

Department of Astrophysical Sciences

Community Expectations for Respectful and Professional Conduct

We, the members of the Department of Astrophysical Sciences at Princeton University, including students, faculty, staff, post-doctoral researchers, and research scientists, strive for an equitable, respectful, and professional environment. We recognize that doing excellent research and learning in the classroom and from one another require a positive climate. Thus, we commit to abide by the following expectations, designed to foster a climate in which all of us may reach our full potential.

All members of the University Community are subject to the University's policies and procedures, including the University's policies on nondiscrimination and equal opportunity in [Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities](#) (RRR); the University's Policy on [Discrimination and/or Harassment](#); and the University's [Policies on Sexual Misconduct](#). The expectations described in this document are not intended to substitute or modify those rights and obligations in any way, and in case of a conflict, University policies will govern.

Section I: Guidelines

Be courteous and polite.

Abide by the University policy on [Respect for Others](#): *Respect for the rights, privileges, and sensibilities of each other is essential in preserving the spirit of community at Princeton. Actions which make the atmosphere intimidating, threatening, or hostile to individuals are therefore regarded as serious offenses.* Examples are to respect each others' pronouns, to refrain from commenting on others' appearance, and to respect the personal space of others.

Behave professionally and conduct research and collaboration in an ethical manner (See the [AAS Code of Ethics](#).)

Be respectful of others' right to express their views and opinions. Abide by the [Department Ground Rules for Respectful Discussion](#). Keep Department communications (e.g., messages to Departmental mailing lists and on the Departmental Slack) appropriate for a professional audience.

Account for differences in career stage or department role in your interactions. For example, communications that may be appropriate (e.g.) between two faculty members, or two students, may be inappropriate when power differences exist (as in between a professor and a student).

Abide by the Princeton policy on [harassment](#). Harassment of any sort, exclusionary or disparaging comments, or slurs based on protected characteristics are never appropriate. Per the University, *“Protected characteristics are those personal traits, characteristics and/or beliefs that are defined by applicable law as protected from discrimination and/or harassment. They include race, creed, color, sex, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, ancestry, religion, physical or mental disability, veteran status, marital or domestic partnership status, affectional or sexual orientation and/or other characteristics protected by applicable law.”*

Abide by the University policy on [protection from retaliation](#): *“The University expressly prohibits any form of retaliatory action against any member of the University community who in good faith: (1) files a report, complaint or grievance under this policy (or with an external entity); (2) opposes in a reasonable manner an action or policy believed to*

constitute a violation of this policy; or (3) participates in University investigations, compliance reviews, or discipline proceedings under this policy.”

Section II: Campus & Departmental Resources

Members of the Department community are encouraged to avail themselves of the University’s policies and procedures for immediate or serious concerns (e.g., sexual assault, immediate threat to your health and safety, or the health and safety of another). [This page](#) details the immediate reporting and confidential resources available through the University.

Issues and suggestions broadly related to the department climate can come to the Climate Committee, [anonymously](#) or to any member of the committee. If you want to discuss or report a specific incident within the department, the Director of Undergraduate Studies (Neta Bahcall), Director of Graduate Studies (Gaspar Bakos), and the postdoctoral coordinators (Jeremy Goodman and Eliot Quataert) support the undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdocs, respectively. These concerns can also be brought directly to the Department Chair (Michael Strauss) or Associate Chair (Eve Ostriker). In cases of sexual assault and misconduct, the University mandates that if faculty learn of such incidents, they must be [reported](#). In such cases the University encourages individuals to seek help from [confidential resources](#) for advice on how to proceed.

There are resources available outside the department as well. Undergraduates can seek help from the Director of Student Life in their College. The Dean of the Graduate School has a number of [resources](#) for graduate students, and the Dean of the Faculty has support for postdocs. A number of [confidential resources](#) are also available.

Section III: Contributing to a Positive Climate

We can all play a role in maintaining a positive climate. The department is striving to remove challenges and barriers to success for members of historically under-represented groups and we invite every member of our community to participate in that goal as you can. We encourage all members of our community to:

Challenge your own assumptions about people and the sources of those assumptions.

Listen and consider suggestions from all department members, regardless of their roles, to improve the climate or work relationships.

Consider intervening when colleagues are disrespectful of a group or class of people (even when members of that group are not present), or report such incidents when they occur.

Take opportunities for education or training on diversity, inclusivity, reporting, and bystander intervention techniques.

We acknowledge the Code of Conduct from the University of Wisconsin-Madison Astronomy Department from which we adopted some of this language.