American College of Surgeons (ACS) Committee on Trauma (COT)
Trauma Education Courses
Participant Code of Conduct

Purpose and Scope:

This policy outlines professional conduct expected for all student participants during educational programming sponsored by the COT. All participants in COT education courses have the right to expect a SAFE learning environment.

Professional Conduct for Course and Educational Activity Participants:

1. Acknowledge and respect different beliefs, backgrounds, values, and cultures of course participants.
2. Report discrimination, bullying, and sexual harassment.
3. Actively engage in the course with prompt arrival, close attention, completion of course requirements, and appropriate pre-planning or reading.
4. Disclose and resolve any conflict of interest prior to the course.
5. Adhere to the infection control standards of the institution, business, or state in which the programming is occurring.

Behaviors that Demonstrate Professional Conduct

1. Attempt collaboration and collegial resolution of conflicts.

2. Refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech. This includes attempts at “humor” that others might find awkward or offensive.

3. Exercise situational awareness and mindfulness of one’s surroundings and the effect one’s behavior and speech may have on fellow participants.

Unacceptable behaviors

The COT has zero tolerance for the following:

1. Violence, threats of violence, or violent language

2. Sexist, racist, homophobic or other discriminatory speech or conduct

3. Inappropriate recordings or photography and any publications of such

4. Inappropriate physical conduct

5. Unwelcome sexual attention/advances, including the use of sexualized language

6. Stalking, following, or intimidation, either online or in-person

7. Disruption of courses or other COT educational initiatives

8. Advocating for any of the above-mentioned unacceptable behaviors

9. Any other conduct or speech deemed inappropriate and/or that may jeopardize the success of a COT educational initiative

Breach in the Code of Conduct:

Method to Report:
Anyone who is subject to or witnesses Unacceptable Behavior, or has any other concerns, has a responsibility to report breaches in the code of conduct to the course director for the activity in question. If local notification is deemed insufficient, reports may also be made directly to the ACS Trauma Education office at traumaeducation@facs.org. All reports will be considered confidential, and the identity of the reporting party will not be released without their express consent.

Processes to Resolve:
Course directors may provide direct feedback to the course participant involved in a reported breach in code of conduct. If the breach is uncorrected, unresolved, or serious in nature, the course leaders may sanction the course member to non-participation; the participant may be removed from the Course. In such a situation, no refunds of any Course fees will be assessed.

Should the local Course faculty or the state/provincial/regional leadership feel that the incident requires attention from COT and ACS, they should refer the matter to the ACS Trauma Education office. The final determination of whether conduct constitutes Unacceptable Behavior, the consequences thereof, and any sanctions or actions imposed by ACS, are solely at the discretion of ACS. Said determinations are final and not subject to appeal. If ACS determines that the breach in conduct is sufficiently serious and that remediation is not an option, the participant may be temporarily or permanently banned from participation in any COT educational activities. Anyone asked to stop Unacceptable Behavior is expected to comply immediately; failure of compliance may also result in temporary or permanent expulsion from COT educational activities.

My signature below attests to my understanding of the above Code of Conduct and my agreement to comply with the terms mentioned therein.