ESA Ethics Statement and Policy Overview

The purpose of the Society is to promote the science of entomology in all its subdisciplines for the advancement of science and the benefit of society, to publish and encourage publications pertaining to entomology, and to assure cooperation in all measures leading to these ends. In accordance with this purpose, The Society expects its members, staff, affiliates, and vendors to:

a. Treat all people with civility, avoiding harassment and discrimination,

b. Uphold the highest standards of truthfulness and honesty in all scientific and professional endeavors,

c. Evaluate the work of colleagues fairly — with open-mindedness, courtesy, and respect,

d. Recognize past and present contributors to science and not claim credit for accomplishments of others,

e. Disclose potential conflicts of interest,

f. Expose scientific and professional misconduct promptly,

g. Strive to make entomology a welcoming discipline for all who work with or study insects, regardless of age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, race or ethnicity, religion, disability, or other identity and demographic factors,

h. Comply with all laws and regulations that apply to our science and profession, and

i. Read, understand, and comply with the society’s ESA Ethics Statement and Policy

ESA Ethics Statement and Policy

Introduction

This policy has been drafted to clearly outline expectations for members, meeting attendees, contractors, vendors, employees, and others who interact with the Entomological Society of America (ESA) (“Society Affiliates”). It also addresses some of the consequences for violations of this policy. It is expected that any transaction with the Society (such as membership joining or renewal, meeting attendance, nomination for office, or similar transactions) will include an acknowledgement that the individual has read, understands, and agrees to abide by the standards detailed in this policy. The overarching mission of these policies is to maximize the excellence, integrity and contributions of the Society and the discipline, through high quality work and professional, ethical, respectful, and inclusive conduct, climate, and culture.
These initial policies have been drafted through consultation with the ESA Ethics and Rules Committee, the ESA Diversity and Inclusion Committee (including the Best Practices Subcommittee), and the Societies Consortium on Sexual Harassment in STEMM -- a coalition of leading professional associations in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, Math, and Medicine (STEMM) of which ESA is a founding member and maintains a leadership role. These policies may be modified at any time by ESA whenever it is determined by Society leaders to be in the best interests of the Society.

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

ESA is a professional organization dedicated to furthering the science and awareness of entomology through the advancement and professional development of all its members. ESA acknowledges and values all dimensions of diversity. Therefore, we welcome into our Society and encourage the participation of all individuals who are interested in entomology regardless of age, gender identity and expression, race, cultural background, religion, physical ability, sexual orientation, professional status, geographic location, and all other characteristics that make our members unique.

ESA actively promotes inclusion, recruitment, and retention in every aspect of the Society – including but not limited to membership, leadership, committees, and staff. We strive to cultivate a scientific society of excellence built on mentorship, encouragement, tolerance, and mutual respect. ESA strives to proactively reject and denounce prejudice and stereotyping whenever it is encountered or affects the Society or the profession.

Community Standards:

The Society values high-quality research, education, professional practice, and service combined with highly professional, ethical, and inclusive conduct, as fundamental to excellence and integrity of the Society and the discipline of entomology and all participating in them. That requires the following community standards, which the Society adopts, and requires all Society Affiliates to practice when working directly with or for the Society. Although ESA cannot mandate behavior for individuals in places or situations which are beyond the Society’s scope, it nevertheless encourages all others in the discipline to follow this guidance whenever possible:

- Engage in respectful, equitable and inclusive conduct and treatment of all those engaged or contemplating engagement in the Society’s community, as well as others in the discipline.
- Do not retaliate against any person(s) who raise a conduct concern, or who assist in any way to investigate or resolve it.
• Remain mindful of the physical and emotional safety of Society Affiliates and all others in the discipline of entomology.

• Seek the advancement of the ability of individuals, groups, and entities to pursue and share the full range of scientific ideas, popular and not, including bolstering creativity, discovery, and service via robust and open exchange of scientific ideas.

• Encourage a climate where multiple scientific and professional perspectives may be freely voiced.

