



## **Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences (ALES)**

### **Respectful Workplace Policy & Guidebook**

*\*Policy and Guidebook are based off of the Alberta Public Service model*



Treating others with dignity and respect is the responsibility of every employee in the Faculty of Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences.

Disrespectful behaviour including bullying, harassment and violence will not be tolerated in our workplace.

## Policy Statement

ALES is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment that is free from harassment, violence, intimidation, discrimination, and other disruptive behaviour that can negatively impact the well-being of our employees. This includes harassment based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, race, age, religion, disability, ethnic group or any other protected class status. No retaliation or reprisals will be tolerated against any individual who, in good faith, reports an incident or participates in a workplace investigation of alleged disrespect. Any report of bullying, harassment, and violence will be investigated in a timely manner and any violation of this policy will result in appropriate corrective action. If you experience, witness, or learn of disrespectful behaviours in the workplace, you must immediately report the behaviour to your Supervisor, Union Representative, and Human Resources.

The Faculty of ALES believes that a safe and healthy work environment:

- Promotes respect
- Celebrates diversity and personal differences
- Values the contribution of others towards achieving the Faculty's mission, vision, and values
- Upholds the fundamental principles of human dignity, rights, and well-being

The Faculty of ALES recognizes that employees perform best in a work environment free from disrespectful behaviours. To that end, this policy

- prohibits any form of disrespect including bullying, harassment, and violence
- seeks to prevent these behaviours and
- provides employees with an effective complaint process.

The expectation is for employees to treat others the way they would expect to be treated and be respectful towards the diverse workforce that encompasses ALES. All employees are responsible for creating and maintaining a work environment free from harassment or other inappropriate behavior.

The intent of this policy is to educate, promote and set expectations for building and maintaining a respectful work environment in the Faculty of ALES.

## Policy Scope

This policy applies to both Academic and Non-Academic staff in the Faculty of ALES. All staff are expected to act in a manner consistent with the requirements of this policy. Demonstrating mutual respect and consideration is a fundamental expectation of our workplace.



ALES fosters a “Culture of Safety & Respect” through positive interactions, open discussions, and a joint commitment to achieving excellence in all our endeavors

## Guiding Values

The Faculty of ALES is committed to providing an environment where employees feel engaged and are motivated to come to work. Our Respectful Workplace Policy provides a foundation to achieve this commitment. Disrespectful behaviour, including bullying and harassment, will not be tolerated in our Faculty. Employees have a right to work in a professional work environment where their contributions are valued and they are treated with dignity and respect.

### Respect

We foster respect by nurturing an environment where each individual is valued, differences are celebrated, and human dignity is preserved.

### Diversity

Diversity is our strength. We value all individuals for their diverse backgrounds, experiences, and ideas.

### Integrity

We act with integrity by being consistently open, honest, ethical and genuine in our communications and interactions.

### Accountability

We take responsibility for our actions, honor our commitments, and focus on finding effective solutions to achieve desired results.

### Teamwork

We strive to create an environment that recognizes the value of teamwork and inspires creativity and cooperation.

These values provide a common understanding of the behaviours expected of all staff in the Faculty of ALES. They are the basic building blocks for achieving a highly motivated and driven workforce intent on achieving organizational success.

## Benefits of Developing a Respectful Workplace

- Greater employee satisfaction and morale
- Decreased employee turnover
- Reduced absenteeism, stress, and sick leaves
- Increased individual/team productivity
- An engaged workforce
- Enhanced loyalty and commitment to the organization

When we work in constructive collaboration with one another, we work SMARTER.

## Responsibilities of All Staff

- 1) We are all responsible for ensuring our actions and behaviours contribute to a positive, collaborative, and respectful work environment.
- 2) We are all accountable for the results of our actions, regardless of our intent.
- 3) We all understand that there is ZERO tolerance for any form of disrespect.
- 4) When disrespectful behaviours occur, we seek resolution by reporting the behaviour through the appropriate channels, obtain the appropriate counsel (Supervisor, Human Resources, Union Representative), and engage those directly involved.

## Definitions

**Bullying** is a repeated pattern of negative behaviour aimed at a specific person or group.

**Harassment** is any inappropriate comment, action or behaviour that demeans, offends, intimidates, humiliates, or embarrasses a person, and that a reasonable person knows or should have known would be unwelcome. The improper conduct can be based on race, religious beliefs, colour gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation of that person or of any other person. Harassment can involve a single incident, or a series of incidents.

