

New Policy on Professional and Respectful Conduct at AMS Meetings

While AMS meetings have a justified reputation of being very professional events characterized by respectful behavior by all participants, there are, occasionally, incidents of inappropriate behavior at a meeting that require action by the staff or volunteer meeting organizers. Therefore, among the many pieces of Society business that were completed by the Council at its meeting this past fall was the approval of a new policy that provides attendees clear expectations with regard to conduct at AMS meetings and also outlines several mechanisms for reporting inappropriate behavior. The full Council-approved policy is provided on the next page, and will be part of the program materials at all AMS meetings.

I want to especially thank the Board on Women and Minorities for leading the effort to establish the new policy. This issue was discussed at their meeting in New Orleans last January, and they rightly noted that most organizations that have large numbers of students at their meetings have a published policy on professional expectations of the attendees. (While harassment can certainly happen to anyone, most feel that students are particularly vulnerable.) In discussing some specific examples of harassment that have occurred at meetings of this kind—including a couple of cases at AMS meetings—a concern expressed by several individuals was that it is not always clear what to do if one is the subject of harassment. This is probably especially true for students or

early-career professionals who may be at one of their first professional meetings and outside their normal support infrastructure. Thus, an important component identified for the new policy is a clear path for reporting that would provide an opportunity for appropriately rapid response. Providing several avenues of reporting helps to ensure that anyone subjected to inappropriate behavior will have a mechanism of reporting that is comfortable for them. Reports will be received by a team of senior AMS staff members who have been trained in responding to issues that might arise at a meeting.

It is my hope that cases of inappropriate behavior at AMS meetings will continue to be extremely rare events. Our community tends to be a very collegial one, and this makes our meetings especially productive and enjoyable. I do feel, however, that a policy such as the one just implemented should probably have been put in place many years ago, just as the AMS policies on diversity and on open meetings were. Such policies establish in writing the expectations for those in the community and reinforce the values we all share.



KEITH L. SEITTER, CCM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PROFESSIONAL AND RESPECTFUL CONDUCT AT AMS MEETINGS

A Policy Statement of the American Meteorological Society

(Adopted by the AMS Council on 20 September 2012)

The AMS is committed to safe and productive meetings for all attendees. Harassment, intimidation, or discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated at any meeting or event associated with the meeting. All communication should be appropriate for a professional audience, including people of many different backgrounds. Those who violate the standards of professional and respectful conduct may be asked to leave the meeting immediately and without refund, may not be considered for service on AMS boards and committees, and may be subject to additional legal action.

Harassment, intimidation, or discrimination includes offensive verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion; sexual images in public spaces; deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following; harassing photography or recording; sustained disruption of talks or other events; inappropriate physical contact; and unwelcome sexual attention.

This statement is meant to cover all meeting-associated events, including those sponsored by organizations other than AMS but held in relation to AMS events. This includes the scientific program and exhibitions, as well as receptions, town hall meetings, and other informal or formal gatherings associated with AMS.

If you believe you have witnessed or have been subjected to behavior that violates professional and respectful behavior, please contact a senior member of the AMS staff. You may do this by talking with any AMS staff person (who are identified with a staff badge) or by sending an e-mail to reportconcern@ametsoc.org or leaving a message at 617-226-3965 with your contact information. You will be contacted by a senior staff member in a timely manner. (If you are not contacted within 12 hours of sending an e-mail or leaving a voice mail, please talk to an AMS staff member at the meeting to ensure that the message is received.) If you witness or experience behavior that constitutes an immediate and serious threat, please call 911 or the local police first.

The AMS takes any breach of professional conduct

at an AMS meeting or related function very seriously. You are encouraged to report any unprofessional conduct in the knowledge that AMS staff members will do their best to maintain the confidentiality of all parties to the extent possible while taking appropriate actions. In situations for which additional action is warranted, the AMS will cooperate fully with the appropriate authorities.

[This policy was adopted by the AMS Council on 20 September 2012, and remains in force until modified by the Council.]

