Science Societies

ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Code of Conduct approved

By Lee Tarpley, Liza Garcia, and Susan Chapman

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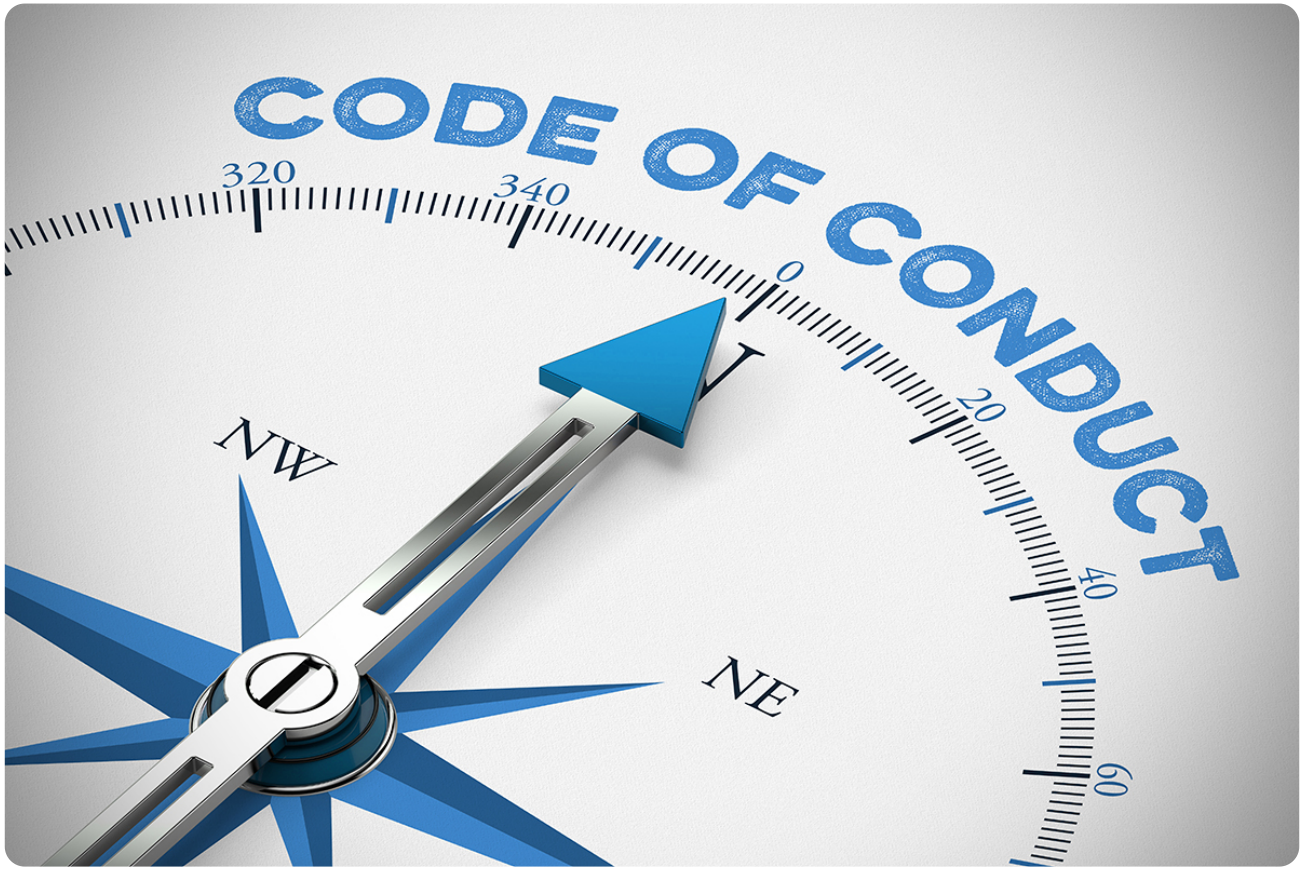


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ASA, CSSA, and SSSA are premier international scientific Societies with each having unique and distinct visions:

- **ASA vision:** The preeminent community for diverse agricultural professionals, leading education and collaboration with partners to address food and environmental challenges by connecting the science of agronomy to its practical applications.

