



Out for Undergrad (O4U) Code of Conduct

To ensure that every participant (student, staff member, volunteer, or sponsor representative) has a safe and “brave space”¹ in which to explore O4U’s curriculum and/or networking opportunities, and to uphold the integrity of the community which emerges as our participants become connected, O4U has adopted this Code of Conduct. O4U intends for its Code of Conduct to establish a baseline set of expectations within which all our constituents can operate sensitively and supportively.

All in the O4U community will speak respectfully to one another. It is expected that all members will treat others with respect and with a willingness to gain understanding about the identity of others. Additionally, the following minimum expectations are in place for interactions with members of the O4U community.

Don’t make assumptions about an individual’s sexual orientation. Some people identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender; some do not. Please do not assume that another’s sexual orientation is discernible on the basis of their presentation or expression.

Don’t make assumptions about an individual’s gender identity. Some people identify as men or women; some do not. Please respect any person’s gender pronouns, along with any other forms of self-identification. If you believe that knowing someone’s gender identity is relevant to your mutual communication(s), please ask the individual to self-identify as outlined below and/or check their O4U profile for their pronouns.

- It is polite to ask, “What pronouns do you use?” If a person’s gender identity is unknown or irrelevant, please use gender-neutral language (like “that person” or “they,” instead of “that woman,” “he,” or “she”). You may be surprised how often gendered pronouns are irrelevant to the conversation at hand.
- Many use the common pronoun sets “he/him/his” or “she/her/hers,” and many do not. Here follows a basic guide for using and pronouncing several gender-neutral personal pronoun sets.
 - Singular they/them/their – the pronouns most frequently used by individuals who utilize gender-neutral pronouns, and the best way to refer to someone whose pronouns you don’t know. e.g., “Someone is at the door, I’ll let them in.” Note that though the pronouns are functionally singular, the third-person plural verb form is used: e.g., “They were standing over there.” not “They was standing over there.”
 - Ze/zir/zir or ze/hir/hir – Ze is pronounced “zee” and is used in the same way as she or he, e.g., “Ze is standing over there.” Zir and Hir, pronounced “zeer” and “here”, respectively, are used in the same way as her/hers or him/his, e.g., “I just shook hands with zir.” and “I introduced myself to hir.” These pronouns take the third person singular verb form, e.g., “Ze is happy.” not “Ze are happy.”
 - Xe/xem/xyr – the x is pronounced as a z, so the pronunciations are “ze/zem/zir.” Usage is the same as for ze/zir/zir.
- In that learning to use gender-neutral personal pronouns appropriately is like acquiring a new language, mistakes are understandable. The upset of people who are repeatedly misgendered and/or obliged to correct their interlocutors’ pronoun use is equally understandable and causing that upset is inconsistent with O4U’s commitment not to assume anyone’s gender identity. We ask you to do your best.

Employ non-sexist, gender-neutral, and erasure-free language across the spectrum of your O4U experience. In addition to being ever-mindful of your own use of personal pronouns, avoid all derogatory, misogynistic, and emasculating terms and phrases. For example, please refrain from using gendered terms when addressing audiences of

¹ The term brave space was first popularized by Brian Arao and Kristi Clemens (2013) in chapter eight, From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces”, of their book *The Art of Effective Facilitation: Reflections From Social Justice Educators*. In it, a brave space within a classroom environment contains...◇ “Controversy with civility,” where varying opinions are accepted ◇ “Owning intentions and impacts,” in which students acknowledge and discuss instances where a dialogue has affected the emotional well-being of another person ◇ “Challenge by choice,” where students have an option to step in and out of challenging conversations. Safe Spaces and Brave Spaces Historical Context and Recommendations for Student Affairs Professionals Copyright © 2017 NASPA - NASPA Policy and Practice Series (Issue 2) 3

mixed or unknown gender (e.g., instead of “freshmen,” opt for “first-year students,” and instead of “you guys,” you might use “y’all,” “everyone,” “friends,” “team,” or “folks”). Language that excludes bisexuals, transgender people, and genderqueer people effectively erases them; please choose more inclusive language (e.g., rather than mentioning “gays and lesbians” say “LGBTQ+ people”).

