**\*\*This code of conduct is meant to serve as a guideline or template for use on research and field projects. Before using this code of conduct please check with your institution for information on reporting, including relevant contact information.\*\*\***

**This document summarizes guidelines and expectations for behavior during research or fieldwork (excavation, survey; also lab work, archival research, etc.). Although this document was created by the *Steppe Sisters Network* (based on a version from the UMMAA), this is a personal agreement on expectations for members of our group working on research projects, regardless of institutional affiliation. While conducting research, we live and work together closely, and this represents our expectations on how we *all* will conduct ourselves during this time.**

**EXPECTATIONS FOR RESEARCH CONDUCT**

Our research depends on the efforts of people from many backgrounds. We are here because we all have one primary mutual interest – to conduct research. Aside from this mutual interest, individuals vary in terms of cultural background and experiences, including our understanding of what is appropriate and inappropriate to say or do. Even with these differences, w***e are responsible for treating each other with equal respect, regardless of position on the research project***.

This means that no one should make anyone else feel uncomfortable, afraid, or lesser. At a minimum, we expect members of this project to not degrade other people, to protect each other’s safety, and torespect each other's privacy and personal space regardless of gender, age, or position. Behaviors towards others that cross these boundaries are not acceptable on this field project. Additionally, some behaviors, such as harassment and discrimination, sexual misconduct, and drug/alcohol abuse will result in consequences, such as being asked to leave the project. These are outlined below.

HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

For the purposes of determining whether a particular course of conduct is discrimination or harassment at this project (including field sites, lab space, living space), we use the following definition (adapted from the Rackham Graduate School at the University of Michigan)[[1]](#footnote-1):

Conduct that is based upon an individual’s race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight or veteran’s status that:

1) adversely affects a term or condition of an individual’s employment, education, living environment or participation in the project or future projects; *or*

2) is used as the basis for or a factor in decisions affecting that individual’s employment, education, living environment or participation in the project or future projects; *or*

3) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s employment or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, offensive, or abusive environment for that individual’s employment, education, living environment, or participation in the project.

In addition to the above, we also consider discriminatory behaviors based on educational or professional background, income, and language to be unacceptable at this field project.

CULTURAL BIAS AND DISCRIMINATION

Because we come from a variety of cultural backgrounds, we must be aware that our reactions to these differences can become a source of discrimination or result in behaviors that are considered harassment. This includes behaviors that might be seen as joking or part of getting to know others. What distinguishes unacceptable behaviors is that they make some individuals feel lesser than others or result in unfair working conditions. Though not comprehensive, the following are some examples of behaviors could be considered cultural bias-based discrimination:

1. *Uninvited or condescending remarks on practices of someone from a different cultural background* such as clothing and self-presentation, food habits, or ways of speaking.

Examples:

- Joseph, a grad student coming to the field site for the first time, continuously mocks the accent of local field assistants.

- Ingrid, a field technician, notices Karl eating a local dish he has prepared and says, “Ugh, I think I’d puke if I had to eat that.”

1. *Selective communication or cooperation with others based on background*.

Examples:

- Eleanor, a student, ignores instructions from local excavation leaders because she is under the impression that only the university PI knows the ‘right’ way of excavating.

- A field director provides detailed instructions on a new aspect of the project to students of one nationality while leaving others to figure it out on their own.

1. *Insensitivity to local cultural norms, ignoring how one’s own presentation will be in conflict with local cultural norms*:

Example:

- Senior researcher Amelia and graduate student Donald dress in a way that is inappropriate for local culture and makes some assistants uncomfortable. Local assistants respectfully express concerns about the issue, but are told they are being oversensitive.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Another type of behavior that will not be tolerated is sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature[[2]](#footnote-2). This includes a range of behaviors that can in other contexts be part of consensual romantic relationships. What distinguishes them as misconduct is that they are unwanted. Though not a comprehensive list, the following are examples of behaviors that could be sexual misconduct:

*1) Unwanted sexual statements -* “dirty” jokes, comments on physical looks, talking about sexual activity in front of others. Can be in person, electronically, writing, pictures, etc.

Examples:

- At dinner, where several students are present, Roberto, a graduate student, asks a newly arrived graduate student whom he has just met, “Welcome. Now, tell us how many professors you’ve slept with.”

 - When they are alone on a survey, one researcher tells another, “I have always wanted to have sex with someone who is tall like you are.”

- While drinking and telling funny stories at a party, a senior faculty member begins to describe a sexual dream they have had.

2) *Unwanted personal attention* – letters, texts, emails, telephone calls, visits, etc.; pressure for unnecessary personal interaction, for dates where a sexual/romantic intent appears evident, or for sexual favors; stalking.

Examples:

 - Louise, the site supervisor, repeatedly appears at Jonah’s cabin after everyone else has gone to bed and there is no emergency or need to communicate with him.

