

ECT Team General Code of Conduct

The Ediacaran-Cambrian Transition collaboration strives to be a place where all members of our community can feel safe and included. Behavior that prevents this from happening is unacceptable, and the principle investigators (PIs) have the authority and responsibility to remove any member of the collaboration if that person's behavior creates a serious problem for the community. In addition to these general guidelines, we will be drafting detailed codes of conduct to accompany future laboratory- and field-based research.

All team participants are to:

- Be treated with respect and consideration
- Be considerate, collegial, and collaborative
- Communicate openly, with civil attitudes, critiquing ideas rather than individuals
- Avoid personal attacks
- Alert a PI if you notice someone in distress, perceive a potentially dangerous situation, or witness a dangerous situation

Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Gender, race-based, or sexual harassment or discrimination
- Sexual misconduct
- Bullying, intimidation, coercion, or threats
- Physical or verbal abuse or assault
- Behavior that endangers the health and safety of oneself or others
- Audio and video recording, or taking images of an individual's presentation, notebook, or code *without* the researcher's permission

Consequences of unacceptable behavior:

- Anyone requested to stop unacceptable behavior is expected to immediately cease and desist
- PIs may institute actions including immediate removal from the general collaboration and/or the specific laboratory or field activity

Reporting unacceptable behavior:

If you are the subject of unacceptable behavior or have witnessed any such behavior, please immediately notify a PI (Emmy Smith, Justin Strauss, Kimberly Lau, Brenhin Keller, Dave Evans, Alan Rooney, Catherine Rose, or Shuhai Xiao) in-person, by email, or by phone. Anyone experiencing or witnessing behavior that constitutes an immediate or serious threat to public safety, or a criminal act is expected to contact 911 or, if abroad, their university's international health services. Those witnessing a potential criminal act should also take actions necessary to maintain their own personal safety.

Note: This general code of conduct is subject to change in order to re-evaluate its effectiveness.

ECT Team Sexual Misconduct Policy

Goals

- Provide a safe and respectful environment for all ECT participants. This includes faculty, researchers, students, technicians, visiting students, interns, guests, volunteers, etc.
- Ensure all ECT participants have access to resources and support for addressing and resolving interpersonal conflicts, including gender-based discrimination, harassment and sexual assault.
- Detail specific reporting procedures to enable rapid communication and response in the event that any participant feels unsafe.

Expectations

Everyone involved in the ECT collaboration has the right to be free from discrimination, unlawful harassment, sexual misconduct, and violence. Title IX is a federal law that gives everyone the right to equal access to education and employment in the absence of sexual harassment and gender discrimination. During your involvement in the ECT collaboration you are expected to follow the law, as well as specific guidelines laid out in the general and more detailed codes of conduct.

Unacceptable behaviors

The following behaviors are considered violations of the general Code of Conduct:

- **Sexual Harassment** includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, and offensive comments related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, physical appearance, and body size.
- **Sexual Misconduct** includes rape, sexual assault, inappropriate touching, sexual battery, sexual exploitation, coercion, and other forms of non-consensual sexual activity.
- **Stalking** is repeatedly following, harassing, threatening, or intimidating including by telephone, mail, electronic communication, or social media.
- **Patterns** of inappropriate social contact, such as requesting/assuming inappropriate levels of intimacy with others.
- **Dating and Domestic Violence** includes emotional, verbal, and economic abuse with or without the presence of physical abuse.
- **Retaliation** is adverse employment, academic or other actions against anyone reporting a violation of this policy (including reporting to any PI or a specific Title IX office).
- **Title IX Violation** is the collective term used for incidents involving discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, and/or retaliation.

