to Institution discipline. As members of the Institution, all Employees and affiliates have obligations to behave honestly and in a manner that respects the safety and rights of others and is respectful in nature.

The following are examples of some types of unacceptable conduct and behavior which are subject to Institution discipline because they are inconsistent with the goals of the Institution. These examples are not exhaustive. When in doubt about the propriety of proposed or observed conduct or behavior, individuals should seek counsel from those colleagues, supervisors, administrators or human resources officers who can assist in determining the right and appropriate course of conduct.

1. Evaluating the professional competence of colleagues by criteria not directly reflective of professional performance.
2. Violating the Institution's policy against harassment, including but not limited to harassing, bullying or physically intimidating behaviors.
3. Breaching established rules governing confidentiality in personnel procedures.
4. Intentionally disrupting functions or activities sponsored or authorized by the Institution.

5. Inciting others to disobey Institution rules/policies when such incitement constitutes a clear and present danger that violence or abuse against persons or property will occur or that the Institution's central functions will be significantly impaired.
6. Unauthorized use of Institution resources or facilities on a significant scale for personal, commercial, political, or religious purposes.
7. Falsifying business records or dishonesty.
8. Forcibly detaining, threatening with physical harm to, or harassing another member of the Institution community that effectively interferes with that person's performance of Institution activities.
9. Violating Institutional Policy including but not limited to, the Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment and Outside Professional Activities Policy, the Harassment (Policy Against) Policy, Consensual Relations Policy, Misconduct in Science Policy, or Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy.
10. Intentionally misrepresenting personal views as a statement of position of the Institution.
11. Committing a criminal act which led to conviction in a court of law and which clearly demonstrates unfitness to continue as an Employee or Affiliate.

In addition to the standards of professional conduct applicable to all Employees and affiliates, Faculty are held to specific additional standards of professional conduct related to their responsibilities as teachers, advisors and scholars.

These statements are examples of some types of unacceptable conduct and behavior that may be unique to the academic settings at the Institution. These examples are not exhaustive. If a student is adversely impacted by an employee, other student, faculty or other individual, who violates this Code of Conduct, they are encouraged to speak directly to the Dean, Associate Dean or Title IX Coordinator in the Academics Programs Office.

1. Failure of Faculty to meet the responsibilities of instruction and advising, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Evaluation of student work by criteria not directly related to performance in courses and/or on research projects;
 - b. Treating any student differently, providing any student with different levels of advising and/or access to funding, training, and advising or lab space, without well understood and justifiable reasons. [i.e. project-related]
2. Any form of discrimination against a student, as stated in the Institution's policy against harassment.
3. Use of the position or powers of a faculty member to coerce the judgment or conscience of a student or to cause harm to a student for arbitrary or personal reasons.
4. Participating in or deliberately abetting disruption, interference, or intimidation in the classroom, laboratory, conferences, in-the-field, or at sea.
5. Violating the terms of the Institution's Consensual Relations Policy.

Reason for Policy

It is the intent of this Code of Conduct to promote a high standard of professional conduct and integrity and effective and respectful communications and relationships throughout the Institution.

Providing written clarity of unacceptable conduct is appropriate both to verify that a consensus about

minimally acceptable standards in fact does exist and to give fair notice to all that departures from these minimal standards may give rise to disciplinary actions. These lists of unacceptable conduct and behaviors are not exhaustive and other circumstances may occur where this policy would apply.

Contents

[Policy Information](#)

[Policy Statement](#)

[Reason for Policy](#)

[Who Should Be Familiar With This Policy](#)

[Related Documents](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Definitions & Responsibilities](#)

[Faculty](#)

[Employee](#)

[Affiliate](#)

[Student](#)

[Unethical](#)

[Procedures](#)

[Reporting](#)

[Investigation](#)

[Disciplinary Actions](#)

Who Should Be Familiar With This Policy

All employees, affiliates and students who have a relationship with the Institution including Trustees, Corporation members, Guest & Visiting Investigators, contractors, vendors, volunteers and customers.

Related Documents

Institution Policies

- Conflict of Interest and Outside Professional Activities
- Consensual Relations
- Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action
- Harassment (Policy Against)
- Misconduct in Science
- Investigation Policy

Contacts

If you have questions about specific issues or need assistance with the interpretation of this policy, contact:

- Director, Human Resources and EEO Officer
- Vice President of Legal Affairs and General Counsel

Definitions & Responsibilities

These definitions apply to these terms as they are used in this policy.

Faculty Any member of the teaching staff at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, regardless of rank or permanent or visiting status.

Employee Any individual employed by the Institution including a student employee.

Affiliate Any individual who has a relationship with the Institution who is not an employee, including students, Postdoc Scholars, Postdoc Fellows, Trustees, Corporation members, Guest & Visiting Investigators, and contractors and vendors.

Student Any individual under the academic supervision of Scientific Staff.

Unethical Contrary to accepted standards of ethical behavior in the workplace.

Procedures

Reporting Allegations of or suspicions of misconduct should be reported. The Institution wants to ensure reporting mechanisms are easy and accessible. There are options which include, reporting to your supervisor, Director, Human Resources and EEO Officer, any member of Staff Council or Senior Administration, Dean, Associate Dean, Title IX Coordinator. In situations where an individual prefers to place an anonymous report in confidence, they are encouraged to use the WHOI Ethics Hotline, hosted by a third party provider, EthicsPoint. WHOI Ethics Hotline: 1-866-868-0920; website: www.who.ethicspoint.com. The information provided through the WHOI Ethics Hotline will be shared with the Institution's EEO Officer/Title IX Coordinator by EthicsPoint on a completely confidential and anonymous basis. Unless the individual allows differently, personal contact information will not be shared.

Investigation Please refer to the "Investigation Policy"

Disciplinary Actions Coaching, Training, and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination may occur as determined by the outcome of the investigation process described above.

[\[go back\]](#)

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