

# 2017

# AGU Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics

**AGU**

ADVANCING EARTH  
AND SPACE SCIENCE

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of the American Geophysical Union is to promote discovery in Earth and space science for the benefit of humanity. Scientific integrity and ethics are fundamental to scientific advancement and science cannot flourish without the respectful and equitable treatment of all those engaged in the scientific community. The AGU Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics Policy is a set of principles and practices for professional behavior regarding the practice, learning, training, publishing, and communication of science which governs all AGU members, staff, volunteers, and non-members participating in AGU sponsored programs and activities. The Policy has been revised to include a new code of conduct that broadens the definition of professional misconduct to include discrimination, sexual harassment, and bullying. The revised Policy identifies standards for professional behavior and outlines processes for reporting and addressing violations.

Key provisions of this updated Policy important for all AGU members, staff, volunteers, contractors, and non-members who participate in AGU programs to be aware of include:<sup>2</sup>

- AGU leadership's affirmation of the international principle that the free, open, and responsible practice of science is fundamental to scientific advancement and human and environmental well-being;
- Definition of scientific misconduct to include code-of-conduct towards others;
- Definitions of discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment) and bullying as it applies to this Policy;
- A higher standard AGU Volunteer Leader Code of Conduct;
- The extension of AGU Ethics Policy to cover participants in all AGU program activities, including Honors and Awards, and AGU governance;
- Self-reporting requirements for awardees and candidates for AGU elected position;
- Ethical guidelines for publication of scientific research;
- A clear and detailed process for reporting and investigating scientific misconduct;
- Special considerations for students (undergraduate and graduate) and student advisors; and
- Description of support mechanisms for issues that may not rise to the level of a formal ethics complaint.

The AGU Meetings Code of Conduct—with a different reporting, investigating, and response process—is included in Appendix B to this Policy.

## II. PREAMBLE: AGU SCIENTIFIC CODE OF CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

The mission of the American Geophysical Union is to promote discovery in Earth and space science for the benefit of humanity. To accomplish this, we seek to galvanize a community of Earth and space scientists that collaboratively advances and communicates science to ensure a sustainable future.

The AGU Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics Policy is a set of principles and practices for professional behavior that governs all AGU members, staff, volunteers, contractors, exhibitors, and sponsors. This Policy also includes any non-member who participates in an AGU program or activity. AGU sponsored programs and activities include, but are not limited to, AGU Meetings, Publications, Honors and Recognition, and Governance Programs, and all appointed, elected, and volunteer positions.

This updated Policy is intended to address ongoing issues within our scientific community that may not rise to the level

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<sup>1</sup> Principles and code have been adapted with permission from the following sources:

- [The Singapore Statement of the World Integrity Conference.](#)
- [The Department of Interior Scientific and Scholarly Integrity Policy.](#)
- The Nuremberg Principles that have guided scientific integrity discussion since 1949.
- [International Council for Science Statute 5 – Principal of Universality.](#)
- [The Belmont Report on Biomedical Research in 1979.](#)

Additional scientific ethics policy guidance is provided in the National Academies of Sciences Engineering and Medicine's 2017 Report, [Fostering Integrity in Research](#), including recommended practical options for discouraging and addressing research misconduct and detrimental research practices.

<sup>2</sup> AGU Staff members are also covered by standards of behavior as described in the AGU Employee Handbook.

of legal actions, yet have profound impact in our research workplace and on individual lives and careers.<sup>3</sup> The AGU has a desire to act in establishing and enforcing code-of-conduct expectations, and to provide additional education and awareness on how to change culture and behavior and address such issues.

AGU leadership affirms the international principle that the free, open, and responsible practice of science is fundamental to scientific advancement and human and environmental well-being. As a member of the scientific community and enterprise, AGU also affirms its desire to foster and support a safe and professional environment in order to learn, conduct research, and communicate science with integrity, respect, fairness, trustworthiness, and transparency at all organizational levels and in all scientific endeavors. This includes all professional interactions within the scientific community and with members of the public. We recognize that failure to uphold these principles harms our profession, our scientific credibility, and the well-being of individuals and the broader community. The culture of science differs internationally, yet integrity must remain inviolate. It is the responsibility of all individuals covered under this Policy to ensure the integrity of our scientific practice and to work to prevent actions contrary to the spirit of the above principles.<sup>4</sup>

One of the goals of AGU is to educate and reinforce positive behavior in the scientific and learning environment, including the classroom, field settings, laboratory, industry, and professional meetings. These guidelines for scientific research and professional conduct hold no meaning if they are breached without consequence. Therefore, a process to guide the resolution of reported violations, and commensurate sanctions are important components of this Policy.

The following newly added Code of Conduct section of the Policy presents principles, responsibilities, a discussion of the special relationship between students and advisors, and a discussion of harassment, bullying, and discrimination—including definitions.

### III. CODE OF CONDUCT

All AGU members are expected to aspire and adhere to the following standards of behavior:

#### A. Principles

*Excellence, integrity, and honesty* in all aspects of research

*Personal accountability* in the conduct of research and the dissemination of the results

*Professional courtesy, equity, and fairness* in working with others

*Freedom to responsibly pursue science* without interference or coercion

*Unselfish cooperation* in research

*Good stewardship* of research and data on behalf of others

*Legal compliance* in all aspects of research, including intellectual property

*Humane approach* in evaluating the implications of research on humans and animals

#### B. Responsibilities

1. **Integrity:** Members will act with honesty in the interest of the advancement of science, take full responsibility for the trustworthiness of their research and its dissemination, and treat others with courtesy, equity, and fairness.
2. **Adherence to Law and Regulations:** Members will be aware of and adhere to laws and regulations related to the professional conduct of research; to the AGU policy on publications, peer review, scientific integrity; and to professional ethics, law and policy related to discrimination, harassment, and bullying.
3. **Research Methods:** Members will employ research methods to the best of their understanding and ability, base conclusions on critical analysis of the evidence, and report findings and interpretations fully, accurately, and objectively, including characterization of uncertainties.

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<sup>3</sup> The AGU processes for addressing any claims of misconduct are outlined within this Policy to work within the law and remain strict in upholding principles of confidentiality and due process. When an allegation of misconduct involves activity that is against the U.S. code of law, or code of law in other respective regions, AGU will work with all appropriate authorities as needed and required to resolve the allegation.

<sup>4</sup> The standards in this Policy are intended to educate members and program participants on conduct expectations, and are not intended to imply a legal obligation on the part of AGU with respect to the conduct of AGU members.

