



An initiative to advance *professional and ethical conduct, climate & culture*

Contents

- I. General Guidance (p.2)
- II. Model Template for Society Reporting (pp. 3-7)
- III. Additional Policy and Legal Considerations (pp. 8-10)
- IV. About the Societies Consortium (p.11)

Complementary Resources:

Report Design Guide—Issues and rationales to address when designing report content/format
societiesconsortium.com [\[direct link\]](#)

Example Fact Sheet
societiesconsortium.com [\[direct link\]](#)

Model Glossary of Key Terms
societiesconsortium.com [\[direct link\]](#)

Note: This resource is currently intended for Consortium Members (and their members') use only.

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B1. Template for Society Reporting-out on Conduct Concerns

This Model Practices & Tools Template is intended to provide science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medical (STEMM) societies and their members' home institutions a resource to help them develop effective reports on the incidence of, and response to, sexual and intersecting bases of harassment in their governance, programming, and operations. Such reporting-out promotes transparency and accountability, which are important to creating actual and perceived organizational climate and culture that are intolerant of sexual and intersecting bases of harassment. *Perception* of tolerance of sexual harassment is a significant predictor of perpetuation, and *perception* of intolerance is a lever for prevention. All or parts of this resource can be excerpted and customized by a society or other entity according to its own circumstances, policy decisions, and needs. This resource is not intended to convey “one-size-fits-all” or “cookie cutter” solutions. This resource is intended to be used with the Report Design Guide, which provides an overview of key discussion issues, current research, and policy considerations, with options, to inform design of report content and format, and related practices aligned with the organization's policy decisions. This resource and its complementary resources may be updated over time, based on the experience and views of Consortium members.

An **Example Fact Sheet** of a society's conduct policies, including how to raise and resolve conduct concerns, is referenced in this Template; a society would create and link to a Fact Sheet about its own conduct-related policies to make them more accessible.

Limitations

This Template is designed with an awareness of law, but it does not constitute legal advice to any particular entity. Legal advice should always be based on the specific facts, circumstances and laws particular to an entity, situation and jurisdiction.

It is endorsed by the Societies Consortium as a resource, not as prescribed practice or reporting-out tool for all members. Consortium endorsement does not mean that Consortium members intend to (or should) adopt all provisions or agree with the practices or reporting form and content reflected in all provisions.

Common Principles for Effective Practices and Tools

The following common principles provide a strong foundation for designing and disseminating reporting-out practices and forms that effectively contribute to prevention of sexual harassment in STEMM fields.

- **Communicating Community Standards (or Aspirations).** Reporting the society's creation of (or aspirations and steps toward creating) community standards for its leadership, members, staff and other affiliates that value high-quality research, education and practice and highly professional, ethical and inclusive conduct, as fundamental to both excellence and integrity in the field. Using the society's influence to help create such standards more broadly in the field.
- **Communicating Conduct as a Barrier.** Clarity through reporting that failure of professional, ethical and inclusive conduct in the field—including, but not limited to, (specifically) sexual and intersecting bases of harassment—is a barrier to including all talent in the field. Such barrier undermines excellence and integrity of the field to the detriment of many individuals and society.
- **Communicating Expected Conduct Beyond Compliance.** Clarity in reporting that community standards include but go beyond compliance with law, reflecting the characteristics of a welcoming community where all talent can flourish.
- **Transparency for Prevention.** Focus on creating an accurate perception through reporting that the society has established and taken serious action to apply high standards of professional, ethical and inclusive conduct in the society's community (at least) and broader field (ultimately)—or is in the process of doing so. This is a key lever to prevent such harmful conduct in society roles and activities and, potentially, across the field.
- **Communicating Consequences & Restorative Practices.** Clarity in reporting that serious consequences result where conduct is lacking in professionalism, ethics and inclusivity. Also, clarity that action advancing an inclusive community is taken, whether or not a formal complaint and a formal process are pursued or a determination of misconduct is made. Community building is sought with punitive action when warranted and, without punitive action, when that is not warranted.
- **Fairness.** Reporting that protects confidentiality for both an identified target and the accused. Reporting that does not impugn any individual's conduct as unprofessional or unethical, without a determination in a fair process, while also reflecting that a formal process and a determination are not required for the society to take action to advance a welcoming community.

