

EAPS Code of Conduct

Version: January 19, 2022

Section 1: Summary

The Department of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences (EAPS) recognizes that our scientific and educational missions are strengthened by contributions from diverse perspectives, and that it is our responsibility to create a **positive, inclusive, and supportive** department culture that **benefits everyone**. The EAPS Code of Conduct provides guidance and establishes expectations for how individual members of EAPS should conduct their day-to-day interactions with others to support this goal, and outlines procedures for reporting misconduct. The EAPS Code of Conduct applies to all members of EAPS (students, staff, faculty) as well as all visitors to our department. The EAPS Code of Conduct is a living document so we encourage feedback or suggestions at any time.

Section 2: Goals and Motivation

2.1 Introduction

The Department of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences (EAPS) at Purdue University strives to actively create a positive, inclusive, and supportive department culture. Interactions between individuals build and support this departmental culture. While some actions and behaviors are explicitly subject to existing legal and/or ethical regulations, the majority of our interactions are not, and thus require additional guidelines.

The EAPS Code of Conduct aims to provide guidance and expectations for interpersonal day-to-day interactions. While our interactions must reflect our fundamental ideals of respect, kindness, and valuing everyone's contributions, they must also go beyond this basic level to recognize the unique challenges of academic departments. We recognize that there are significant power disparities between different roles in EAPS as well as differences in individual identities, and that both positive and negative personal interactions can have a profound impact on the lives and careers of individuals, as well as the function, diversity, equity, and inclusivity of our department.

2.2 Who does the Code of Conduct apply to?

The EAPS Code of Conduct is a set of principles and practices for professional, collegial, and supportive behavior that are expected of all students (undergraduate and graduate), staff (research, teaching, and administrative), and faculty (active, emeritus, adjunct, courtesy) in EAPS. The Code of Conduct should also be used as a tool to inform visitors to our department (including but not limited to contractors, speakers, visiting scientists, and other members of the Purdue community) of our expectations for interactions within EAPS. These principles apply within the physical domain of EAPS as well as to our work-related activities outside of the department - we embody them wherever we represent EAPS.

2.3 Recognizing power dynamics in EAPS

The power disparities across any university department are enormous. On the academic side alone, department members span from senior faculty with international recognition to undergraduates encountering research for the first time. We recognize that we all start our academic journey as students, building knowledge and skill through learning from instructors, advisors, and our community. These relationships and the departmental culture are critical to support strong science and an inclusive, collaborative community. The actions and words of more senior personnel thus have an outsized influence on students and the culture of our community.

In this Code of Conduct, we seek to hold everyone to the same standards and empower all voices. This document empowers all community members to both recognize when behaviors are unacceptable and to speak up when support is needed. We aim to create a physically and emotionally safe space in the department, to both enable personal success and safeguard the academic freedom of all members.

2.4 Supporting diversity in EAPS

The Department of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences [supports an inclusive learning environment](#) where students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives can reach their fullest potential. We recognize that maintaining a diverse department requires supporting equity and inclusion for all community members:

- An **equitable** department enables access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized.
- An **inclusive** department builds a culture of belonging by actively inviting and explicitly valuing the contribution and participation of all members of the community.

As individuals we can support diversity and inclusion by considering equity and inclusion in all decisions within the department, as well as by electing diverse community members to leadership positions and ensuring that students can easily approach and engage positive role models, mentorship, and instruction in EAPS.

Supporting and celebrating diversity requires empathy for the unique identities and situations of all community members. We will consult and listen to diverse voices in our department, particularly during decision making (graduate and departmental committees, faculty and leadership meetings, etc.). We will also specifically identify and seek to address the needs of individuals in the minority of any group and those with less relative power in the department.

Section 3: Expectations

3.1 General Expectations

Members of EAPS are expected to follow federal and state law, [Purdue University Policies](#), and the guidance laid out in this Code of Conduct. Basic expectations include:

- We will act with honesty and empathy, and will be personally accountable for our individual actions. We will conscientiously fulfill obligations of our positions; we will treat

others fairly and equitably, with courtesy and respect; and we will foster a culturally inclusive environment.

