

Behavior, Biology & Chemistry:

Translational Research in Substance Use Disorders

Annual Meeting Code of Conduct

Behavior, Biology & Chemistry: Translational Research in Substance Use Disorders (BBC) is committed to providing a safe and productive experience for all attendees at the annual meeting regardless of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, physical or mental disability, perceived disability, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other basis protected by federal or pertinent state laws. BBC does not tolerate discrimination or any form of prohibited harassment and is committed to enforcing this Code of Conduct (the “Code”) at its annual meeting. BBC is committed to providing an atmosphere that encourages the free expression and exchange of scientific and educational ideas. Furthermore, BBC upholds the philosophy of equal opportunity for and treatment of all meeting participants.

2. Scope of Code

BBC requires compliance with the Code by all meeting participants, staff, guests, and vendors at the annual meeting. This policy is an expression of BBC’s values and commitment to a safe and productive experience for all participants and attendees at its annual meeting. This policy is not an acknowledgement, admission, or description of BBC’s legal obligations with respect to any of the subject matters addressed herein, nor does it create any such legal obligations.

3. Harassment Defined

Prohibited harassment includes verbal, physical, and visual conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment. Harassing conduct can take many forms and includes, but is not limited to, the following: slurs, epithets, derogatory comments, insults, degrading or obscene words, jokes, demeaning statements, offensive gestures, or displaying derogatory or demeaning pictures, drawings, or cartoons based upon an individual’s sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, physical or mental disability, perceived disability, ancestry,

marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other basis protected by federal or pertinent state laws or local ordinances.

Sexually harassing conduct in particular includes all of these prohibited actions, as well as other unwelcome conduct that is sexual in nature, such as unwanted sexual advances; lewd propositions or innuendos; leering; making sexual gestures; making sexually suggestive or graphic comments or engaging in inappropriate sexually-oriented conversation; displaying sexually suggestive objects, graphics, pictures, or posters, whether physically or over the Internet; making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs or jokes; the sexual touching or display of one's own body; or unwanted physical touching or assault, as well as impeding or blocking movements.

Sexually harassing conduct can be by a person of either the same or opposite sex. It is a violation of this policy for males to sexually harass females or other males, and for females to sexually harass males or other females. Conduct that begins as consensual in nature may become harassment if one party withdraws his or her consent. Sexual or other harassment prohibited by this policy is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

The above list of prohibited behaviors is not a complete rendering of what may be deemed sexual or other harassment prohibited by this policy. It is impossible to define every action or word that could be interpreted as harassment. However, BBC has a "zero tolerance" policy toward discrimination and all forms of harassment. BBC reserves the right to discipline meeting participants who engage in any inappropriate conduct, even if it is not specifically referred to or defined in this Code or is not legally actionable as sexual or any other form of harassment.

4. Prohibited Conduct

Prohibited conduct at BBC meetings (in-person or virtual) includes, but is not limited to:

1. harassment based on sex, race, color, personal appearance, national origin, religion, age, physical disability, mental disability, perceived disability, ancestry, marital status, sexual

orientation, gender identity, or any other basis protected by federal or pertinent state laws;

2. demeaning comments or harassment about a person's professional status, qualifications, or affiliations;
3. sexual harassment, as defined in Section 3;
4. abusive conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with another person's ability to benefit from and enjoy or participate in the meeting, including social events related to the meeting and sponsored by BBC;
5. undue or excessive interruption of any event, speaker, or session; and
6. violence or threats of violence.

5. Reporting an Incident

Meeting participants or other individuals, who witness or experience inappropriate conduct at a BBC meeting, including but not limited to the prohibited conduct described above, should report such conduct immediately to the University of Texas Health Science Center (UTHSCSA) Institutional Compliance and Privacy Hotline at 210 567-2014. Any individual reporting such conduct is not required or expected to discuss the concern with the alleged offender. Anyone experiencing or witnessing behavior at a BBC event that is an immediate or serious threat to the safety of those present, or to the public, is advised to locate a house phone and ask for security, or to otherwise contact the San Antonio Police Department at 210 207-7273.

BBC cannot address claimed inappropriate conduct or harassment unless the claims are brought to the attention of the BBC leadership. Meeting participants are encouraged to report any incidents of perceived violations of this policy as quickly as they can or otherwise feel safe doing.

BBC is committed to taking reasonable steps to prevent harassment and other prohibited conduct at its meetings and will make reasonable efforts to address and correct any prohibited conduct that may occur at an official BBC event promptly and completely. BBC will keep any investigation of an alleged violation of this policy as confidential as possible.

BBC can only investigate situations that arise at BBC meetings. If a meeting participant experiences inappropriate conduct or harassment at the participant's own or another institution, at a place of work, at a research facility, or online but not at a BBC-sponsored event, that individual should contact the appropriate person or department responsible for such things at that particular institution, facility or medium.

6. Investigation

BBC will promptly and impartially investigate the facts and circumstances of any claim of inappropriate conduct or harassment under this policy. BBC will make every effort to keep the reporting individual's concerns confidential and will not deliberately share personal information, other than as necessary to carry out the purpose of investigation. While complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, BBC will keep the investigation and its findings as confidential as possible under the circumstances. During an investigation, BBC or a designated independent consultant subject to obligations of confidentiality, generally will do the following (as necessary) to decide as to appropriate action:

- document the nature of the complaint;
- interview the complainant;
- conduct further interviews as necessary, such as with witnesses and, at an appropriate time, the alleged offender;
- document the BBC's findings regarding the complaint;
- document recommended follow-up actions and remedies, if warranted; and
- inform the complainant of the basic nature of the BBC's findings.

BBC will attempt to investigate any complaint or report of a violation of this policy in a prompt and timely manner. Upon completion of the investigation, BBC will take appropriate corrective measures against any person who has engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy, if BBC determines such measures are necessary. Such remedial action may include, but is not limited to, the items listed below in Section 7.

7. Disciplinary Action

If BBC determines that an individual has engaged in prohibited conduct, BBC shall determine the appropriate action to be taken, which may include, but is not limited to:

- private reprimand;
- removal from the meeting without warning or refund;
- implementation of conditions upon attendance at future BBC meetings; or
- restriction from attendance at future BBC Meetings.

BBC may, but is not required to, report any incident to proper authorities, including but not limited to law enforcement. BBC will do so if, in its sole discretion, such reporting is advisable or necessary. Nothing in this policy shall restrict or discourage any individual who experiences or is the target of conduct prohibited by this policy from reporting such conduct to the authorities, to the extent he or she deems such a report advisable or necessary.

8. Retaliation Is Not Tolerated

Retaliation for complaints of inappropriate conduct or harassment are also considered harassment and will not be tolerated. Retaliatory behavior in connection with BBC meetings will be investigated in a similar manner to initial complaints.

(Revised March 2023; adapted with permission from the ACNP Code of Conduct)