

The Clay Studio

The Clay Studio Code of Conduct

Adapted from the Child Imaging Research on Cognition and Life Experiences (CIRCLE) Lab at North Carolina University.

Updated November 2022

Expectations

We recognize the right of all members of The Clay Studio (TCS) to learn and work in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. Discrimination based on age, color, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, citizenship status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status is illegal and is also unacceptable to us. We are committed to contributing to a more equitable society through our programming and deeds.

We require everyone associated with The Clay Studio to abide by this code of conduct – including, but not limited to, our staff, teaching artists, in-house artists, students, and volunteers. This code of conduct applies in any setting associated with The Clay Studio, such as in offices, studios, our shared gathering spaces, or during social outings, conferences, phone calls, video conferences, or in emails, chats, social media posts, blogs, or in any other form of online communication.

This code of conduct aims to help us articulate, imagine, and cultivate a shared studio culture for a positive and inclusive creative environment. Expressing our values and accountabilities to one another provides clear avenues to correct our culture should it stray. We commit to enforcing and evolving this code as our community grows.

Encouraged Behaviors

As our mission states, we believe that the ceramic arts are a force for good that builds connections where all can flourish. Our actions must reflect this basic assumption. As such, supporting diversity and anti-racism initiatives within our community is essential. Specifically, to actively engage in anti-racist practices, it is crucial for TCS community members to:

- Have and demonstrate respect for all persons.
- Listen to and uplift voices, especially those from marginalized communities, even when they challenge our assumptions and make us uncomfortable.
- Speak out and push for change when we see microaggressions or institutional policies that disadvantage marginalized communities.
- Support students and artists to achieve their personal and career goals, especially those from underrepresented groups interested in participating in ceramics, by providing tools and resources that might be helpful.

Prohibited Behaviors

This description reflects (and does not supersede) The Clay Studio's Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Misconduct, which is enforced by either The Clay Studio's staff compliance officer (Deputy Director) or board compliance officer. Individuals can report violations of this code of conduct should be reported directly to either The Clay Studio's [compliance officer](#) (Deputy Director) or board compliance officer. The compliance officer will provide follow-up and resolution, including potential disciplinary action. **If there is an immediate risk to life, safety, or property, please call 911.**

These policies pertain to the following prohibited behaviors:

Discrimination: Treating a person differently than others based on that person's age, color, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, citizenship status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

Harassment: A type of discrimination that happens when verbal, physical, electronic, or other behavior based on a person's identity or identities interferes with that individual's participation in studio activities or creates an environment that is hostile, intimidating, or abusive.

Below we have listed examples of harassment behaviors that are prohibited. This list is not comprehensive concerning actions or types of harassment.

Race or color-based harassment: Conduct that may:

- Include jokes, innuendos, racial slurs, and offensive or derogatory remarks based on a person's color or perceived race that creates a hostile, intimidating, or abusive environment.
- Include physical conduct (e.g., excessive monitoring) based on a person's color or perceived race that creates a hostile, intimidating, or abusive environment.
- Include electronic conduct (e.g., the creation, display, or distribution of racially offensive text, symbols, or images) based on a person's color or perceived race that creates a hostile, intimidating, or abusive environment.
- Include harassment for displaying what is perceived as a stereotypical characteristic for one's race or for failing to conform to stereotypical notions of race, regardless of the actual or perceived race of the person(s) involved.

Sexual or gender-based harassment: Conduct that may:

- Include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, or electronic conduct of a sexual nature that creates a hostile, intimidating, or abusive environment
- Involve verbal, physical, or electronic conduct based on a person's sex, gender, sexual orientation, or sex-stereotyping that creates a hostile, intimidating, or abusive environment (even if acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature)
- Include harassment for displaying what is perceived as a stereotypical characteristic for one's sex or for failing to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity, regardless of the actual or perceived sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression of the person(s) involved.

- Intentionally and repeatedly ignoring someone's preferred pronouns.

Harassment and discrimination may also occur as a function of intersectional identities (e.g., disability and race). These forms of harassment and discrimination are also prohibited under the abovementioned policies.

Complicity: Knowingly aiding, assisting, promoting, or encouraging another person through your actions to commit an act of conduct prohibited by this Policy.

Retaliation: Acts or words taken (e.g., intimidation, threats, coercion, or unfavorable employment or educational actions) against a person because the person participated in good faith in:

- The reporting, investigation, or resolution of an alleged violation of the Policy
- Opposing rules, practices, or actions that the person reasonably believes are in breach of the Policy
- Requesting accommodations based on religion or disability

What to do if you experience or witness someone violate this code of conduct

If you experience harassment or discrimination and feel comfortable doing so, tell the harasser to stop. Do this either as it happens or in a later conversation. Consider the context of the situation; is this something that needs to be addressed publicly/immediately, or would the person be more receptive to your feedback privately? Here are some examples of statements on [Interrupting Bias: Calling Out vs. Calling In](#) that you can use to "call someone out" in the moment when their behavior or words are unacceptable or "call someone in" to explore and grow from the situation.

