

Marine Chemistry and Geochemistry Lab Group **Code of Conduct and Safety Plan**

Overview

We value the participation of every member of our community and want to ensure everyone has an enjoyable and fulfilling experience, both professionally and personally. Accordingly, all members of the X laboratory in the Marine Chemistry and Geochemistry (MC&G) Department at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) are expected to show respect and courtesy to others at all times. We create our culture and our culture is inclusive.

Please note that this code of conduct is not a legal document, and supplements, but does not supersede, [WHOI-wide policies](#) for your level of employment or study.

Inclusivity and diversity

We strive for a research environment in which all participants feel safe, secure, and supported.

All group members are thus dedicated to a harassment-free experience for **everyone**. We do not tolerate disrespect towards our participants in any form, and we ask all members of the community to conform to this Code of Conduct. To create a positive environment for all, and in respect for the mix of skills, experiences, perspectives, and ideas we collectively bring, we encourage the following behavior:

- Use welcoming and inclusive language.
- Be kind and considerate of all, inclusive of all backgrounds and identities.
- Give and accept constructive criticism.
- Listen.
- Express viewpoints respectfully, with consideration of the time available to all.
- In meetings and conversations, find ways to encourage participation by all.
- When planning fieldwork, consider that the field can pose challenges that affect lab personnel unequally, and include strategies to support the safety of all.
- Contribute to a collaborative lab environment by sharing both resources and tasks and by leaving the spaces clean and restocked.

Examples of unacceptable behavior include:

- Harassment, including offensive verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, sexual

images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of discussions, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention.

- Sexual language and imagery
- Insults and put downs
- Sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, or otherwise exclusionary jokes

PI X will discuss the Code of Conduct with lab members who violate these rules, no matter how much they contribute to the lab, or how specialized or needed their skill set is. If inappropriate behavior persists after this initial discussion, formal processes, in line with [WHOI's internal reporting policies](#), will commence.

To report an issue, please contact PI X; all communication will be treated as confidential. If you do not feel comfortable contacting PI X directly, please contact the following: Director, Human Resources and EEO Officer, any member of Staff Council or Senior Administration, Dean, Associate Dean, Title IX Coordinator. In situations where an individual prefers to place an anonymous report in confidence, they are encouraged to use the WHOI Ethics Hotline, hosted by a third party provider, EthicsPoint. WHOI Ethics Hotline: 1-866-868-0920; website: www.who.ethicspoint.com. The information provided through the WHOI Ethics Hotline will be shared with the Institution's EEO Officer/Title IX Coordinator by EthicsPoint on a completely confidential and anonymous basis. Unless the individual allows differently, personal contact information will not be shared.

Mental Health

There is increasing evidence that certain attributes of academic research may challenge your mental health (e.g., [Evans et al., 2018](#), [Pain 2017](#)). Many of these challenges were only amplified due to the COVID-19 pandemic ([Gewin 2021](#)). Specific factors driving this include, but are not limited to:

- Feelings of isolation in your research; e.g. everyone has their own topic and it can often feel as if you are working on your own
- Uncertainty in your research, although it should be noted that, in research of all kinds, it is not just the outcomes that are uncertain, but the questions themselves!
- So-called "negative results"; i.e. at some point in your research it is likely that certain questions will be more challenging to answer than anticipated, or that you will feel you have spent days/months/years working with little to show
- Imposter syndrome: persistent self-doubt in oneself; having trouble accepting your accomplishments.
- Funding: concerns about job security or running out of time because of funding.
- Rejection: Accepting rejection in all phases of the process.
- Striking a work/life balance: difficulty leaving work at work.
- Burnout; i.e. feeling the need to work endless hours to make up for the above issues, and the subsequent exhaustion
- Uncertainty in the next steps in your career

All researchers come across most of these issues at some level. I strongly encourage everyone in the group to take an active and pre-emptive approach towards the maintenance of their mental health. We assure you that you have the time and resources needed for a highly successful stay at WHOI. If there is anything that is placing undue stress, or preventing you from performing at your potential, please do not hesitate to let me know how we can help.

