

CODE OF ETHICS
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Approved by unanimous vote of the faculty on December 10, 2014
Links and contact information updated July 18, 2018

The Department of Sociology at Texas A&M University recognizes the following general principles about civility, ethics, and conduct as central to our mission as an academic and professional community.

Our goal is to promote a positive, collegial atmosphere among all members of our departmental community, including faculty, staff, and students. To this end, it will be departmental policy and expected that everyone will be treated with mutual respect.

We recognize that Texas A&M University has its own set of codes¹ and that the American Sociological Association has its own as well,² from which we take some of the wording of the principles below.

Principle A: Professional Competence

As members of the department, we strive to maintain the highest levels of competence in our work. We recognize the need for ongoing education in order to remain professionally competent; and we utilize the appropriate scientific, professional, technical, and administrative resources needed to ensure competence in our professional activities. We consult with other professionals and community members when necessary for the benefit of our students, research participants, and clients.

Principle B: Integrity

As members of the department, we strive to be honest, fair, and respectful of others in our professional activities—in research, teaching, practice, and service. We do not intentionally act in ways that jeopardize our own or others' professional welfare. When our duties involve evaluations of other faculty members or students, we make these on the basis of scientific merit and professional norms of fairness and objectivity. We conduct our affairs in ways that inspire trust and confidence; we do not knowingly make statements that are false, misleading, or deceptive.

Principle C: Professional and Scientific Responsibility

As members of the department, we adhere to the highest scientific and professional standards and accept responsibility for our research, teaching, and service work. We understand that we form a community and show respect for other members of our community even when we disagree on theoretical, methodological, or personal approaches to professional activities. We value the public trust in sociology and are concerned about our ethical behavior and that of other members of the departmental

¹ See, generally, the Faculty Handbook at: <http://dof.tamu.edu/Faculty-Resources/CURRENT-FACULTY/Faculty-Handbook>

² See, generally, the ASA Code of Ethics at <http://www.asanet.org/about/ethics.cfm>

and university community that might compromise that trust. While endeavoring always to be collegial, we must never let the desire to be collegial outweigh our shared responsibility for ethical behavior. When appropriate, we consult with colleagues in order to prevent or avoid unethical conduct.

Principle D: Mutual Respect

Members of the department respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all people. We strive to eliminate bias in our professional activities, and we do not tolerate any forms of discrimination based on age; gender; race; ethnicity; national origin; religion; sexual orientation; disability; health conditions; or marital, domestic, or parental status. We are sensitive to cultural, individual, and role differences in serving, teaching, and studying groups of people with distinctive characteristics. We are committed to academic freedom. In all of our work-related activities, we acknowledge the rights of others to hold values, attitudes, and opinions that differ from our own. Each community member is expected to treat other community members with civility, respect, and in a professional manner at all times, whether in person or in written communications. As members of the department, we do not engage in demeaning, intimidating, or threatening behaviors that create a hostile professional or workplace environment and negatively affect the ability of others to actively participate in the departmental community.

Principle E: Cooperation & Responsibility

As members of the department, we work together with other students, faculty, and staff in a spirit of cooperation toward common goals of seeking and providing a quality education and a climate suited for research. In this we take responsibility for our own actions instead of blaming others.

The members of this department take seriously the grievances of faculty, staff, and students and will seek to resolve them in a timely manner, but understand that there will be times when individuals may feel uncomfortable in addressing such concerns directly. In these instances, they are encouraged to bring the concern to the attention of the appropriate personnel. If a member of the departmental community--faculty, staff, or students--has a concern, she or he should contact the head of the department, or a member of the executive committee, or the diversity committee.³ If the person would be more comfortable contacting an outside person, they can consult the appropriate person in the college dean's office (see links below).

The university has specific and detailed policies on relevant matters, including sexual and racial harassment and other forms of discrimination. These discrimination policies, and the officials who monitor and implement them, are fully described at the link below.

Texas A&M University nondiscrimination policies and online links:

<https://urc.tamu.edu/media/642261/NoticeOfNonDiscrimination.pdf>
<https://www.tamu.edu/statements/index.html>

³ Department staff have a current list of all committee members.

General Resources on Conflict Resolution

Graduate School Ombuds Office

001 Commons Building

979.845.3631

<http://ogaps.tamu.edu/New-Current-Students/Ombudspersonombuds@tamu.edu>

Undergraduate Ombuds Office

001 Commons Building

979-458-1420

<http://us.tamu.edu/Students/Undergraduate-Ombudsv-balester@tamu.edu>

Faculty Ombuds Office

<http://faculty-ombuds.tamu.edu/>

Tell Somebody

<https://tellsomebody.tamu.edu/>