Respect all races and cultures. There are no circumstances under which racist or discriminatory comments or actions will be tolerated. O4U is active in both seeking and celebrating diversity. Further, we are committed to overcoming all forms of characteristic-based discrimination. Racist and discriminatory comments or attitudes will not be tolerated under any circumstance.

Attendees at all O4U conferences and events, along with any guests, must comply with all federal, state, and local laws related to alcohol use, distribution, and purchase. All attendees are responsible for self-reporting their legal age (along with providing valid government ID when requested) and for their personal conduct, including refraining from excessive alcohol use. During any event sponsored or endorsed by O4U, no individuals under the legal drinking age may possess, consume, provide, or be provided alcoholic beverages.

Additionally, the possession, sale, or use of any drugs or non-prescribed controlled substances, as well as the abuse of any prescribed controlled substance, is prohibited during events or conferences and/or in any situation sponsored or endorsed by O4U.

All individuals serving as volunteers, mentors, speakers, organizers, sponsor representatives, or similar roles must be willing to undergo a criminal background check, if requested. It is their obligation to communicate any instances that may appear on a criminal background check with their employer and/or O4U staff in advance of engaging with conference attendees.

As you interact within the O4U Community, conduct yourself in a manner befitting a professional in a work environment. O4U takes a zero-tolerance position on harassment, inflammatory language, unwanted advances of any kind, sexual or amorous relationships in which noticeable difference(s) in privilege and/or professional power are inherent, and other conduct unbecoming of professionals in the workplace.

Additionally, mentors, sponsors, organizers, volunteers, speakers, performers, and staff have an obligation to not engage with student attendees on any dating platforms (such as Hinge, Bumble, Grindr, etc.) and to not engage in any non-platonic manner during the conference duration. We recommend the avoiding any usage of dating platforms during the conference for mentors, sponsors, organizers, volunteers, speakers, performers, and staff since an individual may not know that another user on the platform is a student attendee at the conference. Discontinuation of use during conference programming will help to avoid interactions that may be considered a misuse of power or privilege.

It is also an expectation that students do not engage with mentors, sponsors, organizers, volunteers, speakers, performers, and staff on dating platforms of any kind during that time.

Investigation of Misconduct

O4U will investigate all allegations or reports of misconduct. O4U expects community members to model professional decorum, recognize situations in which inherent power and/or privilege is theirs, and avoid using that power and/or privilege in any way that would be detrimental to a student or community member.

If a participant experiences or observes a violation of any of these norms, we encourage them to:

- Share their feelings with the person whose behavior they believe has been inconsistent with our commitment, provided they feel safe and comfortable doing so; and/or,
- Inform O4U’s Chief of Staff, Amanda Zielinski Slenski about the incident at <mailto:amanda.zielinkislenski@outforundergrad.org>; and/or,
- Submit a grievance by emailing info@outforundergrad.org with the subject line “Grievance” and include your account of the incident in the body of the email.

O4U will investigate all allegations and reports of misconduct to determine how best to preserve or restore the safety and mutual respect we are committed to fostering, and then take action as necessary to uphold that determination. Consequences for persons found responsible for misconduct range from one-on-one conversations with O4U leadership to expulsion from O4U programs and/or prohibition from future events. State and/or local authorities will also be contacted if/when appropriate or necessitated by law.

Signature of O4U Community Member

Legal Name of O4U Community Member

Date

Submitted via e-mail to leah.sloan@outforundergrad.org or faxed to 972-534-1212 on _____ (date)

Audience: All O4U community members

Executed by: Chief of Staff

Revised: February 21, 2023

Archived: Two years post signature – all should sign yearly

Form Contact: Leah Sloan