

Harvard Astronomy Graduate Code of Conduct

This document serves to define what workplace harassment is to the graduate students of the Harvard University Department of Astronomy and how we as a community strive to create an environment in which everyone feels productive, welcome, and valued.

As members of this community, we have a responsibility to hold ourselves to a high standard anytime we are interacting with our peers or serving as representatives, whether that be in-person or online.

We outline below our values and some of the ways we can fail to uphold them through types of behaviors that can constitute harassment (both sexual and non-sexual), along with ways we can hold each other accountable.

Statement of Values:

As graduate students in the Department of Astronomy at Harvard University, we are a community striving for the advancement of astronomy and astrophysics. **As a community, we are committed to being welcoming and supportive to all students regardless of sex, gender, race, color, religion, nationality/immigration status, socioeconomic class, disability-status, etc.**

We will be sensitive to the needs of our community and commit to work for the good of each individual member. As a community we are committed to holding the following values in our interactions with those who intersect with our community.

The following is a list of our community values:

- We value our peers and treat each other with respect in our interactions.
- We value and listen to critical input from one another, constantly wanting to change and improve our community for the good of present and future students.
- We are inclusive. We do not tolerate racism, sexism, ableism, classism - or any other action which serves to contribute to an environment that is hostile to any member of our community.
- We value the work of our peers and demonstrate this through celebrating each others' accomplishments.
- We value the input of our peers and work to make all voices heard.
- We will allow ourselves to be held accountable to each other.

General Harassment:

Harassment can occur peer-to-peer or mentor-to-mentee. In the case of peer-to-peer harassment, individual graduate students must make serious judgement calls in their conduct with others. They should consider how their actions will contribute to the advancement of astronomy and if this behavior, especially if repeated, makes someone uncomfortable.

The case of mentor-to-mentee harassment can be more subtle. Advisors can inadvertently or intentionally subject their students to unrealistic expectations or prioritize the student's work over their health. Forms of academic bullying can also manifest in interactions between senior and junior astronomers. **In any case of harassment, the graduate student community is committed to supporting our values stated previously and supporting students seeking help.**

The following is a list of examples which constitute general workplace harassment:

- Any discriminatory remarks, comments, gestures, or jokes, including (but not limited to) racial, religious, gender, age, and disability-based harassment
- Any form of emotional harassment, including (but not limited to) trivializing a person or their work, repeatedly challenging what the person says, or making ostracizing comments/insults/put-downs
- Any form of workplace bullying, including (but not limited to) false accusations, hostile/intimidating behavior (verbal or non-verbal), stealing work/ideas, or sabotage/defamation, including spreading rumors about or discrediting someone
- Any other behavior or speech that is unwanted or makes the receiving person (or other people that observe it) uncomfortable
- Any form of workplace abuse whereby a person in a superior position mistreats a less senior person, holds that person to unrealistic expectations, or disregards that person's personal health & well-being in favor of work-related matters

Sexual Harassment:

As a general rule, sexual harassment includes (but is not limited to) unwanted touching, unwanted comments of a sexual nature, and generally sexist behavior.

A non-exhaustive list of examples is given below:

- Lewd jokes or sexual anecdotes
- Suggestive correspondence (letters, notes, emails, audio, video, etc.)

- Sexually inappropriate media (audio, video, etc.)
- Making inappropriate (suggestive or unwanted) sexual gestures or behaviors
- Making inappropriate comments about appearance, clothing, or body parts
- Inappropriate or unwanted touching or physical contact, including but not limited to: pinching, hugging, holding, patting, rubbing, or purposefully brushing up against another person without that person's *explicit consent*
- Asking sexual or intrusive questions (e.g., questions about someone's sexual history, sexual orientation, or romantic relationships)
- Making offensive comments about someone's sexual orientation or gender identity
- Uncomfortable or unwanted proximity to another person
- Any other behavior or speech that is knowingly unwanted or makes the receiving person uncomfortable

Maintaining an atmosphere of accountability:

We will allow ourselves to be held accountable to each other, respect being challenged for our behavior, and remain willing to get advice on how we as individuals can help create a welcoming community where we can all thrive.

Making mistakes is how we learn, both as individuals and as a community. If someone points one out, it represents a learning opportunity that helps us maintain an atmosphere of accountability.

