

Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts

Respectful Behavior Policy *(July 2019)*

Freedom of expression and vigorous debate are crucial to scholarly exchange. The Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts 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. 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. This policy will be revisited annually by the Executive Committee in conjunction with receiving an Ombudsperson's report of complaints filed.

Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Standards

The Society prohibits any unwelcome conduct that is based on an individual's sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, race, color, religion, national origin, age, marital 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 unwarranted 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 an 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.

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 Ombudspersons (Marcel O'Gorman (marcel@uwaterloo.ca) and Kari Nixon (knixon@whitworth.edu)). Anyone may seek advice from the Ombudsperson, regardless of whether an official complaint is filed; however, 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 annually prepare for the Executive Committee 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 Respectful Behavior Review Committee (RBRC) 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 RBRC shall determine whether the incident constituted harassment under the terms of this Policy. If the RBRC Committee determines the incident constituted harassment, it shall furnish a report of the incident, the RBRC Committee's findings, and a recommended sanction, if any, to the Executive Director within sixty (60) days.

Sanctions

The SLSA Executive Director will consult with the Executive Committee's current officers to consider the case. If a majority of the Executive Committee's current officers/members-at-large concur with the recommendations of the Respectful Behavior Review Committee, the Executive Committee shall issue a written reprimand including any sanctions banning the individual from future meetings and/or revoking the individual's membership. The Executive Director will report the outcome to all parties involved, which is final. Society Ombudspersons: Marcel O'Gorman (marcel@uwaterloo.ca) and Kari Nixon (knixon@whitworth.edu).

Adapted from the History of Science Society Respectful Behavior Policy

Approved by SLSA Board (current officers and past presidents) at SLSA Annual Meeting 2019