4. **Research Records:** Members will maintain clear, accurate records of research in ways that will allow verification and replication of their work by others.
5. **Research Findings:** Members will share data and findings openly and promptly, as soon as they have had an opportunity to establish intellectual property rights, if appropriate. Members will respect the intellectual property rights of others and adhere to [AGU Publications Data Policy](#), following best practices for data management, accessibility, and preservation.<sup>5</sup>
6. **Responsibility:** Members will take responsibility for the integrity of their contributions to all publications, funding applications, reports, and other representations of their research. Author credit should be given only to those who have made meaningful contributions to publications. Members will abide by [AGU Guidelines to authors](#).
7. **Acknowledgment:** Members will acknowledge the names and roles of those who made significant contributions (such as ideas and scientific discussion) to the research.
8. **Peer Review:** Members will adhere to AGU review policy and provide fair, impartial, prompt, and rigorous evaluations and will respect confidentiality when reviewing others' work. Members will welcome constructive criticism and be responsive to peer review.
9. **Conflict of Interest:** Members will disclose financial, personal, professional, and other conflicts of interest that could compromise the trustworthiness of their work on AGU committees, publications, research proposals, meeting presentations, and public communications as well as in all AGU honors and awards activities.
10. **Public Communication:** Members, when representing AGU, will limit professional comments to their areas of scholarly expertise when engaged in public discussions about the application and importance of research findings and will clearly distinguish professional comments from their opinions based on personal views.
11. **Reporting Irresponsible Research Practices:** Members will take responsibility to act or intercede where possible to prevent misconduct. The procedures of this Policy will be followed to report to AGU any suspected research misconduct, including fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, discrimination, harassment, bullying, or other irresponsible research practices that undermine the trustworthiness of research and a professional environment for the conduct of research
12. **Environment:** AGU members are responsible for creating and upholding a safe, open, and professional environment for learning, conducting, and communicating science with integrity, respect, fairness, trustworthiness, and transparency at all organizational levels and in all scientific endeavors.
13. **Misconduct:** AGU members will not engage in discrimination, harassment, bullying, dishonesty, fraud, misrepresentation, coercive manipulation, censorship, or other misconduct that alters the content, veracity, or meaning of research findings or that may affect the planning, conduct, reporting, or application of science. This applies to all professional, research, and learning environments. An expanded discussion of this topic appears below.
14. **Societal Considerations:** Members have an ethical obligation to weigh the societal benefits of their research against the costs and risks to human and animal welfare, heritage sites, or other potential impacts on the environment and society. Members need to be aware of legal requirements in this area.
15. **Stewardship of the Earth:** Members have an ethical obligation to responsibly, accurately, and clearly inform the public about natural resources, hazards, and other geoscience phenomena of importance to the well-being of Earth and society.

### C. Student–Advisor Relationship

The relationship between a graduate student and the graduate student advisor is a unique one in the research environment. This relationship carries extra demands for ethical behavior. Many graduate education programs issue guidance for its advisors and students to help provide heightened awareness on roles and responsibilities. Key principles include areas of sensitivity and concern such as these recommendations for graduate advisors:<sup>6</sup>

- promote an environment that is intellectually stimulating and free of harassment;
- be supportive, equitable, accessible, encouraging, and respectful;

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<sup>5</sup> Additional guidance is found in the May 2017 AGU Position Paper, [The Rights and Responsibilities of Scientists](#).

<sup>6</sup> Extracted from the Pennsylvania State University College of Science's [Guidance for Advisor-Graduate Student Interactions](#). See also a [code of ethics for undergraduate research](#).

- recognize and respect the cultural backgrounds of students;
- be sensitive to the power imbalance in the student–advisor relationship;

Students (undergraduate and graduate) and student advisors are encouraged to be aware of responsibilities of the advisor, the student, and the institution in these special circumstances.

#### D. Harassment, Bullying, and Discrimination

AGU members work to maintain an environment that allows science and scientific careers to flourish through respectful, inclusive, and equitable treatment of others. As a statement of principle, AGU rejects discrimination and harassment by any means, based on factors such as ethnic or national origin, race, religion, citizenship, language, political or other opinion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, age, or economic class. In addition, AGU opposes all forms of bullying including threatening, humiliating, coercive, or intimidating conduct that causes harm to, interferes with, or sabotages scientific activity and careers. Discrimination, harassment (in any form), and bullying create a hostile environment that reduces the quality, integrity, and pace of the advancement of science by marginalizing individuals and communities. It also damages productivity and career advancement, and prevents the healthy exchange of ideas.

We affirm that discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), or bullying in any scientific or learning environment is unacceptable, and constitutes scientific misconduct under the AGU Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics Policy. Such behavior should be reported and addressed with consequences for the offender, including but not limited to AGU sanctions or expulsion as outlined in this Policy. In addition, as part of AGU’s commitment to providing a safe, positive, professional environment, [the SafeAGU Program](#) has been created to provide trained staff and volunteers to meeting attendees if they need to report harassment, discrimination, bullying or other safety/security issues during an AGU meeting, or to request confidential support when dealing with harassment-related issues that may not rise to the level of a formal ethics complaint.<sup>7</sup>

Each major AGU program—including Meetings, Publications, Honors, and Recognition, and AGU Governance—has or will have additional statements to address specific code of conduct expectations unique to their activities and consistent with this AGU Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics Policy. If no such policy yet exists, the principles and processes for reporting, investigating and addressing potential code of conduct violations as outlined in this Policy will prevail. AGU leaders are held to additional standards as outlined further in the AGU Volunteer Leaders Section of this Policy.

#### E. Definitions<sup>8</sup>

**Discrimination** means unequal or unfair treatment in professional opportunities, education, benefits, evaluation, and employment (such as hiring, termination, promotion, compensation) as well as retaliation and various types of harassment. Discriminatory practices can be explicit or implicit, intentional, or unconscious. **Harassment** is a type of discrimination that consists of a single intense and severe act, or of multiple persistent or pervasive acts, which are unwanted, unwelcome, demeaning, abusive, or offensive. Offensive conduct constitutes harassment when 1) it becomes a condition of an opportunity, education, benefit, evaluation, or employment or 2) the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work or educational environment that most people would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive. These acts may include epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping based on gender, race, sexual identity, or other categories, as protected by U.S. federal law. Also included are threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts; denigrating jokes and displays; or circulation of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or a group. **Sexual harassment** includes any unwanted and/or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature. **Bullying** is the use of force, threat, or coercion to abuse, intimidate, or aggressively dominate others in the professional environment that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. These actions can include abusive criticism, humiliation, the spreading of rumors, physical and verbal attacks, isolation, undermining, and professional exclusion of individuals through any means.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> See also the AGU Meetings Code of Conduct in Appendix B.

<sup>8</sup> For the purposes of this Policy, the definitions of harassment and discrimination apply in addition to any legal definitions as provided in US Code of Law, and are modified from the [American Sociological Association definition of harassment](#) and the [EEOC definition of harassment](#).

<sup>9</sup> Microaggression is another term sometimes used in describing unwelcomed behavior against underrepresented groups. Psychologists have defined microaggression as brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership. See: Paludi, Michele A. (2012). *Managing Diversity in Today’s Workplace: Strategies for Employees and Employers*. ISBN 0-313-39317-6.

## IV. AGU VOLUNTEER LEADER CODE OF CONDUCT

AGU volunteer leaders are the public face and ambassadors of AGU. They have unique responsibilities to uphold ethical and professional standards of conduct as individuals when participating in AGU affairs and/or representing AGU in an official capacity.<sup>10</sup> In addition to adhering to the AGU code of conduct for its members, AGU volunteer leaders are expected to do the following:

1. Hold themselves to the highest standard of professional behavior, with honesty and integrity, and treat others with equity, fairness, and respect.
2. Conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner when participating in AGU meetings and events and when representing AGU in an official capacity.
3. Act in the best interest of AGU rather than in furtherance of personal or third-party interests.
4. Comply with all laws and regulations in conducting AGU work and comply with all laws and regulations in their professional work that, if violated, could damage the reputation and credibility of AGU.
5. Understand and comply with AGU's policies and procedures related to conflict of interest, reprisal, discrimination, harassment, and bullying.
6. Understand and comply with AGU bylaws and governing policies and procedures.
7. Understand and comply with the codes of conduct that pertain to their service as members of the AGU Board, Council, or committees.
8. Report any suspected violations of the AGU code of conduct by an AGU volunteer using the procedures established in this Policy.
9. Act solely within the authority granted by virtue of their AGU volunteer position.
10. Maintain the confidentiality of any proprietary or privileged information about the AGU, its members, AGU partners, or other constituents.

