

**Provisional Code of Conduct**  
**ASOR Annual Meeting and Other ASOR Sponsored Events**  
**November 2019**

**I. Introduction**

In 2015 the Board of Trustees for ASOR approved a Policy on Professional Conduct that laid out the basic principles ASOR members are expected to follow in their professional activities. Subsequently ASOR adopted the Code of Conduct for Fieldwork Projects. While these documents address most professional activities, they do not provide specific guidance for behavior at the ASOR Annual Meeting. While this silence may have been predicated on the assumption that the aforementioned policies should suffice, events at other professional conferences in 2018 and 2019, including the promulgation of codes of conduct for such events, suggested to the ASOR Board that the organization should follow these other professional organizations such as SCS, SAA, and the European Association of Archaeologists and adopt a policy on conduct at the ASOR Annual Meeting or other ASOR sponsored events.

**II. Statement on Harassment**

The annual meeting and other ASOR sponsored events provide opportunities for ASOR members to engage in the active exchange of ideas both within and outside formal sessions and to interact and network with colleagues. This policy does not seek to limit the subjects of inquiry or in any way to constrain robust debate and dialogue. Participants in the annual meeting must feel free to explore the ideas that are raised in and out of the formal sessions. At the same time this activity should always occur within an atmosphere of mutual respect, recognizing the diversity of ASOR membership and of those who participate in the conference. Attendees, participants, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors and vendors (hereinafter attendees) at any ASOR-sponsored event, including online venues and official or unofficial social events occurring at ASOR-sponsored meetings, are entitled to expect an atmosphere that is free from any kind of disrespect and are expected to adhere to the provisions of this code irrespective of whether they are members of ASOR.

To that end, ASOR will not tolerate harassment in any form. The policies referenced above, as well as ASOR's non-discrimination policy, emphasize the organization's commitment to a professional environment in which the dignity of every individual is recognized and valued and individuals are not subjected to discrimination based on categories such as gender, which includes real or perceived gender identity, religion, age, race, disability, and sexual orientation and adds the other federally-protected categories of familial status (i.e., marital and parental situation, including pregnancy), color, and national origin.

This means that harassment, intimidation, and bullying of any kind have no place at the ASOR Annual Meeting. For purposes of this policy harassment includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment such as unwelcome sexual advances, or other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature. Harassment also pertains to activities/behaviors such as stalking, queer/trans bullying, or hostility or abuse based on age, disability, religion, race or ethnicity. Such conduct is harmful, disrespectful, and unprofessional. Attendees at the Annual Meeting shall not engage in

harassment, bullying, or intimidation of other attendees whether in person or online or through other forms of media, such as unwanted photography/recording whether in or outside a session, or through sustained disruption of talks or other events, and their attendance at the meeting is an express acceptance of the obligation to follow the directives of this policy. Attendees should be mindful that they are bound by the codes of conduct at their own institutions and, as applicable, the provisions of Title IX, and that this policy reinforces those codes.

In the event that an ASOR attendee experiences or witnesses harassment, bullying, or intimidation at the meeting that is inconsistent with the values articulated in ASOR's Policy on Professional Conduct, the attendee should contact ASOR's Executive Director or other member of the Executive Committee and is encouraged to make a report in writing to them immediately or as soon as is practicable. The Executive Committee will work together to look into the reported behavior, to contact the person who has reported the behavior, and, if warranted, to contact the person about whom the complaint has been made. ASOR may take further and immediate action at the annual meeting, such as removal of an individual from the meeting without providing any refund of registration or membership fees, if complaints are made onsite and such a response is deemed necessary. ASOR may, if circumstances warrant it, bar the individual from attending one or more subsequent meetings or revoke the individual's membership in ASOR depending on the severity of the matter. ASOR may also exclude from the Annual Meeting or other ASOR sponsored events any individual censured by his or her home institution for harassment of any kind as described above.

**Charge**  
**Annual Meeting Code of Conduct Committee**  
**April 2019**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the committee that seeks to develop an ASOR Code of Conduct for the Annual Meeting.<sup>1</sup> The leadership of this committee has now been finalized, and I am pleased that ASOR Trustee Emily Miller Bonney will serve as the committee chair. Emily should be in touch with you shortly in order to discuss next steps as the committee begins its work.