- **CSSA vision:** A global community of crop scientists, educators, and practitioners with a common bond of improving plants and their production in a scientifically sound and environmentally responsible manner.

- **SSSA vision:** Unite a global community advocating for soils through education and science.

To achieve these visions, the Societies value high quality research, education, professional practice, and service combined with highly professional, ethical, and inclusive conduct. These values are fundamental to excellence and integrity of the Societies, the disciplines, and all who participate in them.

As such, the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Ethics Committee developed a Code of Conduct for the Societies and provides standards for acceptable behavior for members and awardees/honorees and was built upon the Statement of Ethics.

The Code of Conduct outlines specific principles and practices for professional behavior that guides all members/awardees/honorees, creates an expectation of excellence and integrity, and is the foundation for a welcoming and inclusive community. All other participants in the disciplines are encouraged to practice these same principles.

The development of the Code of Conduct began with extensive research to understand conduct-related issues facing our scientific communities. The Ethics Committee accomplished this through research with the Societies Consortium to End Harassment in STEMM; reviewing ASA, CSSA, and SSSA policies and procedures; and researching best practices in developing codes of conduct—including those of other professional societies.

Following this research, the Ethics Committee devoted many hours to drafting the code of conduct and gathering feedback from the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Boards of Directors. An open comment period for members also provided insightful feedback that was integrated into the document.

The Code of Conduct was approved by the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Boards of Directors in December of 2025. It is available online and both new and renewing members will be asked to agree to the Statement of Ethics and Code of Conduct as a condition of membership.

In 2026, the Ethics Committee will be detailing and documenting the inquiry/investigation process for any reports of misconduct. In addition, it will develop/evaluate educational materials on ethics for the Societies membership.

ASA, CSSA, SSSA Ethics Committee

Across many STEM-focused professional societies, there has been a greater awareness and understanding of responsibilities for establishing expectations for professional conduct as well as mechanisms for reporting, and addressing inappropriate behaviors.

The Ethics Committee is a collaborative group dedicated to creating a safe and welcoming environment in ASA, CSSA, and SSSA. The purpose of the Committee is to guide the Societies' efforts to continue fostering a culture of integrity, appropriate conduct, and accountability within the Societies.

Key functions include:

- Evaluating and updating the Ethics Statements and Codes of Conduct
- Developing guidelines and processes for receiving and evaluating reports of misconduct/breach of ethics
- Confidentially evaluating reports of misconduct/breach of ethics in accordance with established and approved procedures, including disciplinary actions when appropriate
- Enhancing awareness of the process for reporting misconduct/breach of ethics
- Suggesting improvements for member training in ethical conduct
- Providing annual written reports to the Boards of Directors

The committee is composed of members including the Chair and Vice Chair (Chair-Elect), representatives from each Society (appointed by their respective Presidents), and a representative of the DEI Committee. Members of the committee have demonstrated experience and/or training in professional ethics. The important work of this committee includes thoughtful consideration of ethical issues and the development of clear and fair processes. View this document to learn more about the committee.

2025 Ethics Committee members

Chair: Lee Tarpley, Texas A&M AgriLife Research (CSSA)

Vice Chair: Barbara Cade-Menun, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada (SSSA)

Jennifer Bower, Soil Health Institute (SSSA)

Liza Garcia, University of Florida (CSSA)

Jack Karlin, Karlin Consulting (CSSA)

Nityananda Khanal, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada (ASA)

Philip Scoles, Terra Science, Inc. (SSSA)

Zhanyou Xu, USDA-ARS (ASA)

Loutrina Staley, (DEI Committee Representative)

Staff Liaison, Susan Chapman

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