 - Thomas, a researcher, follows Rebecca in the field when asked not to, whispering to her, tapping her on the shoulder, holding her hands or arms as if “helping” but when unnecessary.

 - A graduate student does special favors for an undergraduate, unasked, takes many photos of her, and confronts her with deeply personal information pertaining to his mental health.

3) *Unwanted physical advances* – touching, hugging, kissing, fondling, touching or exposing oneself sexually for others to view; invading private spaces.

Examples:

- Project director(s) frequently approaches students from behind and touches them on the lower back to get their attention.

- While dancing alongside another graduate student, Leo presses himself against the student and then holds onto them, so that they cannot stop the dancing or the close contact.

- Karen intentionally follows Daniel when they are entering a private shower or bathing area when this is not permitted or invited.

- A faculty member enters a student’s room at night and stands over their bed.

*4) Sexual assault, intercourse, or other non-consensual sexual activity*.

Example:

 - A graduate student has sexual intercourse with another graduate student who is severely intoxicated and unable to consent.

5) *Gender or sexual orientation-based harassment and discrimination.*

Examples:

- A senior field crew member regularly calls female students “Sweetie,” but male students by their first or last names.

 - A male graduate student comments that he is tired of female graduate students wearing only “ugly field clothes” all of the time.

- Trench supervisor appoints only male workers to move heavy equipment or to excavate larger features because they are “tough”.

- A student repeatedly asks a gay team member who is in a relationship which one is “the man” or “the woman” in the relationship.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

We recognize that excessive drinking and other substance abuse contributes to harassment and inappropriate behaviors, and also threatens the safety of yourself and others. Alcohol and other drugs particularly interfere with individuals’ ability to give consent and make choices about romantic and sexual activity. On this project, we expect everyone to responsibly manage their consumption of alcohol and other drugs, to not allow consumption of alcohol or other substances to become disruptive to the project, and to know that intoxication is not an acceptable excuse for inappropriate behavior.

POWER DYNAMICS

In some cases, your behavior may make someone feel uncomfortable or fearful without your intention, especially if you are in a more powerful position. There are many ways you can have power. One is by being officially in charge, like the team leaders. Another is by having more knowledge or experience. Another is simply by occupying a more authoritative position in society. Be mindful that if others depend on your expertise or approval, they may be more likely to take your personal comments more seriously than they are meant, and less likely to ask you to change how you behave. Think about the impact your words and actions may have on others - before you speak or act.

In other cases, you may have to respond to someone who is in a position of power at the field project. You are not obligated to do anything under their orders if it makes you feel distressed or unsafe. Additionally, each person on the project has the right to discuss and report interactions that make them concerned without retaliation.

REPORTING

If you become aware of discrimination, harassment, misconduct or substance use problems on this project, the field directors are always available to talk about it. Keep in mind that some individuals on this project are required to report certain issues to their institution or other authorities. This season, they are the field directors:

* Dr. FULL NAME (Assistant Professor, University of BLANK)\*
* Dr. FULL NAME (Director of BLANK)
* Dr. FULL NAME (POSITION and PLACE OF WORK)

who will officially report prohibited conduct.

*\*Dr.* FULL NAME *is the husband/wife/partner of Dr.* FULL NAME*, and will be working alongside our team this summer.* ***Do not*** *report incidents involving Dr.* FULL NAME *to Dr.* FULL NAME*. Instead, if an incident occurs, please report to another field director, a Graduate Student Instructor, or the Teaching Assistant.*

If you would like to speak to someone *without* reporting responsibilities privately, please reach out to:

* FULL NAME (Graduate Student Instructor)
* FULL NAME (Teaching Assistant)

In addition to speaking to people on the project, you may also contact:

* FULL NAME, EMAIL

**POSITION and PLACE OF WORK**

(*Individual with Reporting Obligations*)

Phone:

* FULL NAME, EMAIL

**Department name Chief Administrator**

(*Individual with Reporting Obligations*)

Phone:

Institutional body for reporting purposes: LINK to webpage of institution

IMPACTS OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

We take matters of personal conduct seriously. Issues surrounding discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, substance abuse, and other concerning behaviors may result in individuals being asked to leave the field site and the project. If you break the code of conduct, you may face a range of consequences from the project PIs/directors, which may include a) being asked to leave the field site and pay for your own return travel, b) a refusal to write you letters of recommendation, and c) not being allowed to return to the project. Final decisions concerning inappropriate behavior and the repercussions will be made by the project PIs or field directors.

I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have read the policies stated above and understand the expectations for field conduct. I also understand the policies for reporting conduct.

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(Signature) (Date)

1. <https://rackham.umich.edu/rackham-life/discrimination-and-harassment/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://spg.umich.edu/policy/201.89-0> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)