Research shows that confronting the harasser directly sometimes stops the harassment. Given our values, we expect both parties to be receptive to these conversations, communicate openly, listen, and allow each other to be heard — as outlined above.

When addressing the situation, here are some tips on [talking to the person who disrespected you at work](#). From a mediation perspective, it's helpful to state that you are making it clear to the harasser that you want the behavior to stop. Be clear and specific about the behavior that is making you uncomfortable. Name the behavior and state that it is wrong. Clearly state to the harasser what they are doing and that the behavior is inappropriate. Attack the behavior, not the person. Tell them what they are doing that you do not like, rather than blaming them as a person. ***Avoid cursing, name-calling, put-downs, and other actions that may escalate the situation unnecessarily.***

If you observe harassment or discrimination. We also encourage "bystander interventions." If you witness someone being discriminated against or harassed, [there are many ways to intervene](#). Remember

these 4 D's: **direct, distract, delegate, and delay**. If you feel safe doing so, it can be valuable to step in and confront the harasser (**direct**). However, don't assume that you *have* to confront the harasser directly or in the moment if you feel that doing so may put you or the person experiencing harassment in danger. In these cases, consider taking the more indirect route of [speaking directly with the person being harassed](#) – You can ask if they need help or even make small talk (**distract**). If you don't feel safe intervening, recruit help from someone in a position of authority (**delegate**). Once the incident is over, check in with the person who was harassed and ask them what they need (**delay**).

If someone is trying to tell you about your own harassment or discriminatory behavior. [Listen with an open mind and avoid becoming defensive](#) if you are approached as having, consciously or otherwise, acted in a way that made someone feel uncomfortable or unwelcome. Remember that if someone offers you feedback, it likely took great courage for them to do so. The best way to respect that courage is to [acknowledge your mistake, apologize, and move on](#) — with a renewed commitment to educate yourself further and do better.

We highly encourage individuals to report violations of this code of conduct to [TCS's staff compliance officer \(Deputy Director\)](#) or board compliance officer.

If you don't feel comfortable reporting to the compliance officers, you may also discuss or debrief these incidents with our **DEAI Committee** at deai@theclaystudio.org.

Anonymous reports: You can make a report to The Clay Studio without telling us who you are; however, please be aware that TCS's ability to respond to an anonymous report may be limited depending on the level of information available about the incident. Please refer to the google form online.

Implications for Participation at The Clay Studio

Minor complaints in the studio (outside the bounds of these prohibited behaviors) that the Deputy Director, in conversation with a member of the DEAI committee, deems threatening to the learning environment are handled using a three-strike policy. The first and second strikes will include a warning and education (designed to help individuals understand why their behavior was inappropriate). The third strike will result in expulsion from the studio.

For full-time staff, The Clay Studio has official policies regarding disciplinary processes. For students and in-house artists, disciplinary procedures may include removal from The Clay Studio.

Please read these resources embedded within this Code of Conduct, specifically:

- How to be receptive when approached about insensitive language or behavior
 - [You've Been Called Out for a Microaggression. What Do You Do?](#)
 - [How to Respond if you were disrespectful](#)
- Responding to experiences of harassment or discrimination
 - [Interrupting Bias: Calling Out vs. Calling In](#)
 - [How to talk to the person who disrespected you at work](#)

- Bystander interventions and speaking up on behalf of someone else
 - [Your Guide to Bystander Intervention](#)
 - [What to do if you are witnessing \[Islamophobic\] harassment](#)
- Healing after experiencing harassment or discrimination
 - [Healing and getting closure after harassment at work](#)

What happens when a report is made of prohibited behaviors (as listed above)

After a report is made:

- A small response team consisting of the TCS Compliance Officer or Executive Director, a member of the DEAI committee, and a board member will meet to conduct an initial assessment of the incident, any risk of harm to those involved or to the broader community, and the need for any interim protective measures for the safety and protection of those involved. If necessary, the appropriate authorities will be contacted.
- A member of the team or an independent investigator (when necessary) will contact the affected person to discuss the report, advice about potential next steps based on the procedures that apply to the particular situation, and offer appropriate resources and interim protective measures.
- After the initial assessment, the committee will work with the person who reported the incident to determine how to address the conduct. Suppose the person requests that their name or other identifiable information not be shared with the person they reported committed the behavior or that no formal action be taken. In that case, the committee will consider this request along with several factors, including the nature of the conduct and the risk posed to the TCS community. The Clay Studio will make every effort to respect the decision of the affected person about how to move forward.
- If a report has been made against you and an investigation is pursued, The Clay Studio will notify you of the investigation in writing. TCS will reach out to you to schedule a time for you to meet with a committee member or an independent investigator.
- When an investigation is pursued, recommendations may include corrective measures with an educational component or a formal warning. Some behavior is so egregious, harmful to the people involved, or detrimental to the community's safety that it requires severe disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of program participation or employment.