## V. SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT<sup>11</sup>

All AGU members, as a condition of membership, will abide by the codes of conduct and professional ethics set forth in this Policy. Engaging in activities counter to this Policy can directly damage the integrity of the research process and of AGU and affects public trust in science. Damage to the progress of Earth and space science is harmful to all who are engaged in this pursuit and to the fundamental purposes of AGU. The Union reserves the right to undertake investigation and appropriate action when an allegation of scientific misconduct (1) is directly connected to an AGU activity, (2) may impact AGU's reputation or integrity, or (3) may impact the credibility of the Earth and space sciences.

The term "scientific misconduct" used in this Policy includes violations of the scientific codes of conduct and professional ethics as provided earlier in this document in the Code of Conduct section. Additionally, "scientific misconduct" encompasses the formal definition of research misconduct from the Federal Policy on Research Misconduct given below:<sup>12</sup>

- **Fabrication** is making up data or results and recording or reporting them.
- **Falsification** is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.
- **Plagiarism** is the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.

A finding of scientific misconduct related to **fabrication, falsification** or **plagiarism** requires that:

1. There is a significant departure from accepted practices of the relevant research community; and

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<sup>10</sup> The ethical conduct for AGU staff is explicitly defined in the AGU Employee Handbook.

<sup>11</sup> Adapted from the AGU Policy on Misconduct with additional text from the [U.S. Federal Policy on Research Misconduct](#) and the Department of Interior [Scientific and Scholarly Integrity Policy](#).

<sup>12</sup> The listed definitions of scientific misconduct apply to all AGU members, including those who reside outside the United States.

2. The misconduct be committed intentionally, or knowingly or recklessly; and
3. The allegation must be proven by a preponderance of evidence.

New methodologies or innovative approaches are not considered significant departures from accepted practice. Scientific misconduct does not include errors of judgment; honest errors in the recording, selection, or analysis of data; or differences in opinions involving the interpretation of data. Fabrication does not include documented use of modeling or statistical techniques.

In AGU activities, scientific misconduct also extends to the following actions: covering up or concealing scientific misconduct, reprisals against those who report scientific misconduct (i.e., whistleblowers), malicious allegations of scientific misconduct, and violations of due process protections in handling allegations of scientific misconduct. Individuals who make false allegations, or make allegations of ethics code breaches in bad faith, will be subject to the same misconduct standards and recourse outlined in this Policy.

Scientific misconduct also includes unethical and biased treatment of people, in a professional setting and while participating in scientific programs, as identified in the Code of Conduct section of this Policy. Included are actions such as discrimination, harassment, and bullying. These actions violate AGU's commitment to a safe and professional environment required to learn, conduct, and communicate science with integrity, respect, fairness, trustworthiness, and transparency at all organizational levels and in all scientific endeavors.

When representing AGU in an official capacity, members and officers will uphold all laws and regulations and abide by the highest standards of professional and personal conduct. Therefore, AGU also considers the following behavior with respect to AGU activities to be so serious that violations will be considered a breach of professional ethics and investigated utilizing the procedures in this Policy:

1. Misrepresenting oneself as an official of the Union or as having authorities or honors conferred by the Union beyond those one actually possesses.
2. Misuse of AGU's name, funds, activities, or resources for non-approved purposes.
3. Unauthorized solicitation of funds or resources under the auspices of AGU.
4. Using AGU funds and resources without proper authorization and attribution or in a manner not commensurate with AGU corporate and organizational relationship policies.

All AGU members will disclose as appropriate the financial, personal, professional, and other conflicts of interest that could compromise the trustworthiness of their work on AGU committees, publications, research proposals, meeting presentations, and public communications as well as in all honors and awards activities. Conflict of interest is defined as any financial or nonfinancial interest that conflicts with the actions or judgments of an individual when conducting scientific activities because it

1. could impair the individual's objectivity,
2. could create an unfair competitive advantage for any person or organization, or
3. could create the appearance of either item listed above.<sup>13</sup>

## VI. ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR PUBLICATION OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH<sup>14</sup>

### A. Overview

AGU aspires to select and publish, through peer review, the highest quality Earth and space science research. To achieve this, the peer review process must be objective, fair, and thorough. The ethical basis for this aspiration is absolute trust and honesty among Editors, authors, researchers, reviewers, and funding agencies. Decisions about a manuscript should be based only on its importance, originality, clarity, and relevance to the journal's scope and content.

Every Editor of an AGU journal has the responsibility to establish and maintain guidelines that adhere to the highest

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<sup>13</sup> [NOAA Administrative Order on Scientific Integrity \(2011\)](#).

<sup>14</sup> This section draws on the following:

- Statement by publisher [Taylor and Francis UK](#).
- Publication Ethics for [Medical Journals of the World Association of Medical Editors](#).
- The Council of Scientific Editors [White Paper on Promoting Integrity in Scientific Journal Publications](#) by CSE Editorial Policy Committee 2008-9.
- The Committee of Publication Ethics [flowcharts](#) and [Code of Conduct for Journal Editors](#).



ethical standards set forth in this document for selecting and accepting papers submitted to that journal. Every submitting author, coauthor, and reviewer has specific responsibilities in these activities, as well as the overall responsibility as members of the profession for respecting codes of conduct. Lastly, the AGU Board and Council have responsibility to ensure the independence of the Editors and provide agreed-upon support so that the quality of publications is not compromised.

In Earth and space science, the growth of global collaborations, the public immediacy of many research results, and the implications for individuals and societies result in major ethical responsibilities for Editors, authors, reviewers, and the AGU Board and Council. These guidelines outline respective common sense ethical guidelines to ensure and sustain the trust of the public and the scientific community in the integrity of the science and of the published works in AGU journals. Authors, editors, and reviewers are urged to stay updated on guidance from the [Committee on Publication Ethics](#) and the [Coalition for Publishing Data in the Earth and Space Sciences](#).

