

Cornell Astronomy Community

Values Statement

The shared pursuit of astronomical knowledge brings researchers, faculty, students, and staff members together as the Cornell Astronomy community. Our community thrives when its members feel respected and supported in their respective positions. We strive to create and maintain an environment in which our values of respect, communication, diversity and inclusion, professionalism, and mentorship are prioritized, and we affirm our belief that they are central to the success of our community. We expect that the explicit statement of these values will remind and inspire current and future members of our community to uphold them within their work and engagement with each other. We will work together as a community to hold one another accountable to the values we share, both now and as these values evolve in the future.

Respect

Communities that emphasize mutual respect show reduction in stress and conflict and increases in productivity, knowledge and understanding. Respect facilitates the sharing of diverse opinions and creates a collaborative community where members are able to work together to solve difficult problems. All members of the Cornell Astronomy community contribute to its success; we respect one another, regardless of position or working hierarchy. This also means recognizing and respecting the boundaries and limitations of members of the community and being empathetic and courteous in our interactions.

Communication

Effective communication in a community increases engagement, reduces conflict, and resolves problems before they become bigger issues. Respectful communication fosters the best environment for effective collaboration and allows our community to run as smoothly and efficiently as possible. We aim to communicate expectations explicitly in order to be respectful of the finite time and resources available to members of our community.

Diversity and Inclusion

Studies have shown that communities that embrace diversity and inclusion are more productive, creative and innovative--key attributes for pushing the boundaries of scientific research. Building a community in which people with diverse backgrounds and viewpoints can work productively together encourages scientific progress. Our department is at its best when all members of our community, but especially those from backgrounds historically underrepresented in astronomy, feel respected and a genuine sense of belonging. We aim to be a department that welcomes and values those representing a diversity of identities, backgrounds, and lived experiences. We also strive to build a community where members seek to understand and learn from our differences as well as from our shared interests and experiences.

Professionalism

Organizations that value professionalism establish boundaries that encourage personal improvement, maintain accountability, and minimize conflict. We aim to ensure that our community assists its members in their pursuit of doing good work because we value science that is done ethically and deliberately. Beyond this, we recognize that Cornell Astronomy is a place of research, scholarship, and professional development. We aspire to excel in our work and to ensure that our science is done with integrity and its greater context in mind.

Mentorship

Mentoring and being mentored hone relevant skills, inspire new ideas, and ensure the continued growth of the members of our community. Cornell Astronomy offers opportunities for personal and professional growth to all members of its community. Good mentorship not only supports the future of the field of astronomy, but also allows members of the community to grow in ways that are supportive of their professional development, whether this means pursuing a research career in astronomy or using their training elsewhere. We seek to engage in deliberate and culturally responsive mentoring practices that encourage inclusivity, and provide empathetic, congenial and professional support.