

SPOC Report on Meeting Conduct

Submitted by Bob Eberlein, May 20, 2024

In response to some of the concerns raised in the 2023 conference survey the Society Programs Oversight Committee discussed changes that might make harassment and disrespect less likely to be issues.

Background

In 2019 the Policy Council adopted three statements with respect to conduct, respect, and diversity. The publicly facing page on this is at:

<https://systemdynamics.org/governance/ethics-and-compliance/>

For the Society:

<https://systemdynamics.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/SDS-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

This is not linked by any other documents as far as I can tell.

For the conference/meetings:

<https://systemdynamics.org/terms-conditions/#code-of-conduct>

This appears as part of the registration process.

Additionally, the following diversity statement was adopted (also at

https://drive.google.com/open?id=155wKbXj6MP0m6sSaG6WG3aR0yZkFsXu6&authuser=office%40systemdynamics.org&usp=drive_fs):

The System Dynamics Society embraces and is committed to promoting equality and diversity in the field of System Dynamics as both an ethical and operational imperative. We will continue to promote a culture that recognizes and develops the potential of all members. We will take proactive steps across all our activities and initiatives to ensure the adoption of processes and practices that enable access to opportunities for inclusion and engagement across all segments of our diverse membership. We will strive to eliminate potential sources of discrimination, harassment, and victimization within our membership. We recognize the benefits of having a diverse community of members and volunteers who value one another and realize the contribution they can make to achieving the Society's mission to encourage the development and use of system dynamics and systems thinking around the world.

Recommendations

The SPOC recommends that a modestly updated version of the meetings code of conduct (shown below) be included as part of the initial login process to the conference site <https://isdcsystemdynamics.org>. The SPOC makes a formal motion to the PC to adopt this updated wording.

The SPOC also recommends that the diversity statement be shown prominently as part of the conference site, and promulgated in written or presentation form during the live conference.

Further review of all of these statements may be warranted by a body other than the SPOC.

Revised meetings conduct statement.

This has been revised to include a link to the code of conduct, add VP Membership as a point of contact, and make the contact emails specific but position based so that the statement itself does not need to be updated as people change positions.

Participants Code of Conduct for Meetings

- a. Creating a supportive environment to enable scientific exchange and professional development by all at System Dynamics Society (SDS) meetings is of utmost importance and the responsibility of all. Consistent with the professional practice of other societies, it is SDS policy that all participants will conduct themselves at SDS meetings in a professional manner that is consistent with SDS' [Code of Conduct](#), welcoming to all participants and free from any form of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation. Participants agree to treat each other with respect and consideration to create and ensure a collegial, inclusive, and professional environment at SDS meetings.
- b. All participants of SDS meeting activities agree to comply with this policy. Participants include, but are not limited to, attendees, guests, staff, contractors, and exhibitors. Meetings include all conference activities including sessions, business meetings, receptions, and any other SDS events.
- c. Participants are expected to avoid any inappropriate actions or statements directed at any other based on individual characteristics such as age, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, physical appearance, body size, marital status, nationality, political affiliation, ability status, educational background, or any characteristic protected by law. This includes but is not limited to suggestive, inappropriate or intimidating behavior and language, unwelcome jokes or comments, unwanted touching or attention, stalking, harassing photography or recording, offensive or sexually-oriented images and aggressive physical behavior.

d. Advocating for, or encouraging, any of the above behavior is also prohibited. If a participant experiences or observes inappropriate comments or actions in violation of this code of conduct policy, please contact, via email or in person, the Society's [Executive Director](#), [President](#), [VP Meetings](#), or [VP Membership](#).

e. SDS will promptly investigate any report of conduct in violation of this policy. To the extent possible, SDS will handle any information gathered during an investigation discreetly; however, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. If the investigation concludes that the code of conduct was violated, sanctions may range from verbal warning, ejection from the meeting without refund, or notifying appropriate authorities. Retaliation for reports of inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated and are subject to the same sanctions.