It is not a violation of this policy to express an opinion, raise research, or describe an experience (“articulation”) that is at odds with the opinions of or is offensive to others—if the articulation is part of an on-point discussion of the work and is offered in a manner that does not interfere with others’ reasonable ability and welcome to participate fully in the work. Society Affiliates are cautioned to be mindful of the totality of this policy when making an articulation that others might reasonably find to be offensive. To the extent possible, Society Affiliates are encouraged to keep all interactions positive, allow respectful rebuttal of the articulation, avoid actions and statements which might be reasonably expected to cause gratuitous offense, and treat others with all due care and consideration if the articulation is showing obvious harm on others.

In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is assumed that member and Society Affiliates will act with good intentions and, as such, a community of mutual trust and respect is encouraged.

What to do if you have a conduct concern

The Society will provide an email address (ethics@entsoc.org) through which conduct concerns may be shared. For the conduct of this policy, the following definitions are agreed to:

• Reporter – The person(s) who contacts the Society regarding a concern. The Reporter is not necessarily a member of the Society nor a Society Affiliate.

• Accused – The person(s) who is alleged to have violated this policy.

• Witness – The person(s) who were first-person observers of the alleged incident(s).

• Victim – The person(s) whom the policy violation is believed to have harmed.

• Ombudsperson – A third-party person or persons with whom the Society has contracted or otherwise engaged to serve as an intermediary between Reporter, Accused, Witness, Victim, and/or the Leads.

• Staff lead – The person(s) employed by the Society who is charged with overseeing the implementation of this policy. Generally, this will be the Executive Director or the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

• Volunteer lead – The President of the Society and/or the Vice President of the Society

The Society provides the following ways to raise conduct concerns within the reach of this policy:
• **Informally raising conduct concerns** may be done by alerting the Executive Director (or any other senior staff member); the President (or any other current ESA Officer); or the Society’s ombudsperson to an incident(s) via a telephone call or in-person. The information needed for a formal complaint (see below) is also generally helpful for the Society to act on an informal concern. However, information may be provided in a meeting or by phone, rather than in writing. An informal approach may also be pursued when an individual seeks to explore resolution options before deciding to identify the Accused or whether to file a formal complaint. An informal approach may also be desired if the Victim wants to report behavior to have it on record but does not seek a formal resolution or potential sanction by the Society.

• **Formally filing a concern** is done when a written complaint is received by the Staff Lead and/or Ombudsperson. An expressed verbal concern may also result in a formal complaint, though the subsequent filing of a written complaint may still be required. A formal complaint is equally suitable when the person filing it seeks a formal resolution process or an informal resolution approach. There is no time limit or “statute of limitations” for reporting allegations, though it is understood that time lags in reporting may result in difficulties in completing an investigation (i.e., locating witnesses, obtaining documentation, etc.). A form may be provided by the Society (see below) in order to help the Reporter gather all of the needed information, though its use should be considered optional.

A formal complaint should include the following:

- accused’s name, contact information, and affiliation with the Society (if known).
- if the conduct concern is of a type that involves a victim, the name of the Victim(s) and contact information (if known).
- name and contact information of the Reporter and how the Reporter became aware of the concern (see below for information on anonymous reporting);
- names of any Witnesses or others with pertinent information, and contact information (if known).
- description of the conduct concern, with the date, approximate time, location/setting/activity, and all known relevant facts and circumstances.
- the provision(s) of this or other ESA policies that may have been violated, if known (optional).
- a clear statement of any facts that may indicate any ongoing concern of imminent threat to safety of any person(s) or safety or condition of Property and the sources of such facts, with contact information if known.
- any relevant documents available to the Reporter.
- any other information that would help the Society understand the full nature of the conduct concern; who was involved and who and what may be affected; who
Anonymous formal and informal reports may be submitted. More information is required for a formal report. Anonymity may limit the extent to which the Society can investigate and/or respond to the concern.

Confidentiality is a protection for all parties involved. Whenever possible, a complaint will be dealt with as confidentially as possible. When considering the level of confidentiality to maintain, however, the Society will seek to balance a variety of factors including, but not limited to, the rights of the Victim, the Witness, the Reporter, and the Accused, as well as the protection and safety of the community at large. The Society acknowledges that confidentiality is not always possible (and in some cases may not be desirable). Confidentiality may not be maintained if, in the Staff lead’s judgment and discretion, safety or law requires otherwise. Limited disclosure of the identity of individuals most directly involved may also be needed for the Society to carry out various options to resolve a conduct concern.

