

Events Safety and Inclusiveness

Code of Conduct

NCORE is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive space for all meeting participants. This policy applies to all NCORE activities**,** including:

* Conferences, symposia, workshops, and events sponsored, co-sponsored, or in cooperation with NCORE
* NCORE and NCORE-related planning meetings or events
* Exchanges among committees or other bodies associated with NCORE activities, publications, and communications sent through communication channels related to NCORE**,** including social media

NCORE’s statement on conference safety and inclusiveness outlines the expectations for all meeting participants, including all attendees, speakers, exhibitors, sponsors, volunteers, guests, and NCORE staff. Cooperation is expected from everyone throughout the activities. Attendees should always be mindful of differences in privileges and power between and among each other.

NCORE provides national and international continuing education and professional development activities for education, networking, and collaboration among higher education and allied communities. We value our learning community members and want all attendees to have an enjoyable, safe, and fulfilling experience. Thus, NCORE endeavors to provide a harassment-free conference experience for everyone. Discrimination, intimidation, or harassment based on (listed alphabetically) age, citizenship status, cultural expression, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex assigned at birth, sexual orientation, size, or veterans' status is not tolerated.

# Expected Behavior

We expect all participants in NCORE activities to abide by this policy in all venues where NCORE programming occurs.

* Exercise consideration and respect in your speech and actions.
* Refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech.
* Be mindful of your surroundings and your fellow participants.
* Alert NCORE staff if you see someone in distress, or violations of this policy, even if they seem inconsequential.
* Alert the proper authorities in the event of a dangerous situation.
* Communicate professionally and constructively, whether in person or virtually.
* Handle dissent or disagreement with courtesy, dignity, and an open mind.
* Be respectful when providing feedback and be open to alternate viewpoints.

# Unacceptable Behaviors

Intimidation, discrimination, or harassment of meeting participants is not tolerated. Examples include offensive verbal or written comments and hostile behavior in physical or virtual spaces. Intimidation, discrimination, or harassment committed jokingly or disguised as a compliment still constitutes unacceptable behavior. Sexist, racist, and all other types of exclusionary jokes are prohibited.

Sexualized language and imagery are not appropriate for any NCORE event. Sponsors, exhibitors, and speakers may not use sexualized language, images, activities, or other material or create a sexualized environment. Note that sexualized language does not include conference presentations and books on publishers' displays based on qualitative interviews or different lived experiences that contain first-hand descriptions of oppression due to sexual harassment.

## Unacceptable at any NCORE activity:

**Abuse**: Any action directed at an individual that (a) interferes substantially with that person's participation or (b) causes that person to fear for their safety. These actions include threats, intimidation, bullying, stalking, or other types of abuse.

**Discriminatory Harassment**: Any conduct that discriminates or denigrates an individual based on gender, gender identity or expression, race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion or religious belief, age, marital status, sexual orientation, immigration status, disabilities, veteran status, or body size or any other characteristic protected by law in the location where the NCORE events take place.

**Sexual Harassment**: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal/physical conduct of a sexual nature. Examples include (but are not limited to):

* Unwelcome advances or propositions, particularly when one individual has an authority or power imbalance over the other
* Inappropriate touching of an individual's body
* Degrading or humiliating comments about an individual's appearance
* Displaying or distributing sexually explicit images or messages.

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## Examples of specific unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:

* intimidating, harassing, abusive, discriminatory, derogatory, or demeaning speech or actions by any participant in NCORE events and one-on-one communications carried out in the context of NCORE events.
* offensive, degrading, humiliating, harmful, or prejudicial verbal or written comments or visual images related to gender, gender identity or expression, race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion or religious belief, age, marital status, sexual orientation, immigration status, disabilities, veteran status, or body size.
* unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal/physical conduct of a sexual nature
* inappropriate or gratuitous use of nudity, sexual images, or stereotyped images, to display or distribute sexually explicit or otherwise offensive or discriminatory pictures or messages, display of sexual images in public areas
* deliberate intimidation or stalking
* harassing photography or recording
* Substantial interruption or disruption of events (substantial interference is any interference that is non-trivial in either duration or extent. An interference can be substantial, even if minimal in duration, if the interference is sufficiently disruptive or would be expected to disrupt.)
* Recording any session (including workshops, panels, and presentations) is not permitted unless you have obtained explicit permission from the session organizer and presenters. This includes video recording, live streaming, and audio recording.
* Unwelcome and uninvited attention or contact
* Physical assault (including unwelcome touch or groping)
* The actual or implied threat of physical harm
* The actual or implied threat of professional or financial damage or injury
* Protesting and Signs -The spaces used during an in-person events, whether at a hotel or convention center is space has been rented by NCORE. If someone, whether an attendee or non-attendee of the conference, wants to hold up signs or speak out in protest it needs to occur in the public space outside of the facility such as the public sidewalks.

An attendee of the conference may speak up during the question-and-answer period, after a

presenter has finished their speech, so long as they do not participate in any unacceptable

behaviors addressed in this Policy/Code of Conduct.

## Examples of specific unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:

* Intentionally interfering with another person’s freedom of movement, such as blocking a walkway or door.
* Holding signs about the protest issue in the convention center, hotel lobby, hallways, meeting, exhibitor or general session space.
* Interrupting or talking over a presenter or another speaker that has the floor.
* Protest language and/or giving a dissenting opinion other than as part of a question & answer session or other situation where the presenter has requested other points of view.

# Reporting Inappropriate Behavior

Any individual who experiences harassment (*as described above*) at any NCORE event is encouraged to use the following procedures to report unacceptable behavior.