## **B. Ethical Obligations of Editors of Scientific Journals**

To uphold integrity in the AGU publishing process, AGU Editors are expected to do the following:

1. Provide unbiased consideration to all manuscripts offered for publication, judging each on its merits without regard to ethnic origin, race, religion, citizenship, language, political or other opinion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, appearance, age or economic class seniority, or institutional affiliation of the author(s).
2. Process all manuscripts promptly, with fairness, equity, and respect.
3. Take full responsibility for acceptance or rejection of a manuscript, working in the best interest of science and excellence and utilizing the recommendations of peer reviewers. Manuscripts may be rejected without review if considered inappropriate for the journal, and Editors may consult with Associate Editors or reviewers to aid in this decision.
4. Ensure the peer review process is objective, fair, and thorough. Be vigilant in avoiding conflict of interest, bias, discrimination, harassment, bullying or ad hominem attacks among reviewers and authors.
5. Never disclose information about a manuscript under consideration to anyone other than those from whom professional advice is sought. An Editor may disclose manuscript titles and names of authors of papers that have been accepted for publication.
6. Respect the intellectual independence of authors. Results that are at variance with the dominant paradigm, as well as null results, should be given full and equal consideration based upon the criteria of importance, originality, clarity, and relevance.
7. Fully delegate responsibility of a manuscript to another Editor or Associate Editor to avoid conflict of interest. This includes manuscripts authored by the Editor, manuscripts authored by scientists with whom the Editor has a close relationship, or when a manuscript is so closely related to the research of an Editor as to create a conflict of interest.
8. Never use unpublished information or interpretations from a submitted manuscript for their own or a reviewer's own research, except with the consent of the author.
9. Quickly facilitate publication of errata to correct erroneous information in a published report.

## **C. Ethical Obligations of Authors and Contributors**

To contribute the highest quality science to AGU publications, authors are expected to do the following:

1. Present a precise and accurate account of the research performed and a clear, objective discussion of its significance.
2. Include sufficient detail and reference to sources of information in a manuscript to permit the author's peers to repeat the work. If there are any limitations on use of or access to data, these must be clearly identified.
3. Identify sources of all information and cite those publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work and that guide the reader quickly to the primary and other earlier work essential for understanding the present investigation. Information obtained privately, as in conversation or correspondence, should not be used or reported without explicit permission from the source. Proper credit should also

be given to holders of indigenous knowledge.

4. Carefully document methodology, assumptions, and uncertainty.
5. Follow the most recent acknowledged governing standards for ethics of work done with human or animal subjects.<sup>15</sup>
6. Never plagiarize the work of others or your own work. Always provide appropriate citation.
7. Avoid unnecessary fragmentation or redundant publication of research reports to artificially increase the number of publications.
8. Never include personal criticism in a written piece of work.
9. Report to the Editor any changes made to the manuscript after acceptance.
10. Include as coauthors only those persons who have made significant scientific contributions to the work, and determine order of authorship in a manner appropriate to the contribution. Pay careful attention to inclusion and appropriate attribution of student work. All coauthors share responsibility for the quality and integrity of the submitted and published manuscript.
11. Reveal to the Editor any potential conflict of interest that might be affected by publication of the results contained in a manuscript or in the development of the research.
12. In the role of corresponding author, ensure that all coauthors are fully cognizant of the steps and changes in the manuscript during the review and that all authors agree to the final version of the manuscript.<sup>16</sup>

#### **D. Ethical Obligations of Reviewers of Manuscripts**

To ensure the highest quality science in AGU publications, reviewers are expected to do the following:

1. Provide clearly written, unbiased feedback in a timely manner on the scholarly merits and scientific value of the work, together with a documented basis for the reviewer's opinion. Judge the paper on its merits without regard to personal bias, ethnic origin, race, religion, citizenship, language, political or other opinion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, appearance, age, or economic class, seniority, or institutional affiliation of the author(s).
2. Thoroughly address all review criteria provided by the journal.
3. Decline to review manuscripts for which the reviewer lacks sufficient time, is not qualified, or has a conflict of interest with any of the authors, including personal or competitive relationships.
4. Explain and support judgments adequately so that Editors and authors may understand the basis of their comments. Any statement by a reviewer on an observation, derivation, or argument that has been previously published should be accompanied by the relevant citation.
5. Provide citations to relevant work by other scientists as appropriate.
6. Alert the Editor to any significant similarity between the manuscript under consideration and any other published paper or manuscript submitted concurrently to another journal. Report any plagiarism or the appearance of plagiarism.
7. Never use or disclose unpublished information, arguments, or interpretations contained in a manuscript under consideration, except with the consent of the author.
8. Never include personal criticism of the author in reviewing a manuscript.

#### **E. Ethical Obligations of Authors Publishing for the Public**

Any communication of research to the public, including social media communications such as blogs and related platforms, should adhere to the same levels of accuracy and empirical support for results as do scientific communications. Authors writing for the public are expected to do the following:

1. Maintain accuracy of the science when using common words or simplifying concepts to be understood.

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<sup>15</sup> See the Belmont Report: [Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research](#), 1979.

<sup>16</sup> Authorship obligations as described in the above statements in general, and especially in statements 9-12, also apply to authors' obligations in submitting research abstracts, and in oral and poster presentations at meetings.

2. Announce a discovery to the public only when the experimental, statistical, or theoretical support for it is of sufficient strength to warrant publication in the scientific literature. Ensure submission of such work as quickly as possible.
3. Maintain scientific accuracy while using analogies that are emotionally compelling or that relate to popularly understood concepts or themes.

## **F. Ethical Obligations of AGU Toward Its Editors**

To maintain honesty and trust in the AGU publishing process, the officers, and staff of AGU are expected to do the following:

1. Fully inform AGU journal Editors of their responsibilities, authorities, terms of appointment, and mechanisms for resolving conflict.
2. Never interfere in the evaluation, selection, or editing of individual articles, and respect that Editors have authority over the editorial content of the journal, generally referred to as “editorial independence.”
3. Support editorial decisions made based on the clarity, originality, importance, and relevance to the journal’s audience including manuscripts that are critical of the current paradigm or that may be contrary to the published statements of AGU.
4. Protect the editorial, peer review, and publishing process from influence of commercial interest, personal self-interest, political influence, or other nonscientific influences.
5. Responsibly use the right to appoint and terminate Editors. Cause for dismissal should be for substantial reasons such as scientific misconduct, irresponsible decisions, personal behavior contrary to the ethical standards of the profession, or failure to fulfill responsibilities as Editors.

## **VII. AGU PROCESS FOR INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS UNDER THIS POLICY**

### **A. General Process for Filing and Investigating Allegations of Misconduct**

#### **1. Scope of the Process**

Allegations of scientific misconduct may be submitted to AGU when the alleged action is directly connected to a program operated under the direction of the Union including its publications, presentations, and meetings as defined in the Preamble. When an allegation received by AGU also involves U.S. federally funded research and meets the federal definition of research misconduct (included in this Policy), AGU will follow the reporting requirements of the Policy on Federal Research Misconduct. When an allegation of misconduct involves activity that is against the U.S. code of law, or the code of law in other respective regions, AGU will work with all appropriate authorities and home institutions as needed and required to resolve the allegation. Such authorities include but are not limited to (1) research, business, governmental, and academic institutions; (2) U.S. civil and criminal courts, or (3) police and other enforcement bodies.

AGU recognizes that an allegation of scientific misconduct is not, in and of itself, proof of scientific misconduct. AGU recognizes that an allegation does, however, bear the potential to damage professional credibility and cast doubt on the entire career of an accused party. Whenever possible, AGU will observe strict confidentiality when an allegation of scientific misconduct by a member is reported, up until the investigation process has been completed and a ruling by the governing body has been made, at which point confidentiality may or may not be preserved, depending on the case and the findings.

This process also supports the authority of the Editors and the Publication and Meetings committees who have the primary responsibility to ensure that the AGU publication record reflects appropriate standards and best practices in scientific scholarship in the Earth and space sciences.

