



Society of Vertebrate Paleontology

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SVP Meetings Code of Conduct

SVP is committed to providing a safe, productive, and welcoming environment for all meeting participants and SVP staff. We require that all participants, including, but not limited to, attendees, presenters, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, SVP staff, and service providers abide by this SVP Meeting Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct applies to all SVP meeting-related events, including those sponsored by organizations other than SVP but held in conjunction with SVP events in public or private facilities.

Expected Behavior

- Conference attendees are expected to behave in a courteous and, professional, and civilized manner and to respect meeting participants volunteers, SVP staff, convention center/hotel staff, and one another.
 - Be considerate, respectful and collaborative.
 - Communicate openly with respect for others, critiquing ideas rather than individuals and maintaining collegiality, where collegiality is the expectation for all attendees. Collegiality includes civility in discourse and mutual respect for differences in background, expertise, and points of views. Collegiality does not imply agreement on scientific, social, or personal issues. Collegiality includes respect for the intellectual property of others: photographs, recordings, or other reproductions of material in talks, slides, posters, or artwork should not be disseminated without the permission of the author (see the Social Media guidelines in the instructions for presenters and in meeting materials for how to give participants permission to share your work).
 - Avoid personal attacks directed toward other attendees, participants, staff, and suppliers/vendors.
 - Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants. Alert staff if you notice a dangerous situation or someone in distress (see below for reporting procedures).
 - Respect the rules and policies of the meeting venue, hotels, SVP contracted facility, or any other venue.

Harassment is any action that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's professional standing or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Behavior that is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another, so one must use discretion to ensure that words and actions communicate respect for others. This is especially important for those in positions of seniority, as those in more junior positions may be reluctant to express their objections or discomfort regarding unwelcome behavior.

Unacceptable behavior:

- Harassment, intimidation, or discrimination in any form will not be tolerated.
- Physical or verbal abuse of any meeting participant.
- Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to disparaging verbal comments or gestures related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, national origin.
- Epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; display or circulation of written graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion towards an individual or group. Harassment intended in a joking manner still constitutes unacceptable behavior.
- Inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces or in presentations.
- Threatening or stalking any meeting participant.
- Inappropriate physical contact.
- Unwelcome sexual attention, including sexual advances or propositions; verbal comments or physical actions of a sexual nature; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; a display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; sexually explicit jokes.
- Disruption of talks at oral or poster sessions, in the exhibit hall, or at other events organized by SVP at the meeting venue, hotels, or other SVP-contracted facilities.
- Invasive photography or recording, including no photographs or recordings of minors (under 18 years of age) without explicit permission from guardians.
- Recording or photography of talks or posters without express permission from the authors.

Consequences

Anyone requested to stop unacceptable behavior is expected to comply immediately. SVP officers (or their designees), staff, or security may take any action deemed necessary and appropriate (see Disciplinary Action section below). SVP reserves the right to prohibit attendance at any future meeting.

Reporting Violations of the Code of Conduct

- If you are the subject of unacceptable behavior or have witnessed any such behavior please immediately notify a member of the SVP executive committee. (who are identified at the meeting by a ribbon on their badge and are listed on the SVP website here: <http://vertpaleo.org/the-Society/Leadership.aspx> . If you need help identifying or contacting an executive committee member, please ask a staff member or SVP meeting volunteer for assistance. SVP staff and volunteers who are wearing “Safe SVP” buttons are trained to assist you if you need to report a harassment or other safety/security issue. Details should be shared only with executive committee members, not staff or volunteers.
- **Notification should be done by contacting an SVP executive committee member in person on site or by emailing your concern to safeSVP@vertpaleo.org**

Anyone experiencing or witnessing behavior that constitutes an assault or other criminal behavior, or is an immediate or serious threat to personal or public safety, is advised to contact Emergency Services (911 in the US or Canada; 000 or 112 in Australia) and locate a venue phone and ask for security.