II. MODEL REPORTING TEMPLATE

Overview and Key

This Model Reporting Template is intended to provide a robust menu of customizable reporting charts and content as a resource on which societies can build their own report-out forms and practices. Societies will need to decide what data they can and want to report about the incidence of, and responses to, sexual and intersecting bases of harassment. Societies may not report on all data points offered as options in the Model Template. However, societies may want to consider collecting some data that can help them identify, evaluate and address issues of professional, ethical and inclusive conduct, climate and culture—even if all data are not going to be publicly reported.

- Language that is bolded in light blue and or italicized in light blue will call for the society to insert its specifics, or to include offered optional points if applicable to the society and its needs. When a mouse hovers over the light blue text, a gray box will appear. Click on the box for guidance and options.
- Text that is marked with a ⚠ provides guidance or calls for the Society to decide more significant policy issues.
- White text that is included in dark blue word boxes provides the Society with instructions for the page.

DESIGNING A SOCIETY REPORT IN 3 STEPS

- Step 1. Report's Purpose & Society's Conduct Expectations
- Step 2. When the Society Acts—What the Report Covers
- Step 3. The Full Reporting Template or the Limited Reporting Template

REPORT ON STATUS & ACTIONS TO ADVANCE COMMUNITY STANDARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN RELEVANT FIELDS

Reporting Period: Relevant Date – Relevant Date

To advance goals of transparency and accountability for excellence and integrity in the **Relevant Fields** (Field), the **Society Name** (Society) is pleased to provide this Report on Community Standards For Excellence, focusing on action to advance professional, ethical and inclusive conduct, climate and culture in the Field. *Information on **Subject-e.g., periodic trends or new initiatives** is included in this period's Report.*

A. Community Conduct, Climate and Culture for Excellence

The Society encourages the following community-driven standards of conduct from all current and prospective participants in the Field (the Community). The Society particularly encourages *and requires* such conduct in a sub-set of that Community, i.e., the Society's volunteers, leaders, employees, members, affiliates, vendors, and all those participating in Society activities (Society Affiliates):

- Leaders in the Field contribute high quality research, teaching/learning, practice and service to the Field, but that alone is not enough.
- To be a leader and achieve excellence in the Field, and for the privilege of being recognized as a participant in good standing in the Field's Community, an individual must embody professional and ethical conduct, including acting respectfully to others and welcoming and fully including all talent.
- Sexual harassment (including gender harassment) and other intersecting bases on which people are targeted for harassment and discrimination (e.g., race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, different abilities, religion, etc.) are unprofessional and unethical; they diminish participation and drive talent from the Field, undermining its excellence and integrity.
- Our Community's conduct is expected to be inclusive; to actively welcome diversity; and to be actively intolerant of sexual and intersecting bases of harassment, as well as other unprofessional and unethical behavior, in professional, educational, service and practice endeavors.
- All people involved in the Field, regardless of their roles, should be able to safely and productively pursue their academic and professional aspirations. Everyone in our Community who does not act to advance an inclusive community is accountable if some members of our Community are prevented from full participation due to unprofessional and unethical conduct of others.
- Continuous improvement is a focus for the Society and Society Affiliates, as we work together in an ongoing effort to build a Community in the Field that fully reflects these and related standards, welcoming all talent and maximizing excellence.

When the Society Acts—What the Report Covers

Through its own and collective efforts, the Society seeks to elevate understanding of—and accountability for satisfying—high standards of professional, ethical and inclusive conduct in the Field. The Society prioritizes supporting the success of all current and prospective participants in the Field’s Community to meet these standards of conduct. But the Society also holds accountable a sub-set of that Community, the Society Affiliates, for conduct in their Society roles and activities *as well as for conduct in their other roles and activities that may affect Society roles/activities*. Replace With Text From **Option I** or **Option II** Based On The Scope Of The Society’s Honors and Awards Policy

Option I: The Society further seeks to promote accountability of participants in the broader Field Community by exercising the Society’s discretion on whom to confer honors and awards, among other avenues of influence. This Report demonstrates the current status of these aims and some important ongoing actions of the Society to advance them.

Option II: This Report demonstrates the current status of these aims and some important ongoing actions of the Society to advance them.



In this section (above), the Society needs to decide whether it will hold Society Affiliates accountable for ethical, professional and inclusive conduct standards in their non-Society roles/activities, when that conduct also may affect Society roles/activities.

Select Option I or Option II

Also, the Society needs to decide whether it will use its broader influence in the Field to promote the Society’s conduct standards through its honors and awards process and other means.

