

Department of Earth Sciences, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Guidelines for Ethical and Professional Conduct

The Department of Earth Sciences strives for a work and learning environment that all members enjoy being a part of, feel vested in contributing to, and are supported in the variety of endeavors they pursue. Excellence in research, education, learning, professional pursuits, and service are all fostered by effective and supportive relationships among all members, embracing differences in sex, gender identity, age, ethnicity, culture, socio-economic background, sexual orientation, political or other viewpoints, spiritual practices, physical abilities, or any other aspect of a person's identity.

This document provides guidelines for ethical and professional conduct pertaining to the different roles within the Department of Earth Sciences. The intent is to provide heightened awareness of the need to consciously build professionalism, trust, respect, two-way communication, and shared expectations. All staff, faculty, researchers, students, and visitors will be attentive and responsive to this intent. Faculty and staff, especially, will endeavor to be role models for these practices. These guidelines complement the following State and UH policies.

[Hawaii State Ethics Commission Ethics Guide](#)

[UH Board of Regents Policy, RP 12.201, Ethical Standards of Conduct](#)

[UH System Executive Policies](#)

EP [1.203 Consensual Relationships](#)

EP [1.204 Title IX](#), See also the [UH Title IX Office](#)

EP [7.208 Systemwide Student Conduct](#);

EP [9.210 Workplace Non-Violence](#);

EP [12.211 Policy for Responding to Allegations of Research and Scholarly Misconduct](#).

UH System [Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action \(EEO/AA\) Policies](#)

UH Mānoa [Office of Student Affairs Policies](#)

I. Faculty & Staff Interactions

- A. Be supportive, encouraging, fair, dependable, trustworthy, and courteous.
- B. Foster success of the team: actively contribute to the instructional, advising, service, and research activities of your division, the Department, SOEST, and the University. Engage positively in faculty and committee meetings, department seminars, and student defenses.
- C. Communicate professionally, constructively, respectfully, and positively. Email should be concise, polite, and directed only to those who need to know. Emotional content should be minimized, or carefully measured. Interpersonal conflicts or disputes should be addressed privately, preferably in-person. By-standers should constructively support those in the conflict. Public shaming/humiliation, and the appearance of shaming/humiliation, is not tolerated; such behavior also violates UH policy.
- D. Be supportive and tolerant of differences in personalities, communication styles, individual strengths, weaknesses, as well as personal circumstances.
- E. Show sensitivity to power imbalances between senior and junior faculty, and between faculty and staff.

Acknowledge the contributions, accomplishments, and successes of team members. Treat mistakes or shortcomings—by yourself or by others—as opportunities for improvement. Ask for, and offer support.

F. II. Advisor and Mentor Responsibilities

- A. Be a role-model by upholding the highest professional and ethical conduct.
- B. Practice respectful and supportive collaboration, being especially sensitive to the power imbalance in the student/postdoc–advisor relationship. Establish an environment that is intellectually stimulating and free of intimidation or harassment. Never pursue or engage in romantic or sexual relations with advisees; this is also in violation of UH Executive Policy (1.203). Be respectful and inclusive of individuals from all backgrounds.
- C. Have open, two-way communication, set clear expectations and timelines (working hours, lab safety, academic goals, expectations on MS and PhD chapters, criteria for authorship); schedule regular and frequent (e.g., weekly) meetings; provide frequent feedback on progress.
- D. Be a responsive mentor. Training and oversight in professional development should include time management, effort prioritization, design of research projects, development of oral and written communication skills, grant preparation (as appropriate), best research practices, safety, and career advice.
- E. Provide guidance in the responsible and appropriate pursuit of scholarly interests outside of your advisees' primary research.
- F. Be considerate of the time constraints and competing demands of advisees.

- G. Protect advisees' agreed-upon roles in a project, rights to use of data, and the appropriate level of authorship in presentations and publications.
- H. Be attentive to timelines of departmental milestones for student progress and in completion of degrees. Be dependable when serving on student committees: read and review papers, proposals, and theses in a timely manner. Celebrate accomplishments of all post-docs and students; attend student defenses.

III. Class Instructor Responsibilities

Instructors will adhere to the [Policies and Procedures of the University of Hawaii at Mānoa's Office of Student Affairs](#). Points of emphasis or in addition follow.

- A. All interactions between faculty, teaching assistants (TAs), and students must be constructive and civil. Promote a classroom culture that is respectful, inclusive, intellectually stimulating, and safe from all levels of intimidation or harassment. Be aware that even subtle or subconscious expressions of frustration can have harmful effects on students.
- B. Treat all students and TAs with equal respect regardless of differences in sex, gender identity, age, ethnicity, culture, spiritual practices, political or other viewpoints, appearance, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and any other aspect of their identity. Be aware of, and avoid, potentially negative effects of your own (subconscious) biases. Address individuals using their preferred pronoun; when in doubt, use their name. Identify preferred pronouns discretely and respectfully (e.g., email, information cards, private conversations).
- C. Be mindful of, and never exploit, the power imbalance between faculty and students.
- D. Be a role model for how to speak to, or about others.
- E. Show that you care about your students' well-being and academic goals. Respect students' time constraints due to responsibilities outside of your class such as other academic activities, work, and family.
- F. Empower all students to participate fully in class, lab, and field activities while being sensitive to differences in student temperaments and communication styles.
- G. Practice safety in the classroom, lab, and on field trips (including at sea). On field trips, make sure attendees know the safety rules, the necessary equipment, and the appropriate attire. Notify field trip attendees in advance about the itinerary, lodging and field conditions.
- H. Ensure that course expectations, requirements, and due dates are understood by students and TAs at the beginning of the semester. Commit to dates of significant assignments or field trips. If a change is unavoidable, make every effort to accommodate those who cannot change. Provide early and frequent constructive feedback about student progress.
- I. Never pursue or engage in romantic or sexual relations with students. This is also in violation of UH Executive Policy (1.203).

