

# Stony Brook University Department of History Code of Conduct

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This is a Code of Conduct, building upon existing Stony Brook [University Policy](#), [SUNY-Wide Policies](#), [Graduate Division Policies](#), and the [Code of Student Responsibility](#), that will be adhered to by all community members of the Stony Brook History Department (which includes faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students, departmental affiliates, and adjunct and visiting instructors).

Although only University Policy holds legal force, we present this Code to affirm and remind all of us of the department's values and expectations for appropriate behavior with one another. The department will vigilantly work to create a healthy, civil culture where all community members feel supported, and trust that their questions and concerns will be heard. Borrowing language from the AHA, "Historians cannot successfully do [their] work without mutual trust and respect. By practicing their craft with integrity, historians acquire a reputation for trustworthiness that is arguably their single most precious professional asset."

## ***Transparency***

We, as a department, will strive to maintain a clear flow and availability of information concerning university and department policies. We will publicize clear processes that include a network of people to whom it is safe to express concerns or complaints and work to address problems with appropriate and restorative solutions. All community members have access to a network of people inside and outside the department. If students or faculty members believe the grievances are outside the purview of the department, they should contact the offices listed below. The department also endeavors to clearly outline the processes involved in the allocation of academic and professional resources.

All members should be aware that university policy dictates that the following violations, which are listed on the Title IX website, fall under mandatory reporting legal requirements, no matter if they are reported to a student, colleague, or faculty member: "sexual violence, sexual or gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking and/or retaliation." For more about mandatory reporting, see the following link: [Responsible Employee | Title IX](#)

For more information or to report an incident see Stony Brook's Title IX page: [Title IX](#)

## ***Dignity and Respect***

All community members should behave and be treated with dignity and respect at all times to ensure that the University is a safe and welcoming place. Members of the department can negate harmful and inappropriate behavior by being active bystanders. An active bystander is someone who witnesses a problematic situation and takes steps to deescalate or disrupt the situation (Loyola University Chicago provides a useful [resource](#) on how to be an active bystander). We will strive to ensure that our behavior is not offensive, and is free from harassment, bullying, abuse and discrimination.

*Discrimination* is the verbal and/or active intolerance of someone based on their race, color, gender and/or gender identity and expression, religion, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, national origin, citizenship status, veteran or military status, age, disability, and any other legally protected status.

*Harassment:* Harassment is [defined by the U.S. EEOC](#) as unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information. Harassment of community members undermines the principles of equity, free inquiry and free expression. Harassment is considered to be a serious form of professional misconduct. For further information on NY State Law regarding harassment, see: [link](#).

*Microaggressions:* Subtle acts can be as damaging to the environment and culture of the department as open acts of bullying and abuse of power. Such micro-aggressions could manifest in dismissing a student's opinion, interrupting colleagues when they are speaking, skipping a student during class, and not really attempting to learn people's names. All History Department community members, including active bystanders, should strive to recognize microaggressions and address them in or out of the classroom.

*Bullying:* The most typical form of bullying seeks to harm, intimidate, or coerce someone. It can occur via different vectors of power such as race, religion, class, etc. However, an imbalance of power does not need to exist for bullying to occur--it can happen horizontally--student to student, faculty member to faculty member, staff member to staff member, etc.

Building upon Virginia Tech's statement on bullying, academic bullying occurs throughout the academic or professional space: in the classroom, in meetings, at conferences, in face-to-face interactions, and through email and social media. Bullying may take many forms including but not limited to physical, verbal, or written acts or behavior. It may also manifest as excluding behavior such as deliberately ignoring, humiliating, undermining, and excluding or dismissing individuals or groups.

Hostile and/or offensive behaviors include but are not limited to behaviors that are harmful or damaging to individuals and/or property. Other offensive actions may include behaviors and language that are discriminatory, intimidating, threatening, disruptive, manipulative, vulgar or vicious.

*Sexual Harassment:* Building on AHA and SUNY Stony Brook's standards and language (<https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/oide/policies/sb-main-campus-lisvh/p106.php>), the Stony Brook History Department has no tolerance for sexual harassment of any kind in any setting.

Sexual harassment is behavior (speech or actions) in formal or informal settings that demeans, humiliates, discriminates against or threatens an individual on the basis of their sex, gender, gender expression, or sexual orientation. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome touching and/or sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal comment or physical conduct of a sexual nature, including situations in which the request or conduct involves any implied or expressed promise of professional reward for complying. Persistent and unwelcome solicitation of emotional or physical intimacy is also included, as is intentionally misgendering someone, refusing to use a person's preferred pronouns, or making inappropriate remarks about a person's gender identity or sexual orientation.

### ***Supervisory, Collegial & Mentoring Relationship Guidelines***

This department is a shared space involving working relationships among faculty, staff, graduate (TAs, research assistants, students) and undergraduate students. These relationships should all adhere to the following universal guiding principles.

*Respect, Diversity, & Inclusivity:* Respect, diversity, and inclusivity are the guiding principles of this department. All are expected to show respect and behave in a professional manner at all times both on and off-campus. This means respecting personal boundaries, varying opinions, and providing a welcoming and inclusive environment for individuals from different backgrounds.

*Positions of Power:* Although this department strives to maintain a collegial working environment, we must acknowledge the positions of power amongst all its members. Everyone has power and can wield it over others. Individuals should be careful not to take advantage of others or use one's power to privilege a certain individual or group of people.

*Romantic Relations:* Romantic and sexual relationships are impossible to untangle from inherent power dynamics between individuals with different positions. Romantic and sexual relationships between members in the department with different power dynamics are highly discouraged.

*Clear Communication:* All healthy relationships require clear communications. This means asking questions when something is misunderstood, assuming best intentions, and using "I" statements to avoid speaking on others' behalf. On the other hand, having knowledge of confidential or sensitive information also means knowing when not to speak.

### ***Learning Environment***

Creating and sustaining a productive and inclusive learning environment depends on mutual respect. Our History community must listen to each other and contribute thoughtful and relevant discussion without dismissing the ideas and views of others. Our craft moves forward through a rhetoric of reasoned discourse, courtesy, and constructive response. History as a practice and profession depends on a multitude and variety of views provided by its students and practitioners. We will not always agree with each other, but it is always important to give each other the opportunity to speak and to listen. To facilitate an inclusive and productive learning environment, the department discourages any distracting, discriminatory, or caustic behavior in the classroom and throughout the department.

As a community, we commit to being active bystanders, and upholding our professional responsibilities with the utmost seriousness, integrity and fairness.