Society members and Society Affiliates are required to respect confidentiality of the identities of any individual who is involved while it is being reviewed and resolved. Failure to honor this responsibility is a serious violation of this policy.

All reports will be indefinitely kept on file and accessible to the Staff Lead(s), including their successors. To aid in future investigations of allegations against repeat offenders, the reports may be shared with the Volunteer Lead and/or the Ombudsperson.

Investigations

When credible evidence (refer to Definitions section of this policy) is received by the Staff lead, the process for consideration of the allegation shall be as follows:

a. Complaint or Allegation is received by the Staff lead. The Staff lead shall review the information and if the complaint is found to be a potential violation of the Society’s policies and potentially actionable by the Society, they will refer the matter to a three-person panel which consists of the Society’s Vice-President, the Chair of the ESA Committee on Ethics and Rules, and the Executive Director. At this point any leader—whether or not they are on the review panel—who was notified of the matter verbally or in writing (e.g., cc:ed to an email which contained the complaint) should refrain from making any written or spoken public commentary on the matter beyond what may be required for the investigation to proceed. Confidentiality of the process is important to protect the Victim and Accused.

b. The panel will review the allegation and if found to be credible, actionable, and a violation of the Society’s policies, begin the investigative process, as outlined below.
   • Within 60 days of undertaking a review process, the Society shall provide the Accused notice of the Society’s intent. This notice shall include an initial
overview of the allegation, a statement of the interests of the discipline being served, and an overview of the forthcoming process.

- The Accused will have an opportunity to submit to the Society, within 14 days of receiving a notice of intent, a written statement of any reasons why the Accused believes it would not be in the best interests of the discipline for an investigation and any potential sanction to be imposed.
- After that 14-day period, whether or not a statement has been submitted, the Society—through the Committee—will act in its discretion and decide whether to continue with the investigative review process.

c. If undertaken, the investigation process may include

- Engagement of ESA's legal counsel (or a similar, trusted advisor) as the primary investigator.
- Notification to the Accused, as described above.
- Interviews with the Accused, the Reporter, the Victim, and any witnesses whose input may be pertinent to the investigation.
- A written finding by the investigator (i.e., a recommendation) once the investigation is completed.

d. The panel will review the written finding from the investigation and accept or modify the finding.

e. The Executive Director shall convey the outcome of the panel's decision to the Accused, the Reporter, and any Victims who indicated while being interviewed during the investigative process that they wish to be notified of the outcome.

f. When notifying the abovementioned individuals of the outcome of the panel’s decision, the Executive Director will also notify Victims or Accused that they may file appeals within 60 days.

g. Appeals to the finding shall be received by either the Executive Committee of the ESA or the Governing Board of the ESA.

Findings

The Society may decide to enact Consequences (see below) to serve the objectives of this policy whenever:

- A finding of ethical misconduct has been finally determined to have occurred through an investigation, determination, and/or adjudication by a court of law (or similar legal entity), corporation, academic institution, or similar organization.
- A representative of the Society (i.e., employee, elected/appointed volunteer leader, or other leading representative from the Society) was a first-hand witness to a serious ethical lapse which is then promptly reported to the Society.
- Credible evidence exists of a serious ethical misdeed by an individual or a pattern of ethical misdeeds.
• An individual admits to a serious ethical breach.

The Society accepts that it may be constrained from investigative or corrective action by external factors that would limit its ability to fully investigate allegations. These actions include instances such as institutions that allow individuals to resign, retire, or transfer when they face accusations of misbehavior. To that extent, ESA strongly encourages all professional institutions in the entomological community to establish and enforce strong codes of conduct and hold their employees accountable when they are found to have violated those policies.

To support ethical conduct within the discipline of entomology, the Society will annually report on ethical incidents which were reported. The reports will be provided to the Governing Board and the membership, though varying information may be provided to each. To the extent possible, these reports will protect the confidentiality of all parties.

