

Society of Biological Psychiatry
Code of Conduct
Approved 6.24.2019

1. Introduction

The Society of Biological Psychiatry (“SOBP”) is dedicated to providing a safe and productive experience for all participants and attendees at all official SOBP events regardless of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, physical or mental disability, perceived disability, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal or pertinent state laws. The SOBP does not tolerate discrimination or any form of prohibited harassment and is committed to enforcing this Code of Conduct (the “Code”) at its Annual Meeting or at any other SOBP event. As a professional society, the SOBP is committed to providing an atmosphere that encourages free expression and exchange of scientific and educational ideas. Furthermore, SOBP upholds the philosophy of equal opportunity for and treatment of all meeting participants and staff in any venue.

2. Scope of Code

The SOBP requires compliance with the Code by all meeting participants, staff, guests, and vendors at all official SOBP events, including the annual meeting, committee meetings or other activities that are expressly sponsored or promoted by the SOBP, whether held in public or private facilities. This policy is an expression of the SOBP’s values and commitment to a safe and productive experience for all participants and attendees at its official events. This policy is not an acknowledgement, admission, or description of the SOBP’s legal obligations with respect to any of the subject matters addressed herein, nor does it create any such legal obligations.

3. Harassment Defined

Prohibited harassment includes verbal, physical, and visual conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment. Harassing conduct can take many forms and includes, but is not limited to, the following: slurs, epithets, derogatory comments, insults, degrading or obscene words, jokes, demeaning statements, offensive gestures, or displaying derogatory or demeaning pictures, drawings, or cartoons based upon an individual’s sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, physical or mental disability, perceived disability, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal or pertinent state laws or local ordinances.

Sexually harassing conduct in particular includes all of these prohibited actions, as well as other unwelcome conduct that is sexual in nature, such as unwanted sexual advances; lewd propositions or innuendos; leering; making sexual gestures; making sexually suggestive or graphic comments or engaging in inappropriate sexually-oriented conversation; displaying sexually suggestive objects, graphics, pictures, or posters, whether physically or over the Internet; making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs or jokes; the sexual touching or display of one’s own body; or unwanted physical touching or assault, as well as impeding or blocking movements.

Sexually harassing conduct can be by a person of either the same or opposite sex. It is a violation of this policy for males to sexually harass females or other males, and for females to sexually harass males or other females. Conduct that begins as consensual

in nature may become harassment if one party withdraws his or her consent. Sexual or other harassment prohibited by this policy is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

The above list of prohibited behaviors is not a complete rendering of what may be deemed sexual or other harassment prohibited by this policy. It is impossible to define every action or word that could be interpreted as harassment. However, SOBP has a “zero tolerance” policy toward discrimination and all forms of harassment. SOBP reserves the right to discipline meeting participants who engage in any inappropriate conduct, even if it is not specifically referred to or defined in this Code or is not legally actionable as sexual or any other form of harassment.

4. Prohibited Conduct

Prohibited conduct at SOBP meetings includes, but is not limited to:

1. harassment based on sex, race, color, personal appearance, national origin, religion, age, physical disability, mental disability, perceived disability, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal or pertinent state laws;
2. demeaning comments or harassment about a person’s professional status, qualifications, or affiliations;
3. sexual harassment, as defined in Section 3;
4. abusive conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with another person’s ability to benefit from and enjoy or participate in the meeting, including social events related to the meeting and sponsored by SOBP;
5. undue or excessive interruption of any event, speaker, or session; and
6. violence or threats of violence.

5. Reporting an Incident

Meeting participants or other individuals, who witness or experience inappropriate conduct at an SOBP meeting or other official SOBP event, including but not limited to the prohibited conduct described above, should report such conduct immediately to the Executive Director of the SOBP, Sarah Timm at stimm@SOBP.org or (615) 432-0096. If the individual is uncomfortable reporting the conduct to the Executive Director of the SOBP for any reason, the individual may report the conduct to the SOBP Project Manager, John White at jwhite@sobp.org or (615) 432-0096. Any individual reporting such conduct is not required or expected to discuss the concern with the alleged offender. Anyone experiencing or witnessing behavior at an SOBP event that is an immediate or serious threat to the safety of those present, or to the public, is advised to locate a house phone and ask for security, or to otherwise contact the authorities for protection.

The SOBP cannot address claimed inappropriate conduct or harassment unless the claims are brought to the attention of SOBP leadership. Meeting participants are encouraged to report any incidents of perceived violations of this policy as quickly as they can or otherwise feel safe doing.

The SOBP is committed to taking reasonable steps to prevent harassment and other prohibited conduct at its meetings and will make reasonable efforts to promptly and completely address and correct any prohibited conduct that may occur at an official SOBP

event. The SOBP will keep any investigation of an alleged violation of this policy as confidential as reasonable.

The SOBP can only investigate situations that arise at SOBP meetings or other SOBP-sponsored events. If a meeting participant experiences inappropriate conduct or harassment at the participant's own or another institution, at a place of work, at a research facility, or online but not via SOBP-sponsored channels that individual should contact the appropriate person or department responsible for such things at that particular institution, facility or medium.

6. Investigation

The SOBP will promptly and impartially investigate the facts and circumstances of any claim of inappropriate conduct or harassment under this policy. SOBP will make reasonable efforts to keep the reporting of individual's concerns confidential and will not deliberately share personal information, other than as necessary to carry out the purpose of investigation. While complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, SOBP will keep the investigation and its findings as confidential as reasonable under the circumstances. During an investigation, the SOBP or a designated independent consultant subject to obligations of confidentiality, generally will do the following (as necessary) to decide as to appropriate action:

- document the nature of the complaint;
- interview the complainant;
- conduct further interviews as necessary, such as with witnesses and, at an appropriate time, the alleged offender;
- document the SOBP's findings regarding the complaint;
- document recommended follow-up actions and remedies, if warranted; and
- inform the complainant of the basic nature of the SOBP's findings.

The SOBP will attempt to investigate any complaint or report of a violation of this policy in a prompt and timely manner. Upon completion of the investigation, SOBP will take appropriate corrective measures against any person who has engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy, if SOBP determines such measures are necessary. Such remedial action may include, but is not limited to, the items listed below in Section 7.

7. Disciplinary Action

If the SOBP determines that an individual has engaged in prohibited conduct, the SOBP shall determine the appropriate action to be taken, which may include, but is not limited to:

- private reprimand;
- removal from the Meeting without warning or refund;
- implementation of conditions upon attendance at future SOBP Meetings;
- restriction from attendance at future SOBP Meetings; or
- expulsion from the SOBP.

The SOBP may, but is not required to, report any incident to proper authorities, including but not limited to law enforcement. The SOBP will do so if, in its sole discretion, such reporting is advisable or necessary. If the SOBP determines that an individual has engaged in prohibited conduct at an SOBP meeting, and such individual is an SOBP member, SOBP may take disciplinary measures consistent with Article XI of the SOBP

Bylaws. Nothing in this policy shall restrict or discourage any individual who experiences or is the target of conduct prohibited by this policy from reporting such conduct to the authorities, to the extent he or she deems such a report advisable or necessary.

8. Retaliation Is Not Tolerated

Retaliation for complaints of inappropriate conduct or harassment are also considered harassment and will not be tolerated. Retaliatory behavior in connection with SOBP meetings will be investigated in a similar manner to initial complaints.