

Northwest Anthropological Association: Policy on Harassment (2020)

Policy Brief and Purpose

The Northwest Anthropological Association (NWAA) strives to provide a safe and welcoming environment that is free from bias and intimidation. The NWAA, in keeping with federal and state law and non-profit best practices, expressly prohibits any form of harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, status as a Vietnam-era or disabled veteran, or any other protected classification. No form of discriminatory or harassing conduct by or towards another member, staff, volunteer, contractor, exhibitor, sponsor, or other person participating in association events or programs will be tolerated.

It is the policy of the NWAA for members to have a professional environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. The NWAA does not tolerate discrimination or any forms of harassment, including but not limited to sexual harassment. The NWAA is committed to enforcing this policy at all levels within the Association. Anyone who engages in discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action from the Board, up to rescinding association awards and/or scholarships, revoking or prohibiting membership, and /or prohibiting participation in association meetings and activities.

If anyone experiences or witnesses any violation of the NWAA's Policy on Harassment at a Northwest Anthropological Conference (NWAC) or event, they should report the incident immediately to any member of the Board of Directors or via email to the Board at: nwaconf@gmail.com. Please be aware that NWAA can only retain confidentiality within the parameters of the law.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined in U.S. federal guidelines as "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature."¹ The NWAA Board recognizes that the legal definition of sexual harassment includes harassment that is sexist or sexual in nature: it can "include offensive remarks about a person's sex," with this form being "illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment." In fact, the majority of sexual harassment is sexist rather than sexual and has been tied to negative work and health consequences for victims.

Sexual Assault

Sexual assault includes actual or attempted physical attacks (e.g., unwanted physical contact, rape) and any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the explicit consent of the recipient. Sexual assault is illegal.

Title IX and its Relationship to NWAA's Policy on Harassment

In the United States, private and public schools that receive Federal funds must comply with Title IX. Title IX of the Education Amendments (1972), 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs, activities and employment. Title IX applies regardless of whether federal financial assistance is received directly or indirectly. Title IX applies to all forms of sexual discrimination including sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, sexual violence, and all forms of gender-based harassment. Title IX applies equally to students, staff, and faculty, and is meant to protect students and employees from sexual harassment by any school employee, student, or non-employee third party.

Northwest Anthropological Association members who are employed by schools are also accountable to their institution under Title IX.² Members outside the U.S. may also be bound by any similar legislation in their home country or country of employment.

Scope

Northwest Anthropological Association's Policy on Harassment is intended to cover all NWAC conference attendees, members, staff, volunteers, contractors, exhibitors, and sponsors. This Policy also applies to any non-member who participates in an NWAA program or activity. NWAA-sponsored programs and activities include, but are not limited to: meetings, public events, publications, honors and recognition, and governance programs, and all appointed, elected, and volunteer positions.

Annual Meetings

The Association will not tolerate sexual harassment or sexual assault of NWAC meeting participants (including, but not limited to attendees, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, NWAA staff members, service providers, or other meeting guests) in any form. By registering to present or attend NWAC meetings, members and participants commit to maintaining respectful and ethical relationships in accordance with the NWAA Policy on Harassment. The NWAA Board of Directors reserves the right to remove an individual violating this Policy from the Annual Meeting without warning, and prohibit attendance at future NWAC meetings, programs, and/or activities. Individuals who are currently sanctioned for assault or harassment by an adjudicating institution (e.g., a university) will be barred from NWAC meetings. Appeals may be requested in the case of advance registration; on-site registration for such individuals will not be permitted. If an individual in attendance at an NWAA-sponsored meeting/event is found to have violated the NWAA harassment policy, the NWAA Board of Directors will revoke the individual's permission to be on the premises. Should such an incident arise, the Association will work directly with security and law enforcement to manage the removal process.

Expected Behavior at NWAA Meetings

- Treat all participants, attendees, NWAA staff, and vendors with respect and consideration, valuing a diversity of views and opinions.
- Be considerate, respectful, and collaborative.

