

## **Pi Sigma Alpha Code of Conduct**

*Adopted by the Pi Sigma Alpha Council, September 6, 2024*

In accordance with the Pi Sigma Alpha (PSA) mission, PSA events and activities are convened to recognize and celebrate academic excellence by, and provide professional development and leadership opportunities for, students in political science and related fields; to stimulate scholarship and interest in politics, government, and democracy; to encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion in the discipline; and to support curricular and extracurricular activities that promote dialogue and civic engagement. The purpose of the PSA Code of Conduct (Code) is to ensure the safety and dignity of all who participate in PSA events and activities.

### **1. Applicability**

- The Code applies to all chapter, regional, and national events and activities, both in-person and virtual, as well all communication platforms.
- The Code applies to all who participate in PSA-sponsored events or activities, including invited guests, audience members, and vendors.

### **2. Society Standards**

- Participants should endeavor to promote respect and the norms of professional behavior in all PSA events and activities.
- If a witness to potential harm to a conference participant, participants should be proactive in helping to mitigate or avoid that harm. Participants in greater positions of power (e.g. conference chairs, faculty advisors, etc.) should be especially mindful of their responsibility to mitigate harm whenever possible.
- Participants should alert the chapter advisor and/or national office personnel if they encounter a situation in which someone might be in imminent physical danger.

### **3. Unacceptable Behavior**

- Any acts of unwelcome physical or emotional contact, including stalking or following, and/or solicitation of emotion or physical intimacy accompanied by threats of physical or professional harm;
- Intimidating, harassing, abusive, threatening, derogatory or demeaning speech or actions;
- Discrimination, unwelcome comments, and/or exclusionary behaviors related to actual or perceived gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, socioeconomic status, age, religion, veteran status, or parental status that coerce others, foment broad hostility, or otherwise undermine equity or the dignity of any participant;
- Taking video or audio recordings, or photographs, without consent;
- Any other violations of applicable municipal, state, or national laws, in addition to violations of other PSA policies or those of the home institution.

### **4. Reporting Violations of Society Standards**

- Participants who experience or witness violations of the society standards shall report the incident to the Executive Director, any PSA Council member, or chapter advisor.
- Any Council member who receives such a report should notify the Executive Director immediately. If a report is made to the Executive Director, the Executive Director will inform the Executive Committee or Council within a reasonable amount of time.
  - If the report concerns allegations against the Executive Director, including failure to intervene or respond to violations by others, the person receiving the report should notify the Executive Committee.
- For reports made to chapter advisors about behaviors at local or regional events/activities, the chapter advisor shall make their own determination about whether or not reporting the incident to the national office or Council is warranted.

- If applicable, participants who experience or witness violations of society standards may also report the violation to law enforcement or other appropriate bodies.
  - The Executive Director or PSA Council members shall only report violations to external bodies with the consent of the participant experiencing the violation unless the Executive Director (or Executive Committee if an allegation concerns the Executive Director) determines such actions are necessary to protect the health and safety of others.
- Where student members are alleged to have committed violations of society standards, the Executive Director shall report the alleged violation to the student's faculty advisor.
- The PSA Whistleblower Policy provides protection to all who report violations in good faith.

#### **5. Consequences of Violating Society Standards**

- The Executive Director (or Executive Committee if an allegation concerns the Executive Director), chapter advisor (if a local or regional event), or designee shall investigate the allegation, and, if found credible, impose one or more of the following sanctions as appropriate:
  - Provide guidance on appropriate behavior, including a warning of more serious sanctions should the behavior continue;
  - Removal from the event or activity;
  - Temporary suspension or permanent ban from participating in future PSA events or activities;
  - Alerting the home institution or employer of the person committing the violation, although the specifics of the violation shall not be shared unless the PSA representative determines such a report is necessary to protect the health and safety of others;
  - Additional sanctions are governed by the PSA Constitution, Article II, Section 8c for members and Article V, Section 4 for Council members, and by the PSA Employee Handbook and/or individual employee contracts for PSA personnel, including the Executive Director.

#### **6. Appeals**

- Sanctions may be appealed on the grounds the violation did not occur or the sanction is disproportionate to the violation;
- Appeals must be made in writing to the PSA President (or the President-Elect if an allegation concerns the President) within 30 days of notification of sanction;
- The Executive Committee shall review the appeal and issue a written decision within 14 days to maintain, alter, or eliminate the sanction.