IV. Student Responsibilities

Students will adhere to the [Policies and Procedures of the University of Hawaii at Mānoa's Office of Student Affairs](#), as well as the UH System [Student Code of Conduct](#). Points of emphasis or in addition follow.

- A. Exercise the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and safety in all activities.
- B. Be proactive in, and bear the primary responsibility for, your successful education and professional development. Be open to opportunities beyond minimum requirements.
- C. Be an active participant in your classes. Join discussions, ask questions, seek clarification, and engage with the learning opportunities provided in the classroom.
- D. Be responsive to the timelines, forms, and policies of the Department, college, and University for your degree.
- E. Proactively communicate with advisors, instructors, the Graduate Studies Committee, as well as your thesis or dissertation committee. Know that communication is a two-way endeavor.
- F. Provide constructive and honest feedback about your classes, instructors, and/or advisor—including criticisms—when requested or, otherwise, using appropriate channels (see “Guidelines and Procedures For Resolving Conflict” below).
- G. Be attentive to differences in behavioral and communication styles, roles, skills, strengths, weaknesses, as well as personal circumstances.
- H. Promote an academic culture that is constructive, respectful, inclusive, intellectually stimulating, and safe from all levels of intimidation or harassment. Address individuals using their preferred pronoun; when in doubt, use their name.
- I. Never pursue or engage in romantic or sexual relations with faculty. This is also in violation of UH Executive Policy (1.203).

V. Scientific Integrity and Ethical Research Practice

The Department of Earth Sciences upholds the highest standards of scientific integrity and ethical practice as described by AGU's policy on Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics (ethics.agu.org) as well as the AGI Guidelines for Ethical Professional Conduct (www.americangeosciences.org/community/agi-guidelines-ethical-professional-conduct). In addition, the following practices are highlighted.

- A. Be constructive, respectful, honest, fair, impartial, and rigorous.
- B. Group projects should begin with a documented understanding and agreement on respective roles and responsibilities, as well as a plan for collecting, sharing, and archiving data. Changes should be mutually agreed upon and documented.
- C. Authorship credit should be assigned to those who have made a meaningful contribution to a combination of the creation, design, and execution of a study, as well as the analysis and

interpretation of its findings. Faculty should be attentive to, and support the appropriate level of, authorships of students and post-docs.

- D. Professional reviews, such as of proposals, manuscripts, and personnel evaluations, should support the purpose and integrity of the process. Reviews should adhere to confidentiality requirements, be objective, and be completed in a timely manner.
- E. Department members should be aware of culturally sensitive issues, particularly with regard to Hawaiian and Pacific Island culture. For example, a plan for rock sample collection should be discussed with students in advance, and accommodation should be made for those who (e.g., due to cultural beliefs or practices) are uncomfortable with the plan.

VI. Conducting Earth Science Research in Hawai'i

Researchers should be fully aware that serving the State of Hawai'i is an overarching role of the University, SOEST, and the Department. Positive public perception and relationship-building are critical both in strengthening effectiveness in this role, as well as in fostering lasting public support of research in Hawai'i. The following are basic guidelines to promote this effort.

- A. Always request permission for land access, whether the land is private or owned by a county, the state, or the federal government. In your request, introduce yourself, including where you are originally from, where you live now, and your employer. Be forthcoming about the goals and procedures of the research. If you plan to collect samples, ask specifically for such permission (some places require an additional permit for this). Consider how your research will impact, or benefit, the land itself as well as the people who own or live near the land. Respect the outcome of the landowner's decision, even if access is denied.
- B. Care for the land. Remember that in traditional Hawaiian society, the land was valued as providing for all life, and was used by people as efficiently as possible. If you can conduct your work from existing roads and trails, do so. Before collecting a sample, pause and consider the value of the sample to the place as well as to people who may come after you. Collect only what you need.
- C. There are numerous ways to engage with the public. For example, if someone approaches you while you are in the field, take the time to explain the research and its goals. If appropriate, practical, and safe, invite people who live or work near the field area to participate in the research. Offer to make a public presentation about what your work will entail before you start, the progress of the work while it proceeds, and results after the work is complete. Send the landowner a letter of thanks as well as a copy of any reports or papers that were produced by the project. Some community members will appreciate knowing the outcome of the permission they granted, and some will be interested in your results.
- D. Use Hawaiian words and place names properly. When appropriate, use proper diacritical marks (i.e., kahakō and 'okina). Learn the origin of place names, as well as the history and cultural background of the area in which you will be working. See the following resources:

