

EAS, AS, and GS Policy for Safe and Respectful Behavior During Off-Campus Activities

Policy Statement: The Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences (EAS) and the Fields of Atmospheric Sciences and of Geological Sciences expect and require all participants traveling on Cornell business or activities to contribute to an environment of mutual respect, free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

Policy Principles: This policy applies to all EAS members (faculty, research staff, postdoctoral associates, graduate students, undergraduates, guests and contractors) during their participation in all field research, field trips, field courses, conferences or workshops. Individuals in supervisory roles have special responsibilities not even to *appear* to abuse their position of power.

Designing and directing field activities present many special challenges for group leaders. Although students are expected to take responsibility for their own health and wellness, leaders have the added responsibility to inform all participants of any unusual risks and living conditions.

Prohibited activities: Sexual violence and harassment are prohibited. Only “yes” means yes. Sexual slurs, jibes or persistent ‘hitting on’ another for sex are harassment.

Harassment on the basis of any protected characteristic (such as but not limited to race, ethnicity, sexual identity, sexual orientation, religion, or veteran status) or appearance is strictly prohibited. This conduct includes, but is not limited to: epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes and display or circulation of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group.

Group leaders must be especially proactive in maintaining the travel group’s culture of respect for one another if the EAS group is traveling where the culture (or the collaborators) tolerates or encourages discrimination or slurs, or treats these attributes as themes of humor.

The possession, use, or sale of illegal drugs are forbidden. Abuse of alcohol impairs the ability to knowingly consent to sexual activity as well as the ability to take appropriate actions in the case of emergencies. The group leaders must place the group’s need for safe transportation foremost in their decisions regarding their own consumption of alcohol. The leader should set clear group standards for whether alcohol use is not allowed at all or in moderation, and GRAs or TAs should contribute to assuring that the group’s behavior is consistent with that policy. Purchasing alcohol for underage students is against the law.

Special considerations: No romantic or sexual interactions across hierarchical ranks in the group (e.g., faculty with TAs or GRAs, TAs with enrolled students, etc.) are allowed. If natural attractions develop, these must be postponed until after the supervisory relationship terminates.

Cultural experiences are a valued part of EAS-related travel. Nevertheless, group leaders need to remain alert for cultural situations that are potentially offensive. Leaders should offer members of their group options to remove themselves safely from these situations.

Reporting an Incident (see attached Policy Procedures for details and contact information): Participants are urged to promptly report a complaint against person(s) responsible for sexual harassment or assault, or bias activity, usually to either a supervisor or the police. The program leader is responsible for treating seriously reports, for initial investigation, and for taking actions to prevent recurrence (as described in the attached materials).

Retaliation is Prohibited: EAS will not tolerate any form of retaliation against persons who file a complaint or assist in the investigation of a complaint. The filing of intentionally false complaints is likewise unacceptable.

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Policy Statement

It is policy of the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences (EAS) and the Fields of Atmospheric Sciences and of Geological Sciences that all participants traveling on Cornell business or activities will contribute to an environment of mutual respect, free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Travel in the US, in foreign countries and in isolated natural settings offers tremendous learning opportunities, but also opportunities to encounter dangers whose scope is not fully appreciated. Trust and respect among all participants are essential for the success of these activities.

Policy Principles

This policy applies to all EAS members, including faculty, research staff, postdoctoral associates, graduate students, undergraduates, guests and contractors, during their participation in all field research, field trips, field courses, conferences or workshops. The policy highlights the needs of all Cornell participants for a safe experience. Individuals in a supervisory role have special responsibilities in dealing with other members of the project or program team, to not abuse, or *even appear to abuse*, their position of power.

Designing and directing field activities present many special challenges. Group leaders should review in advance information regarding crime and safety reports for the region to be visited, assess the security of housing facilities, and discuss with participants the risks involved with alcohol, traveling solo, etc. Students should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own health and wellness; however, project directors have the additional responsibility of informing all project participants of any unusual risks and living conditions. On every program students and faculty have to feel they can rely on one another to watch out for each other's safety.

Prohibited activities

Sexual assault is intentional sexual contact with another person without that person's consent. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, physical contact or sexual innuendo that substantially interferes with the educational environment. Only "yes" means yes. It is okay to become close and trusted friends. It is not okay to confuse this with consent for sex.

Sexual assault and harassment are prohibited by Cornell; the rules of Cornell are in effect when off campus as part of university activity. Sexual assault is a crime. Sexual interactions and commentary are only acceptable if there is an unambiguous and freely given consent between participants. Sexual slurs, jibes or persistent 'hitting on' another for sex are harassment.

Harassment on the basis of any protected characteristic (such as but not limited to race, ethnicity, sexual identity, sexual orientation, religion, or veteran status) or appearance is also strictly prohibited. This conduct includes, but is not limited to: epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes and display or circulation of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group.

Group leaders must be especially proactive in maintaining the travel group's culture of respect for one another if the EAS group is traveling where the culture (or the collaborators) tolerates or encourages discrimination or slurs, or treats these attributes as themes of humor.

The possession, use, or sale of illegal drugs are forbidden. Abuse of alcohol impairs the ability to knowingly consent to sexual activity as well as judgment about appropriate sexual boundaries. Abuse of alcohol impairs the ability to take appropriate actions in the case of

emergencies. Driving while under the influence of either drugs or alcohol is forbidden. Because rental vehicle and/or university rules commonly prevent most members of a field group from being permitted drivers, the group leaders must place the group's need for safe transportation foremost in their decisions regarding their own moderate consumption of alcohol. The faculty or staff leader should set clear group standards for whether alcohol use is not allowed at all or in moderation, and GRAs or TAs should contribute to assuring that the group's behavior is consistent with that policy. Purchasing alcohol for underage students is against the law. Anyone who does this assumes total liability.