It is the intent of this AGU process to determine whether a violation of the principles outlined here has occurred and to decide on appropriate sanctions. It is not the intent of this process to correct poor research or poor scholarship except to the degree that the AGU published record may need to be corrected. A flow chart depicting the below described AGU process for investigating scientific misconduct is found in Figures A1 and A2, in Appendix A of this report.

#### **2. Involved Parties**

The *Chair of the Ethics Committee* coordinates AGU’s investigations of scientific misconduct. The past Past-President

of AGU will serve as the Chair, unless an alternate appointment is made by the AGU President.

The *Ethics Committee* reports to the Board of Directors and is responsible for investigating allegations that are deemed by the Chair of the Ethics Committee to be substantial and thereby require investigation. The Ethics Committee will be appointed as needed, with membership selected based on the nature of the case or allegation. The Chair will name one of the committee members as the Vice Chair to assist and serve as Chair in the event of conflict of interest, or if the Chair cannot serve for other reasons. Because of their other substantial responsibilities, AGU committee chairs should not be considered for nomination. The AGU President will work with the Chair of the Ethics Committee to review nominations and finalize the membership of the Ethics Committee.

The *Board of Directors* has the final authority to determine what actions will be taken if an allegation of scientific misconduct is found to be substantiated.

The *Complainant* is the individual who registers the allegation with AGU. The complainant need not be an AGU member.

The *Respondent* is the individual(s) against whom the allegation is made. The Respondent must be an AGU member or, an author of an AGU publication or presentation, or an AGU meeting attendee.

### **3. Responsibilities**

The designated senior AGU staff member for Ethics and the Chair of the Ethics Committee serve as the point of contacts for receiving allegations of scientific misconduct. They conduct an initial evaluation of the allegation to determine if a full investigation is required. If so, the Chair will coordinate with the AGU President to assure a committee is appointed in a timely fashion to conduct an investigation—the results and recommendations of which will be forwarded to the Board of Directors for final action. The committee composition will reflect the nature of the allegation. The Chair will ensure that all procedures and due process as described in Section 4 are followed.

The Board of Directors will review the findings and recommendations and make a final determination of what actions are to be taken.

If the allegation of scientific misconduct is substantiated, the Board of Directors will determine AGU's response to it and whether and under what circumstances other organizations need to be informed of the infraction.

### **4. Procedure**

#### **(a) Reporting an Allegation**

AGU ethics program staff members are committed to listening to and addressing complaints and to guiding victims through options confidentially before she or he decides how to proceed, including details for potential informal solutions or a formal complaint.

Formal allegations regarding scientific misconduct by AGU members, staff, or others in connection with AGU activities (publications, meetings, governance, honors, and other official duties) must be submitted in writing either directly to the Chair of the Ethics Committee or to [ethics@agu.org](mailto:ethics@agu.org). Formally submitted allegations receive an initial review by the senior AGU staff member responsible for ethics and relevant parties are informed to allow for further assessment of evidence presented, including a determination of scope and next steps. Whenever possible, allegations are addressed and resolved at an AGU program level (for example, publications, meetings, honors and awards, etc.). Allegations that cannot be resolved through an informal mechanism, such as SafeAGU, or at an AGU program level are referred to the officially designated AGU Senior Staff member for Ethics, and the Chair of the Ethics Committee. The Ethics Chair will consider the allegations and determine if a full investigation is warranted. All parties will be bound to treat all documents and information with the highest degree of confidentiality throughout and after the process. Failure to do so is deemed a serious breach of these guidelines.

The allegation must contain the following information:

1. The name and affiliation of the person(s) submitting the allegation and the name and identifying information of the person(s) alleged to have committed the scientific misconduct.
2. A description of the allegation that includes the date and circumstances of the alleged misconduct.
3. Any documents or other relevant items (such as data, scientific papers, memos, diaries, etc.) with annotation showing specifically how the item relates to the allegation.
4. An explanation of how the allegation relates to scientific misconduct as defined in this Policy.
5. A statement explaining any conflict(s) of interest the person making the allegation has with the subject(s),

entity(ies), or situation(s) named in the allegation. A conflict of interest does not preclude the filing of an allegation.

Allegations may be returned if they do not contain the above information. It is advisable for anyone experiencing unacceptable behavior to keep detailed records of such incidents,

including dates and names of any potential witnesses. Allegations may be submitted via e-mail to [ethics@agu.org](mailto:ethics@agu.org), or in writing to the following:

Chair of the AGU Ethics Committee  
2000 Florida Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20009-1277, USA

### **(b) Procedure for Preliminary Investigation**

Upon receipt of an allegation, the Chair of the Ethics Committee will notify the AGU President and Executive Director within 10 business days. The Chair will also acknowledge receipt of the allegation to the complainant within 10 business days.

The Chair of the Ethics Committee will review the material and recommend either item a or item b (below) to the AGU President within 15 business days of receipt of the allegation:

- a) does not constitute scientific misconduct as defined by AGU and no further action is warranted, or
- b) appears to constitute scientific misconduct as defined by AGU and may require establishment of a Committee for further investigation.

The AGU President and Ethics Committee will respond within 10 business days on whether they concur.

If the AGU President and Ethics Committee agree that the allegation does not constitute scientific misconduct as defined by AGU, then the complainant will be notified immediately by the Chair of the Ethics Committee and the allegation dismissed.

If the President of AGU and/or the Ethics Committee believe that the allegation may constitute scientific misconduct, then the Ethics Chair will provide notification to the respondent and complainant, an investigating Ethics Committee will be appointed by AGU President, and the appointed Ethics Committee will begin an investigation. If the respondent admits to the alleged scientific misconduct at any time during the procedure, the investigation will be halted and the Ethics Committee will prepare recommendations to the Board of Directors for actions and or sanctions to be taken.

If the allegation involves U.S. federally funded research, meets the federal definition of research misconduct provided in this Policy, and AGU determines there is sufficient evidence to proceed to an investigation by the Ethics Committee, the home institution will need to be notified, and a determination made by the Ethics Chair, whether the investigation will be carried out by the home institution, by AGU, or jointly.

After filing a complaint with AGU or with their home institution, a complainant may request that AGU provide protections from harassment, discrimination, or bullying at AGU activities. Such actions may include, but are not limited to: barring the respondent from a complainant's talk, barring a respondent from an AGU activity, or providing the complainant with an escort during AGU activities. If the complaint goes to a full investigation at AGU or at the home institutions, AGU may consider further actions. [The SafeAGU program](#), referenced earlier in this Policy, may also provide similar protections (such as providing an escort for AGU activities, or other steps deemed necessary to assure member safety) for harassment-related concerns that fall short of a formal ethics complaint.

In some cases, an allegation may be resolved informally, such as through an apology and assurance that the action will not happen again (especially in cases of the respondent unknowingly causing offense), or may best be resolved through mediation between the Complainant and the Respondent. They, or the Chair of the Ethics Committee, may make a recommendation for mediation at any time during the investigation process, or as a final resolution after an investigation is completed.

### **(c) Procedure for Investigation**

The Committee has 90 days to complete its investigation, but may ask for an extension of time from the AGU President if needed. If the internet and conference calls are to be used as part of the panel operations, adequate security and confidentiality of the proceedings must be taken. Additional members may be added to a specific investigation to provide subject matter expertise pursuant to the allegation.

