

# Williams Lab Code of Conduct

The Williams Lab is committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment to enhance student and life-long learning. In our lab, everyone should be welcomed, included, and treated with equal respect regardless of their gender, age, race, sexual orientation, religion, culture, disability, academic record, or personal background. Black Lives Matter. We commit to making our lab a safe and welcoming place for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender diverse, intersex, asexual and queer (LGBTIQA+) people to work and to live as their authentic selves, without judgement, without discrimination and free from harassment. We respect, value, and celebrate the attributes, characteristics and perspectives that make each person unique. We also recognize the innovative contributions that individuals with many types of differences can make and seek to foster a collaborative and supportive environment that maximizes the potential of all students and employees.

## Inclusivity

Lab members should:

- Welcome and support people of all backgrounds and identities into our group
- Actively include and engage all members of the lab
- Be mindful of how much each person is participating and being heard

## Professionalism

Lab members should:

- Conduct all research (in the lab & in the field) in a safe manner
- Respect everybody's time - be punctual and show up prepared for lab work/office work/meetings. Notify as soon as possible if you will be late.
- Be mindful of the personal boundaries of others.
- Communicate in a kind and clear manner – particularly important when communicating in text (e.g., email) where meaning can sometimes be misconstrued.
- Ensure you keep communal work-spaces clean & organized.
- Utilize equipment calendars and notify users ASAP if you are not going to be able to use a slot you signed up for.
- Accept responsibility for mistakes and take corrective action to prevent them in the future.

## Language Matters

Lab members should:

- Refer to others by their preferred pronouns.
- Show kindness, patience, and treat everyone in a dignified manner.
- Not engage in homophobic, racist, transphobic, ageist, sexist or otherwise exclusionary language or behavior.

## Promoting Learning

Lab members should:

- Be respectful & kind. When providing feedback (either as an individual or as a group), be sure to be constructive in your comments and acknowledge the good (or excellent) aspects of the work rather than only focusing on the areas that need improvement.
- Provide sufficient time for feedback. Respect everyone's time and plan sufficiently for deadlines so that those providing feedback do not have to do so at the expense of their own work. A good rule of thumb is ~1 week for an abstract, 2-3 weeks for a paper/chapter
- Be generous. Our lab should be collaborative, which means helping others and receiving help. Senior lab members are expected to help pass on knowledge, expertise, and experience to junior members. Junior members will also contribute valuable viewpoints.
- Be proactive in seeking assistance when it is needed. This includes feedback on proposals, methods, papers, etc. It also includes seeking feedback for professional development (e.g., applying for graduate school, postdoctoral opportunities, or non-academic positions).

## Discrimination & Harassment

Lab members should:

- Not engage in or tolerate discrimination or harassment of any kind. Please see Colorado State University Title IX Contact and Policy Information: <http://policylibrary.colostate.edu/policy.aspx?id=773>
- Be aware that the PI is a Title IX "responsible employee" and, as such, required to report disclosures of sexual misconduct to the university Title IX office.
- When working in the field, crews should have a method of communication for safety & reporting purposes and contact information for reporting Title IX and/or safety violations. When a cell phone is not an option, a lab-provided Garmin InReach should be used, and the device should be kept somewhere that it is accessible to all members of the lab. Any crew member may at any time use the devices to report incidents of discrimination and/or harassment. See CSU policies here:

## Scientific Integrity

Lab members should:

- Conduct research in a responsible, ethical, and reproducible manner. Responsible Conduct in Research (RCR) training is required for all students and postdocs working on NSF or NIH funded projects and strongly encouraged for students funded through other mechanisms.
- Never engage in fraud, misrepresentation, coercive manipulation, censorship, or other misconduct that alters the content, veracity, or meaning of research findings.
- Ensure you back-up data and are following any project-specific data management plans. Lab notebooks and final code for projects should be neat and well-organized.
- Foster reproducibility and transparency by submitting protocols, data, and metadata to publicly available online repositories in a timely manner.

