

Statement of Appropriate Conduct at AMSA Conferences

[The American Men's Studies Association](#) holds an annual professional conference to develop the discipline of men's studies and to enable its members and other interested individuals to share their research with others in the field, to hear and discuss new ideas, and to build professional networks. To provide all participants—members and other attendees, speakers, performers, exhibitors, staff and volunteers—the opportunity to benefit from the event, AMSA is committed to providing a harassment-free environment for everyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, ethnicity, religion or other group identity.

As an association, AMSA is strongly committed to diversity, equity and the free expression of ideas. These values are delineated in AMSA Mission and Values statements (in particular, in the Values Statement #4, “[AMSA] seeks the participation and membership of all individuals irrespective of gender identity, race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical abilities, nationality, or religious identity”). These values and beliefs indicate that conduct based on civil discourse and the free exploration of competing ideas and concepts—with a fundamental respect for the rights, dignity and value of *all* persons—is appropriate at AMSA conferences.

AMSA seeks to provide a conference environment in which diverse participants may learn, network and enjoy the company of colleagues in an environment of mutual respect. Conference participants seek to learn, network and have fun. Within the context of AMSA policies, critical examination of beliefs and viewpoints does not *by itself*, constitute hostile conduct or harassment. Similarly, use of sexual imagery or language in the context of a professional discussion *might not* constitute hostile conduct or harassment.

AMSA recognizes a shared responsibility to develop and maintain a welcoming and open environment for the benefit of all in attendance at AMSA conferences. We ask speakers to frame discussions as openly and inclusively as possible and to be aware of how language or images may be perceived by others. Since AMSA conferences attract international participants, speakers and audience members alike should recognize that some differences in terminology may result from cultural differences. On their parts, conference participants should be mindful of the fact that presentations may include controversial content that could be upsetting. We ask participants to engage in appropriate self-care, including exercising the option to leave a session or conversation quietly and respectfully.

Some behaviors are specifically prohibited, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Direct or indirect harassment or intimidation based on race, religion, language, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, appearance, or other group status.
- Sexual harassment or intimidation, including unwelcome sexual attention, stalking (physical or virtual), or unsolicited physical contact.
- Yelling at or threatening speakers (verbally or physically).

All participants—speakers, performers, and exhibitors—are expected to observe these rules and behaviors in all conference venues, including online venues and social events. Participants asked to stop a hostile or harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately and to do so responsibly, showing respect for the rights of others.

Possible sanctions for harassing conference participants include, but are not limited to the following:

- Asking the harasser to leave the conference immediately;
- Sending the harasser a formal letter explaining the AMSA Board's view of the incident and warning against similar behaviors at future conferences;
- Prohibiting the harasser from attending the next AMSA conference.
- Prohibiting the harasser from attending any future AMSA conferences.

To report an incident or problem:

Please contact a board member and/or conference co-chair; if you need help locating a board member, an AMSA staff member can help you locate a person with whom you can discuss the situation. All such reports will be directed immediately to a special committee of the AMSA Board, which will meet within two months and will determine and carry out the appropriate course of action, and which may consult with and engage other AMSA staff, leaders and legal counsel as appropriate. Event security and/or local law enforcement may be involved, as appropriate based on the specific circumstances. A follow-up report will be made to individuals who report being harassed, and any participant who is sanctioned for harassment may appeal (see the "Appeal Process for AMSA Conference Participants").

Final notes about the "Statement of Appropriate Conduct at AMSA Conferences":

- The AMSA Board will review this policy and the "Appeal Process for AMSA Conference Participants" every two years at its biennial retreat.
- AMSA welcomes constructive comments about these policies. Comments should be submitted in writing to the AMSA contact email and should include both a detailed explanation of the problem and suggestions for improvement. The outcome of the discussion will be made available to the person(s) proposing the change within 30 days after the AMSA Board retreat.

The AMSA Board thanks the American Library Association for allowing us to use their "Statement of Appropriate Conduct" as a model for this statement.