- We will take responsibility for the integrity of our contributions to all professional activities and interactions and abide by all [Purdue ethics standards](#).
- We will fairly value and acknowledge all those who make contributions to department or group activities, work products, and achievements.
- We will create and promote safe, open, and productive environments for learning, working, and socializing. To this end, we will act with integrity, respect, fairness, trustworthiness, and transparency.
- We will actively intervene or report when we witness or otherwise become aware of misconduct or suspected misconduct including discrimination, harassment, bullying, or other irresponsible behaviors that undermine individuals, EAPS, or the university. We will strive to honor privacy and confidentiality (see Section 4 for information on how to report violations).
- We will extend these principles both inside the physical domain of EAPS and outside of the department while representing or otherwise displaying any affiliation with EAPS. This includes but is not limited to conferences and academic gatherings, field activities, social media engagement for professional purposes, and community outreach initiatives. In these EAPS-related public settings, we will act professionally, refrain from personally critical comments, and clearly distinguish professional comments from our personal opinions and views.

3.2 Supporting each other, supporting diversity

We will strive to go beyond these basic expectations by actively working to create a supportive and inclusive environment that promotes success in EAPS through the following actions:

- We work to recognize the diverse identities that make up our community and will consider the impact that words, actions, and policies will have on these identities. We will openly acknowledge when our words, actions, or policies may have had a negative impact and will seek to learn about different approaches to the situation.
- We commit to listening to those with different identities from our own, and will be open to continuing education on topics related to supporting all identities, including but not limited to [racial justice](#), [implicit bias](#), [anti-racism](#), and allyship.
- We strive to understand the historical context of underrepresented students and their communities and [the role and rights of Indigenous People](#) who were the original caretakers of the land we live and work on.
- All EAPS members involved in recruiting activities work to support the recruitment of diverse members of EAPS. Recruiting activities include but are not limited to participating in education and recruitment activities with underrepresented groups, taking a [holistic approach](#) to grad admissions and recruitment of undergraduate researchers, and following best practices for limiting implicit bias in searches for new hires at all levels.
- We strive to support retention of diverse members of EAPS by providing a safe, inclusive, welcoming, and supportive environment for those identifying with underrepresented groups throughout their time in EAPS.

- We will direct those in need toward support resources (listed at the end of this section) or toward EAPS ombudspeople when in need of assistance.
- Supervisors are encouraged to discuss the Code of Conduct with new group members and employees and make discussions on topics like mental health, work/life balance, and inclusion and equity a regular part of meetings with group members.
- Supervisors are encouraged to recognize that students and employees are whole individuals who have needs and responsibilities beyond their work at Purdue. Supervisors will make expectations clear but will also strive to support a healthy work/life balance.
- We will report any acts of discrimination that we observe by following the process outlined in Section 4.

The following resources are available to support diversity, inclusion, and success at Purdue:

- [Multicultural Science Program Mentoring and Tutoring Programs](#)
- [College of Science Student Success Programs](#) (Women in Science Programs, Global Science Partners, Learning Beyond the Classroom)
- [Purdue Student Success Programs](#) (Academic Success Center, Veterans Success Center, Disability Resource Center, Span Plan for non-traditional students, Purdue Promise for students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds)
- [Diversity Resources](#) (Academic Tutoring, Cultural and LGBTQ Centers)
- [Division of Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (for students)
- [Center for Healthy Living Employee Assistance Counseling](#) (for faculty and staff)
- [Faculty Liaisons](#)

3.3 Mentoring trainees

The strongest power imbalances in academic departments are between students or postdocs and their academic mentors, so this relationship carries extra demands for ethical and supportive behavior. Any individual who is charged, formally or informally, with the supervision, instruction, training, or mentorship of a graduate or undergraduate student or postdoc should recognize the responsibility they have in their interactions with that student as a role model and advisor. These individuals include but are not limited to faculty advisors, committee members, lab supervisors, postdocs, graduate student mentors, and teaching assistants.

Trainees (undergraduate/graduate students and postdocs) and mentors at all levels are encouraged to be aware of the responsibilities of the advisor, the student, and the institution in regards to this relationship. In addition to [EAPS program and department requirements](#), these include:

- Mentors should be sensitive to the added weight their words and actions may carry in their interactions with the student and the potential impact on the student's well-being, motivation, and success.
- Mentors should be aware that comments about the student, within or outside of EAPS, carry the potential for significant impact on the success and career opportunities of the student, as well as on our culture of support and inclusivity in EAPS.

- Mentors should recognize that they are role models for their students and set a positive example in all topics discussed above, particularly in exhibiting empathy toward others and acting with honesty and integrity.