Option I is appropriate if, when the Society confers honors, it exercises its discretion to consider individuals’ high quality of work *and* high standards of professional, ethical and inclusive conduct. Through its honors policy, the Society seeks to influence conduct broadly in the Field. However, the Society is not promising to determine misconduct of, or to impose sanctions for misconduct on, those who are not Society Affiliates.

Option II is appropriate if the Society’s Honors and Awards policy does not currently provide for the Society to consider professional, ethical and inclusive conduct when conferring honors. While quality of work *and* quality of conduct are important for advancing excellence in the Field, some societies will need more time to adopt an honors and awards policy that addresses both considerations or may pursue other strategies instead.

Data Summary Options For Report

Each of the data summary templates below includes an array of charts as examples of some types and formats of data that the Society may, in its own judgment, want to present in its Report. While there is a menu of optional charts for Society's consideration, the Society may choose not to use all charts.

Some societies already are gathering and may be reporting-out broad data. Other societies are not yet positioned for broad data gathering and reporting. Consequently, the Society may choose to use the "Full Reporting Template" OR "Limited Reporting Template. The Limited Reporting Template may initially best suit the Society's needs and capacity if the Society: has not received any reports of conduct concerns; has not been collecting data on conduct concerns; and/or has not yet adopted the conduct policies it may need. The Limited Reporting Template includes as few as 2 charts, plus 2 optional charts. It addresses the types of concerns that may be raised, ways to do so, and ways in which the Society may address concerns. The Full Reporting Template includes up to 7 different data summary chart options, presenting the same information as is in the Limited Reporting Template plus types of concerns that actually have been raised and responses.

Instructions:

- First select one of the following reporting templates by double clicking on the icon of the template you would like to use:



Full Reporting
Template.docx



Limited Reporting
Template.docx

- By selecting the Full Reporting Template or the Limited Reporting Template, a Society will be connected to a separate word doc that includes a "Table of Charts" followed by chart examples that correspond to the chosen Template (Full or Limited). Within the Full Reporting Template and the Limited Reporting Template, the Society has the further choice of including all or only a subset of the chart examples provided.
- After selecting the Full or Limited Reporting Template, make chart selections, customize the charts, and prepare a corresponding "Table of Charts" (listing only the selected charts) to meet the Society's needs and policy decisions. Then save that separate word doc. Finally, copy the saved text and paste it into the next page of this Model Template under "Data Summaries" to complete the Society's report form.

Important Notes

1. The Society may opt not to include portions of its usual report to protect confidentiality of individual information, to address pending or threatened legal claims, or when sufficient data are not available.
2. Please address any questions to [Position/Office and Contact Information](#)



Priority Considerations For The Model Reporting Template

Consider the following additional information when customizing the Model Reporting-out Template for a society's or other entity's specific needs and priorities.

- 1. Consistency:** A society or other entity is well-advised to ensure that its report is not at odds with its other applicable policies, tools, or contracts. Any inconsistency needs to be resolved. It is important to make clear on the face of relevant policies, tools and contracts which one ultimately governs if there is a conflict or ambiguity. Pre-existing contracts likely govern, unless they are amended, if there is a conflict with a new document.
- 2. Design Consideration for Privacy and Confidentiality:** In policies and reports, it is important for a society/entity to—
 - communicate clearly about all options available for reporting on and resolving conduct concerns, including formal processes and informal processes;¹
 - empower targets to make decisions about which path to follow to report on and resolve conduct concerns, without pressure from the society/entity or others;
 - consider and adhere to privacy/confidentiality policies of the society/entity that advance safety and fairness of all those involved or affected, as well as laws that may apply, and consult the society's/entity's privacy officer and counsel as needed;
 - if the society/entity intends ombuds officials and other similarly trained officials to be available to receive confidential reports and facilitate informal resolution processes, avoid making these officials “responsible [or reporting] employees” for a society/entity (i.e., those who are required to report) under society/entity policies or Title IX regulations.²
 - communicate clearly about circumstances involving safety of the community or legal requirements which may require the society/entity to act without consent of an identified target and/or guaranteeing confidentiality.³
 - See the Report Design Guide, “Considerations Relating to Confidentiality” for more information, at societiesconsortium.com [direct link](#).

¹ Title IX requires investigations and response. Proposed revised regulations, if adopted, may require formal processes and determinations when a formal complaint is filed unless all individuals involved agree otherwise.

² 34 CFR § 106.8 “Each recipient shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under this part, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to such recipient.”

