**GSA Code of Conduct**

**PURPOSE**

This code provides responsibilities and guiding principles of conduct for all members of the Geological Society of America (GSA). It is the mission of GSA to advance all fields in the geosciences, enhance the professional growth of all members, and promote the geosciences in the service of humankind, and in fulfilling this mission, members have professional obligations to their colleagues, students, clients, employers, and the public as well as to their science.

In support of these obligations, this Code aims to:

* further understanding in geosciences through open and honest communication of research;
* ensure appropriate accessibility of accurate and reliable geological information to educators, students, employers, policy makers, and the public; and
* encourage effective education and training in all disciplines of the geosciences.

**STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRINCIPLES**

Members of GSA are expected to adhere to the highest standards of conduct and to maintain personal and professional integrity. GSA members should observe the following responsibilities and principles in the conduct of their professional affairs.

**Responsibilities to:**

* *The Sciences and Profession*
Geoscientists should seek to advance all disciplines of the geosciences, understand the limitations of their knowledge, and respect objectivity and truth in their professional endeavors. Geoscientists should ensure that their scientific contributions, and those of their collaborators, are thorough, accurate, and unbiased in design, implementation, and presentation. Where appropriate, geoscientists should remain current with developments in their field, share ideas and information, keep accurate and complete laboratory records, maintain integrity in all conduct and publications, and give due credit to the contributions of others. Conflicts of interest and scientific misconduct, such as fabrication, falsification, omission/suppression of results, and plagiarism, are incompatible with this Code.
* *The Students and Colleagues*
Geoscientists should mentor and encourage all students in a manner that is open-minded, objective and enthusiastic; promotes curiosity, and recognizes that education is a fundamental trust conferred by society for the promotion of the student's learning and professional development. Geoscientists should treat associates with respect, regardless of the level of their formal education, encourage them, learn with them, share ideas honestly, and give credit for their contributions.
* *The Employer and Employees*
Geoscientists should promote and protect the legitimate interests of their employers, perform work honestly and competently, fulfill obligations, and safeguard proprietary information. Geoscientists, as employers, should treat subordinates with respect for their professionalism and concern for their well-being, and provide them with a safe, congenial working environment, fair compensation, and proper acknowledgment of their scientific contributions.
* *The Clients and End Users*
Geoscientists accept uncertainty and integrate information with a unique perspective involving time, space, and scale. Geoscientists should provide for, advise, and serve clients and end users in a manner that is honest, objective, competent, dependable, honorable, respectful, and fair.
* *The Public and Humankind*
All geoscientists have a professional responsibility to serve the public interest and welfare and to further knowledge of science for the benefit of humankind. Geoscientists should actively be concerned with the health and welfare of humankind and effectively communicate knowledge about potential natural hazards to the public. Public comments on scientific matters should be made with care and precision, without unsubstantiated, exaggerated, or premature statements.
* *The Environment and Natural Resources*
Geoscientists should strive to communicate their knowledge to protect the environment and to provide appropriate stewardship of natural resources. Geoscientists should also understand and anticipate the consequences of their work on the environment and natural resources.

**Principles of Conduct for Members:**

In meeting these responsibilities, members will follow these guiding principles in conducting their professional activities.

1. Members will strive to communicate their knowledge of the geosciences to the public; to promote proper stewardship of all natural resources in manner that is environmentally and economically responsible; to effectively communicate their knowledge of natural hazards to the public; to apply their knowledge for the enhancement of public policy and land-use planning; and to support educational opportunities for students, the profession, and the public.
2. Members will treat students respectfully and without exploitation. Members will strive to accurately represent an understanding and knowledge of the geosciences, avoiding and discouraging the dissemination of erroneous, biased, or exaggerated statements about the geosciences. Members will offer their professional advice and guidance only on those subjects in which they are informed and qualified through professional training or experience.
3. Members will strive to cooperate with other researchers whenever possible and appropriate to assure rapid interchange and dissemination of knowledge in the geosciences.
4. In publications, members should strive to differentiate facts, opinions, and hypotheses.
5. Members will not plagiarize in verbal or written communication, and will give full and proper credit to the creativity, ideas, and efforts of colleagues and students. Members will not fabricate, falsify, or suppress results, deliberately misrepresent research findings, or otherwise commit scientific fraud.
6. Members will not attempt to injure the reputation or professional opportunities of another scientist by false, biased, or undocumented claims. Members will not seek employment, grants, or gain by offers of gifts or favors, or by any other malicious action.
7. Members will undertake reasonable efforts to ensure inclusiveness and will not discriminate against others, in the course of their work on the basis of race, sex, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, and disability. Members will not practice or condone harassment in any form in any professional context.
8. Members will not represent themselves as spokespersons for the Society without express authorization by the President of GSA.

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# American Geosciences Institute Guidelines for Ethical Professional Conduct

These guidelines address common ethical topics across the geoscience community; the ethics statements of individual societies may expand beyond these guidelines.

Geoscientists play a critical role in ethical decision making about stewardship of the Earth, the use of its resources, and the interactions between humankind and the planet on which we live. Geoscientists must earn the public’s trust and maintain confidence in the work of individual geoscientists and the geosciences as a profession. The American Geosciences Institute (AGI) expects those in the profession to adhere to the highest ethical standards in all professional activities. Geoscientists should engage responsibly in the conduct and reporting of their work, acknowledging the uncertainties and limits of current understanding inherent in studies of natural systems. Geoscientists should respect the work of colleagues and those who use and rely upon the products of their work.

***In day-to-day activities geoscientists should:***

* Be honest.
* Act responsibly and with integrity, acknowledge limitations to knowledge and understanding, and be accountable for their errors.
* Present professional work and reports without falsification or fabrication of data, misleading statements, or omission of relevant facts.
* Distinguish facts and observations from interpretations.
* Accurately cite authorship, acknowledge the contributions of others, and not plagiarize.
* Disclose and act appropriately on real or perceived conflicts of interest.
* Continue professional development and growth.
* Encourage and assist in the development of a safe, diverse, and inclusive workforce.
* Treat colleagues, students, employees, and the public with respect.
* Keep privileged information confidential, except when doing so constitutes a threat to public health, safety, or welfare.

***As members of a professional and scientific community, geoscientists should:***

* Promote greater understanding of the geosciences by other technical groups, students, the general public, news media, and policy makers through effective communication and education.
* Conduct their work recognizing the complexities and uncertainties of the Earth system.
* Sample responsibly so that materials and sites are preserved for future study.
* Document and archive data and data products using best practices in data management, and share data promptly for use by the geoscience community.
* Use their technical knowledge and skills to protect public health, safety, and welfare, and enhance the sustainability of society.
* Responsibly inform the public about natural resources, hazards, and other geoscience phenomena with clarity and accuracy.
* Support responsible stewardship through an improved understanding and interpretation of the Earth, and by communicating known and potential impacts of human activities and natural processes.