Purdue [prohibits](#) amorous relationships between a student and any University employee who has educational responsibility over the student, and supervisors and subordinates where there is a supervisory or evaluative relationship between the parties. ***We encourage all EAPS members to carefully consider the power dynamics before initiating any amorous relationship with a student/trainee with whom you have any potential to fulfill a mentor role.*** Even in cases without a direct supervisory relationship, voluntary consent by the student or mentee is difficult to fully ascertain, and can easily be misconstrued by the party with more power.

3.4 Expectations beyond the Code of Conduct

Discrimination, bullying, and harassment by any means are unacceptable and in violation of applicable laws, [Purdue University Policy](#), and this Code of Conduct. Research misconduct, as defined by the Purdue Ethics Policy ([III.A.2](#)), is also in violation of this Code of Conduct.

- Discrimination, as defined by the Purdue Ethics Policy ([III.C.2](#)) is the process of illegally differentiating between people on the basis of group membership rather than individual merit. Systemic discrimination may occur when unequal treatment results from neutral institutional practices that continue the effect of past discrimination. Individual discrimination may result when a person is subjected to unequal treatment on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, genetic information, disability, status as a veteran, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
- Harassment, which includes stalking, racial harassment, and sexual harassment, is defined in the Purdue Ethics Policy ([III.C.1](#)) as conduct towards another person or identifiable group of persons that is so severe, pervasive or objectively offensive that it has the purpose or effect of:
 - a. Creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment, work environment or environment for participation in a University program or activity;
 - b. Unreasonably interfering with a person's educational environment, work environment, or environment for participation in a University program or activity; or
 - c. Unreasonably affecting a person's educational or work opportunities or participation in a University program or activity.
- Bullying is the use of force, threat, or coercion to abuse, intimidate, or aggressively dominate others in the professional environment that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. These actions can include abusive criticism, humiliation, the spreading of rumors, physical and verbal attacks, isolation, undermining, and professional exclusion of individuals through any means.

3.5 Field Activities

Accessibility during field activities

Field experiences are a critical component of EAPS educational and research activities, and the unique challenges of field work and field trips/courses require in-depth consideration of diversity, equity, and inclusion. All aspects of the EAPS Code of Conduct apply to EAPS-related field experiences. Barriers to access and challenges in the field vary widely, including the following (for additional information see [Zavaleta et al., 2020](#); [Giles et al., 2020](#); [Morales et al., 2020](#)):

- Physical accessibility (e.g., rough terrain, inclement weather) can prevent those with disabilities from participating
- Economic (e.g., cost of gear/equipment, travel, or payment for courses)
- Scheduling (e.g., avoiding long days for those with additional care duties or allowing breaks for prayer)
- Dietary or medical restrictions, especially in locations with limited services
- Regular access to private restrooms (often necessary for women, those with non-conforming gender expressions, or those with medical issues)
- Disparities in experience (e.g., how to live and work in the field)
- Inability to travel to countries or locations with visa restrictions or restrictive laws or cultural norms regarding specific sexual, gender or other identities
- Microaggressions and sexual harassment are shown to be more likely in remote locations that lack normal support systems and often have close quarters
- Unintentionally exclusionary cultural norms and behaviors (e.g., expectations for how a field geologist looks or acts)

This is not an exhaustive list, but emphasizes the need for forethought and planning, rather than adapting spontaneously to specific individuals. At a basic level, all field trips should be preceded by introductory sessions including basic information regarding accessibility, behavioral expectations, and access to food, water, shelter, and restrooms. We recommend integrating students, in particular those from underrepresented groups, in course and research design, and field activity organizers should consider using evaluations to assess accessibility ([Zavaleta et al., 2020](#)). One integrated model for developing accessible courses that would apply well to field courses is the Universal Design for Learning ([Scott et al. 2003](#), [Bernacchio and Mullen 2007](#)).

Engaging with local communities during field activities

The external impacts of field work also need to be considered. Earth science fieldwork both in the US and abroad has the potential to both negatively impact and benefit indigenous communities, marginalized communities, and communities of color. In order to ensure positive and mutually beneficial relationships with these communities, we recommend that EAPS field activity leads make connections with community leaders in advance of field work to discuss how the field work may impact their environment or culture and how the communities may be enriched by the field activities. This can include: whether or not field work would interrupt important religious or cultural holidays; what areas may be disrespectful to enter or disturb; sample collection; needs of the community related to the field work; current political challenges; and how the community and land should be acknowledged during dissemination of research (publications, presentations, etc.). Leaders should educate students involved in field activities on these practices as well as the culture of the communities.