1. The Chair of the Ethics Committee will consult with the Committee to determine the schedule of the investigation and make assignments regarding specific actions to be undertaken by the Committee members. All procedures will be conducted under strict confidentiality.
2. The Chair of the Ethics Committee will formally notify the complainant and respondent in writing that an allegation has been received and will be investigated and will provide an approximate timetable and description of the investigation.
3. Collection of information, evaluation of the allegation, and interaction with the Complainant and the Respondent will be conducted. A teleconference or a face-to-face meeting may be held at AGU HQ (or other mutually agreed upon location) of the full Committee. Both the Complainant and the Respondent will be invited to the meeting and travel supported by AGU. The Complainant and Respondent may also attend by teleconference or internet. All information that has been collected by the committee will be forwarded to both the Complainant and the Respondent no later than 5 business days before the meeting, so that all parties may evaluate it. The Complainant and Respondent may also provide written statements from themselves or others as part of the proceedings 5 business days before the meeting. During the meeting:
  - a) the Ethics Committee will summarize the allegation and associated evidence of scientific misconduct, and
  - b) the Respondent will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations. The Committee, in Executive Session, will then consider all the evidence presented, make a finding as to whether scientific misconduct has occurred, and recommend a response by AGU.
4. The finding and recommendation of the Ethics Committee will be forwarded to the Board of Directors in a report prepared by the Ethics Committee and submitted by the Chair. The report should be a clear, complete, and final determination of all charges. At a minimum, the report will include the following: (1) summary of the alleged scientific misconduct, (2) summary of the fact-finding activities of the committee, (3) discussion and conclusion of the fact finding, (4) recommendations for actions and or sanctions to be taken, and (5) appendices as needed containing supporting documents and written statements.

A Respondent may retain the services of an attorney at their own cost. AGU may also retain services of an attorney if it deems this necessary. If an attorney is needed, as determined by the Ethics Committee, the Board of Directors should ensure adequate resources are available to secure the necessary legal services.

#### **(d) Review by the Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors, in Executive Session at its next scheduled meeting, will review findings and recommendations submitted by the investigating Ethics Committee. The Board of Directors may accept or reject the Ethics Committee's recommendations of actions to be taken, but may not reject the conclusions (findings) of the Ethics Committee. However, the Board can request additional investigation which the Ethics Committee will have up to 90 days to conduct. The action by the Board of Directors will be summarized in a report for the record and a copy forwarded to the Ethics Committee. The Board will notify the Chair and the Respondent and the Complainant of its decision within 10 business days of the Executive Session.

#### **5. Sanctions**

If a finding of scientific misconduct has been made, the Board of Directors will decide the action to be taken. These may include appropriate sanctions, the period over which the sanction will be in effect, correction of the publication record, and/or recommendations for education or training. Sanctions, in increasing severity, may include but are not limited to the following:

- a) Written reprimand or warning.
- b) Removal from AGU volunteer position.
- c) Publication of "errata" notices.
- d) Withdrawal/retraction of presentations, publication, or posters.
- e) Placement of an author or reviewer on an AGU Editor's watch list.
- f) Notification to other journals
- g) Suspension from publishing in AGU journal(s) for a specific period, including permanently.

- h) Suspension from making presentations at AGU sponsored meeting(s) for a specific period, including permanently.
- i) Suspension of membership.
- j) Permanent expulsion from AGU.
- k) Denial or revocation of honors and awards.
- l) Notification to respondent's home institution.
- m) Publication/notification to members of incident in *Eos* or other AGU publication.
- n) Public statement regarding the scientific misconduct.

When an AGU member is sanctioned by another organization for scientific misconduct or convicted of criminal activity, the AGU Board may consider its own sanctions related to membership, attendance at AGU programs, and publishing with AGU.

All members are required to self-report if they are currently under investigation or have been convicted of scientific misconduct, or a serious criminal activity that violates the AGU ethics code, when they are nominated for an AGU committee or office, or selected to receive an AGU award. Nominations for awards and recognition will include a statement that to best of knowledge of the nominator, the nominee is not currently under investigation and has not been convicted of scientific misconduct or criminal activity. A member may request in writing from the AGU Board an exemption from this reporting requirement when the violation is older than 10 years, steps have been taken to mitigate the violation (through such actions as education, supervision, or settlement), or there are other mitigating circumstances that the AGU Board should consider.

## **6. Appeals**

Once the Board of Directors has decided actions to be taken against the Respondent, the Respondent has sixty (60) days to file an appeal of the sanction and/or the finding. An appeal must be based on new evidence or reconsideration of evidence and include a narrative justification for the appeal. The Board of Directors will meet in Executive Session at its next scheduled meeting to review the appeal and sustain or revise its decision on the sanction or refer the appeal to the Ethics Committee for reconsideration of the finding.

That action will be documented for the record and will be communicated to the

Respondent and the Ethics Committee within 10 working days following the Board of Directors meeting. The Ethics Committee may then have up to 90 days to reconsider the finding and any new evidence from the Respondent. If necessary, the Ethics Committee may ask the Board for an extension of time for gathering additional information.

## **7. Interactions with Other Institutions**

It is recognized that AGU members may be governed by the ethical and scientific integrity policies of other institutions (such as professional societies, governmental agencies, research institutions) or by governmental laws such as the U.S. Federal Research Misconduct Policy. When reporting, investigating, or resolving instances of scientific misconduct, members and the AGU Ethics Committee should consider the following:

- a) Other institutions may need to be notified or involved in resolving the allegation. When an allegation involves U.S. federally funded research, meets the federal definition of research misconduct provided in this Policy, and AGU determines there is sufficient evidence to proceed to an investigation by the Ethics Committee, then the home institution must be notified and a determination made by the Ethics Chair, whether the investigation will be carried out by the home institution, by AGU, or jointly.
- b) If the same allegation is already being investigated by a Respondent's home institution, AGU may wait until that investigation is complete and the issue has been resolved before undertaking its own action, if any action is deemed necessary; or AGU may collaborate with the other institution in the investigation.
- c) Notification of an institution, an external (non-AGU) journal, or the public of a finding of scientific misconduct should be considered only in the most serious of violations or when required by law.

## **8. Conflict of Interest**

Real or apparent conflicts of interest must be avoided in all actions by the Ethics Committee, the Ethics Committee Chair, the subject matter experts retained by the Committee, and the Board of Directors during an investigation. To this end, members of the relevant committee must recuse themselves from participation in the investigation if they are

from the same institution (for institutions with multiple campuses this applies only to the same physical campus), have worked closely with, have a personal relationship with, or are related to either the Complainant or Respondent.

## **9. AGU Statute of Limitations**

It is preferred that allegations of misconduct be made within one year of the incident taking place or within 60 days of the discovery of the incident, so that a timely investigation may be carried out. However, the AGU, at its discretion, may investigate older incidents on a case-by-case basis. The shorter the period between incident and report helps greatly in the ability to investigate and bring proper remedy to a case. All allegations of misconduct will be considered on a case-by-case basis; and, there is no absolute AGU statute of limitation for considering ethical breaches.