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Heliophysics Summer School

Applications are invited for the Heliophysics Summer School to be held in Boulder, Colorado, 12-19 July 2013. The application deadline is March 1, 2013. Apply online at: www.vsp.ucar.edu/heliophysics.

The 2013 School will focus on the physics of space weather events that start at the Sun and influence atmospheres, ionospheres and magnetospheres throughout the solar system. Leaders will address the physics of all these various environments and will also go into the technologies by which these various environments are being observed. The program will also include considerations of the societal impacts of space weather that affects satellites near Earth and elsewhere in the solar system.

Students have a unique opportunity to learn through highly interactive seminars and hands-on working groups. The diverse topics of heliophysics are taught through the textbook series developed by leaders of this school and will include development of labs, problem sets and background materials from which the discipline may be taught at universities worldwide.

Sponsored by NASA Living With a Star program and managed by the UCAR Visiting Scientist Programs

THE ENERGY SECTOR AND EARTH OBSERVATIONS, SCIENCES, AND SERVICES

A Policy Statement of the American Meteorological Society

(Adopted by the AMS Council on 20 September 2012)

Energy production and use are highly sensitive to weather, water, and climate¹. Extreme events, including heat waves, droughts, ice and snow, tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, wildfire, and solar storms disrupt the generation and delivery of electricity, the extraction and refining of oil and natural gas, and the short-term consumer demand for energy. Disruptions to the energy sector from extreme events often occur over large geographic areas and have huge economic impacts.

Small changes in weather can also cause large impacts on the energy sector. A difference in temperature of a few degrees can dramatically influence the demand for electric power and natural gas. Modest changes in wind speed or cloudiness substantially alter the output from wind and solar generation. Drought and elevated cooling-water temperatures can limit the operation of conventional fossil fuel and nuclear power stations.

Weather and climate variability across short, medium, and long time scales affect all energy sources. Biomass and hydroelectric power vary over seasonal and annual time scales depending on growing conditions and water availability. Physical assets involved in energy generation, transmission, and distribution are planned, constructed, and operated over time scales of 50 years or more. Investment decisions to deploy additional energy infrastructure and to develop new energy resources must account for potential future conditions over multiple decades.

Therefore, improvements in Earth observations, sciences, and services (Earth OSS), particularly those related to weather and climate, are virtually certain to provide direct benefits to the United States' energy sector, such as the following six:

1. Increased forecast accuracy and confidence will very likely reduce the energy sector's vulnerability to extreme weather events by reducing risks to life and property (including the energy workforce) by

making it easier to reposition assets needed for system operations, recovery, and restoration.

2. Improved short-term to medium-range forecast accuracy (from minutes to two weeks) will enable more cost-effective integration of renewable sources of electricity, particularly wind and solar, which vary over time and with location. Better forecasts can reduce the need for reserve power and enable better use of energy storage, transmission, and demand response.
3. Increased accuracy and confidence in longer-term prediction (from two weeks to several years) will help companies and people improve their energy production and consumption strategies. This will increase the efficient use of resources, enable smarter financial hedging strategies, reduce waste, and minimize environmental impacts to air and water.
4. Improved decadal-scale projections will help energy producers and consumers anticipate and adapt to climate variability and change and to corresponding shifts in the patterns of energy supply and demand. The energy industry will need these improvements to occur at local and regional scales to enable full incorporation of the potential consequences of climate variability and change into decision-making, including the construction of more resilient energy infrastructures and systems.
5. More comprehensive Earth system measurements would promote the development and expansion of additional energy resources by characterizing potential new resources, advancing our understanding of weather and climate events that affect resources, and improving models of weather and climate on which the energy system depends.
6. Energy production and use also impact the Earth system itself through emissions of greenhouse gases, aerosols, and pollutants; consumption of water resources; and changes to the landscape. Earth OSS will help society identify, manage, and minimize the harmful unintended consequences of energy production and use.

¹ Weather and climate are also sensitive to energy production, as described in greater detail in the AMS Statement on Climate Change: www.ametsoc.org/policy/2012climatechange.html.