The ESA Committee on Ethics and Rules should annually review this policy to ensure its continued efficacy. Proposed updates should be brought to the Governing Board for review and adoption.

Definitions

An inherent challenge when doing ethics work is agreement on definitions of what is (or is not) an ethical violation; what constitutes credible evidence; and what level of sanction is appropriate for each determined violation. The Society acknowledges that this process is likely to never be complete nor perfect. The intention of this policy is to strive toward equity and the minimization of incidences of unethical conduct. For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions are hereby made:

• **Unethical behavior** shall be defined as that which is a flagrant violation of established and known rules of the Society or work institution, or of local, state, national, or international laws; and/or (b) unwanted behavior directed against one or more individuals which would be considered grossly unprofessional by a reasonable standard of decency (particularly when those individuals may be on the lesser side of a power dynamic). Behavior which is found to be a relatively minor offense, is not part of a larger pattern of unethical conduct, or is a case where the Accused shows convincing contrition shall be judged by a less severe standard than other allegations.

• **Credible evidence** shall be defined as a written allegation which is likely to be believed. To be “credible” evidence need not but may be supported by (a) physical or otherwise tangible evidence (i.e., audio recordings, emails, etc.) which lends credence to the allegation; and/or (b) that which comports with other similar accusations of unethical behavior against the same individual, whether or not the incident in question is the same or occurred at the same institution. The allegation should also include specific details of how the alleged behavior is a violation of ESA’s policies.
In judging credibility, the closer the evidence gets to a Victim’s or first-hand account, the more heavily it may be weighted. That is, a Victim’s account or a first-hand witness account will likely be judged to be more credible than a contemporaneous account (i.e., where the Victim immediately reported the incident to a 3rd party who, in turn, reports it to ESA), which shall be more credible than a second-hand account.

**Sanctions** may range from a verbal or written warning up to and including a permanent ban on participation in any ESA activity such as membership, meetings, or publishing in the journals. Sanctions for any behavior found to be a violation of ESA’s policies may vary according to any or all of the following:

- the severity of the offense as determined by the three-person panel using the standard of “how would a reasonable individual member of the Society view this action?”;
- the recency of the behavior;
- the damage caused by the behavior;
- the number of individuals negatively impacted by the behavior;
- the frequency of the behavior being judged;
- the strength of the evidence presented;
- whether or not the Victim is willing to commit themselves to being a part of the accusation;
- any restorative justice wishes of the Victim of the alleged improper behavior (i.e., should the sanction weight more toward punishment of the offender or repairing any harm caused?) and
- the level of contrition shown by the Accused.

**Actionable** is a legal term which tends to infer that there is sufficient evidence for a legal suit to be filed. In this policy, however, the word is defined by a slightly lesser standard: actionable in this policy means that the allegation presented has been found to be reasonably credible and that there is a reasonable chance that the Society would be able to procure evidence to substantiate or disprove the allegation(s). As an example, an allegation where a Reporter/Victim states that the Accused was verbally abusive to the Reporter/Victim in a private conversation, the case may be credible but is possibly not actionable if the Honoree denies the allegation and no additional evidence is available. Admissions, evidence or prior abusive conduct, witness reports and other evidence ESA deems credible can be considered. Since a pattern of behavior may be established over time by multiple instances of credible but un-actionable allegations, the Society encourages reporting of all serious ethical breaches. Even when a claim is actionable, however, it may not result in a finding of fault.

**Awareness** of a potential ethical conduct issue is defined as when the Executive Director or their designee has been made aware of the allegation.
Consequences

ESA provides formal and informal processes for resolving reported conduct concerns. Short-term measures may be taken or required to be taken and may impose restrictions and other consequences on individuals on a temporary basis while a conduct concern is being reviewed and resolved. A process governs these actions for effectiveness to serve the ESA’s mission, strategic principles, this policy, and the betterment of the entomological community.