WHOI's and MIT's Employee and Student Assistance provider, KGA, offers confidential services to employees, students and their adult household members at no cost. The ESAP provides 24/7 immediate, confidential access to counselors for emotional support and information about resources related to a crisis. Contact KGA at [800-648-9557](tel:800-648-9557), by email at info@kgreer.com or on the [KGA website](#). For easy access, download the KGA app, KGA Mobile, in the Apple or Google Play stores. KGA has a self-assessment tool, and you can schedule a time to speak with a therapist at their website.

As an alternative, here is a link from [Psychology Today](#) that gives information about the therapists, their backgrounds, and their methodology. You can enter a location and can specify parameters such as specific issues, insurer, gender, age, etc. It's my understanding that in Massachusetts, insurers are letting therapists bill for tele-sessions since the COVID-19 pandemic started, so you can probably pick a therapist anywhere in the state since you don't have to see them in person.

Finally, for JP students only, there is information on the [JP website about counseling options](#) with links to MIT insurance information.

Safe Spaces at WHOI

At WHOI there are designated spaces for students and postdocs to gather and find community in the absence of faculty or other employees. The student lounge is on the second floor of Clark South on the Quissett Campus. The [postdoctoral lounge](#) is in Caryn House on the Village Campus. We are actively working on establishing a designated safe space for BIPOC people at all levels and will provide updates when available.

Security at WHOI:

WHOI has a team of security guards that monitor the campus 24/7. If you are working after normal business hours, weekends or holidays please call the Smith Guard by dialing x3280 or "0" from a campus phone or 1-508-289-3158 from a cell phone. Give them the name of the building, room number, and time you'll be working. You may request that a guard check on you in addition to their normal rounds and/or request an escort to/from your vehicle.

Manuscript, Data Backup, Laboratory and Instrumentation Maintenance

Manuscripts

Authorship on any manuscript or presentation will be openly discussed within the group. These discussions should happen before the manuscript writing phase and should include everyone who has made a significant contribution to the work. A "significant contribution" can include, but is not limited to, interpretations of primary data and

development of ideas presented in the work. The order of authors on a manuscript or presentation should be dictated by the relative contribution made by each author. Where conflict arises, PI X will facilitate discussion to help resolve this. Additional ethical and authorship guidelines are provided by the [ACS](#) and [AGU](#).

Papers must be shown to and receive formal approval from all co-authors (both inside and outside of WHOI) prior to submission. Please give co-authors at least two weeks to comment on paper drafts; at busy times of the year (e.g., holidays or grad school application deadlines), they may need longer. Upon acceptance (or rejection) of your paper, please inform all coauthors of the outcome as soon as possible and ensure all co-authors get a chance to look at and comment on page proofs. Note that after paper acceptance, final text and graphics files should be sent to all co-authors for their records/use within 14 days.

Scheduling Instrument Time

The lab has an instrument calendar to reserve time on instruments that are routinely used. Please make sure to reserve time in advance. If the instrument is required for an extended duration, please confer with others during group meetings to make sure the timing works for all. Please approach PI-X if you feel that instrument availability is limiting your scientific progress.

Instrument Use and Maintenance

A protocol for each instrument is found on the desktop of its computer. For instruments without a computer, the protocols are found in the X-drive (add path). Please make sure to follow the protocol when using each instrument. If there are steps in the protocol that could be clarified, please raise this in group meetings so others understand and learn from your experience. These protocols are living documents and are expected to be refined over time.

At the end of each protocol is a list of routine maintenance that should be done for each instrument. Before using the instrument please check the maintenance schedule (add path) to ensure that we are keeping up over time.

Data backup

Data export and backup policies are located on the desktop of each instrument computer. It is critical that these policies are followed every time that raw data is created. Routine checks of data backup will be conducted randomly to ensure proper execution of the protocols.

Conferences

Abstracts

You are encouraged to present your findings with the research community. Typically, a general rule of thumb is that research should be published, submitted or nearing submission prior to presentation at a conference. Conference abstracts should be shared with all co-authors (both inside and outside WHOI) at least one week before the abstract deadline. Upon acceptance (or rejection) of your abstract, please inform all coauthors of

the outcome as soon as possible. Unless discussed with PI-X, please send a final draft of your presentation or poster to all co-authors at least one week before the date of presentation.