Public-private partnerships involving the energy sector, and those who provide Earth OSS to the energy sector, have great potential for societal benefit but require careful navigation by policy makers. Some private-sector companies that rely on public-sector data and forecasts from the federal government provide services that are targeted to particular energy-sector business areas and clients. Meanwhile, competing energy companies collect weather and climate data that they view as sensitive proprietary information. Increased availability of these data would likely improve forecast skill and facilitate integration of a wide variety of energy resources. Policies to encourage the sharing of data, while still protecting the business interests of private-sector companies, have considerable potential to benefit the energy sector.

The United States faces numerous complex challenges and opportunities with respect to our energy sector. Improved Earth OSS capabilities are central to better planning, development, operation, and use of energy for the decades to come. Advancements in Earth observations, sciences, and services can also be expected to provide significant benefits to other important social and economic sectors including public health, water resource management, national security, transportation, and agriculture.

Therefore, AMS recommends:

- robust federal support for Earth observations, sciences, and services;
- a comprehensive assessment of the energy sector's needs and priorities for Earth observations, sciences, and services;
- research to 1) better understand how the existing, and potentially enhanced, observing system can

most effectively improve weather forecasts for all energy sources, 2) better understand the sensitivity of energy resources to climate variability and change, 3) better understand the impact of the energy sector on the Earth system, and 4) improve the skill of weather and climate models at simulating energy-sensitive weather and climate conditions;

- policies to promote sharing of data relating to Earth OSS and energy demand among the research, forecast, and operations communities spanning the public, academic, and private sectors;
- safeguards to protect the business interests of private-sector companies that share proprietary data; and
- an improved national data collection and quality-control capability for weather and climate observations, including for data contributed from non-traditional sources. This would provide ready access to high-quality data for decision makers, private companies, the media, and members of the public.

Together, these recommendations would help reduce the energy sector's vulnerability to extreme weather events, enable more cost-effective integration of renewable sources of electricity, and improve the nation's energy production and consumption strategies.

[This statement is considered in force until September 2016 unless superseded by a new statement issued by the AMS Council before this date.]

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ABOUT OUR MEMBERS

The **COMET Program**, in partnership with Earth Gauge, has released three new climate change courses/training modules. These free online courses and training materials address the connections between weather and environment and count for continuing education credit through the AMS Certified Broadcast Meteorologist Program.

The three 15-minute "minicourses" on the climate change topics of extreme weather, regional impacts, and sea level rise are designed to complement the Earth Gauge/COMET course "Climate Change: Fitting the Pieces Together."

For more information on these courses, visit the Earth Gauge website (www.earthgauge.net/meteorologists

[/courses](#)). For additional training modules and resources, see COMET's MetEd Broadcast Meteorologist page (<https://www.meted.ucar.edu/index.php>). The MetEd website provides education and training resources to benefit the operational forecaster community, university atmospheric scientists and students, and anyone interested in learning more about meteorology, weather forecasting, and related geoscience topics.

AccuWeather is collaborating with the National Federation for the Blind (NFB) and its newspaper service for the blind, NFB-NEWSLINE, to provide emergency weather alerts to blind and print-disabled subscribers throughout America. NFB-NEWSLINE

is a free audible information-access service that provides more than 300 newspapers and magazines to the blind.

“The lack of access to emergency weather alerts has been a persistent problem for the blind,” comments Marc Maurer, president of the NFB. “Now with the combination of AccuWeather alerts and NFB-NEWSLINE, an innovative source of this critical information has been created for the blind of America.

David Denotaris, who is a subscriber to the newsletter, notes the importance of this collaboration for the blind community.

“For the first time, I am able to easily gain access to emergency weather service alerts by making a phone call,” Denotaris says. “To this day, the alert systems available on television are not accessible to the blind, but now I will have the same information and at the same time as my sighted coworkers, neighbors, and peers.”

