

# CODE OF CONDUCT DURING FIELD ACTIVITIES

## Department of Geosciences

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Our Code of Conduct for field activities is applicable to all research and teaching activities taking place off the campus of the University of Fribourg. We use it to outline the behaviour expectations during field activities – in other words, how we put **‘Be Good To Each Other’** into practise.

The Code applies to and protects all people involved in our field activities, no matter their status or seniority. This document has two parts:

**The Bill of Rights** outlines the rights of all team members regardless of your role in the team, whether student, assistant, scientist or leader throughout the course of the field activity.

#### **The Code of Conduct:**

- Defines appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- Outlines reporting and investigative procedures
- Includes protection against retaliation

- Through discussion and agreement with all participants/team members, the Code can be modified to fit the individual needs of specific field activities. Please notify the Department of these revisions during Unit or Pool meetings.

**Definitions** of key behaviours are also provided at the end of this document.

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## Background

Our Code was developed by the Department's Wellbeing-at-Work Group in 2023. Our approach is based on examples available through the ADVANCEGeo Partnership ([https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/resources/codes\\_conduct.html](https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/resources/codes_conduct.html)).

This document does not replace or override provisions in the Federal or Cantonal Laws or the Directives of the University of Fribourg. These provisions include but are not limited to:

- The Federal laws governing labour relationships (e.g. The Code of Obligations (RS 220) ; Gender Equality Act (151.1) ; Swiss Criminal Code (311.0) ; Federal Act on Data Protection 235.1)
- The Federal laws concerning safety at work (e.g. Loi sur le travail/Arbeitsgesetz (822.11) ; Ordonnance 1 relative à la loi sur le travail/Verordnung 1 zum Arbeitsgesetz (RS 822.111) ; Ordonnance 3 relative à la loi sur le travail/Verordnung 3 zum Arbeitsgesetz (822.113).
- The cantonal laws concerning measures against harassment (Ordonnance relative au harcèlement et aux difficultés relationnelles sur le lieu de travail / Verordnung über Mobbing, sexuelle Belästigung und zwischenmenschliche Probleme am Arbeitsplatz (RSF 122.70.14)
- The University Directive concerning measures against sexual harassment (*'Directives du Rectorat de l'Université de Fribourg du 17 février 2003 (Etat le 27 janvier 2020) concernant des mesures contre le harcèlement sexuel à l'Université de Fribourg/Richtlinien des Rektorats der Universität Freiburg vom 17. Februar 2003 (Stand am 27. Januar 2020) betreffend Massnahmen gegen sexuelle Belästigung an der Universität Freiburg'*)

## Bill of Rights

All team members have the following rights, which you acknowledge and agree to support.

### **Right to respect, dignity, and professionalism**

All group members have the right to not experience or see misconduct from other group members as defined by the Code of Conduct.

### **Right to safety**

All group members are entitled to a safe working environment. This includes training and providing adequate safety equipment. All group members have the right to discuss risks prior to, during and after the field activity.

All group members have the right to refuse or pause work if they have not been adequately trained, if equipment is not provided, or if they feel unsafe.

All group members shall be provided with visible proof of credentials and affiliation if requested.

### **Right to privacy**

All group members have the right to privacy. In cases of collective accommodations like dormitories ensure in advance that all group members are comfortable with the arrangements. When private rooms or tents are used, each group member must respect the privacy of group member's space and not enter it without their permission nor disturb a group member in their room/tent unnecessarily.

All group members have the right to privacy when using the bathroom. If no indoor bathrooms are available care must be taken to respect the privacy of group members outdoors.

All group members have a right to specify whether they permit photographs and/or video of them to be taken by other group members.

### **Right to communicate**

All group members have the right to receive training in the use of communication devices.

All group members have the right to outside communications at all times during the field activity. In an emergency, the field leader may request that communications are temporarily restricted to emergency purposes, but they will always allow group members to report misconduct.

All group members have ownership of their physical communications such as text messages and are not obliged to share them with any other group member.

### **Right to rest**

All group members have the right to rest if they are physically or mentally exhausted as long as doing so does not reduce the safety or well-being of other group members. A group member taking rest does not stop other group members from continuing to work.

### **Right to anonymity**

Any group member that submits a report of harassment or Code of Conduct violation has the right to anonymity throughout the reporting process. The group member's identity shall not be revealed to the accused or reporting agency without their consent. However, anonymity may not be guaranteed within university reporting systems.

