

Expectations of Professional Conduct

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The Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences is committed to maintaining a professional environment that supports the success of those participating in its mission of research, teaching, mentoring, and service. As a professor, I do my best to promote rigorous intellectual inquiry while embracing the diversity of our community, particularly in my courses. Similarly, I expect my students and TAs to conduct themselves professionally when engaged in activities associated with class.

Professional conduct includes contributing to the goals associated with the activity. Sharing data, ideas and opinions related to the activity is a critical part of behaving professionally. By asking questions, making observations, and discussing approaches and interpretations, you are collaborating in the educational, research, and/or service missions of the Department.

Professional conduct includes treating others with respect. In verbal and written communications, respecting others includes listening to the intent of others' communications, critiquing ideas rather than individuals, and addressing differences by trying to find common ground. Professional conduct also includes respecting others' personal space and avoiding comments on personal aspects of others.

Professional conduct includes being considerate. Paying attention to how your actions impact others and reducing negative impacts are key aspects of professional behavior. For example, keeping disruptions and noise to a minimum while others are working is considerate. By being aware of others' responses, you can adjust your behavior when it interferes with maintaining a professional environment.

When people share a respectful, considerate approach, disagreements can usually be accommodated and compromises can be reached to maintain a professional environment. However, it is not always possible to avoid conflict or offense*. At times, not all participants will share a respectful, considerate approach, and it is appropriate to remind those who do not of the expectation of professional behavior. Inappropriate behavior can be interrupted as it occurs and should be reported to a faculty member or advisor you trust.

Field trips require particular attention to professional conduct. While on a field trip or in a field class, each member of the Department is representing UC Davis and Earth and Planetary Sciences to the public. In addition, some field exercises extend beyond normal university hours, particularly those involving overnight stays and camping. My expectations of professional conduct extend throughout the duration of field trips, including overnight. Extra consideration is expected in these circumstances, including respecting others' privacy, avoiding activities that disrupt others' studies or sleep, and contributing to community chores.

*One definition of "offensive" is "causing someone to feel deeply hurt, upset or angry". What is offensive to one person might not be offensive to another. Thus, identifying whether or not something is offensive requires evaluating its effect on others. That evaluation is intrinsically subjective, making respectful discussion about why something might be offensive an important part of professional conduct.