## **B. Allegations of Scientific Misconduct During Submission and Review for AGU Publications<sup>17</sup>**

### **1. Scope of the Process<sup>18</sup>**

Editors have an important role in the prevention and remediation of scientific misconduct during the editorial process. During the review of a manuscript, allegations of scientific misconduct may arise. These allegations may deal with plagiarism, authorship, misrepresentation, fabrication of data or results, and falsification of data and results. Some of these allegations may be more readily handled within the editorial process by the Editor such as allegations of plagiarism brought by a peer reviewer that can be readily resolved by working with the author. Other cases may need to be brought to the attention of the Ethics Chair, for example, an allegation from an author surrounding bias in peer review or rejection of a manuscript. At any time, an Editor, peer reviewer, or author may bring an issue of scientific misconduct to the Ethics Chair when they feel it cannot be resolved through the editorial process. The Ethics Chair will consult with the AGU President on the need to appoint an Ethics Committee for follow-up investigation.

### **2. Involved Parties**

The editorial structure of AGU journals may include the Editor-in-Chief, Editors, and Associate Editors. Authors are those listed on the publication and include the senior authors as well as coauthors. Reviewers are those requested by the editorial structure of a journal to review a manuscript that has been submitted for publication to an AGU journal. The Publications Committee is an AGU committee that is responsible for oversight of AGU publications.<sup>19</sup>

### **3. Responsibilities**

All Editors, authors, and peer reviewers are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of ethics and integrity in the writing, editing, and publication process. The responsibilities of Editors, authors, and peer reviews are defined in detail by the Publications Committee.<sup>20</sup>

### **4. Process**

Ethical guidelines for the publication of scientific research and the obligations of Editors, authors, and reviewers are provided in this Policy. To the extent possible, issues of scientific misconduct should be resolved amongst the author, the journal editorial structure, and the reviewers. This does not preclude the submission of a formal allegation to AGU using the process described in Section A of this Policy by a member of the editorial structure, an author, or a reviewer. An author may also file a rebuttal if he or she feels the allegations of an Editor or peer reviewer are unfounded.

Once a manuscript has been published, any allegations of scientific misconduct related to the publication should be dealt with by the Ethics Chair and the Ethics Committee to be appointed as needed.

### **5. Sanctions**

Editors should work with authors and reviewers to resolve allegations where possible. If the Editor finds that an allegation is true, they may reject the manuscript and/or refer the allegation to the Ethics Chair and an Ethics Committee to be appointed by the AGU President.

### **6. Appeals**

An author may appeal the decision by an Editor to reject a manuscript on the basis of scientific integrity or professional ethics. Such an appeal will be forwarded to an appointed Ethics Committee for resolution.

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<sup>17</sup> This process is a subset of the immediately prior Part A: General Process for Allegations of Scientific Misconduct

<sup>18</sup> [Dual and Prior Publication Policy](#); [Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics in AGU Publications](#); [Permissions Policy](#); [Text Requirements](#).

<sup>19</sup> [Publications Committee](#).

<sup>20</sup> See also [Publishing Guidelines](#).



## **VIII. INDEPENDENT ACTION BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

In cases where the Board of Directors believes that immediate action must be undertaken because of the seriousness of the incident or where the reputation of AGU is at stake, they may act independently of the Ethics Committee. Whatever action is taken and sanctions levied must be documented for the record and a copy forwarded to the Ethics Chair.

## **IX. CLOSURE AND DOUBLE JEOPARDY**

Once action has been taken by AGU with respect to an issue of scientific integrity or professional ethics, that issue is considered closed with the exception of a single appeal. The same issue may not be pursued independently through another AGU process or entity after a decision is made or after an appeal is concluded.

## **X. TRACKING OF ALLEGATIONS AND DECISIONS**

Editors, the Ethics Chair and AGU Ethics Program Staff will be responsible for recording allegations and decisions in a secure AGU database with access limited to their use and that of the Board of Directors. The record will include the allegation and relevant reports and decisions. Reports of publication misconduct that did not result in a finding of code of conduct violations will be destroyed at the end of one year. Reports of misconduct related to harassment will be maintained for up to ten years in a secure data base, to help address the issue of repeat offenders. A summary report of AGU ethics cases and their disposition will be made available to AGU Council and membership annually.