Section 4: Reporting, Resolution, and Preventing Retaliation

EAPS has long held ourselves to high standards, and the EAPS Code of Conduct formalizes our ongoing commitment to creating a positive environment within EAPS. In the event that an individual within EAPS falls short of our expectations for good departmental citizenship, it is important that mechanisms for identifying, communicating, and learning from the incident are clearly defined.

The reflection, reporting, and resolution pathways described below aim to both provide feedback and guidance to EAPS members on their efforts to support a positive culture as well as a clear mechanism to resolve any problems that arise. *We anticipate all but the most serious incidents can be resolved through reflection, feedback, and open communication between the parties involved, facilitated by the department ombudspeople.*

For serious incidents that require involvement of departmental leadership, we have developed a reporting process that includes possible pathways for resolution and improvement. This internal reporting process does not replace mandatory university-level reporting for violations of university policy. Repeated or egregious violations of our Code of Conduct will lead to specific and relevant consequences. The EAPS community is committed to protecting reporters from retaliation while also informing and listening to those accused of any wrongdoing.

4.1 Pathways for Improving Departmental Citizenship

We will prioritize an ongoing commitment to good departmental citizenship and adherence to the EAPS Code of Conduct, and we encourage our community members to reflect on their actions and seek ways to improve. Faculty and staff are encouraged to include within their annual review documents a confirmation that they have read the EAPS Code of Conduct and a written discussion of the actions they took or future plans to uphold and reinforce the EAPS Code of Conduct. Actions could include, but are not limited to: continuing education on topics related to supporting all identities, new or continuing efforts in teaching/field work/research/mentoring to support a more inclusive and positive environment, and participation in recruiting or outreach activities aimed at increasing diversity in STEM.

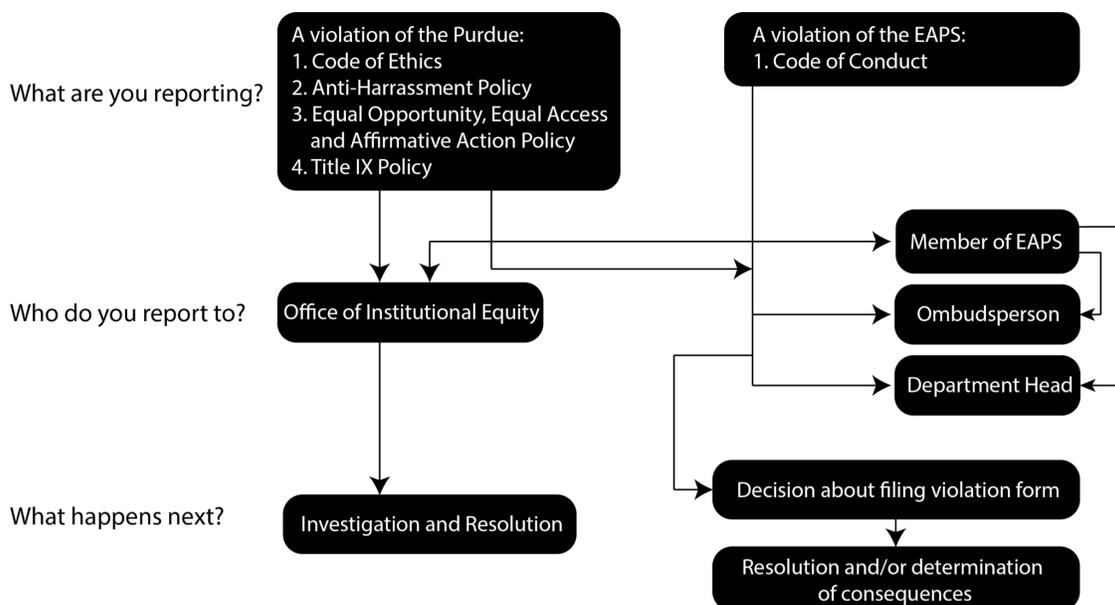
We encourage including this section in annual reports, as it not only allows faculty and staff to review their commitment to good citizenship on an annual basis, but also enables a mechanism for each member to receive feedback and guidance on their performance in relation to the Code of Conduct. For faculty, this section will be reviewed and discussed by the faculty member's Professional Affairs Committee (PAC) and by the department head as part of their annual review process. This section of the Annual Performance Report, like all others, will be considered by the Executive Committee for decisions on merit raise eligibility. For staff, this report will be reviewed by their supervisor as part of the annual review process.