Reporting Options

Individuals involved in this collaboration have multiple reporting avenues. No matter your home institution or affiliation, you can report an incident that you experienced, observed, or were told about, in the following ways (contact information listed under Important Contacts below):

- Disclosure to any PI
- Disclosure to any institutional Title IX office
- Disclosure to police (911)
- Confidential reporting and support resources are listed under Important Contacts below

What happens after a report is made

Reporting to any of the listed options above will result in disclosure to the PI management team and the appropriate Title IX office, who will work together alongside the individual who was harmed to determine a course of action. It is important to note that *all* PIs are “responsible employees” and mandatory reporters. This means they are required to report anything they experience, see, or hear about to their respective Title IX offices. The next step in the institutional Title IX office process is that an investigator from their office will conduct outreach to the targeted individual of the inappropriate behavior, which includes providing resources for support. They will then ask this individual if they want the office to move forward with an investigation. The complainant is in control of the process at this point. If they do not want an investigation to move forward, *it will not*. The only way that an investigation will move forward *without* the support of the targeted individual is if:

1. The incident was part of a larger pattern throughout the collaboration (one example is if multiple individuals reported the same person for comments that constituted sexual harassment or discrimination);
2. The accused individual has a history of violence, sexual violence, arrest, or the incident was committed by multiple perpetrators;
3. The incident was perpetrated with a weapon, included physical violence (such as hitting, restraint, pushing, or kicking), or the threat of violence;
4. The affected individual is a minor.

The ECT collaboration is a grantee of the National Science Foundation (NSF). As such, information about any findings of sexual or other types of harassment and actions taken by the PIs will be provided to the NSF. See [NSF Important Notice No. 144](#) for additional information.

The complainant will *always* be included and informed of the results of their disclosure, any action that is taken, and the results of an investigation.

Potential Actions

The PIs have the ability to take immediate and long-term actions to ensure the safety of the team participants. Immediate action could include changes in field accommodation or lab assignments and other options up to removal of any team member from the current activity. Long-term actions occur once an investigation is completed. Depending on the finding, the PIs may choose

to change the immediate action that was taken, and/or implement longer term actions and sanctions.

After an incident is brought to our attention, the PIs will include the complainant in their discussion about how to make the environment safe again. For example, if the complainant needs support in talking with someone about inappropriate behaviors, the PIs will either directly mediate, or find resources to support the mediation of, the conversation. If the complainant says they do not feel safe being in a certain situation with another person, then the PIs will work with them to find an acceptable arrangement (such as housing or laboratory changes, mediation, up to possible removal of the accused individual from the field or laboratory).

What to do if someone discloses to you (and you are not a mandatory reporter)

If a friend or colleague discloses that they have been targeted by sexual misconduct, there are a number of ways in which you can support them:

- Tell them that you believe them, that you support them, that it is not their fault, that no one deserves to be targeted by such behavior.
- Provide them with the list of contact information and resources included in this document.
- Ask if they want your help in finding out what their options are.
- Ask what else you can do to help.
- Respect their decision not to talk with you if they don't want to.

It is common for survivors of sexual assault not to initially name what happened to them as rape or abuse although they may recognize harmful behavior. Over time, as they feel safer, they may try to understand the experience through talking about it. The support of a friend can be extremely beneficial in the healing process.

Remember that the well-being of the person who was harmed must be prioritized. Reporting an incident to police or others without the support or knowledge of the person who was harmed could be more traumatic than helpful. All PIs are a "responsible employee" and therefore must report any disclosure to their respective Title IX office. As described above, this means that the office will conduct outreach to the person harmed, and then it is *still* their decision whether to have an investigation move forward, or not. The individual who was harmed has the right to make the decision to have an investigation move forward or not.

What to do if you have been sexually assaulted, or targeted by sexual misconduct

We support you. You have the right to:

- Talk to anyone about your experience;
- To not talk to anyone about your experience (silence can make the healing process more difficult, and we encourage you to reach out to a trusted friend or one of the resources listed below);
- Change your mind about talking to anyone about your experience at any time;

- Report to a PI, the police, or any of the other reporting options listed above;
- Bring someone with you to provide support during reporting or any resulting discussions;
- To seek reasonable accommodations to minimize the impact of the experience on the success of your work;
- To seek medical assistance, including medical care and a medical forensic exam.

This is not intended to be a comprehensive list.