**Attendee Procedures for Reporting an Experience with or Witnessing Unacceptable Behavior**

* ***Procedure 1-*** If the situation appears to be an emergency (e.g., requiring medical assistance or if there has been an overt threat of violence), please call 911. If not, move to procedure 2.
* ***Procedure 2 -*** In the event of unacceptable behavior, you may wish to inform a person in authority. You can call or text (405) 243-0286. Those acting on these cases include NCORE staff members or NCORE designated representatives tasked to handle such complaints. These individuals can provide information about the process for handling complaints or immediate onsite needs. *There may be cases where a person informed of harassment must file a complaint. (e.g., Title IX issues in the United States and venue or employer-specific policies)*
* ***Procedure 3—Any investigation or further action requires written communication*** *to*NCORE using the form for Reporting Violations of the NCORE Events Safety and Inclusiveness Policy/Code of Conduct.
	+ Prompt reporting is critical so NCORE staff can stop the conduct before it is repeated. Therefore, all written reports will be followed up promptly, with a further investigation to confirm or resolve disputed facts. NCORE staff will strive to keep the individual's identity confidential when conducting investigations.

# NCORE prohibits any threats or acts of retaliation against individuals who report unacceptable behavior or provide information in connection with a report by another individual. NCORE condemns threats or acts of retaliation and will handle reports of such in the same manner as the original report.

**NCORE staff procedures upon receiving a verbal report of Unacceptable Behavior**

* ***Procedure 1.*** NCORE staff will lend a sympathetic ear.
* ***Procedure 2.*** If a person wants further action, NCORE staff will explain the procedures for reporting unacceptable behavior. In general, at this step, NCORE staff will not attempt to mediate or resolve complaints informally.
* ***Procedure 3.*** An identified NCORE staff update the person on the process and outcome as allowable and seek resources or referrals as appropriate.
* ***Procedure 4*** Suppose an immediate emergency extends to more than one individual. In that case, event organizers may need to take more decisive actions, such as addressing the event attendees, barring further event attendance and participation by specific attendees, or imposing requirements on an attendee's further involvement.

*Such decisions will be kept as minimally intrusive as possible and must be made with the awareness that an allegation is not the same as a determination of guilt*. Any post-event investigations, sanctions, or other actions are handled using the form for Reporting Violations of the NCORE Events Safety and Inclusiveness Policy/Code of Conduct.

**NCORE staff procedures upon receiving a written complaint of Unacceptable Behavior**

When receiving a report of unacceptable behavior, the NCORE’s Director will review and direct appropriate follow-up.

* ***Procedure 1.*** The NCORE Director or NCORE staff designee will investigate the complaint.
* ***Procedure 2.*** The NCORE Director, in consultation with NCORE staff, will review all materials and determine whether the complaint violates the NCORE Events Safety and Inclusiveness Policy to make a final, binding decision regarding policy violation and the consequences of any such breach.
* ***Procedure 3.*** On behalf of NCORE, the Director will inform the complainant and subject of the decision(s). *There may be cases where a person informed of harassment must file a complaint. (e.g., Title IX issues in the United States and venue or employer- specific policies)*

# Possible actions resulting from a breach of the Code of Conduct

The NCORE Director may take actions including, but not limited to:

* Exclusion from NCORE leadership positions
* Remove an individual from any NCORE event without warning or refund.
* Prohibit an individual from participating in future NCORE activities, including but not limited to attending NCORE, NCORE Connections, or publishing in NCORE publications.

## Any individual who knowingly makes a false allegation of harassment may be subject to appropriate sanctions, including all of the above.

NCORE endeavors to keep proceedings under this policy as confidential as possible. Participants in any proceeding under this policy, including the complainant, subject, and witnesses involved in resolving the complaint, must adhere to this confidentiality policy. However, participants may consult legal counsel at their own expense, provided they have first agreed to keep the matter confidential.

# Appealing Sanctions

If an individual feels they have been falsely or unfairly accused of violating the NCORE Events Safety and Inclusiveness Policy, they may appeal within thirty (30) days after notification of the decision. The individual's appeal must be submitted to Belinda Biscoe, who will endeavor to resolve appeals within sixty (60) days after the appeal is made. The appeal will be decided upon based on consideration of the applicable record by Belinda Biscoe whose decision is final.

**Attendee Procedures Appealing finding Unacceptable Behavior**

* ***Procedure 1.*** Submit an appeal to ***SWCHRSappeal@ou.edu***with a concise grievance(s) description.
* ***Procedure 2.*** Belinda Biscoe will thoroughly investigate the appeal.
* ***Procedure 3.*** Belinda Biscoe will review all materials and determine whether the complaint violates the NCORE Events Safety and Inclusiveness Policy or upholds the appeal. Belinda Biscoe will inform the complainant and subject of the appeal decision(s).

# Warnings and Disclaimers

This NCORE Events Safety and Inclusiveness Policy is not intended to limit open discussion of the merits of work or issues presented at NCORE events. It applies only to ***behavior*** at NCORE events and activities.

NCORE assumes no liability or responsibility for the actions of any member or other activity participant.

NCORE is not responsible for protecting the safety of members or participants in NCORE activities. Individuals who feel their safety is at imminent risk due to harassment or other reasons are encouraged to take appropriate steps to ensure personal safety.

# Disclaimer

By registering for and attending NCORE events, each participant acknowledges reviewing this disclaimer and expressly releases NCORE and its executive committee and national advisory council, employees, or agents from liability concerning such meeting as provided herein.

Thank you for helping NCORE provide welcoming and safe events.