All complaints will be treated seriously and investigated and addressed promptly and appropriately. SVP executive committee members are committed to listening to and addressing complaints and to guiding victims through options confidentially before she or he decides how to proceed, including details for potential informal solutions or a formal complaint. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent that it does not compromise the conduct of an adequate investigation or the rights of others, as allowed by law

SVP Procedures for Responding to Harassment Complaints at Annual Meetings

1. Any SVP representative receiving a complaint will immediately notify the SVP Vice-President. The Executive Director and the SVP President will be made aware of the situation immediately unless such individual is the subject of the complaint. Should the VP be the subject of the complaint, the Executive Director and the SVP President should be notified. All complaints will be investigated fairly, thoroughly, and as promptly as possible, and corrective action will be taken where warranted.
 2. The SVP Vice President, or SVP Officers designated by the President to serve this function, (along with the SVP President and the Past President, if available) will then determine whether the matter requires an investigation. If so, the Vice President and one other impartial investigator (chosen by the Vice President) will conduct an investigation. Any individual who believes he or she has a conflict of interest should not serve as an impartial investigator. If the SVP Vice-President and the SVP President (along with the Past President, if available) determine that no investigation is necessary, they will determine if any other action is appropriate.
 3. The investigators will review the complaint and interview the complainant. They will then document and report to the SVP President and Past President, or their designates, who will determine if further investigation is required or recommend other appropriate action, including, where it is deemed advisable, consultation with legal counsel.
 4. Unless the investigators, after interviewing the complainant, determine that the complaint should not be further pursued, the investigators will then meet with the alleged offender, explain the details of the complaint, and give them a reasonable chance to respond to the allegations and bring evidence of their own.
 5. If the facts are in dispute, the investigators will take any additional steps necessary to determine the facts, such as interviewing witnesses. The investigators will seek appropriate counsel from the SVP President and Past President, or their designates, if they are unsure how to proceed at any time.
 6. The investigators will report the findings of the investigation to the Executive officers, as appropriate. The available Executive Officers will then determine an appropriate action, which may include a disciplinary action. The determination will then be promptly communicated to the complainant and alleged offender.
 7. Notification to the Society is essential to enforcing this policy. Meeting participants may be assured that they will not be penalized in any way for truthful reporting of harassment or discrimination.
- Notwithstanding the above procedures, for unacceptable behavior occurring at that is reported during

that event, SVP may take preliminary action, including directing an attendee to leave the event, pending a full investigation and resolution of the complaint.

Disciplinary Action

Individuals who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, as will individuals who act in bad faith by making maliciously false accusations. In the Society's sole discretion, this disciplinary action may consist, at minimum, of a written warning, but may also include ejection from the meeting, reporting the behavior to the violator's Title IX officer (or equivalent), and other penalties, without refund of any applicable registration fees or costs. If an incident is particularly serious or repeated incidents occur with the same individual, that individual may be banned from future meetings, and/or SVP membership may be revoked. If the determination is made to terminate the membership of any person, the applicable provisions of the Bylaws, including procedural requirements, will be followed.

Retaliation is Prohibited

Retaliation against any individual who reports harassment or assists in an investigation as defined herein is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation is a serious violation of SVP policy and, like acts of harassment or discrimination, will be subject to disciplinary action. If you believe you have experienced or observed retaliation, notify SVP meeting staff by email at safeSVP@vertpaleo.org, at the meeting registration desk, or by contacting one of the Society's Executive Committee (who are identified at the meeting by the ribbon on their badge and listed here: <http://vertpaleo.org/the-Society/Leadership.aspx>). SVP representatives wearing the "SafeSVP" button can assist with locating an SVP Executive Committee member.

Appeal & Questions

In the event that an individual is dissatisfied with the actions taken as a result of the investigation, he or she may submit a written appeal to SVP's Executive Committee. An appeal may be granted at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to an Executive Committee member.