Students do not submit formal annual reports but should aspire to the same standards as faculty and staff. Graduate students must complete an Individual Development Plan (IDP) at the beginning of each academic year which is reviewed by their advisor. As part of the IDP,

graduate students are encouraged to complete a section discussing their commitment to and efforts in upholding the EAPS Code of Conduct each year, which will be reviewed by their advisor. This provides an opportunity for graduate students to receive annual feedback on their departmental citizenship.

4.2 Reporting violations of university policy

In the event of a serious violation of university policy, an official incident report should be filed to (1) the Office of Institutional Equity, (2) Human Resources, or (3) the EAPS department head, as outlined in the figure below. If you are unsure who to report to, the EAPS ombudspeople and department head can help determine whether or not and how a report should be made. However, note that the head and faculty ombudspeople are considered mandatory reporters (see description below).



What constitutes a serious violation that should be reported?

Serious violations that should be reported at the university level include all violations of university policy. This includes but is not limited to:

1. Any behavior violating the Purdue Code of Ethics (<https://www.purdue.edu/policies/ethics/>).
2. Any behavior violating the Purdue Anti-Harassment policy (III.C.1) (<https://www.purdue.edu/policies/ethics/iic1.html>).
3. Any behavior violating the Equal Opportunity, Equal Access and Affirmative Action policy (III.C.2) (<https://www.purdue.edu/policies/ethics/iic2.html>)
4. Any behavior violating Title IX policies (III.C.4) (<https://www.purdue.edu/policies/ethics/iic4.html#history>)
 - a) A University employee conditioning education benefits on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo)

- b) Unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would determine is so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the University's educational programs or activities
- c) Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence or Stalking

There is overlap between some of these Purdue policies and the EAPS Code of Conduct; however, the department-level reporting procedures described below do not replace official reporting to university-level offices for serious violations of university policy. These internal processes do not meet the requirements for filing complaints/grievances under university policy. Violations of the Purdue code of ethics, the anti-harassment policy, or the Title IX policy must be reported outside of the department to the [Office of Institutional Equity](#). The department head and ombudspeople can help facilitate this reporting process, but reporters (either complainants or mandatory reporters) are ultimately responsible for making complaints at the university level.

Mandatory Reporters

Members of EAPS that serve in supervisory roles are considered mandatory reporters by federal law. If an incident that is reported to an individual in a supervisory role is determined to violate either the Title IX or Anti-Harassment Policies of Purdue University as described in section 4.2, they are required to report it to the [Office of Institutional Equity](#). The department head and ombudspeople who are faculty are considered mandatory reporters.

4.3 Reporting EAPS Code of Conduct violations

We recommend that any concerns about incidents, departmental culture, or interpersonal interactions related to the EAPS Code of Conduct should be communicated to the department ombudspeople. The ombudspeople include both faculty, staff, and graduate students who have received training in mediation and conflict resolution. The ombudspeople are committed to listening to and addressing complaints and concerns, and will seek to resolve them with mediation or other resolution mechanisms where possible. Communicating concerns to the ombudspeople will enable conversations on how to improve relationships and department culture. These conversations will help all of us learn how to be better department citizens and move forward as a community.

After mandatory reporting outlined above, violations of the EAPS Code of Conduct can be reported to the departmental ombudspeople or the department head. In some cases, violations of the EAPS Code of Conduct should be documented in a written report to the department head. Examples of incidents that should be documented include:

1. Any behavior that creates major barriers to student matriculation or success
2. Any repeated actions or acute incidents that have a significant negative impact on our departmental culture

In general, complaints/grievances that violate the EAPS Code of Conduct but not Purdue policy will be those reported to EAPS. Reporting can be done in person, or via email. In the case of an incident involving the department head or ombudspeople, reports can also be made to the assistant department head. As part of their training, the department head provides guidance to

the ombudspeople regarding which types of violations must be escalated to the departmental leadership.

Immediately upon receiving a report of a violation of the EAPS Code of Conduct (as defined above), the ombudsperson or department head will determine whether this case requires mandatory reporting to the Office of Institutional Equity. If the incident does not fall into a category requiring mandatory reporting, the ombudsperson or head will work with the reporter to determine whether a Code of Conduct Violation Form will be filed with the department to document the incident.

This form will contain:

- a) The name of the person(s) submitting the allegation and the name and identifying information of the person(s) alleged to have committed the misconduct.
- b) A description of the allegation that includes the date and circumstances of the alleged misconduct.
- c) Any supporting documents or other relevant items.
- d) An explanation of how the allegation relates to misconduct as defined in this policy.
- e) A statement explaining any conflict of interest the person making the allegation has with the person who reportedly committed the violation (e.g., the reporter was previously reprimanded for their own behavior by the purported violator).