[Kūlana Noi'i](#), standards for community-based research in Hawai'i

[Wehewehe](#): Hawaiian-English dictionary

[Ulukau](#): Hawaiian place names

[Papakilo Database](#): Place names, geneology, and Hawaiian newspapers

[UH ITS](#): Hawaiian diacritical marks for Windows and Mac OS

VII. Guidelines and Procedures for Resolving Conflicts

Members of the Department of Earth Sciences consciously strive to establish effective and productive relationships built upon trust, respect, two-way communications, and shared expectations. When misunderstandings or conflicts arise, efforts should be made early and in good faith to find constructive and equitable resolutions. The following is a sequential list of recommended steps for resolving conflicts.

- A. Misunderstandings or conflicts should be addressed early and confidentially. A constructive verbal conversation between the individuals involved is often a good way to start. It is preferable to lead by communicating one's perspective of the interaction, including one's feelings, rather than to accuse or blame. Seek mutual understanding. For example, *"On {date of conflict}, when you engaged in {the conflicting behavior}, I felt uncomfortable, and I'd like to talk with you about it.....I felt this way because from my perspective...."* When understanding is achieved, then solutions can be proposed, *"If a similar situation should occur in the future, it would help me if you responded by {suggested response}"*.
- B. Bystanders who witness a misunderstanding or offending behavior should actively support an amicable resolution. Again, seek mutual understanding first and foremost. Bystanders may intervene by saying *"The statement that was made came across to me as being potentially disrespectful to {name of individual} because.... Can you see why what was said could have raised concerns?"* Immediate or early response is usually preferred.
- C. More severe conflicts or blatantly offending or abusive behavior should be documented with relevant information (e.g., emails, conversations, and dates of events) as soon as possible. Documentation should be done by individuals involved as well as by bystanders. Be factual. This information may be used within SOEST or the University to address the situation.
- D. Seek the appropriate personnel to facilitate conflict resolution. The suggested chains of communication for various groups follow.
 - Undergraduate Students. Earth Undergraduate Advisors; Earth Department Chair; SOEST Director of Student Services; SOEST Associate Dean of Academic Affairs; SOEST Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; the Chair of the UHM Academic Grievance Committee within the Office of Judicial Affairs; Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) Director for UH Mānoa Students.
 - Graduate Students. Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee; Earth Department Chair; SOEST Associate Dean of Academic Affairs; SOEST Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; the Chair of the Academic Grievance Committee within the UHM [Office of Judicial Affairs](#); EEO/AA Director for UH Mānoa Students.

- Faculty and Staff. Department Chair; Associate Dean of Academic Affairs; SOEST Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; EEO/AA Director for UH Mānoa Employees.

See also: UH System Executive Policy 12.211, “Policy for Responding to Allegations of Research and Scholarly Misconduct”. Grievances arising during classroom instruction should follow the UHM “[Academic Grievances Procedures](#)”.

VIII. Required Reporting of Threatening Situations or Sexual Harassment and Misconduct

- A. Sexual Harassment and Misconduct. Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in education. Policy requires that any recognized incident of sex/gender harassment, discrimination, or misconduct (including acts of sexual violence, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking) must be reported to [UHM Office of Title IX](#). Faculty or staff who witness, or are informed of an incident must report it, and they should inform the individuals involved of this requirement. The reporting can go to the SOEST Dean’s Office, directly to the [UHM Office of Title IX](#), or both. Know your rights and the UHM policies before reporting an incident or problem.

Crimes and Suspicious or Threatening Behavior. [UHM Department of Public Safety](#), 956-6911; Honolulu Police Department, 911.

IX. Actions to Address Misconduct

The following is a list of possible actions initiated by the Earth Department Chair, the SOEST Dean’s Office, or both that may be taken to address offending behavior or misconduct. The intent is to produce directed solutions that support the well-being and effective operation of *everyone* in the Department.

Faculty and staff respondents

- A. Meetings to discuss the issue(s) and/or pattern(s) of behavior, with written and signed documentation of the meeting outcomes. Such meetings are meant to allow individuals to present their points of view and to discuss ways to mitigate issues that may have become a pattern, or before they do so.
- B. Appropriately imposed restrictions or adjustments to the distribution of the offending individual’s workload among teaching, student advising, research, and service. Any consequential impairments to performance may be reflected in performance evaluations.
- C. Disciplinary actions are governed by BOR policies on research and scholarly misconduct as well as the current UHPA/BOR Collective Bargaining Agreement. See the following resources:
- [UH Board of Regents Policy](#), RP 12.201, Ethical Standards of Conduct
 - [2017-2021 UHPA/BOR Contract on Disciplinary Actions](#)
 - [UH System Executive Policies 1.204 Title IX; 9.210 Workplace Non-Violence; 12.211 Policy for Responding to Allegations of Research and Scholarly Misconduct](#)

Student respondents

- D. Actions to address student misconduct will be taken following the [University Student Conduct Code](#).