

# Moving toward a Conference Conduct Policy

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Special report to the Policy Council, May 8, 2018 by Bob Eberlein, VP Electronic Presence.

## Background

During the Summer 2013 Strategy workshop for the full Policy Council the issue of sexual harassment was raised by then VP Membership Etienne Rouwette. In the discussion that followed no direction was set for determining how to respond to such situations, though it was agreed that setting such a direction should be pursued at a future PC Meeting.

During the 2017 conference a small group of us met to discuss this issue, and agreed that a recommendation should be made for the 2018 winter PC Meeting. Because of all the activity related to transition and the adoption of new member and conference management systems, this topic did not make it onto the agenda.

## Recommendation and Opportunity

The need to develop a coherent policy related to conduct at the conference and other Society activities has not lessened. Capitol Hill Management Services (CHMS) has indicated that they have a client currently finalizing a policy in this area who has agreed to share it with us. This seems like a good starting point for a concerted effort to put together a conduct policy. It is hoped that the policy will be discussed at the summer PC meeting and finalized by the end of the year to be in place for the 2019 conference.

In the meantime, simply remaining silent on this issue, as we have been, seems inappropriate. Laura Black drafted language to indicate clearly that there are some basic expectations around behavior related to gender, ethnic, cultural, racial and other individual differences. Bob Eberlein and Roberta Spencer modified that language to remove references to resources not currently available through the Society website. The strikethrough statement below now appears at:

<http://www.systemdynamics.org/inclusion-builds-excellence->

Moved, that the following text replace the current inclusion-builds-excellence page on the Societies web site:

### **Respect builds excellence!**

The System Dynamics Society values and actively promotes respect for all conference participants regardless of race, ethnicity, religious practice, or gender. To that end, we do not condone discriminatory or disrespectful behavior or nuance of any kind at conference-related activities. If you are unsure what kind of language and gesture might be unwelcome or perceived as offensive, observe the interactions of others, or simply ask. If you experience or observe behavior that discourages respect for all, we invite you to contact us at

[respect@systemdynamics.org](mailto:respect@systemdynamics.org). A number of people have volunteered to discuss, and potentially resolve, issues related to respect and one of them will respond to your email. During the conference it may be possible to arrange a face-to-face meeting for this discussion. *This revised statement uploaded on May 19, 2018 as part of the final discussion*

### **Inclusion builds excellence!**

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The individuals who will be at the conference and have volunteered to talk with anyone sending email to the inclusion address are: Laura Black, Etienne Rouwette, and Krys Stave.

Alternatively, or additionally, we could introduce these people at the conference so that attendees could look for them and not have to use the email.

### **Immediate Steps**

I would like to encourage more discussion on this topic. I am also putting forth the following motion to ensure that all Officers and Policy Council Members have a chance to give consideration to these issues.

**Moved**, that the summer 2018 Policy Council meeting include discussion of conference behavior and that the statement quoted in the report by Bob Eberlein continue to be made available through our website.