### **Right to data access**

All group members shall have access to data which they collect for future publications, unless explicitly agreed upon before the data was collected.

Any group member that independently collects data for their own project shall be asked before those data are shared with other people not participating in that project.

All publications that result from data collected by a group member or local knowledge holders who are engaged in a project should include that individual as a co-author or an acknowledged party. All group members associated with data collection should be notified before submitting the publication.

# Code of Conduct

This code of conduct outlines the expected and the unacceptable behaviour during field activities organised by the University of Fribourg's Department of Geosciences.

It applies regardless of your role in the group, whether student, assistant, scientist or leader.

You agree to follow the code of conduct which is designed to promote professionalism, respect and support. You recognize that unacceptable behaviour will bear consequences, which may include your removal from the activity and a review by the relevant authorities. The consequences pronounced and the responsible authority taking measures depend on the degree of the unacceptable behavior and whether you are employed or a student.

## 1. Expected Behaviour

### **Group interactions:**

Be accepting of a wide range of views and allow all group members to give their opinions openly without judgement, if viewpoints are not discriminatory. Consider the ideas, not individuals.

Respect and be considerate of others without prioritizing some knowledge, such as western science, over others, such as local and Indigenous knowledge.

Include all group members in decision making and do not exclude others from meetings.

Be honest and accountable. If you do not follow the Code of Conduct or fail to meet expectations in some way, be open, admit mistakes, and try to do better.

Avoid knowingly making false or misleading statement(s) (or engaging in activities) that could be or be viewed as offensive or defamatory.

Recognize and avoid overly aggressive or chauvinistic actions. A culture where "roughing it" is seen as a rite of passage is unacceptable.

Ask for help when you need it and respect those who ask for help. Recognize that people have different strengths and some disabilities are invisible.

### **Recognizing the context of the work:**

Be aware of, and address your position, power, privileges, and values. This includes recognizing the colonial histories, cultural biases, and structural marginalization that may have led to your position within the group.

Respect the landscape in which you are a guest, including the land, water, plants, and animals. Reduce your impact by following "Leave No Trace" principles.

Respect the local community. Make efforts to learn about their culture and value their knowledge. Ask permission to take photographs of people and use their stories, ideas, and information. Make efforts to share the collected scientific data with the community and build relationships.

### **Respecting personal boundaries:**

Believe victims of misconduct through all stages of the reporting process, take seriously the impact of misconduct, and respect their anonymity through the reporting process if they desire.

Respect the rights of any team member accused of misconduct - the Bill of Rights still applies. Respect their right to anonymity outside the reporting process. Do not engage in 'mobbing' of the accused.

Ask permission to take photos or record group members in any way, and only post photos or video on public platforms if consent has been given.

Follow any local field station rules including respecting the property and facilities.

Respect the safety of others, both physically and mentally.

## **2. Unacceptable Behaviour**

### **Misconduct includes:**

- Physical or verbal intimidation, bullying, abuse, harassment, or assault.
- Coercion/Manipulation i.e. harmfully seeking to influence another person.
- Threats (including but not limited to threats of violence, professional discreditation, unwarranted decreases in responsibilities, and public embarrassment).
- Gender, race-based, age-based, ability-based, or sexual harassment.
- Sexual misconduct including the inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in a public space, or sustained use of sexual innuendo.
- The use of hate speech about a person's gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, race, religion, or national origin.
- Behaviour that endangers mental or physical health and safety.
- Stalking - repeatedly following, harassing, threatening, or intimidating.
- Influencing the proceedings of a misconduct report, including actions to delay, discredit, stop, or falsify the investigation of misconduct.
- Retaliation against a person or group reporting misconduct.
- Mobbing, i.e. the bullying or isolation of an individual by a group, even if this individual is accused of misconduct.

### **Misconduct that will result in review and possibly your removal from fieldwork includes:**

- The use of illegal drugs or excessive use of alcohol during fieldwork
- Supplying alcohol to any person under the legal age in the locality
- Supplying illegal drugs
- Dangerous driving
- Disregard for the personal property of others
- Loud and unpleasant behaviour
- Ignoring quiet hours
- Repeatedly disregarding responsibilities
- Using social or mainstream media to target group members in a way that could harm their privacy and/or reputation

- Deliberately mis-characterizing a person's gender identity, including through the use of a name or pronoun that the person has rejected.

Depending on the degree of the misconduct and after hearing the alleged fieldwork participant the leader or head of department can take emergency measure like the immediate removal from ongoing fieldwork (Chap.6). Further measures might be taken after reporting to the relevant authorities.