Global Science & Technology, Inc. (GST) has been awarded a task order to continue and expand the National Mesonet Program for NOAA’s National Weather

Service (NWS). The National Mesonet Program is a network of surface-based observation networks—“mesonets”—located throughout the United States. These mesonets are both fixed as well as mobile. The provision of meteorological observations and associated metadata to NWS helps to improve forecasts and warnings for severe weather within local NWS field offices and achieve effective collaboration among disparate network operators to promote NOAA’s objective of a “weather-ready nation.”

GST and its alliance of universities and weather companies have been performing work on the National Mesonet Program for three years. Under the new task order, GST will continue to leverage existing nonfederal environmental observation networks to supply observation data to improve the prediction of high-impact, local-scale weather events.

The new task order also places emphasis on emerging technologies that detect temperature, wind, and moisture in the lower atmosphere. Increased sampling of the lower atmosphere will improve datasets that initialize predictive weather models.

THE HIGHLIGHT

ADVICE TO EARLY-CAREER PROFESSIONALS

with Brian Tang

In continuing to feature successful early-career professionals and share their keys to success, the Board for Early Career Professionals is highlighting Brian Tang, assistant professor at the University at Albany-SUNY. In this month’s feature, Brian provides some advice to early career professionals.

- *How did you find this position and what was the interview process like?* I found this job by word of mouth and advertisements on professional e-mail lists. The interview process consisted of one-on-one meetings with many of the faculty members and college dean along with a research seminar. During each meeting, the faculty members asked about my past research, my teaching ambitions, how I would fit in the department, and what I envisioned my research goals would be

in a few years and beyond. Each meeting also gave me a chance to ask questions I had regarding the students, curriculum, department, and the city life. The research seminar was a typical one-hour talk with questions at the end.



Brian Tang

- *To get to this point in your career, what role did mentors and advisors play?* My advisors and mentors during my undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral years all played tremendous roles. My undergraduate advisor and professors gave me advice on particular courses that would prepare me for graduate school and equally important advice during the application and decision process for graduate school. My graduate advisor, Kerry Emanuel, gave me ample opportunities to shape and share my research, including going to conference and field campaigns. He is an

exemplar in terms of how to teach, how to speak, how to write, and how to conduct research. I try to emulate many aspects of how he conducted himself professionally. During my postdoctoral years, my mentors were important for establishing research collaborations beyond my dissertation work and also gave me great advice regarding early publications, proposals, and my faculty applications. In all, I am much indebted to my mentors over the past 12 years for getting me to the point where I am now.

- *Is there anything you would have done differently in college knowing what you know now about your job?* I think I would have taken advantage of the opportunities to network with people in both the public sector and private sector. The latter is becoming much more important in our field, and the trend is to develop more academic-private sector partnerships, so developing connections early on can give one a distinct advantage. As they often say, it matters who you know.
- *What do you want to be doing in five years? Why?* In five years, I plan to be on my way to getting tenure. This involves developing several fruitful research projects and collaborations; having several grants to fund this research, graduate students, and post-docs; and being a successful teacher and mentor. Since we live in an age where public understanding of atmospheric science is crucial, I also hope to get involved in outreach to educate the public about what we do and why it is important. I also hope to develop some private-sector partnerships.
- *Who do you admire in our profession? Why do you feel that way?* I admire that so many people in our profession are excited about and love what they do. These are exciting times because there are so many fundamental and important questions in this field that remain to be elucidated. In order to tackle these questions, we require expertise across a wide array of disciplines, from computer science, to chemistry, to physics, to economics and policy. This represents an immense challenge, but also holds countless opportunities. I find individuals in this field are not motivated by superficial reasons, but genuinely interested in discovering the truth about aspects of our planet's atmosphere. As a result, people are always looking for ways to collaborate and bring a set of strengths to the

table to best approach a problem in which there is common interest.