# Role of the PI

The PI:

- Is deemed a “responsible employee” and required by law to report incidents of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator or other appropriate designee.
- Is responsible for ensuring a safe, productive, and respectful working environment.
- Must take reports of unwelcoming, disrespectful, unsafe, or discriminatory behavior seriously and will act accordingly to ensure other lab members are not affected.
- Has the responsibility of providing timely feedback to students & postdocs on their proposals, manuscripts, theses, etc. It is completely OK to send reminders via Slack or Email to the PI – reminding by replying with the original email will help bring your request back up to the top of the email account.
- Will meet weekly with any graduate student or postdoc that prefers to have regular feedback (this is not required and ~50% of students prefer this option).
- Will be honest with you about funding for projects, assistantships, etc. and will work (as will lab members themselves) to secure funding for student, employee, and project support.
- Will provide letters of reference for undergraduates, graduate students, postdocs and other employees. Will tailor those letters for a particular position as long as provided sufficient time (2 weeks) and the necessary information (attach to request) to do so. If you have any concerns about how strong of a recommendation you will receive, do not hesitate to ask – I will let you know before I write the letter.

# Having Fun

Lab members are encouraged to:

- Have fun – you are going to spend a lot of time in the lab – invest into this community so that you can help shape it into somewhere you like to work. We want everyone to be invested in providing a supportive, safe, and fun environment that fosters success, allows for personal growth, and promotes a collaborative research enterprise.
- Engage in communal lab social activities that may include enjoying a beverage and/or food, indoor climbing, pumpkin carving, skiing, hiking, etc. These “lab activities” are completely optional and are often organized by members of the lab.
- Tell your supervisor (or PI) that you need a break or to take time off. This also includes undergraduates working closely with a graduate student and/or postdoc. Whether you are busy because of classes, need a mental health break, or simply have an opportunity to go on an exciting adventure that does not involve academia – talk to your supervisor (or PI) and we’ll make it happen.

# Intervening and Reporting Misconduct

Lab members are encouraged to:

- Ideally, we would all be able to defuse an incident, but in practice individuals will have varying levels of comfort that depend on the particular situation, their current experience, and their role in the lab. If you can, move from being a bystander to a responder – if you see or hear something inappropriate speak up.
- However, if you don't feel comfortable intervening but recognize that someone should, please report the incident to the PI. You may contact the PI via email and arrange a time for a meeting (note – the PI is required to report certain types of misconduct to the Title IX office). If you feel uncomfortable discussing the issue with the PI, you may report an incident directly to the chair of the Biology Department or to one of the offices listed below. Be aware that you have protections against disciplinary action or any retaliation for good faith reporting of fraud, waste, and abuse.

## Colorado State University Resources

Policy on Discrimination and Harassment:

<http://wsnet2.colostate.edu/cwis549/csufc/policy.aspx?id=710>

Office of Equal Opportunity

Web: <http://oeo.colostate.edu/>

Email: [oeo@colostate.edu](mailto:oeo@colostate.edu) Phone: (970) 491-5836

Office of Title IX Programs and Gender Equity

<https://oeo.colostate.edu/title-ix-sexual-harassment/>

[Online Reporting Form](#) (970) 491-1715

The Office of the Ombuds

<https://ombuds.colostate.edu/>

A confidential resource for all employees of Colorado State University who voluntarily seek help in resolving concerns and conflicts related to the workplace

Student Conflict Resolution Center

<https://resolutioncenter.colostate.edu/>

Conflict Resolution Services provides a voluntary, neutral, confidential process to assist students when conflicts, disputes, or interpersonal challenges arise.

Disability Center

<https://disabilitycenter.colostate.edu/>

Email: [sdc\\_csu@colostate.edu](mailto:sdc_csu@colostate.edu)

Office of Inclusive Excellence

<https://inclusiveexcellence.colostate.edu/>

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Ideas in this code of conduct were inspired by:

[The Silbiger Lab](#)   [The McKinney Lab](#)   [The Carpentries](#)