

MIT Physics Community Values

May 2018

This statement of values informs departmental policies and structures and applies to the MIT Physics community, including students, faculty, staff, and all those who choose to affiliate with the MIT Physics Department. The Department commits to ensuring that the entire community understands and strives to uphold the values in this document.

Our Physics Community Values stem from the basic principle that members of our community should treat each other with respect and decency at all times. In turn, we should not alienate, diminish or insult each other, either in word or deed.

Based on this principle, we believe that *well-being*, *respect*, *inclusion*, *collaboration* and *mentorship* are moral imperatives that are vital to scientific progress. These ideals are essential for excellence in teaching and research and guide our participation in the MIT Physics community.

***Well-being:* We support each other at all times and remember that we are not alone.**

Mental and physical health are priorities above all else. Proactively addressing wellness is essential to everyone in our community. We look out for others who may be in distress or struggling and offer them compassion and understanding. Just as we treat others well, we must be compassionate with ourselves. Asking for support is brave and admirable no matter the circumstances. We strive to find a healthy balance between our professional and personal lives and proactively seek out any support that we need.

***Respect:* We value the multitude of ways to be a physicist and the many paths through our field and Department.**

We are all respected as physicists, regardless of the problems we choose to study or our current level of mastery. No field of research is inferior; all areas of study are worthy of respect. Much of physics research is interdisciplinary. We value the richness that interdisciplinary research brings and recognize the worth of other research fields.

Our community includes an invaluable team of dedicated administrative and support staff members. We value the diverse strengths and experiences of all staff members and recognize them as an integral part of the Department.

***Inclusion:* We strive to speak and act in ways that support and include all members of our community.**

We are informed and shaped by our identities and experiences. A diversity of identities and experiences is essential to bringing broad perspectives to our Department and academic mission. It is our responsibility to ensure that these diverse voices are included and heard. As individuals and as a community we constantly work to avoid all forms of discrimination, including explicit, implicit and/or unintended bias. We respect and validate other people's identities and the language they use to describe themselves. Comments made with good intentions can still be hurtful and we strive to be aware of how our comments impact others.

Collaboration: Physics is a social endeavor and we proudly collaborate with others to advance the field.

When we collaborate, we take other people's ideas seriously and recognize that they might understand concepts and approach problems differently. Exclusion or derision of others based on different points of view is not acceptable. Collaboration requires sharing knowledge and skills, and is based on appropriately acknowledging everyone's intellectual contributions. Proper acknowledgement is crucial to all activities in the Department.

Mentorship: All physicists are here because of the mentorship we have received and continue to receive, and the mentorship we offer to others.

We all act as both mentors and mentees throughout our careers. Mentor-mentee relationships entail constructive feedback, active listening, responsiveness and a mutual respect and appreciation of each other's efforts and time. Humiliation and degradation are unacceptable forms of interaction. Mentors should act with compassion, empathy and a strong belief in the potential of their mentees. Mentees should be communicative, ask questions and take initiative.

As members of our community, we uphold the principles of well-being, value, inclusion, collaboration and mentorship. We take an active responsibility in ensuring that everyone feels welcome and respected. We recognize that other people's life experiences are not our own, but are valid in and of themselves. Given this, we realize that our actions may impact others in unintended ways even as we strive to treat each other with respect. We understand that we will make mistakes. When we do, we will work to correct them and educate ourselves. We take pride in being upstanding members of our community.

Contributors

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