**Workplace Violence** according to the Occupational Health and Safety Code, Part 1: “whether at a worksite or work related, means the threatened, attempted, or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical injury”. Employees must notify their supervisor of all incidents of workplace violence even if there was no physical injury.

**Human nature is complex. There are many factors that can drive human behaviour which may include an individual's distinct culture, ethnicity, religious beliefs, personal circumstances and upbringing. Actions and/or behaviours that are considered to be respectful to one person may be disrespectful to another. For this reason, it is imperative to follow the PLATINUM RULE,**

***"Treat other's the way they want to be treated"***

### **Respectful Behaviours**

The following behaviours describe our ideal work environment. All staff are responsible for exemplifying the following behaviours to develop, promote and maintain a respectful work environment.

- Allowing one person to speak at a time
- Expressing appreciation
- Taking accountability for your actions
- Seeking input from others
- Being asked for thoughts and opinions
- Praising good work
- Giving timely recognition of people's efforts and accomplishments
- Providing positive reinforcement
- Offering assistance when someone needs help
- Practicing common courtesy - saying "please" and "thank you"
- Communicating openly, honestly, and collaboratively
- Providing opportunities for input and participation
- Giving constructive feedback
- Demonstrating sympathy and a show of support when someone is having a difficult time
- Listening openly to other points of view, even when you disagree
- Seeking consensus
- Providing clear expectations

## **Respectful Behaviours continued.....**

- Sharing knowledge and information
- Being inclusive
- Mentoring/coaching: Taking the time to develop others
- Acting honestly and with integrity
- Empowering others
- Sharing laughs
- Social banter
- Random acts of kindness



## **Disrespectful Behaviours**

Understanding what constitutes disrespectful behaviours is key to identifying them when they do occur in the workplace and take the appropriate steps to address that behaviour. Demonstrating the following behaviours in our workplace can negatively impact a person's physical, psychological, and emotional well-being and will not be tolerated in the Faculty of ALES.

- Eye rolling, finger wagging, or other physical gestures that are used to make fun of, express frustration with, or isolate another employee
- Workplace violence/assault
- Verbal or Written Abuse
- Intimidation, leering or other objectionable and insulting gestures
- Threats including coercion
- Angry outbursts
- Unwanted physical contact such as touching, patting, pushing, pinching or punching
- Display of pornographic, racist or offensive pictures or materials
- Inappropriate text messages, emails, and social media posts

## **Disrespectful Behaviours continued.....**

- Unwelcome remarks, name-calling, jokes, innuendo or taunting about a person's race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation of that person or of any other person
- The use of derogatory language
- Abuse of authority that undermines someone's performance or threatens his or her career
- Spreading false information about an employee
- Practical jokes that result in awkwardness or embarrassment
- Unwelcome enquiries or comments about an individual's personal life
- Unwelcome remarks about a person's physical attributes or appearance
- Humiliation in front of others
- Taking credit for someone else's or a team's work
- False accusations of disrespectful behaviour
- Gossiping
- Purposely and/or regularly interrupting people when they are speaking
- Refusing to converse or work with an employee

## **What are NOT Considered Disrespectful Behaviours?**

The following are considered legitimate workplace actions so long as they are carried out in good faith, in a professional/respectful manner, and in a non-arbitrary fashion:

- Direct supervision, including discussions about performance expectations
- Assignment and direction of work, including how to accomplish tasks
- Requests by supervisors for updates or status reports
- One-on-one discussions between managers, supervisors and their staff
- Approval or denial of overtime and time off

The above noted actions are encompassed by management's legitimate right to conduct business and direct operations.

## **False Allegations**

Making a false allegation against another employee is a serious offense and is considered another form of disrespectful behaviour that will not be tolerated. False allegations are particularly injurious because they force the accused individuals to defend their integrity. The allegations and subsequent investigation can be traumatic and costly regardless of the findings. Where accusations are found to be false, disciplinary action may be taken against the person who made the accusation.