### 3. Sexual or Romantic Advances

Group members should follow an “Ask Once” policy when it comes to consensual sexual advances or “asking someone out” during field activities. An “Ask Once” policy ensures that all group members can only “ask out” an individual once. Asking out includes flirting, expressing interest, and/or making advances towards an individual. If at any point that individual states that they are not interested, brushes off the advance, or does not reciprocate in a positive way, the group member must not continue to ask out the individual. If the group member continues to pursue the individual, it is considered harassment.

Superiors, advisors, teachers and excursion leaders should not have relationships with their students or inferiors during field activities or excursions. Here, the ‘Ask Once’ policy described above does not apply.

### 4. Victim of Misconduct

Each situation is unique. If you have experienced inappropriate behaviour,

You are entitled to the following (not exhaustive):

- Talk to anyone about your experience. Talking as early as possible may help to prevent the situation from getting worse. It is always possible to report later.
- Change your mind about talking to anyone about your experience at any time
- Report to any of the reporting options listed below
- Bring someone with you to provide support during reporting or any resulting discussions
- Seek reasonable assistance to ensure the success of your work
- Seek medical assistance

### 5. Reporting an Incident

**All group members have the responsibility to report all instances of unacceptable conduct. All instances of misconduct require reporting no matter the severity. This applies even if the unacceptable conduct concerns group members with leadership duties.**

#### *How to report an incident:*

Several reporting options are available. You can report to people in the field (e.g. the field leader or another group member) and to people back on Campus. The options include people of multiple genders.

The preferred options for reporting misconduct are as follows:

- The President of the Department of Geosciences
- Another Professor in the Department of Geosciences

- The dean or the dean's office of the Faculty.

If you report an incident to another person in the Department who is not a professor, then this person has to pass this report onto a Professor in the Department on your behalf. This person also has a duty to respect your requests for anonymity.

Where requested, the Department will seek to preserve the anonymity of the reporting individual.

You may also report directly to the University Administration, for instance through the Ombudsman Service: <https://www.unifr.ch/uni/en/administration/mediation-office.html>.

Further options and information can be found at the following address:

<https://www.unifr.ch/campus/en/support/conflicts-and-discrimination/respect-and-harassment/>

Be aware that they will not have information about your field activity or this Department-level Code of Conduct, and so are likely to contact the President of the Department of Geosciences. Be aware, the anonymity of the reporting individual might not be preserved outside of our Department.

## **6. The procedures for responding to a report of misconduct:**

Concerns and reports will be addressed promptly. First, the Department's Professorial Group will make sure that immediate safety issues have been addressed. The report will then be handled through standard University of Fribourg reporting procedures, which will usually be started by the President of the Department of Geosciences.

The response to misconduct during the field activity can include:

- Removal from field activity
- Remove responsibilities, privilege, or access while on field activity
- Temporary ban from the team's spaces in the field
- Permanent ban from the team's spaces in the field

As far as possible, the remoteness of any field location will not factor in the decision to terminate a group member's participation.

Action against a person or group as a result of a report will not be tolerated.

Further measures might be taken after reporting dependent on the degree of misconduct and the relevant authorities. In principle, the Faculty is responsible for academic measures, the Rector's Office for disciplinary measures in the case of breaches of university order by students (art. 117 al. 2 Uni Statutes). For breaches of university order by persons employed by the University, art. 117 al. 5 of the Uni Statutes refers to the legislation on state personnel. In this case, the department of human resources is in charge of the procedure.

## Definitions

**Bullying** – Abusive conduct involving threatening, humiliating, or intimidating behaviour directed at one or more people by one or more perpetrators that interferes with ability to work and is intended to cause physical or psychological harm.

**Coercion/manipulation** – The use of threats or one’s positionality or power to persuade someone to do something.

**Harassment** – Defined as any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct based on race, colour, religion, sex (includes sexual harassment and discrimination based on pregnancy), disability, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, and protected genetic information that is so objectively offensive as to alter the conditions of the individual’s employment. Harassment unreasonably interferes with an employee’s performance and can create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

**Retaliation** – Adverse employment, academic or other actions against anyone reporting a violation of this code.

**Sexual Harassment** – Includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when the conduct is made as a condition of employment and when the conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

**Stalking** – Defined as repeatedly following, harassing, threatening, or intimidating including by telephone, mail, electronic communication, or social media.