# APPENDIX A: PROCESS DIAGRAMS

Figure A1. AGU Process for Investigating Scientific Misconduct, Part 1

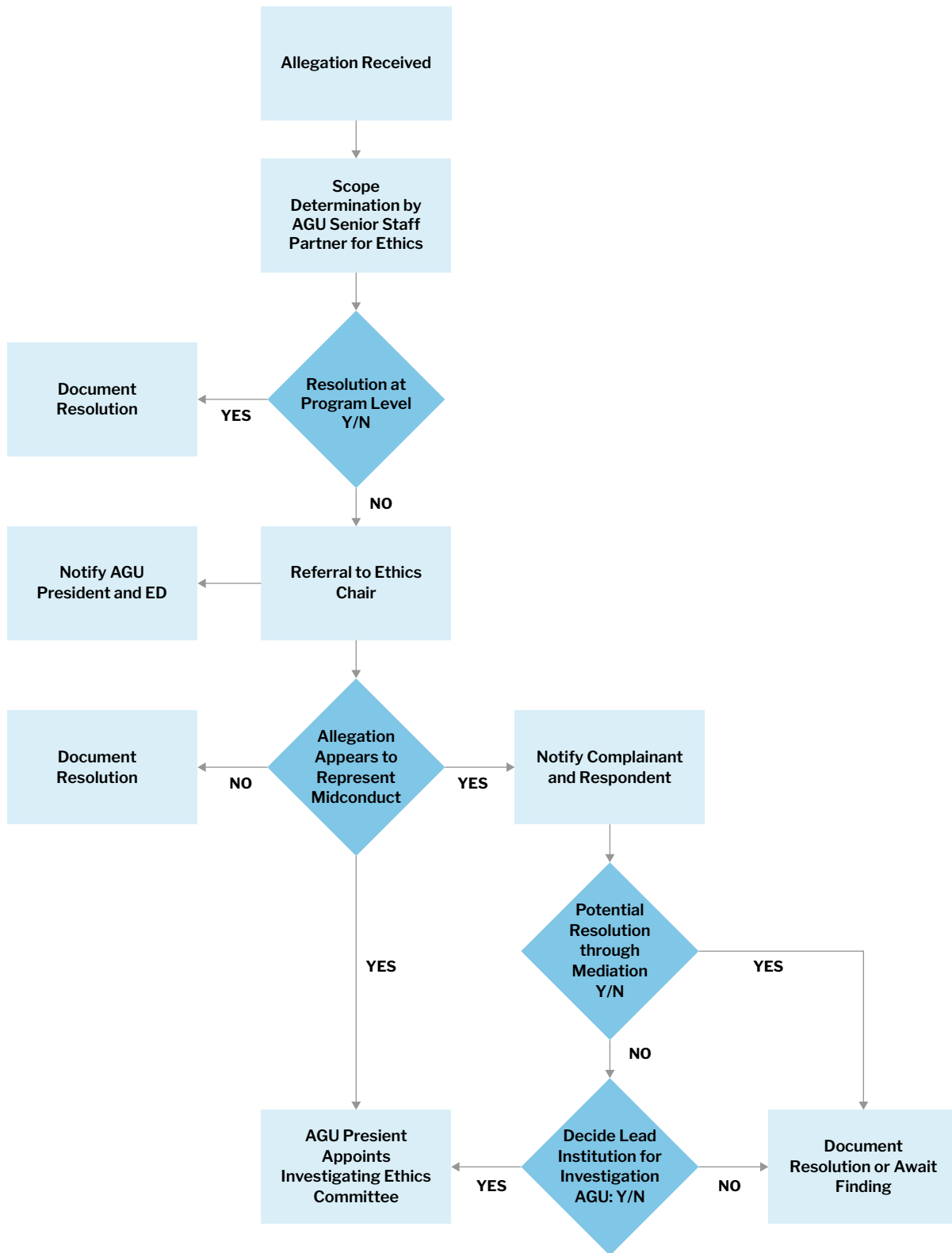
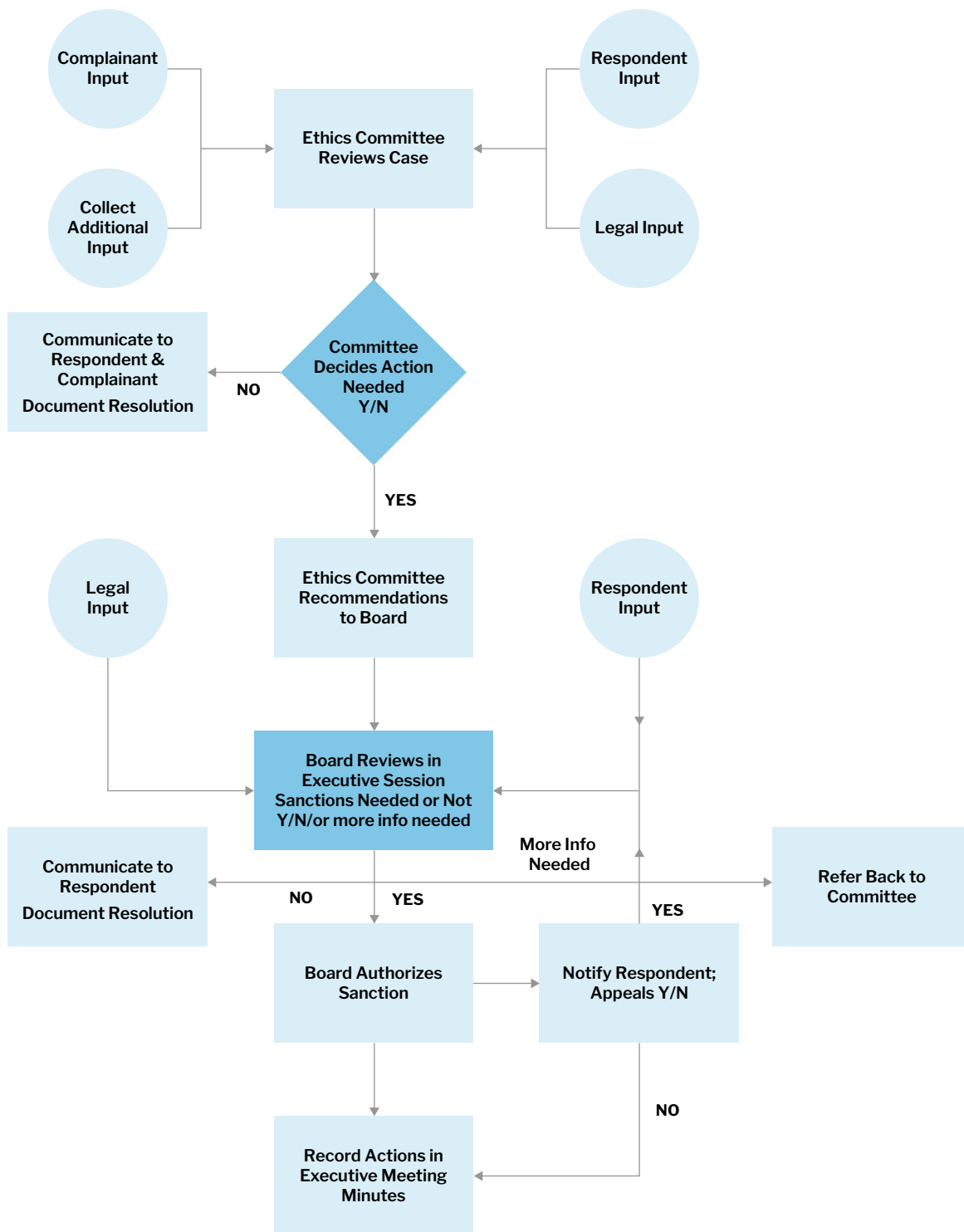


Figure A2. AGU Process for Investigating Scientific Misconduct, Part 2



## APPENDIX B: AGU MEETINGS CODE OF CONDUCT

AGU meetings, open to AGU members and those interested in the geosciences, are among the most respected scientific meetings in the Earth and space science community. AGU is committed to providing a safe, productive, and welcoming environment for all meeting participants and AGU staff. All participants, including, but not limited to, attendees, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, AGU staff, service providers, and others are expected to abide by this AGU Meetings Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct applies to all AGU meeting-related events, including those sponsored by organizations other than AGU but held in conjunction with AGU events, in public or private facilities.

In addition, AGU members and authors of AGU publications must adhere to the [AGU Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics Policy](#).

### B1. Expected Behavior

- All participants, attendees, AGU staff, and vendors are treated with respect and consideration, valuing a diversity of views and opinions.
- Be considerate, respectful, and collaborative.
- Communicate openly with respect for others, critiquing ideas rather than individuals.
- Avoid personal attacks directed toward other attendees, participants, AGU staff, and suppliers/vendors.
- Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants. Alert AGU staff if you notice a dangerous situation or someone in distress.
- Respect the rules and policies of the meeting venue, hotels, AGU contracted facility, or any other venue.

### B2. Unacceptable Behavior

- Harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying, or discrimination in any form will not be tolerated.
- Physical or verbal abuse of any attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, AGU staff member, service provider, or other meeting guest, also will not be tolerated.
- Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to, verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, national origin, or socioeconomic class; inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces or in presentations; or threatening or stalking any attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, AGU staff member, service provider, or other meeting guest.
- Making a visual and or audio recording of another individual's presentation without the explicit permission of AGU or the author is not allowed.
- Disruption of talks at oral or poster sessions, in the exhibit hall, or at other events organized by AGU at the meeting venue, hotels, or other AGU-contracted facilities is also unacceptable behavior, and is subject to sanctions.

### B3. Consequences

- Anyone requested to stop unacceptable behavior is expected to comply immediately.
- AGU staff (or their designee) or security may take any action deemed necessary and appropriate, including immediate removal from the meeting without warning or refund.
- AGU reserves the right to prohibit attendance at any future meeting.
- Other consequences as set forth in the [AGU Scientific Integrity and Professional Ethics Policy](#), as applicable.

### B4. Reporting Unacceptable Behavior

- If you are the subject of unacceptable behavior or have witnessed any such behavior, please immediately notify an AGU staff member or AGU volunteer in a leadership position.
- Notification should be done by contacting an AGU staff person on site or by emailing your concern to [individuals explicitly named with contact information for each specific meeting].
- Anyone experiencing or witnessing behavior that constitutes an immediate or serious threat to public safety is advised to contact 911 and locate a house phone and ask for security.