## **Requesting Anonymity or That No Action Be Taken**

When an employee reports an issue or concern to their Supervisor, the Supervisor is expected to,

- actively listen and acknowledge the employee's concerns
- determine the appropriate course of action to address the concern
- seek the counsel of Human Resources when/if necessary

If an employee feels the issue is significant enough to bring to the attention of their Supervisor, they should be aware that their Supervisor may take action to ensure the issue will be addressed. Action taken may involve the Supervisor,

- providing advice on next steps
- mediating a conversation between the relevant parties
- elevating the issue to Human Resources for further counsel or action
- referring the employee to the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights

## **The Role of the Bystander**

Employees who witness disrespectful behaviour have a responsibility to take action by making their Supervisor, Human Resources, or Union Representative aware of such situations. Bystanders who do not take action may contribute to creating a poisoned work environment. If an employee witnesses other employees acting disrespectfully, there is an expectation that this information will be brought forward to the appropriate parties for resolution.

**The standard you walk past is the standard you accept.**

Lt. General David Morrison, Australia's Chief of Army

## Resolution

All employees can contact their Supervisor, Human Resources Manager, Union Representative, or the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights for advice, information, and resources available to them when dealing with acts of disrespect in the workplace.

### **Informal Issue Resolution Process:**

- Employees are encouraged to speak to the individual directly, if possible, or write them a note or send them an email if they are not comfortable speaking to them. These are difficult conversations to have but employees are expected in most instances to do their best to work things out with each other before escalating to a higher level.
- If speaking to the individual does not resolve the issue or if you are not comfortable in approaching the individual, employees can speak to their supervisor or manager. Employees are encouraged to work with their supervisor or manager to develop a plan for how the situation can be addressed moving forward.
- Employees may also seek guidance and coaching from the ALES Human Resources Manager on how to have these conversations effectively.
- Employees may request their supervisor or manager to assist in coaching and/or mediating an informal conversation with the intent of seeking resolution.
- If the matter involves an employee's supervisor, an employee may also bring concerns to their supervisor's manager or alternatively to Human Resources in an effort to find a solution prior to filing a formal complaint.
- Failing a successful informal resolution, an employee may consider pursuing the formal complaint process as per the Collective Agreement to which they are party to.

### **Formal Resolution Process**

If resolution cannot be reached through informal methods, then employees may choose to file a formal complaint under the appropriate Article of the Collective Agreement,

- NASA, Article 18
- APO, Article 16
- FSO, Article 16
- TRAS, Article 16
- ATS, Article 13
- Faculty, Article 16
- After an initial review, an investigation will be completed by the appropriate parties as outlined within the respective Collective Agreement.
- Once the investigation is complete,
  - the findings are reviewed by the appropriate parties

- appropriate corrective action is invoked based on the findings, which may include discipline up to and including termination.

### **Moving Forward In The Right Direction**

It is the responsibility of every employee within the Faculty of ALES to contribute towards the development and maintenance of a safe and respectful work environment. This will require a conscious, genuine, and collaborative effort by all parties. It is important to recognize that the words we speak, the behaviours we exhibit, and the actions we choose to take can have a significant impact on others. All employees have the right to work in an environment where they feel they can thrive and be acknowledged for their hard work and contributions. ALES leadership recognizes that our employees are our greatest assets. Through positive interactions, ALES will continue to foster a culture of safety and respect.



## Questions and Answers

**1. Q:** Are there time limits for making a formal complaint ?

**A:** Complaints will be accepted by the Faculty of ALES as per the timelines indicated in the Collective Agreement. The earlier a complaint is submitted, the sooner the disrespectful behaviour can be addressed.

If you are a member of a Staff Association, you may also enlist the aid of your union representative. This person can guide you through the process of submitting a formal complaint based on the appropriate article within the Collective Agreement.

**2. Q:** Perhaps I am being oversensitive to the situation. How do I know when I should deal with the issue?

**A:** If someone's actions and/or behaviours have made you feel uncomfortable, the processes as outlined in this policy can assist you in addressing the issue and reaching a resolution.

**3. Q:** I was just having some fun. How can my humor be considered inappropriate?

**A:** Humour is an effective means to build relationships, relieve stress and tension, and enhance one's overall well-being. However, humour is also subjective in nature, and has the ability to offend others and/or hurt feelings. Get to know your colleagues so that you can better understand individual thresholds and where the line should be drawn. Every person has a different way of dealing with certain situations, subject matters, and every workplace has their own unique cultural norms. Develop an understanding of the work environment and be cautious in using humor.

**4. Q:** How do I let someone know that they have said or done something that offends me?

**A:** The best course of action is to speak to the individual in private and to explain to them what they specifically did, how it made you feel and why. Be clear on how you propose moving forward or what you need to see change. Communicate that if the behaviours continue, you will escalate to matter to the appropriate party.