- Communicate openly with respect for others, critiquing ideas rather than individuals.
- Avoid any personal attacks directed toward other attendees, participants, NWAA staff, and suppliers/vendors/exhibitors.
- Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants. Alert the NWAA Board if you notice a dangerous situation or someone in distress.
- Respect the rules and policies of the meeting venue, hotels, NWAA contracted facility, or any other venue.

Unacceptable Behavior at NWAC Meetings

- Harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying, or discrimination in any form will not be tolerated including, deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following, harassing photography, or recording.
- Physical or verbal abuse or harassment of any attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, staff member, service provider, or other meeting guest, also will not be tolerated.
- Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to, offensive verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, national origin, or socioeconomic class; inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces or in presentations; or threatening or stalking any attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, NWAA staff member, service provider, or other guest.

Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior at NWAC Meetings

- Anyone requested to stop unacceptable behavior is expected to comply immediately.
- The NWAA Board or security may take any action deemed necessary and appropriate, including immediate removal from the meeting without warning.
- The NWAA Board reserves the right to prohibit attendance at future meetings and events in addition to rescinding association awards and/or scholarship, and revoking or prohibiting membership.

Responding to Unacceptable Behavior at NWAC Meetings

- If you are the subject of unacceptable behavior or have witnessed any such behavior, you may notify an NWAA Board member on site or by emailing your concern to the NWAA Board of Directors: nwaconf@gmail.com
- If you witness sexual harassment or assault, respond first to the affected person's needs and safety. Support that person if they choose to report the incident, but respect their decision to report or not report.
- Anyone experiencing or witnessing behavior that constitutes an immediate or serious threat to personal or public safety is advised to contact 911, locate a house phone, and ask for security.

How to Obtain Assistance

This Policy is not intended to constitute legal advice. In the event of any conflict between this Policy and applicable laws or institutional policy, the applicable laws or institutional policy prevails. Members and institutions are encouraged to seek their own counsel for advice regarding any specific situation. NWAA is not an adjudicating body; however, there are processes in place to support members in getting their grievances addressed when unwanted behaviors occur in the context of NWAA sponsored events and activities (e.g. conferences, editorial activities, governance events). Effective [DATE], the NWAA Board of Directors will:

1. Receive complaints of harassment in the context of NWAA settings and activities.
2. Discuss the complaint with the alleged harasser and give them an opportunity to respond to the complaint if the complainant wishes for the Board to actively participate in resolving the complaint.
3. Record the dates, times, and facts of the incident and the results of the resolution process.
4. Be authorized to deem a complaint to merit no further pursuit by NWAA.
5. Make clear to any complainants that the Board is not providing legal advice and that the availability of the Board is not intended to substitute for a complainant's either making use of internal institutional mechanisms for addressing complaints, for consulting expert legal advice, or for seeking formal legal redress.
6. Make clear to all parties that NWAA can only promise confidentiality within the parameters of the law.
7. Prepare an annual report containing general information about the number and types of complaints received. This report will be made available to NWAA members.

Acknowledgements

The NWAA Board of Directors adopted this Policy on Harassment on [DATE]. The Policy was adapted from the Alaska Anthropological Association (AkAA) Policy on Harassment (2019) <https://www.alaskaanthropology.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Anti-Harassment-Policy-2019-1.pdf>.

¹ See, e.g., Sexual Assault. Department of Justice. Updated April 2, 2015. <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/sexual-assault> The Department of Justice specifically defines “rape” as forced penetration of any body part of another person without that person’s consent. This definition of rape acknowledges the sex and gender of the perpetrator and victim is irrelevant, a victim is not required to physically resist, and a person may be unable to provide consent (e.g., due to intoxication, psychological coercion, physical incapacitation, or other physical and mental incapacities).

² Title IX: https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix_dis.html