

CODE OF CONDUCT

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTION, UNIL

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

For the benefit of all members of the Department of Ecology and Evolution (hereinafter “DEE” or “Department”), this Code of Conduct sets out practical information that aims to help us achieve a welcoming, safe, and respectful atmosphere. In pursuing these aims, DEE members, and the Department as a whole, strive towards developing and maintaining friendly and inclusive behaviours. This document defines the expected behaviour from all DEE members during all activities hosted by or associated with the DEE, as well as those behaviors considered as unacceptable conduct..

APPLICABILITY

All members of the DEE are to adhere to this Code of Conduct upon joining the Department. If members of the DEE invite non-DEE members to a DEE activity, this non-DEE member is also expected to adhere to this Code of Conduct; it is the responsibility of the inviting DEE member that the non-DEE member respects this Code of Conduct. The authority of this Code of Conduct remains superseded by all UNIL regulations.

This Code of Conduct applies to all activities hosted or associated with the DEE. These activities include, but are not limited to, DEE social events (e.g., DEE retreats, Group retreats, Christmas dinners, apéros, dinners with invited speakers, etc.). DEE seminars, as well as day-to-day activities associated with the supervision of, and interactions among, team members including postdoctoral researchers, PhD and Master students and technical and administrative staff.

DEFINITIONS RELATED TO UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

Persuant to this Code of Conduct, unacceptable conduct (hereinafter “Unacceptable conduct”) is a behaviour that disrupts a respectful, safe and harassment-free experience for all Department members and, in general, that violates one’s personality rights, safety or personal freedom.

Unacceptable conduct includes (but is not limited to):

- Harassment
 - Aggressive physical and/or psychological pressure.
- Unwanted sexual attention
 - It is defined by UNIL as “harassing behaviour of a sexual nature or any other behaviour related to a person’s sex, which is unwanted by the person receiving it and which adversely affects their dignity.”
- Objectification
 - Degrading someone to the status of an object (example: reducing a person’s value to a single attribute or characteristic).
- Stalking
 - Unwanted, repeated, oppressive attention.
- Shaming
 - Subjecting someone to disgrace, humiliation, disrepute, e.g., by delivering non-constructive criticism in public.
- Intimidation
 - Compelling or deterring someone towards a decision by overt or implied threats.
- Bullying
 - Seeking to harm, intimidate or coerce a person.
- All forms of discrimination (defined as: the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people) based on (non-exhaustively):

- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Disability
- Physical appearance
- Race
- Religion
- Economic origin
- National origin
- Ethnicity

SPECIFICATIONS OF UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

All Unacceptable conduct presented in a joking manner is equally unacceptable. This Code of Conduct applies to all types of communication supports, i.e. it equally applies to the use of language, written, audiovisual or auditory support, as well as images or poster presentations. This includes if they represent disrespectful or targeted criticism of individuals, groups, or teams, rather than valid criticisms of science. As part of ensuring respectful behaviour, it is important to recognise that individual sensitivities to actions or communications that may not be acceptable will vary, and what might seem acceptable or humorous to some people might not be to others. Each member of the DEE must be open to listening to others' experiences and sensitivities, and change their behaviour or language if others find it offensive. In meetings of DEE members, and during any discourse or exchanges, all constructive criticism should be delivered in the spirit of mutual respect and should be directed not at the person but, as necessary, at the idea or work in question.

SPECIFICATION FOR SEMINARS

Seminars, whether internal, external, presentations from Masters students, or any other presentations with a public, are a key part of the scientific life of the DEE. All Department members are encouraged and expected to participate, by presenting, attending, and asking questions. The DEE aims to nurture an environment where everyone feels confident and safe to share what they are doing, and to participate publicly in scientific discussions. Feedback is intended to improve, not to discourage.

Speakers, hosts, and the audience are asked to always show respectful behaviours towards all attendees (e.g., in reference to the examples of unacceptable conduct listed above).

The seminar host (or the person in charge of public presentations) has the task to ensure that Question & Answer sessions are accessible, respectful, and unthreatening. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Providing some time for people to be ready to ask the first question at the end of the talk.
- Giving priority to questions from early career researchers (including students).
- Paying attention to any potential gender imbalances in the order of people invited to ask questions.
- Paying attention to the tone of questions, and considering either to interrupt the questioner to ask them to reformulate any questions which might be perceived as aggressive, or to attempt to formulate the question themselves with a more respectable tone.
- Paying attention to avoid situations where questions are asked repeatedly in a way that could be perceived as harassment, or which may indicate that the questioner and speaker might like to continue a more in-depth discussion after the seminar.

