

Midwest Archaeological Conference, Inc. (MAC)

Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy Statement

The MAC is an anti-racist, anti-discriminatory organization that encourages all members to proactively protect and promote the rights of all. The MAC expects all members to treat one another with respect and dignity. It is MAC policy to provide a safe, productive, and socially comfortable environment to its members, free from harassment or intimidation that is connected to offensive sexual or discriminatory conduct.¹

Background

Recent studies have revealed that sexual harassment is prevalent in anthropological and archaeological fieldwork (Clancy et al. 2014; Meyers et al. 2015). Both studies indicate that women are far more frequently harassed by men; that students and individuals in “entry-level” positions (which Meyers et al. [2015:24] define as “undergraduate and graduate students, field and museum technicians, and assistants”) are more likely to be harassed; that harassment consisted of both inappropriate comments and contact; and that harassment has occurred from both supervisors and classmates, co-workers, and colleagues. Both Clancy et al. (2014) and Meyers et al. (2015) indicate that sexual harassment has a direct negative impact on individual’s performance and career, leading to insecurity about their abilities, insecurity about career futures, a lack of networking opportunities, and fear of safety at field sites, as well as lack of recommendation letters. Sexual harassment produces a decreased desire to continue with career choice, a decreased desire to do fieldwork, a decreased desire to do archaeology, a decreased desire to attend conferences, and a decreased desire to publish (Meyers et al. 2015:28).

Membership Obligations

The MAC Board is responsible for promoting organization-wide conditions free of harassment and discrimination. This policy applies to all MAC members acting in their professional roles and to MAC annual meetings and other MAC-sponsored events. Every member of the MAC is accountable for their own actions.

To prevent harassment and discrimination, the MAC strongly encourages its members acting as supervisory archaeologists including field school faculty and assistants, cultural resource management

¹Sexual harassment is defined as deliberate and unsolicited verbal comments, gestures, or physical contact that is unwelcomed. This includes suggestion that any person’s promotion, employment, compensation, or treatment is in any way contingent upon or related to their participation in or rejection of conduct of sexual nature. Sexual harassment also includes unwanted advances, suggestive comments including sexual jokes, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Hostility toward or intimidation of any individual may also be sexual harassment. As an organization incorporated in the United States, the MAC is bound by U.S. law. Sexual harassment is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Discrimination is an action that denies individual’s rights and fair treatment based on their race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, military service, or any other social affiliation. Discriminatory actions taken by individuals can be considered harassment. Discrimination is a violation pursuant to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1972, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and other applicable laws as appropriate to the situation at hand.

field supervisors, and others, to proactively define harassment and discrimination to all participants in such activities, including instructions on how to report such behavior, and to clearly state that neither harassment nor discrimination will be tolerated. The MAC encourages all MAC members to comply with the harassment and discrimination policies of their universities, institutions, businesses, and professional organizations. The MAC encourages all MAC members to share this harassment and discrimination policy and the associated MAC Code of Conduct and Ethical Principles documents with their students and staffs. If any MAC member feels that an instructor, supervisor, mentor, co-worker, or another MAC member is behaving in a harassing or discriminatory manner, they should immediately tell the individual to stop such behavior, and if it persists, should report this behavior to the appropriate persons.

The MAC and its members will not harass or discriminate against any member or individual on the basis of gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, place of birth, disability, marital status, veteran status, physical appearance, body size, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, or religion, or any other protected category. Any member or other individual who feels that they have been harassed or discriminated against should bring the issue to the attention of the MAC President, MAC President-elect, or MAC Secretary. If at a MAC-sponsored event the report should be made to persons designated in the MAC Code of Conduct.

The MAC supports the anti-harassment and discrimination policy of the Society for Historical Archaeology, the Advisory Council on Underwater Archaeology, the Sexual Harassment Policy of the Register of Professional Archaeologists, and similar policies of other archaeological societies.

References

Clancy, Kathryn B. H., Robin G. Nelson, Julienne N. Rutherford, and Katie Hinde 2014 Survey of Academic Field Experiences (SAFE): Trainees Report Harassment and Assault. PLOS|One, 16 July 2014 DOI:10.1371/journal/pone/0102172.

<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0102172>

Meyers, Maureen, Tony Boudreax, Stephen Carmody, Victoria Dekle, Elizabeth Horton, and Alice Wright 2015 Preliminary Results of the SEAC Sexual Harassment Survey. Horizon and Tradition: The Newsletter of the Southeastern Archaeological Conference 57(1):19-35

This policy statement is rooted in that of the Society for Historical Archaeology <https://sha.org/about-us/sha-sexual-harassment-discrimination-policy/>; used and modified with permission. Last updated 12/21/2021.