



# MLML Code of Conduct

*Last approved 08/15/2023*

At Moss Landing Marine Labs we are a community of students, faculty, researchers, and staff working together to *empower a diverse community of marine science leaders by providing unparalleled and equitable access to the education, environment, and tools necessary to understand marine and coastal processes—creating new understanding and solutions in a changing world.* ([MLML Inclusive Mission Statement](#)). This Code of Conduct has been developed to foster inclusive and safe learning and research environments. Labs, research groups, and specific activities such as boating, diving, chemical safety, and others may have additional guidelines. MLML adheres to SJSU and CSU policies and state and federal laws regarding discrimination and harassment.

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## Conduct Expectations

Everyone at MLML has the right to learn and work in an inclusive and respectful environment free from discrimination and harassment. These expectations hold for both physical and virtual spaces and apply to all MLML affiliates and contractors: faculty, researchers, staff, and students.

**We value diversity** in our science and education and **actively strive to increase diversity, and promote equity and inclusion.**

**We will not engage in, and will actively discourage, discrimination or harassment,** bullying, microaggressions, ethical misconduct, or other harmful behaviors.

**We will be kind, tolerant, and respectful** of fellow students, researchers, labmates, and collaborators.

**We will communicate respectfully and professionally:** All communication should be appropriate for a professional audience and be considerate of people from different cultural backgrounds. Sexual language and imagery are not appropriate at any time.

**We will challenge ideas not individuals:** In our search for knowledge and employment of the scientific method, we will challenge ideas and assertions while showing respect for those with whom we are engaged.

**We will ethically conduct research, teaching, and community engagement.**

**We will adhere to laws and policies:** We will be aware of and adhere to laws, university policies, and this Code of Conduct in our professional behavior.

## Welcoming and Inclusive Environment

Remember that all MLML community members are people before we're researchers, students, and employees. Always strive to be empathetic and supportive, and be respectful of:

- Privacy if someone chooses not to disclose things about their personal life
- Confidentiality if someone shares something personal
  - NOTE:
    - All members of the MLML community who are also SJSU or SJSU Research Foundation employees, including student employees, are "[mandatory reporters](#)" for incidents of discrimination and sexual harassment.
    - These must be reported to the [Title IX and Gender Equity Office](#).
- Boundaries with respect to physical and mental health, family obligations, religious practice, etc.
- The ways that people may be personally affected by global events and politics

At MLML, we work hard to treat everyone with equal respect regardless of their gender, age, race, sexual orientation, religion, culture, (dis)ability, academic record, or personal background. MLML affiliates should:

- Actively include and engage all lab members in discussion (lab meetings, social events, etc)
- Be mindful of how much each person is participating and being heard
- Welcome and support people of all backgrounds and identities into our group
- Refer to each other with the individual's self-identified pronouns
- Foster a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment
- Not engage in homophobic, racist, transphobic, ageist, sexist or otherwise exclusionary language or behavior
- Show kindness, patience, and treat everyone in a dignified manner

## Harassment and Discrimination

Discrimination or harassment will not be tolerated at MLML.

Harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct or comments, either directly against an individual in the workplace or made in a general manner that contributes to an environment that is hostile or lacking respect or dignity. Behavior or actions may be harassment, whether or not they are intended to be, if the effect could be considered by a reasonable person in the shoes of the target, and is in fact considered by the target, as limiting their ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or opportunities offered by the University.

Often harassment can take the form of "microaggressions." Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target individuals based upon their marginalized group membership. For example, commenting on a woman's appearance rather than her work is a microaggression. Often, microaggressions can be couched in the form of a "compliment," (e.g. "you're too attractive to be a scientist") which causes additional stress to the target when trying to decide how to respond. Over time, these comments can take a great toll on mental and emotional health, and the target's feeling of belonging in science and academia. Furthermore it is illegal to discriminate against anyone based upon their sex, gender or gender identity. Unwanted sexual advances or employment benefit on the condition of an exchange of sexual favors is also illegal.

Our MLML community is protected from discrimination and harassment on the basis of:

- Age
- Disability-Medical Condition
- Genetic Information
- Marital status
- Race, color, citizenship, ancestry or national origin
- Religion
- Retaliation

- Sex, gender, gender expression, and/or gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Veteran status

Examples of Unacceptable Behavior include:

- Physical or verbal abuse, harassment, or assault
- Intimidation or bullying
- Coercion/Manipulation
- 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
- The use of hate speech directed at a minority group including comments about a person's gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, or national origin
- Behavior that endangers the mental or physical health and safety of lab members
- Stalking
- Retaliation against a person or group reporting code of conduct violations

## Reporting & Resources

What do you do if you observe or experience unacceptable or concerning behavior?