The knowledge we gain about the planet's atmosphere is used to improve models that have tangible effects on saving lives and aiding people in making decisions that pay enormous dividends compared to the money originally invested in research. I am always happy to tell people I research the atmosphere because it is something anyone can relate to. Despite the stereotypes behind our profession (e.g., "blame the weatherman"), I do think people realize that this is one area where we have made great strides in the past few decades, but there is still much more to be done.

- *Who do you seek out for advice and why? To whom do you routinely provide advice, if anyone?* I seek out advice from both junior and senior faculty in my department. Junior faculty members have experience with the tenure process. They are fresh with the time line and expectations for assembling a good portfolio, so I go to those individuals if I have questions or need advice regarding tenure. Senior faculty members know the inner workings of the department and college, the challenges of advising students, and how to put together successful proposals with collaborators. All of these are important aspects of academia, so I value their advice equally. I am also comfortable seeking advice from my past mentors and colleagues, since an outside perspective can be refreshing and can shed light on aspects of a problem or question that I had not previously considered.

I provide advice to both undergraduate and graduate students. For undergraduates, I recommend classes they should take in order to graduate with a well-rounded and strong background, tailored to their career interests. For instance, I may recommend an individual seeking to go to graduate school take more math, physics, and/or programming than their major requires since those skills are important for being successful in graduate school. I also advise undergraduate students on the graduate school application process and sometimes recommend specific programs or advisers that the student should consider, given their interests. For graduate students, I advise them on curriculum that fits their area of research concentration, teaching methods if they are my teaching assistant, directions for their research problem, conferences they should attend to present their research, and how to be a good writer and

speaker. Much of the advice I give echoes good advice I was given myself when I was both an undergraduate and graduate student.

- *What advice would you give to an early-career professional starting in this field?* For someone who is considering an academic path and is in their postdoctoral or late graduate school years, I would recommend getting known in your area of research. Good ways of getting known include publishing your research, presenting at conferences, making an effort to give good reviews of papers and proposals, and developing potential collaborations with scientists. However, especially with regard to the last aspect, there is a danger in overcommitting yourself early in your career by getting involved in too many projects. Learning how to set priorities is important. For instance, as a postdoc, there was one research project that I set as my highest priority. My goal was to use that research project as a springboard to bigger projects that I plan to work on in the coming years. The research project also showed that I was capable of doing something independent of my graduate school work. Besides the main project, I collaborated on one or two other projects with other scientists. There were other interesting opportunities that I could have gotten involved in, but doing so would have stretched me thin. Learning how to say no is an important skill to have, too.
- *What is it like to be an early-career professional and work for the government/private sector/academia?* I personally think it is very exciting. The frontier of knowledge in our field is advancing quickly, and there is great need to understand the atmosphere better for both short-term and long-term socioeconomic needs. I have had a lifelong interest in the weather, and to be able to make a career out of it is beyond a fantastic dream. I know many of my colleagues share the same sentiment.
- *Do you have any helpful tips for someone going through the job search right now?* I would recommend that someone going through a job search right now keep their options open. There are many emerging opportunities. Talk with people who have recently gone through the process themselves and get their advice and experiences. *The Academic Job Search Handbook*, by Vick and Furlong, was very helpful in getting me prepared for the job application and interview process for a faculty position.
- *What was the most difficult part of the job searching process?* The most difficult aspect was the endurance one needs for an academic interview. A carefully crafted statement of research and statement of teaching require many days of editing. I went through many drafts before I was happy with the statements. The wait for a response from the university can also be stressful. It is a slow process where committees have to sift through materials, get reference letters, and take time out of their already busy schedules to meet to discuss the candidates' qualifications. It may be a few months before one gets a response back. During the interview itself, it is truly a marathon. One might have one or two days of meetings, a research presentation, and may even have to teach a class. You have to be engaging, energetic, and inquisitive the entire time. It is a very mentally exhausting experience. My advice is to start preparing early and definitely rest up beforehand.

LIVING ON THE REAL WORLD

[Editor's Note: The following post is excerpted from William Hooke's blog, *Living on the Real World* (www.livingontherealworld.org/). Hooke is director of the AMS Policy Program.]