This form is not mandatory but is for internal use only and is submitted to the department head for review. Within 30 days of receipt, the head will make a decision on whether to pursue any action related to the incident reported on the form; if so, the head will inform the personnel involved and their supervisor(s) that the form has been filed, and allow them to respond. The person alleged to have violated the Code of Conduct can then meet with the head to discuss the report and/or file a written response to the head.

Reporting to Human Resources (HR)

In some cases, incidents may not rise to the level of violating university policy but still represent serious issues that should be documented at the university level. In these cases, the ombudspeople will suggest that an incident or issue should be communicated to Human Resources (HR) for documentation. These types of communications can be anonymous. Especially in cases of problems with mentoring relationships or interpersonal interactions, documenting these problems is an important first step toward preventing problematic patterns of behavior.

4.4 Resolution

When necessary, violation reports filed with the department head may be used at the discretion of the department head, the executive committee, and the chairs or members of relevant committees to determine access to departmental resources. For faculty and staff, this can include but is not limited to access to merit raises, awards, seed funds, professional development funds, matching funds, sabbaticals, departmental space, contract renewals, access to students, TA support, and teaching waivers. For graduate and undergraduate

students, this can include but is not limited to travel awards, scholarships, and TA support. For undergraduate students, this also includes participation in research and field activities.

The record of these incidents will be kept confidential to the best of the department head's ability but will transfer to subsequent heads.

If a violation report is not filed, the ombudsperson will work with the reporter to seek other forms of resolution. These may include but are not limited to:

- a) Mediation within the department (separately or together)
- b) Mediator from outside the department (e.g., involving the Human Resources Office)
- c) Recommended participation in specific training or workshops relevant to the incident (e.g., implicit bias, anti-racism, etc).

4.5 Preventing Retaliation

Continued adherence to the EAPS Code of Conduct is very important for our goal of ensuring that everyone is treated fairly and equitably and is welcome and appreciated in the department.

In an effort to prevent retaliation, we commit to:

- a) Make every effort to keep reports confidential
- b) When possible, keep reporters anonymous if report violation forms are not filed
- c) Evaluate departmental and committee structures to ensure equity and fair treatment (e.g., remove violators from positions of oversight over the reporter)
- d) Ombudspeople/head participating in regular follow-ups with the reporters to ensure conditions have improved

Section 5: Adoption of the Code of Conduct and Process for Updates

5.1 Adopting and Reviewing the Code of Conduct

The EAPS Code of Conduct was adopted by faculty vote on X/X/XXX and will be reviewed each year. The following opportunities to review the Code of Conduct will be presented to department members:

- **Faculty members and permanent staff** will review the Code of Conduct at the annual Fall faculty and staff retreat, and are encouraged to confirm that they have read and adhered to the Code of Conduct when they submit their annual report to their supervisor each spring.
- **Contracted staff** will be encouraged by their supervisors to review the Code of Conduct when they sign or renew their contracts.
- **Graduate students** will review the Code of Conduct in their first semester in EAPS 602 - New Grad Seminar and are encouraged to confirm that they have read the Code of Conduct as part of their annual checklists.
- **Undergraduates** will review the Code of Conduct in EAPS 137 - Freshman Seminar. Reviewing the Code of Conduct may be required to participate in paid research and teaching assistantships in EAPS, and may be required to participate in field activities.
- **Visitors to EAPS** are also expected to follow the Code of Conduct, although we acknowledge that it is unrealistic for all visitors to be provided a copy of this document.

We encourage hosts to make visitors aware of the Code of Conduct and that serious violations may result in restrictions on their future activities in the department, especially in the case of repeated or long-term visitors. If an incident occurs with a visitor to EAPS, the Code of Conduct can be used to facilitate discussion of our expectations for interactions within EAPS.

To show support for our goal of creating a positive, supportive, and inclusive department culture, all EAPS members are encouraged to publicly share the Code of Conduct and/or pledges to follow the Code of Conduct (e.g., in courses, on group websites).

5.2 Updating the Code of Conduct

This is a living document that should change as our department grows and as we learn how to best support one another. The EAPS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee will maintain responsibility for updating the document. The Department Head will send the Code of Conduct to all EAPS members at the beginning of every academic year. All suggestions for updates should be directed to the Chair of the DEI Committee by April 1, and proposed updates will be voted on at the annual fall faculty and staff retreat.