Special considerations

There should be no romantic or sexual interactions between members of the traveling group across hierarchical ranks (faculty with TAs or GRAs, TAs with enrolled students, etc.). Whereas natural attractions can develop, these must be postponed until the supervisory relationship terminates in order to avoid 1) conflict of interest and 2) potential exploitation of students arising from the inherent power differential between faculty (staff, TAs, etc) and student participants. These relationships detract from the dynamics of a research or course group, and undermine the trust that is vital to safety and learning. A faculty member who finds themselves in a budding relationship with a student whom they also will supervise on campus, who wishes to pursue that relationship and who has been told by the student that s/he also wants to pursue the relationship, should speak with the Director of Graduate Studies in their Field or the Department Chair to remove themselves from the Special Committee or other supervisory position.

Cultural learning is a valued part of EAS-related travel. Nevertheless, group leaders need to remain alert for cultural situations that emerge that are offensive. Leaders should offer members of their group options to remove themselves safely from these situations.

Reporting an Incident (see attached Policy Procedures for details and contact information)

Participants are urged to promptly make a report or file a complaint against the person(s) responsible for sexual harassment or assault even if s/he does not wish to pursue the matter further. Keep in mind that the individual who committed this act is a potential future danger, not only to you but also to other members of the community. Anyone who directly witnesses or experiences bias activity (or finds evidence of or hears about past bias activity) should intervene in the moment as appropriate, communicate the incident to the program leader, and file a report.

Immediate incident response should usually begin with a supervisor in the program, or the police or other local civil authority. The program leader is responsible for treating seriously reports, for initial investigation, and for taking actions to prevent recurrence (inclusive of sending accused perpetrator[s] back to Cornell). If an individual is not comfortable reporting to the group leader, alternative reporting suggestions can be found on the attached sheet.

If alternative solutions cannot be put into place, Cornell will provide funds for travel back to campus for an individual so desiring and whose rights or safety are threatened by the prohibited behaviors described in this policy.

Retaliation is Prohibited

EAS will not tolerate any form of retaliation against persons who file a complaint or assist in the investigation of a complaint. Retaliation is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action.

Policy Procedures: Reporting Details (*this information is to be updated at least annually*)

If you need medical care, the on-site team leader will help locate local medical, legal and safety resources. In a foreign country the US Embassy can be helpful in connecting you to good local resources.

After immediate safety concerns have been addressed, a variety of options at Cornell will assist you to make the appropriate reports and find continuing care for yourself. Individuals whom you might consider consulting for assistance include a trip leader, academic advisor, director of graduate studies, EAS chair, any other faculty members inside of and outside of the department, staff members at Gannett health center, and undergraduate and graduate advising offices. The Campus Code of Conduct and University Policy 6.4 should be consulted for specific recommended procedures. For a guide to these procedures and for further information go to share.cornell.edu and click on Policy and Laws, Cornell Policy and Definitions at: <http://share.cornell.edu/policies-laws/cornell-policy-def/>.

If the actions that violate this policy are those of the program leader, the complainant needs to report the situation to an on-campus supervisor. In the case of serious incidents that are not readily remedied, the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences is prepared to assist a victim to leave the program to return to campus immediately, even if doing so incurs additional travel-related costs. In no case should a participant leave an off-campus program without notifying unambiguously at least one program supervisor of their departure and destination.

Your complaint should be registered using a Cornell system that initiates investigation and action:

<https://publicdocs.maxient.com/reportingform.php?CornellUniv>

Cornell's victim advocate is available to assist any member of the Cornell community who has been the victim of a crime or other traumatic incident. That service is accessed by calling 607-255-1212 or by email:

victimadvocate@cornell.edu.

Reports of bias-related harassment or assault should be reported at:

<https://publicdocs.maxient.com/reportingform.php?CornellUniv>

Communications with EAS faculty and employees (including GRAs and TAs) regarding sexual assaults are only partially confidential. Although these individuals must report incidents to a specific narrow set of university authorities, they will not discuss personal information with other members of the off-campus group nor the EAS on-campus general community. This balance between confidentiality and the sharing of vital information is governed by Cornell University Policy 6.4. For further details on confidentiality see [SHARE.cornell.edu](http://share.cornell.edu) and go to Getting Care – Confidentiality at: <http://share.cornell.edu/getting-care/confidentiality/>.

Accusations against individuals for violation of Policy 6.4 will be handled as if the actions had occurred on campus. Complaints will be processed under an internal university investigation as described in that policy.

Students will find important information they need to file a complaint at:
http://share.cornell.edu/files/2014/03/student-guide_filing-a-complaint-1lzujbd.pdf.

Students will find important information they need to respond to a complaint at:
http://share.cornell.edu/files/2013/10/student-guide_responding-to-a-complaint-1ch3jwq.pdf.

(Different administrative procedures apply in the case of claims against faculty members or other university employees. Contact Workforce Policy and Labor Relations, alm63@cornell.edu, for details.)

Definition from Cornell University Policy 6.4:

Sexual violence, including sexual assault and rape, is a broad term that refers to physical acts perpetrated without consent or when a person is incapable of giving consent. Consent is defined as words or actions that show a voluntary agreement to engage in mutually agreed-upon sexual activity. Consent is not present when one is incapable of consent, subject to coercion or threat of coercion, or subject to forcible compulsion.