³ For example, when reports of sexual harassment are made to a Title IX coordinator, or a responsible employee becomes aware of concerns, Title IX requires action and response; under proposed regulations of the U.S. Department of Education, the concerns may have to be formally investigated and a formal resolution process (hearing, etc.) may be required.

III. ADDITIONAL POLICY AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

3. Defamation: It is impossible to control whether a defamation claim will be made. However, the aim is to discourage such claims and to strengthen a society's/entity's legitimate position that defamation claims relating to actions to advance ethical and professional conduct are not valid. A good practice is to avoid providing information in a society's reporting-out form that identifies individual incidents or the identities of individuals involved.

- This is particularly important where an evidence-based, factual conclusion has not been reached—and may never be reached—about whether the conduct of concern occurred and whether it violates a society's or other entity's policy or law.⁴

- Include in conduct reports a prominent note such as:

“The Society does not make judgements about any individual without determining facts and providing involved individuals an opportunity to provide relevant information. While we offer formal processes, sometimes those involved in and affected by conduct of concern desire an informal or restorative action to acknowledge, understand and prevent recurrence of the harm, advance community standards and safety, and restore relationships. The information in our report intentionally does not make or include judgments about any individuals. Any statement or action to the contrary is prohibited and not authorized by the Society.”

4. Personal Affairs Conduct Distinguished. There may be situations where an individual's conduct in personal affairs casts serious doubt on that individual's fundamental ethics, or the safety of a society's or other entity's community. Such doubt may interfere with the individual's ability to perform society/entity roles and activities. It may be best to have an “other” category for some data points in a report in order to avoid having the report get ahead of or misrepresent a conduct code. Conduct codes will likely need to address a number of complex issues, including whether (or when) personal conduct is ever covered.

- Conduct in personal affairs may affect performance in a professional setting if there is a final determination, or even a credible question, that someone committed an illegal act of violence or egregious dishonesty in the individual's personal life (e.g., rape, domestic partner abuse, vehicular homicide, child pornography, embezzlement, insider trading, theft).
- However, an individual's conduct in personal affairs generally should not affect performance in a professional setting, if the conduct in personal affairs reflects cultural differences, is not illegal in the U.S., and is not brought into the workplace or education setting.

⁴ A society/entity may be required to offer formal processes, whether as an employer, or under Title IX as the recipient of federal funds for any educational program.

III. ADDITIONAL POLICY AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

5. **Adapting resources for use by Institutions of Higher Education, Teaching Hospitals, and Other Entities:** Necessary modifications of Consortium resources for use by research and educational entities include:

- **Minor Language Adjustments.** Replace “Society” with another defined term suitable for the entity throughout. Consider whether there is any other terminology that needs minor adjustment.
- **Different Legal Obligations.** Consider consistency with laws that may apply to the particular type of entity.
 - For example, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Title IX may apply to institutions of higher education (IHE) in circumstances when they do not apply to societies, or these laws may apply more broadly in IHEs.

NOTE: Part III of this Model Practices and Tools Template for Society Reporting may be updated to identify additional considerations, as well as additional resources to which the addressed considerations relate.

IV. ABOUT THE SOCIETIES CONSORTIUM

The Societies Consortium on Sexual Harassment in STEMM is a unique collective act of leadership and accountability to advance excellence in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medical fields (STEMM). This initiative is providing customizable model policies (with embedded menus of options for flexibility), policy-law guidance, and practical tools to advance professional and ethical conduct, climate and culture in societies’ own operations and STEMM fields broadly, in support of inclusion of all talent and excellence in the fields. Through a collective effort and investment, the consortium model can develop high quality resources that benefit from multiple perspectives and national expertise, in a time and cost-efficient manner. Toward these aims, the Consortium’s strategic focus is building communities actively intolerant of sexual and intersecting bases of harassment and building bridges for collective efforts across STEMM—among societies, academic and research institutions, teaching hospitals and others, as well as researchers, faculty, practitioners and students. Launched in December 2018, 100 STEMM disciplinary societies are Inaugural Members (with the inaugural period ending in April 2019) and membership remains open, with more than 120 Members and committed Members as of November 2020).

To learn more about the Societies Consortium or to join, visit societiesconsortium.com or email societiesconsortium@educationcounsel.org



Executive Committee				
American Association for the Advancement of Science	American Chemical Society	American Educational Research Association	American Geophysical Union	American Physical Society
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