REPORTING UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

It is the collective responsibility of all of us as DEE members to help keep the DEE community safe, accountable, and responsible. If you experience or witness unacceptable behaviour, you have the choice of reporting your concerns through UNIL level procedures, which can include but is not limited to an

independent party (independent of UNIL) or, to the DEE level event/activity organisers or hosts, or to the Department Director, or to UNIL Human resources (HR). Please consider the timings of reporting options outlined below, which are particularly relevant for organised events/activities.

- **Immediate action:** Event/activity organisers or hosts identify contact persons, who might be themselves or others, who will be available to help anyone reporting and/or experiencing unacceptable conduct during DEE social events or other activities. This could, depending on the circumstances, involve the contacting of UNIL's security services (<https://www.unil.ch/unisep/home/menuinst/le-service-unisep.html>) or local law enforcement (117), providing escorts, or otherwise assisting the victim(s) and/or witness(es) to feel safe for the duration of the event/activity. In cases among the day-to-day activities of department members, the affected person(s) can turn to direct supervisors, non-direct supervisors, representatives (PhD, postdoc, PAT), mentors (PhD), or any of their peers who may feel comfortable acting on their behalf, in order to put an immediate end to the unacceptable behaviour (including by contacting UNIL security and/or local law enforcement), in addition to then choosing to pursue or not to pursue subsequent non-immediate actions.
- **Non-immediate action:** Event/activity organisers and/or the person(s) reporting and/or experiencing Unacceptable conduct during DEE social events or other activities can subsequently contact the "Persons of Trust" (<https://www.unil.ch/aide-help/en/home/menuinst/trouver-de-l-aide.html>) mandated by UNIL to act independently of the university. Any situation can be shared confidentially with the "Persons of Trust" and they are ready to listen, provide advice and guidance, and accompany victim(s) and/or witness(es) in appropriate further action if needed.

Alternatively or in addition, event/activity organisers and/or the person(s) reporting and/or experiencing Unacceptable conduct during DEE social events or other activities can subsequently contact the Department Director who will contact UNIL Human resources department, or contact directly UNIL's HR department.

Apart from this, UNIL has a website that provides all the information and resources needed in case of conflict, harassment, or discrimination: <https://www.unil.ch/aide-help/en/home.html>, [as well as the Equal Opportunity Office \(https://www.unil.ch/egalite/home/menuinst/notre-engagement.html\), which may also be able to help direct a person seeking to report an incident towards the most effective resources.](https://www.unil.ch/egalite/home/menuinst/notre-engagement.html)

Important confidentiality notice: When contacting the "Persons of Trust", no actions will be undertaken without your consent, nor will your name be communicated to anyone without your consent, whether you are reporting as a witness of, or as a person who experienced, any unacceptable behaviour. Note, however, that any person employed by UNIL or an entity attached to it has a duty to inform the Rectorate of serious cases that may be qualified as violations of personal rights in accordance with Article 321a of the Code of Obligations, in order to enable the Rectorate to take action: the Rectorate has an obligation to take measures by virtue of its duty to act as an employer and is the only one entitled to do so. Only entities subject to medical and professional confidentiality can guarantee total confidentiality. If you wish to be guaranteed confidentiality in the first instance, you must contact the "Persons of Trust".

Additional considerations: Discouragement of, or retaliation for, the reporting of Unacceptable conduct is in itself also considered as Unacceptable behaviour. Reporting an incident in bad faith, defined as in an intentionally dishonest manner, is in itself also considered as Unacceptable behaviour.

EXAMPLES OF CONSEQUENCES OF UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

The person will be asked by event organisers, hosts, representatives of an affected person(s), or an affected person(s) themselves to cease their Unacceptable behaviour and will be expected to comply immediately. Ideally, the person who behaved unacceptably would apologise, unless the person who experienced the behaviour would prefer that they do not have further contact. Repeated violations of the Code of Conduct

may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of the employment contract, as determined by the Rectorate. Therefore, Unacceptable behaviour conducted in a work-related context that is reported to the University will be pursued by the UNIL system of investigation under the UNIL rules and regulations.

ENTRY IN FORCE

This code of conduct has been adopted on the 12 June 2023 and is supported by the SRH and the Dean of the Faculty of biology and medicine.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Canadian Association for global health: <https://cagh-acsm.org/en/conference-code-conduct>

European society of evolutionary biology: https://eseb.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Code-of-Conduct-revised-2022_08_31.pdf

https://www.unil.ch/files/live/sites/dee/files/shared/Intranet/documents/COC%20Seminars%20DEE_V4.pdf