What are Blogs (Vertebrates) Good For?

(Originally Posted 1 October 2012)

Judith Curry had an interesting post over the weekend: What are blogs good for anyways? In it, she draws our attention to a seminar given by one Franziska Hollender based on her masters thesis. Professor Curry says this:

The premise behind this study was an interesting one, although the study (focused on the comments for a few posts at WUWT) was rather limited. The key conclusion of the presentation is that **"Finally, it is concluded that the climate change discourse has been stifled by the obsession of discussing the science basis and that in order to advance the**

discourse, there needs to be a change in how science as an ideology is communicated and enacted.”

After exploring Ms. Hollender’s particular thesis, Dr. Curry adds her general perspective:

“A few additional comments addressing what I think blogs are good for. Blogs allow for much more rapid discussion of breaking science than the conventional method of conference presentation, journal publication, and subsequent comments in the journal. Not only do blogs engage a wider range of scientists than the [sic] say a specialty conference, but they also engage the public on current research. There is also an increasing tendency to use climate blogs for propaganda. . . .

. . . What do I get out of the climate blogs? They keep me up do [sic] date on the current literature and issues of interest to the broader public. Because of my blogging, I’ve developed a network with some fantastic people from around the world, with whom I would never have otherwise engaged. I’ve learned a lot and broadened my intellectual horizons. And finally, blogging sharpens your written communication skills. To the extent that you engage in the dialogue (I did this more at ClimateAudit and Collide-a-Scape, prior to Climate Etc., than I do now), it sharpens your critical thinking and rhetorical skills.

And finally, its [sic] an opportunity to engage in discussing and understanding issues related to the social dynamics of science in the 21st century with social media, extended peer communities, etc. The internet is changing the sociology of science in ways that are rapidly evolving and poorly understood. Engaging in the blogosphere is a way to be part of that.”

A great list! You can get the full details on “Climate Etc.”

Reflection on what blogs are good for is valuable; more is certainly needed. In the scheme of human affairs, blogs are nascent, and their role is indeed evolving, both in response to blogs’ inherent nature and in response to social change. They have a great potential for good!

So . . . speaking of evolution, it might be worth stepping back and asking whether this question is much different in character from another:

What are vertebrates good for, anyways?

A moment’s reflection should convince all of us that vertebrates play all sorts of roles. Some are apex

predators. Others are ruminants. Some are scavengers. Some, like tick birds or cleaner-fish, provide hygiene services for other vertebrates. Some are parasites. Some fly, some crawl, some swim. Vertebrates and invertebrates alike can fill similar niches in different ecosystems . . . and some play different roles in different ecosystems and at different times. We find them at all levels of an ecosystem food chain. Ecologists therefore tend to ask narrower questions: *What is this particular vertebrate good for? What is its role in its ecosystem?*

Presumably blogs can, do, and will continue to fill such a variety of roles across the communications landscape. Depending upon their provenance, their writers, their intended aims, and the communities who read them, they can probably serve almost any purpose, functioning in ways that range from something akin to a peer-reviewed journal or an IPCC process all the way across the spectrum to a major publication or newspaper.

Recall Judith Curry’s comment in the fine print above? *“Because of my blogging, I’ve developed a network with some fantastic people from around the world, with whom I would never have otherwise engaged.”*

Fantastic person? She’s one such herself. In fact, we’re told that we’re each created in the image of God. It’s therefore more likely than not that each of us is fantastic: special, beautiful, wise, insightful, valuable—indeed, irreplaceable—in some unique way.

And that brings to mind another purpose blogs serve. Flash back to a time when most communication was through a relatively small, nondiverse set of (largely) print media. If you had an opinion on a given matter, and took the trouble to write it up, you might or might not have the opportunity to share your thinking. But the odds weren’t so much in your favor. This reality prompted the poet Thomas Gray to note, back in the 18th century:

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom’d caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Today, with blogging, tweeting, and other social media, more of us get the chance to appreciate the ways in which you (*Fill In Your Name Here*) are fantastic.