

**From the Department Head:** *Ethical conduct, both personal and scientific, is very important to the UConn Physics Department. This document outlines the values that bind the community of people who make up the UConn Physics Department. All members of the Department are expected to follow, and to actively promote, these ethical conduct standards. This document was written with input from all constituencies: students, staff, faculty. It is also included as part of our Physics Department By-Laws.*

[bylaws-Appendix-E-Conduct-and-Ethics-FINAL.pdf \(uconn.edu\)](#)

## **Physics Department Code of Conduct and Ethics Statement**

The members of the physics department are committed to assuring the highest standard of integrity in all aspects of University life. The faculty, graduate students, postdocs and staff must follow the Employee Code of Conduct of the University (see <https://policy.uconn.edu/2011/05/17/employee-code-of-conduct/>) and the undergraduate students must follow the Student Code (see <https://community.uconn.edu/>). Members of the department must take the relevant compliance training and follow them. The trainings include topics such as the University Code of Conduct, professional ethics, and diversity, equity and inclusion. It constitutes the University Guidelines, and is consistent with the Laws of the State of CT.

The members of the physics department embrace the ethics and policies spearheaded by the professional societies: the American Physical Society (APS), the American Astronomical Society (AAS), the American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT), the Materials Research Society (MRS) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). Inspired by the corresponding statements of APS, the following sections express what we believe and strive for, and are not meant to imply any rules or reporting requirements beyond those in the University Codes of Conduct.

### **Departmental Code of Conduct**

It is the policy of the UConn Physics Department that all department members will conduct themselves in a professional manner that is free from any form of incivility, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. Faculty, postdocs, staff and students will treat each other with respect and consideration to create a supportive, inclusive, accessible and welcoming professional environment in the department. Actions that create a hostile, intimidating, and/or offensive work environment for any group or individual should be eliminated and will not be tolerated as they do not reflect the values of our department. Creating a supportive environment is the responsibility of all physics department members.

The members of the physics department will avoid any inappropriate actions or statements based on individual characteristics such as age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, nationality, political affiliation, ability status, educational background and/or research area. Discriminatory, harassing, disruptive or uncivil behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. Harassment includes but is not limited to inappropriate, uncivil or intimidating behavior and language, unwelcome jokes or comments, unwanted touching or attention, offensive images, and stalking. Slander, libel, and maligning are forms of uncivil behavior and will not be tolerated.

The department and its members strive to avoid systemic and implicit bias against any group or individual. Systemic bias occurs when policies, procedures, and practices of an institution result in the exclusion of some groups, and the promotion of others. Implicit bias occurs when an individual has a preference for, or aversion to, a group or an individual without conscious knowledge.

Everyone, regardless of their intentions, has implicit biases. Members of the physics department strive to raise awareness and mitigate the influences of implicit bias.

## **Departmental Code of Professional Ethics**

Physicists and Astronomers are citizens of the global community of science and share the responsibility for its welfare. The success of the scientific enterprise rests upon two ethical pillars. The first of them is the obligation to tell the truth, which includes the prohibition of fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism. The second is the obligation to treat people well, which includes the prohibition of abuse of power, and the encouragement of the practice of fair and respectful relationships with colleagues, subordinates and students, and the avoidance of bias. Professional integrity in the conception, conduct, and communication of professional activities reflects not only on the reputations of individuals and their organizations, but also on the image and credibility of the physics and astronomy professions in the eyes of scientific colleagues, governments and the public. Physicists and Astronomers must strive for continual improvement in their standards of ethical behavior, and transmit improving practices with enthusiasm to future generations.

## **Building a More Inclusive Culture**

Problems within the Department should be identified, reported, and remedied in a professional and respectful manner in order to build mutual trust and a more inclusive culture. Reporting plays an important role for that. If a department member observes inappropriate comments or actions they should report them to the appropriate administrative authority immediately.

Violations of the University's Code of Conduct or Professional Ethics policies, to which this document adheres, will be reported to the appropriate administrative authority (Department Head, Dean's Office and/or Office of University Compliance). An overview of the reporting paths at UConn can be found under this link <https://inform.uconn.edu/>.

Concerns that do not rise to the level of university compliance reporting should be brought to the attention of the Department Head, Associate Department Heads or other trusted individuals in the Department who are committed to help build a more inclusive culture. Conversations with the Department Head can be confidential upon request except for situations where the Department Head may have reporting obligations, see <https://equity.uconn.edu/policiesprocedures>.

Concerns about the Department Head can be brought to the Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Any member of the Department can consult the Ombuds office <https://ombuds.uconn.edu/> for advice at any point. The collective bargaining units <http://uconnaaup.org/> and <http://ucpea.ct.aft.org/> as well as the UConn Workplace Navigators <https://navigators.initiative.uconn.edu/> provide further very helpful resources.

All members of the Department must follow the non-retaliation policy. Reports of harassment, bullying, microaggressions, and violations of university policy and law will be taken seriously and can result in a range of responses.

Last update: Sept 1, 2022.