Consequences of violating this policy may include (including combinations of) the following:

- Public or private reprimand or statement;
- Suspension, revocation, or permanent denial of membership and associated privileges;
- Suspension or permanent denial of the privilege of publishing in ESA publications;
- Permanent expulsion from affiliation and/or contact with the Society (for egregious misconduct in severity or frequency);
- Removal or suspension from a volunteer position;
- Removal or suspension from a leadership position (whether employee or volunteer);
- Denial or revocation of honors or awards;
- Suspension or permanent prohibition from attending, exhibiting at, sponsoring, or making presentations at Society meetings;
- Temporary or fixed-term no-contact requirements for the accused and identified victim(s);
- Notification by the Staff lead of the Society’s determination of a violation (the allegations, facts and conclusion) to the home institution (employing, visiting, educating or where there is another appointment);
- Disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or termination of employment for Society employees; and
- Restorative or community-building practices (which may be pursued to address conduct concerns even without a determination of a violation of the Policy).

Disclosures

All Society Affiliates are required annually to acknowledge (disclose) and affirm in writing that they have read and will abide by this policy. Some Society Affiliates are required to make additional disclosures on an annual basis and when there are changes. Other Society Affiliates are required to make additional disclosures before participating in a Society activity or performing any service for the Society, as well as annually and when there are any changes, so long as that activity or service continues. The required actions and forms will be incorporated into various transactions, such as meeting registration, membership application and renewals, and manuscript submissions. All Society Affiliates are responsible for knowing and satisfying these requirements.
Policies Specific to Allegations of Ethical or Personal Misconduct by Honorees

The purpose of this policy is to address cases where personal and professional conduct intersects with ESA’s various forms of recognition, including Awards and Honors, appointed and elected leadership, and other professional recognition (referred collectively herein as “Honors”).

It is the intent of the Society to create a framework for addressing lapses in professional ethics and conduct by individuals related to ESA’s Honors. Situations may arise where ethics in the conduct of an individual’s personal affairs cast serious doubt on that individual’s fundamental ethics. However, unless personal conduct cases are found to be egregious or extreme, the Society only considers conduct in the context of a professional setting. A professional setting includes personal behavior which occurs during a professional trip (e.g., personal conduct in a bar or restaurant while on travel to an ESA conference). Credible evidence of an illegal act of violence or a serious breach of ethics in an individual’s personal life may also be sufficient grounds to cast serious doubt on their fundamental ethics and thus justify revoking, suspending, or withholding ESA Honors.

When an evidence-based allegation regarding an act of questionable ethical intent or impact arises in the context of an ESA event or programming, the Society’s Ethics in Entomology Statement shall be the governing policy.

The Society finds that determined unethical conduct of a current or prospective holder of an Honor—as well as credible, but undetermined, questions about the ethical conduct of such an individual—can contribute to longstanding structural and systemic barriers in the discipline. Consequently, to ensure excellence in member development, the society will generally not confer any honor on any individual whose conduct has been determined to be severely unethical and may impose a waiting period on those who have been found to be guilty of more minor ethical lapses.

The Society will not confer any Honors on any individual whose ethical conduct is the subject of a serious and credible evidence-based allegation known to the Society, so long as the matter has not been finally determined to the Society’s satisfaction. Determined unethical conduct may also justify suspension, withholding, or revocation of Honors and a credible evidence-based, but unresolved, allegation of ethical conduct may justify these actions. As appropriate, incidents and credible evidence-based allegations would be investigated as described elsewhere in this policy.

The Society retains the right to grant, defer, or withhold an Honor to any person. The Society also retains the right to revoke or suspend an Honor already granted if, in its judgment and discretion, the Society determines that revocation is in the best interests of the Society and discipline. Suspension means the Honor (and the ability of the recipient to exercise any
associated privileges and rights) are held in abeyance until such a time when the Society determines—at its discretion—that the Honor may be reinstated or revoked.

Nominators who are aware of an allegation against a nominee have an ethical obligation to inform ESA of the allegation as part of the submission process or as soon as they are aware of the allegation. Further, a person who is being considered for Honors (upon becoming aware of being considered), or who holds Honors, has a continuing duty to disclose to the Executive Director the existence of any fact, situation, or circumstance that could be considered relevant to the Society’s decision whether to award the Honors under provisions of this policy. Failure to make a disclosure may result in the Society withholding, suspending, or revoking Honors, in the Society’s discretion.