What to do if you see something inappropriate

The most effective way we can prevent harm to any member of our community is by looking out for each other. All ECT team participants are expected to share in the responsibility of creating a safe environment and to act when they witness behavior that could be harmful to others. In any potentially harmful situation there are often other individuals along the way who recognize there is a problem and have the ability to step in and help the targeted individual. Active bystanders are individuals who take the responsibility to act when they see something or hear something that makes them uncomfortable.

Here are some suggestions to take an active role in the safety of our community:

- Be aware of your surroundings and social situations.
- If a situation makes you or others uncomfortable, or it looks like someone is being targeted, recognize that this is a problem and that you can be part of the solution to help.
- Take action to diffuse the situation while staying safe; some ideas include checking in with the targeted individual, telling a PI what is happening, recruiting help from friends, diffusing the situation by distracting those involved (look at that neat thing over there!).
- If you are uncertain if there is a problem, check in with the individuals involved to see if they are okay or need help.

Look out for your friends and colleagues, but never put yourself at risk!

Contact Information

PI Emmy Smith (Johns Hopkins University):

Phone: 214 384 8884 (c) , 410 516 8687 (w)

Email: efsmith@jhu.edu

Johns Hopkins Title IX Office: oie@jhu.edu, 410.516.8075

Online reporting form: <https://forms.jh.edu/view.php?id=158633>

Director and Title IX Coordinator: All JHU OIE staff and contact info listed here:

<https://oie.jhu.edu/contact-us/oie-staff/>

PI Brenhin Keller (Dartmouth College):

Phone: (607) 351-9811

Email: brenhin.keller@dartmouth.edu

PI Justin Strauss (Dartmouth College):

Phone: (805) 256-4772

Email: justin.v.strauss@dartmouth.edu
Dartmouth College Title IX Office: titleix@dartmouth.edu, (603-646-0922)
Online reporting form:
https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?DartmouthCollege&layout_id=10
Director and Title IX Coordinator: Kristi Clemens (603-646-9850)

PI Kimberly Lau (Pennsylvania State University)

Phone: 408-921-4285 (m), 814-863-9775 (o)
Email: kvlau@psu.edu
Penn State Title IX Office: titleix@psu.edu, (814) 867-0099
Online reporting form: <https://titleix.psu.edu/filing-a-report/>
Director and Title IX Coordinator: Chris Harris (814) 867-0099

PI David Evans (Yale University)

Phone: 203-640-5726
Email: david.evans@yale.edu

PI Alan Rooney (Yale University)

Phone: 617-335-3512 (m) 203-4323761 (o)
Email: alan.rooney@yale.edu
Yale University Title IX Office: <https://provost.yale.edu/title-ix> (203-432-2000)
Online reporting form: <https://smr.yale.edu/report-incident>
Director and Title IX Coordinator: University Coordinator: Stephanie Spangler
stephanie.spangler@yale.edu Tel:203-432-6854

PI Shuhai Xiao (Virginia Tech)

Phone: 540-231-1366
Email: xiao@vt.edu
VA Tech Title IX Office: Katie Polidoro, polidoro@vt.edu, 540-231-1824
Online reporting form: <https://oea.vt.edu/about/requesting-assistance.html>
Director and Title IX Coordinator: Katie Polidoro
Intake and Case Coordinator: Katie Polidoro, polidoro@vt.edu, 540-231-1824

PI Catherine Rose (University of St Andrews)

Phone: +44 (0)1334 462874
Email: cvr@st-andrews.ac.uk
St Andrews Non-Academic Misconduct Office: discipline@st-andrews.ac.uk, +44 (0)1334 46
4107

Other non-institutional, confidential options:

National Sexual Assault Hotline- Provides confidential, one-on-one, crisis support 24/7
Phone: 1.800.656-4673
Website: <https://rainn.org/get-help/national-sexual-assault-hotline/>

Resources used in the creation of this policy

Development of this policy was based on similar policies at the Toolik Research Station (University of Alaska at Fairbanks).