**5. Q:** What options do I have in dealing with disrespectful behaviour?

**A:** If you are being disrespected, then you need to take action to address it. Not doing anything is enabling the behaviour and that person may not know what they are doing is having a negative impact on you. You can,

- tell the person to stop
- write them a note or send them an email if you are not comfortable speaking to them directly
- speak to a colleague, supervisor, union representative or Human Resources
- file a formal complaint if you cannot resolve this matter informally

## Questions and Answers continued.....

6. **Q:** Do I have to wait for something serious to happen before I take any action?

**A:** Disrespectful behaviour, including bullying and harassment, may constitute a single incident or a series of incidents over time. It contributes to the development of a poisoned work environment. You do not have to wait for an actual incident to take action. It is best to deal with the situation as it arises.

## Resources

Resources	Contact Information
<b>The Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights</b>	Telephone: 780.492.7478 E-mail: <a href="mailto:osdhr@ualberta.ca">osdhr@ualberta.ca</a>
<b>Helping Individuals at Risk (HIAR)</b>	Telephone: 780.492.4372 Email: <a href="mailto:hiarua@ualberta.ca">hiarua@ualberta.ca</a>
<b>UofA Protected Services (UAPS)</b>	EMERGENCY - CALL 911 Complaints/Information (24hr): 780-492-5050
<b>ALES Human Resources</b>	Telephone: 780.492.8312 E-mail – <a href="mailto:ssarkar@ualberta.ca">ssarkar@ualberta.ca</a>
<b>Non Academic Staff Association</b>	Telephone: 780.439.3181 Email: <a href="mailto:nasa@ualberta.ca">nasa@ualberta.ca</a>
<b>Association of Academic Staff University of Alberta</b>	Telephone: 780.492.5321 Email: <a href="mailto:reception@aasua.ca">reception@aasua.ca</a>
<b>UAPPOL – Discrimination Harassment and Duty to Accommodate</b>	<a href="https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Pages/DispPol.aspx?PID=110">https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Pages/DispPol.aspx?PID=110</a>

# Toward a respectful workplace

Where are you on the continuum of behaviours?



● **Green zone**

Respectful, professional and values-based behaviours contribute to a respectful workplace. You are encouraged to maintain awareness of your behaviours and to continue modelling the ALES values of respect, integrity, accountability and excellence.

- Behaviours include:
- Random acts of kindness
  - Timely recognition of people's efforts
  - Positive reinforcement
  - Constructive feedback
  - Listening/being attentive
  - Checking In
  - Sharing knowledge, information
  - Seeking input from others
  - Being accountable

▲ **Yellow zone**

Unprofessional, careless and disruptive behaviours can harm others, make them uncomfortable and affect the overall well-being of staff in the workplace. You are asked to re-evaluate your behaviour and make changes to support a respectful workplace

- Behaviours include:
- Interrupting
  - Not doing what you say you will do
  - Careless humour
  - Not permitting input
  - Practical jokes that result in embarrassment
  - Angry outburst

● **Red zone**

Intentional, targeted, prohibited and/or illegal behaviours are unacceptable. They harm others and create an unsafe workplace. This behaviour must cease immediately!

- Behaviours include:
- Gossiping
  - False accusations
  - Threats, including coercion
  - Bullying

## **Continuum of Behaviours**

Human behaviours and actions fall within a continuum. As such, it is often difficult to distinguish behaviours as acceptable or unacceptable because sometimes the behaviour falls somewhere in between the two categories. These behaviours and actions may be dependent upon an individual's distinct culture, ethnicity, religion, personal circumstances and/or upbringing. In an organizational context, the Continuum of Behaviours describes the vast array of behaviours that an employee may exhibit in the workplace. One end describes positive behaviours while the other end demonstrates unacceptable behaviours. The Green Zone describes the ideal work environment where employees display behaviours that can drive both individual and organizational success. Green Zone behaviours are the expectation within the Faculty of ALES. The Yellow Zone describes unprofessional behaviours that delve into the realm of disrespect. If Yellow Zone behaviours are not dealt with appropriately, it contributes to the development of a poisoned work environment and can potentially lead to Red Zone behaviours. The Red Zone consists of behaviours that are intentional, targeted, and has the potential to cause severe physical, emotional, and psychological harm. If Red Zone behaviours are not dealt with immediately it can lead to the development of an unsafe/toxic work environment.