The following is a list of goals for maintaining an accountable community:

- We aim to create an environment that enables and empowers each member to speak out against inappropriate behavior and harassment
- We want the members of our grad student community to know that harassment (intentional or not) creates a hostile environment and makes members feel excluded and unwelcome
- While mistakes are bound to happen, we can work together to prevent them from being repeated
- If any harassing behaviors are happening to a student with their advisor or in their collaborations, they should know that it is not their fault and they should not risk their health to live up to unrealistic advisor expectations

Points of Contact:

If you feel harassed or uncomfortable in your work environment, please feel free to reach out to the following groups and/or people:

See for a list of resources also <https://astronomy.fas.harvard.edu/resources-1>.

It is important to note that each resource has a different level of “confidentiality”. For an overview of this see the following Harvard title IX handout: https://titleix.harvard.edu/files/titleix/files/harvard_title_ix_understanding_confidentiality.pdf

1. Your CAS representatives: Locke Patton (A-110) and TBD
2. Mentors, including your faculty mentor, graduate student mentor, or mentoring program coordinators
3. Accountability allies: Munazza Alam (P-201), Theron Carmichael (P-306), & John Lewis (A-205)
4. Professors, including our Director of Graduate Studies (Charlie Conroy; P-321) or your academic advisor
5. **The Title IX office**, including Seth Avakian (avakian@fas.harvard.edu) and Danielle Farrell <https://gsas.harvard.edu/person/danielle-farrell>.

Seth Avakian is besides title IX officer also the coordinator for non title-IX issues regarding professional conduct. Professional conduct includes other forms of discrimination and harassment, generalized bullying, academic misconduct (intentionally inaccurate authorship, data manipulation, uncompensated labor) as well as violations of other university policies, professional standards, and laws.

Danielle Farrell is also the director of student services and **assists students** having personal or academic difficulties to navigate and connect with GSAS, Harvard, and local resources. You can schedule online an appointment with her.

6. **University Ombudsman** see <https://ombudsman.harvard.edu/>. “The University Ombudsman Office is an independent, neutral and confidential place for visitors to discuss their academic and workplace issues and concerns.”. It has a different level of confidentiality compared to Title IX and/or talking to faculty/students. For example, Ombudsman does not have to notify a title IX officer.
7. **Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (OSAPR)** <https://osapr.harvard.edu/> GSAS students who want to process and understand

their experiences in a confidential setting have several options, including the OSAPR.

8. **Office of Dispute Resolution** <https://odr.harvard.edu/>
9. **Racial Harassment and Discrimination:** office for racial harassment, defined as actions on the part of an individual or group that demean or abuse another individual or group because of racial or ethnic background. Contacts:
 - [Sheila Thomas](#), Dean for Academic Programs and Diversity
 - [Patrick O'Brien](#), Interim Dean for Student Affairs
 - [Danielle Farrell](#), Director of Student ServicesSee also [this website](#)
10. **[Harvard graduate student union - HGSU](#):** have several resources available regarding harassment.

First of all, Boryana (boryanah@alumni.princeton.edu) & Jasmine Gill (jasminegill1996@gmail.com) are members of the newly formed grievance committee of HGSU. Students are encouraged to voice any concerns you may have to either one of them or the union (hgsu.general@gmail.com). These can be related to anything (regardless of the severity) including **workload stress, discrimination on any basis, unwelcome behavior, intimidation, retaliation, and bullying.**

Other documents/resources:

- You can file a “grievance” through the union if you experience problems at work. This grievance procedure can also lead to a third-party arbitration. [Here’s a graphic](#) of how this process works. Fill out [this form](#). Or contact the grievance committee (hgsu.grievance@protonmail.com)
- When going through a harassment procedure, you have the right to have a union representation. Such a union rep. can help you think about what you want, have informal discussions and can help with formal grievance filing and/or arbitration in the process. Union representatives are trained GSAS students. Fill out [this form](#) if you are in need.
- For the academic year 2020/2021 HGSU has negotiated a contract with Harvard that is in place that also explains your rights when you experience things like harassment, abuse and intimidation. These rights are described mostly in Article 6 to Article 9 of [this contract document](#).