While a potential conduct matter is being reviewed and/or investigated, when the individual in question is not yet an Honors holder and is merely being considered for such, this notification and review process may, in some circumstances, delay the ability of an individual from competing for an Honor until the matter has been resolved. If the Accused is ultimately cleared of the allegation, they may once again compete for Honors. In some instances (i.e., time-limited Honors) this may require the Society to be more lenient in interpretation of the Society’s Honors rules.

At the conclusion of the investigative process, the investigator and panel shall turn the matter, including the recommendations, over to the Executive Director. The investigator may recommend that the Society do nothing, or suspend, revoke, or withhold Honors for the individual. In serious cases, the recommendation may also go further and seek banishment from the Society or other outcomes. Upon receiving the recommendation, the Executive Director shall be charged with making a final determination. Appeals may be made by the individual being sanctioned as described in the Investigations portion of this policy.

Special Circumstances – Honors Held by Incapacitated or Deceased Individuals

Special circumstances arise when previous unprofessional and unethical conduct of a deceased individual or an individual who becomes permanently incapacitated who holds Honors is alleged. The Society will exercise its discretion to address such situations on a case-by-case basis and may determine that no action is needed, without heightened concerns. It will consider the following:

- A deceased or permanently incapacitated person is unable to participate in an informal investigation or process and is unable to defend against allegations or to participate in restorative remedies.
- A deceased or permanently incapacitated person cannot continue unprofessional and unethical conduct, eliminating threats that the conduct will be ongoing. The same may be true for individuals experiencing certain forms of permanent incapacitation.
• Unless heightened concerns for continuing impact on the discipline exist, the need to
protect the interests of the discipline in eliminating barriers to inclusion may be limited,
and the interest of fairness to the Accused may be greater.

• Heightened concerns for impact on the discipline may exist when the act of
unprofessional and unethical conduct has been determined during a person’s lifetime (or
after death and is established by unequivocal facts) and is highly egregious (respecting
a single event or frequency). This is particularly so when the deceased or permanently
incapacitated individual is very prominent in the discipline, or the Honors held is/are
exceptional, or there is a named Honor continuing to be conferred on others.

• When action is warranted, it may range from revocation of Honors to a statement
regarding intolerance of the conduct. Revocation is an extraordinary remedy. The
Society will exercise its judgment on a case-by-case basis. If a statement is made, the
Society would speak to intolerance of the conduct, without judging or stating whether
the conduct occurred, and without adding commentary to any existing determination
made on the subject. When a statement is made, the Society may include examples of
types of unprofessional and unethical conduct faced and consequential actions taken
under the Society’s current policy generally, to demonstrate the authenticity of its
intolerance for the type of conduct and mitigate impact on the discipline.

The Society is not expected to newly investigate a question of professional and ethical conduct
related to a deceased Honoree.
Reporting Misconduct to the Entomological Society of America

This optional form may be used to report allegations of misconduct by a Society Affiliate (Member, Leader, Staff, Contractor, Vendor, Exhibitor, Attendee, etc.) It is to be submitted to the Society’s Executive Director, Chris Stelzig at ethics@entsoc.org. Please include additional pages and documentation as necessary and appropriate. To the extent possible, this matter will be treated confidentially.

Your name (Are you the Victim?  □ No  □ Yes) __________________________

Your affiliation and contact information _________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Victim’s name and contact information (if different than Reporter) ________________________________

Accused’s name _____________________________________________________________________________

Accused’s affiliation (Employer or other Institution) _______________________________________________

Accusation (Explain the incident(s) and how ESA’s policies were violated) _________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Has the Accused’s affiliation been notified of this incident(s)  □ No  □ Yes (detail the outcome)
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Are there any known conflicts of interest in this matter?  □ No  □ Yes (provide details below)
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Names/affiliations/contact for any witnesses to the incident(s): _________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Please attach any supporting documents and sign/date below that you attest this is true:
___________________________________________________________________________________________

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