Logistics

You will be supported (financially and otherwise) to attend and participate in conferences related to your research. Most project budgets include travel support to conferences for studies and postdocs, but you are encouraged to apply for supplemental funding. For instance, the WHOI/MIT JP provides X \$ per year for conference travel support. You can either pay conference and travel fees and be reimbursed (via Unanet; confirm with PI-X which project #), or direct ADMIN towards any bookings you need. In either case, please register for the conference as a student and in advance to obtain discounted registration fees. When possible, you will fly economy class and book the cheapest accommodation possible (within reason - if the conference is in Denver, don't fly to Miami first to save \$30 - your time is valuable!). Our typical practice is to share hotel rooms if travelling with colleagues, even if they are from outside of our lab. Please only book hotel rooms, not AirBnB. Please book no later than 1 month in advance of the conference, and preferably earlier to obtain the most affordable travel arrangements and accommodations.

Note that we will typically aim to attend conferences 'en masse', such that accommodation costs can be shared and a more significant group 'impact' can be achieved. Exceptions can of course be made for conferences specific to your area of study and/or interest. Some conferences that we regularly attend are below (this is by no means exhaustive, and other more specifically, ad-hoc meetings will likely arise):

Winter:

American Geophysical Union (AGU) Fall Meeting
Ocean Sciences meeting (biannual)

Spring:

American Chemical Society (ACS)

Working hours and group communications

WHOI has a [flexible workplace policy](#). I am supportive of this policy and recognize the benefits of striking a positive work-life balance. Please discuss this policy with me to establish how best to strike this balance. Typically, most work and communications will occur M-F 9a-5p. However, in certain circumstances (e.g., experimental work, approaching deadlines), there will be work and communications outside of these hours. In these cases, I ask that you note the urgency of the request. This way it's clear if this needs to be done ASAP or it can wait until the following work week.

The group is in the process of switching over to Slack for communications. The idea is that all communications will be housed in one system, making it easier to keep track of group and person-to-person correspondences. If you aren't familiar with Slack, please spend some time with another lab member to learn how communication using this

platform works. As the group learns more about the pros and cons of Slack, we will continue to update this section. For instance, I imagine setting up a number or lettering system to indicate the sense of urgency to respond to messages.

Meetings

Group meetings: Group meetings are set each semester and are typically held weekly on Th or Fri. These meetings are an excellent forum for updating colleagues on project progress, developing research skills, and widening our collective understanding. Meetings provide a forum for the presentation of results, such as 'dry-runs' of conference talks, and more informal discussions around research topics arising. As part of your professional training, you will be expected to lead a group discussion on a topic of your choice at least once per semester.

Individual meetings: These will occur on an ad-hoc basis as personal situations require. These will give you an opportunity to discuss your progress and any administrative issues that you need addressed. You are encouraged to send a short agenda ahead of and to come fully prepared for individual meetings; in this way, discussions can be focused such that all concerns are addressed. After the meeting, please update your agenda to document the decisions made. This running document should build over time and will help you keep track of your progress.

Field Work

Field work is an opportunity for professional growth and development but not a requirement. In cases where a project demands field work, please discuss this opportunity with PI X to learn more about the field setting and expectations. The reality is that all field situations are different (e.g., cruise vs. remote field site vs. local field site), each coming with their own set of unique challenges. These challenges will also vary from person to person. [Here is a resource](#) that discusses some of the unique challenges faced in field settings and why these challenges vary from field site to field site and person to person. Several months before the field campaign we will spend an individual meeting discussing some of these challenges, how they may or may not apply to your field setting, and how to deal with them when faced.

Thanks, and please enjoy your time in the X lab!

This Code of Conduct (CoC) draws on codes of conduct from [The Carpentries](#) and the [Ocean Carbon and Biogeochemistry Program](#) and from six open source CoCs: (i) [Basin Research Group CoC](#); (ii) [BahlaiLab CoC \(Christine Bahlai\)](#); (iii) [WhitakerLab \(Kirstie Whitaker\)](#); (iv) [Hill Lab \(Jon Hill\)](#); (v) [Krevorlab \(Sam Krevor\)](#); and (vi) [MicroMicEng \(Ben Britton\)](#).

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