- Call 911 if you or someone else is in immediate danger.
- You can report an incident in an informal or formal way, see below.
- As our MLML values emphasize, we strive to address violations of our code of conduct with early intervention and dialogue focused on the needs of the person experiencing the discrimination or harassment.
- We will not retaliate against someone for reporting a violation.
- MLML will respond promptly to reports, usually within 3 business days. The response will, in part, depend on the mode of reporting (see below).

### Informal Reporting Options

- Who To Talk To:
  - If you feel comfortable, you can speak directly to the person and remind them of the code of conduct and the related educational resources available.
  - You can talk with one of several MLML contacts:
    - your lab advisor or supervisor,
    - any [faculty member](#), [PI](#), or [staff member](#) at MLML
    - [Graduate Program Coordinator, Terra Eggink](#)
    - [Health & Safety Officer, Jocelyn Douglas](#).

- MLML [Department Acting Chair, Mike Graham](#),
  - or the [MLML Interim Director, Ivano Aiello](#).
- NOTE: Some complaints (discrimination and sexual harassment) **cannot** be kept informal or anonymous.
  - All members of the MLML community who are also SJSU or SJSU Research Foundation employees, including student employees, are “[mandatory reporters](#)” for incidents of discrimination and sexual harassment.
  - These must be reported to the [Title IX and Gender Equity Office](#).
- [Student anonymous report form](#):
  - If you choose to report in confidence and remain anonymous, this may limit the reach of the investigation and appropriate due process.
  - This form goes to the MLML Graduate Program Coordinator who will forward it to the appropriate MLML administrator.

## Formal Reporting Options

### Student Reporting

In addition to the informal options above, you can report formally through SJSU or your home campus resources. Students who are also employed at MLML should also see the Staff section below.

*SJSU (these resources are available to students regardless of home campus):*

- [Bias/Discrimination Incident reporting form](#)
  - By reporting discrimination incidents, you are helping to maintain SJSU as an inclusive and safe campus environment. Once received, staff from the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and other offices will review the information and may contact you for additional information.
- [Discrimination & Harassment Complaints for Students](#)
  - This SJSU page guides you through the process.
  - Clicking on “Complaint Form - See Attachment F” will take you to the official CSU policy and complaint form.
    - Choose Attachments from the table of contents on the left and find [Attachment F - Complaint Form](#)
    - [Where this form is submitted depends on the type of report](#). For reports of misconduct against a student, faculty, employee, or staff:
      - Reports of misconduct reporting Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Exploitation, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Stalking, and associated Retaliation: submit to [SJSU Title IX officer](#).
      - All other types of misconduct: submit to the SJSU [DHR administrator](#), currently Julie Paisant.

What the report is about	Where to submit
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Sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, sexual exploitation, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and associated retaliation	Campus <a href="#">Title IX Officer</a>
All other types of misconduct	Campus <a href="#">DHR administrator</a> . Currently <a href="#">Julie Paisant</a>

- [Student Ombuds](#)
  - A designated administrator who offers students impartial, informal, and confidential support to assist them with a variety of issues and concerns.

*CSUMB:*

- <https://csumb.edu/titleix/>

*Other Home Campuses*

- Look for the Title IX or discrimination and harassment reporting process on your home campus website.

#### Staff Reporting

In addition to the informal options above, you can report (via email, in writing, or verbally) to your supervisor, MLML director, or SJSU resources.

*SJSU Research Foundation staff*

- [Complaint Procedure and Form | Research Foundation](#)

*SJSU State staff*

- [Discrimination & Harassment Complaints for Employees & Third Parties | University Personnel](#)

#### Faculty Reporting

- [Discrimination & Harassment Complaints for Employees & Third Parties | University Personnel](#)

What are some possible consequences for inappropriate conduct

In accordance with SJSU and CSU policies, MLML will address violations of our code of conduct in support of the inclusive and supportive environment we intend to foster. Inappropriate conduct will be addressed with coaching, corrective action, and disciplinary measures up to and including termination of the violator's appointment.

Possible corrective action for faculty, staff, and research scientists include:

- Meetings to discuss issues and/or patterns of behavior with written and signed documentation of the meeting outcomes. Such meetings are meant to allow faculty and research scientists a chance to present their point of view and to discuss ways to mitigate the issues that have become a pattern. Subsequent complaints will lead to further action.
- Loss of ability to recruit new graduate students or supervise undergraduate students;
- Depending on the infraction, negative performance evaluations likely translating into loss of any merit raises that might have otherwise occurred, and/or loss of endowments or discretionary funds (if any held);
- In severe cases, termination.

Possible corrective action of students include:

- Violations of [SJSU's Student Code of Conduct or Academic Integrity policy](#) will be referred to the appropriate SJSU personnel.
- Restricted access to facilities
- Suspension or expulsion

### Revisions and Feedback

This code of conduct will be revised at least annually by the MLML Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The committee welcomes feedback. [Contact the committee](#) by email.

### Resources

Resources, links to trainings, and readings are available on the [Code of Conduct webpage](#).