

## Code of Conduct (Handbook Section)

The following code of conduct emphasizes that graduate students in MSU's philosophy graduate program take the professional and ethical aspects of their academic education seriously and carry out their studies with proper accountability. This code of conduct is presented to students because they will one day become members of either non-academic professions or academic professions, which has imposed upon itself standards of professional behavior and conduct designed to protect the public from fraudulent practice. This code of conduct is not intended to abridge, supersede, or modify any other university document.

### University Documents

The department follows the general guidelines and policies set by MSU. These policies can be found here:

- Spartan Life: <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/>.
- General Student Regulations: <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/regulations/selected>.
- Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities: <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/graduate-student-rights-and-responsibilities>.

The department adheres to MSU's policies regarding non-discrimination, anti-harassment and non-retaliation (including sexual harassment) that can be found here

- <https://civilrights.msu.edu/policies/>

### APA

Basic parameters of this code of conduct are taken from the APA *Code of Conduct*

- <https://www.apaonline.org/page/codeofconduct>

### General Principles of Conduct

- Treating others fairly, equitably, and with dignity;
- respecting the philosophical opinions and traditions of others, without disparaging those who hold positions at odds with one's own;
- maintaining integrity and trust in all professional commitments and interactions; and
- recognizing that power and seniority do not offer reasons for being inattentive to the values just mentioned.

### Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment includes degrading, hostile, or offensive conduct or comment by a person towards another that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause the target to be humiliated, intimidated, or otherwise gratuitously harmed.

- Typical examples of bullying and harassment include
  - verbal aggression and yelling;
  - spreading malicious rumors;
  - calling someone conventionally derogatory names or using derogatory stereotypes to describe them;
  - humiliating initiation practices (“hazing”);
  - “cyber-bullying” through email, text messages, or social media;
  - stalking;
  - subjecting an individual to repeated, unsolicited criticism, except when this is clearly limited to a matter of scholarly dispute;
- subjecting a person to public ridicule;
- sabotaging a person's work; scapegoating (e.g., blaming a disabled person for the need to make accommodations);
- and other hostile conduct that diminishes the capacity of its target to function effectively as a teacher, worker, or scholar.

This injunction is not intended to discourage

- expressing differences of opinion;
- arguing against positions taken in seminars or departmental events, including those of faculty;
- defending philosophical positions and viewpoints in discussions and in writing;
- expressing dissatisfactions about departmental leadership, guidance committees, faculty, graduate students, or any other conduct by members of the philosophy department;
- offering constructive feedback, guidance, or advice regarding scholarship or work;
- or reasonable actions taken in the capacity of instructor for the sake of pedagogy and scholarship.

## **Electronic Communications**

Graduate students should remain aware at all times that statements made online or through social media are easily misunderstood due to lack of contextual clues, and can easily become overblown. While respect for academic freedom and freedom of speech are paramount, graduate students should keep in mind the following guidelines when making use of institutional equipment, servers, websites, and email for engaging with social media:

- In a professional setting, it's best to avoid ad hominem arguments and personal attacks, especially if they amount to slander, libel, and/or sexual harassment.
- Language used in professional electronic communications should use the same kind of inclusive language and reflect the same kind of mutual respect as is expected in the classroom or other face-to-face interactions.
- In compliance with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA) and other professional standards, confidentiality should always be respected.
- While sometimes unavoidable, anonymity in online posts should be used judiciously.