We envision that this Code of Conduct will address multiple issues concerning the safety and well-being of participants at the ASOR Annual Meeting including but not limited to (1) discrimination based on sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, and religion; (2) harassment, including (a) sexual harassment, (b) harassment that creates a hostile or intimidating environment, (c) harassment that demeans a person or group of persons and that the person responsible knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause the target to be humiliated, intimidated, or otherwise gratuitously harmed; and (d) harassment that functions implicitly or explicitly to limit others' participation in the Annual Meeting's program and associated activities; (3) assault, including sexual assault. The code should also include plans for emergency management of such incidents at the Annual Meeting.

More specifically, we hope an ASOR Code of Conduct for the Annual Meeting can set forward a series of principles for respectful and professional behavior to which every participant at the ASOR Annual Meeting should aspire, as well as a series of best practices that ASOR should strive to enact. Such principles might include articulating expectations regarding professional and respectful behavior that ASOR has for every participant at the ASOR Annual Meeting. Best practices might require ASOR to develop more robust plans for emergency management: for example, one of ASOR's sister societies prints emergency phone numbers (the numbers for hotel security) on the back of participants' name tags.

We envision that an ASOR Code of Conduct for the Annual Meeting will, in tone, model itself on and be fully consonant with the ASOR Policy on Professional Conduct (with which any proposed Code of Conduct — like any ASOR policy — needs to be fully consonant). Specifically, the ASOR Policy on Professional Conduct deliberately set itself to be aspirational: to articulate a series of principles to which ASOR members aspire to adhere and best practices that ASOR members strive to enact. Conversely, we heard very clearly during the process that brought the ASOR Policy on Professional Conduct into being that our members did not want ASOR to become a policing body, by setting forth mechanisms of enforcement if the Policy's principles and best practices were not followed. The recently developed ASOR Code of Conduct

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<sup>1</sup> As appropriate this code should be applied to other meetings/symposia that ASOR organizes or to which it lends its name as a sponsor and to other events associated with ASOR e.g., cultural heritage workshops and events; regional meetings; international symposia.

for Fieldwork Projects was drafted based on this conviction, and we envision the ASOR Code of Conduct for the Annual Meeting will need to embrace, as fully as possible, this conviction as well.

Nonetheless, in the same way that directors of field projects must have some means for addressing participants' problematic behavior, an ASOR Code of Conduct for the Annual Meeting will need to offer some means by which ASOR might address egregiously problematic behavior at its Annual Meeting. The recent incident at the Society for Classical Studies (SCS) Annual Meeting --<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/01/07/racist-comments-directed-classics-scholar-disciplinary-meeting-floor-classicists>; <https://www.chronicle.com/article/After-Racist-Incidents-Mire-a/245430> -- demonstrates the need for ASOR to have a policy that allows for a quick, on-the-spot responses to incidents as they unfold, just as was possible at the SCS Annual Meeting under the terms of the Society for Classical Studies Annual Meeting Harassment Statement (<https://classicalstudies.org/annual-meeting/scs-annual-meeting-harassment-statement>). We do not advise, however, that ASOR put into place a multi-faceted and multi-layered adjudicatory process that we believe would go beyond what our members want (for an example of such, see [https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/Meetings/Professional\\_Conduct\\_Procedure.pdf](https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/Meetings/Professional_Conduct_Procedure.pdf)).

In short, we think the goal of an ASOR Code of Conduct for the Annual Meeting should be primarily proactive: to set out guidelines that help and encourage participants avoid the sorts of inappropriate behaviors (harassment, assault, bullying, discrimination) we noted above and that allows ASOR to deal promptly with emergencies that do arise.

Many thanks, again, for your willingness to serve on the important committee. We look forward to supporting you in every way that we can, and we also encourage you to seek help and support from others in ASOR who might have particular expertise to bring to bear. These people include Beth Alpert Nakhai, the Chair of the Initiative on the Status of Women; Richard Coffman, the Chair of the ASOR Board, who is an attorney and could help navigate any legal issues and questions that might arise in your discussions; Lynn Swartz Dodd, who was the Chair of the Ethics Working Group; and Virginia Herrmann, who chaired the CAP sub-committee that wrote the ASOR Code of Conduct for Fieldwork Projects. Andy Vaughn, the ASOR Executive Director, can also help identify sister societies that have developed codes of conduct for their annual meetings and make those codes available for your reference as you work to develop a similar code of conduct for ASOR.

As always, all our best, and good luck!

Sincerely,

Susan Ackerman  
ASOR President

Sharon Herbert  
ASOR Vice President  
Chair, Chairs Coordinating Council