

2024 Public Description of Work for Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

Argonne National Laboratory

Expanding Employee Performance Appraisals to Include Core Values

Relevant rubric area:

1. Prevention: Embedding the Values of Diversity, Inclusion, and Respect into Recruitment, Hiring, Admissions, Retention, Promotion, and Advancement.
2. Prevention: Identifying and Reinforcing Community Values

Description of Work

Introduction:

In 2018, Argonne National Laboratory established a set of Core Values—Impact, Safety, Respect, Integrity, and Teamwork—as the foundation of the Laboratory’s efforts to create and sustain a safe, welcoming, diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace environment (see our [previous description of work on this topic](#)).

Impact	Safety	Respect	Integrity	Teamwork
We think creatively, pursue innovative ideas, and deliver excellence to positively change our community, nation, and world	We take personal responsibility for the safety, security, and well-being of ourselves, those around us, and our environment	We embrace diversity, value the perspectives and contributions of others, and act professionally toward all	We are honest, keep our commitments, and take responsibility for our actions and outcomes	We include and inspire others, share and communicate openly, and celebrate success as one Argonne team

For each of the five Core Values, the Argonne community identified a set of most-valued key behaviors that exemplify fidelity to these values.

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Impact Behaviors that demonstrate Impact include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Being curious and open minded in the work we do to achieve science and technology leadership and operational excellence □ Being inclusive in our behavior and deeds □ Genuinely considering other points of view □ Embracing and encouraging new ideas and opinions from team members and stakeholders □ Asking for help when needed and providing help when possible □ Constructively questioning/ examining the status quo □ Seeking solutions to problems we think are barriers to creativity to improve results 	Safety Behaviors that demonstrate Safety include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Speaking up for the safety of myself, my colleagues, and the lab because we all depend on it □ Trusting that speaking up will not be held against you □ Supporting those who speak up with safety concerns □ Paying attention to details and not taking shortcuts □ Being considerate of the physical and psychological well-being of myself and my co-workers 	Respect Behaviors that demonstrate Respect include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Addressing points of difference candidly, civilly, directly and honestly □ Using appropriate language and behavior at all times □ Refraining from the following unprofessional behavior: shouting, belittling, demeaning others, bullying, swearing, gossiping, and spreading rumors □ Listening to understand □ Allowing others uninterrupted time to speak without talking over them □ Standing up and taking action when I see someone being treated disrespectfully 	Integrity Behaviors that demonstrate Integrity include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Doing my job with honesty and integrity, even when no one is looking □ Delivering what I promise, when I promise it — or communicating otherwise □ Giving and sharing credit where credit is due □ Leading by example □ Recognizing and overcoming bias 	Teamwork Behaviors that demonstrate Teamwork include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Engaging diverse team members to achieve even greater success for myself and the Argonne team □ Sharing information in a timely manner for team members to accomplish their work □ Helping each other grow and accomplish individual, group and laboratory goals □ Sharing best practices broadly to advance our collective mission and goals □ Involving people in decisions where outcomes affect them □ Promoting civility, well-being and a sense of community
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We all share the responsibility to create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive workplace environment through our behavior.

July 2019

In an effort to enhance accountability for these behaviors and to continue the process of fully integrating the Core Values into the Laboratory's culture, the Core Values were integrated into the annual performance appraisal process for supervisors in 2022 as part of their overall performance appraisal (see our [previous description of work on this topic](#)). This was intended as the first phase of a broader integration of the Core Values into performance appraisals for all employees.

In 2023, all employees at Argonne were evaluated on Core Values during their annual performance appraisals. A project team, comprised of staff from human resources, learning and organizational development, communications, and change management, worked diligently to develop clear guidance and training materials. These resources aimed to help employees grasp the significance of Core Values in their roles, understand how they would be assessed in performance reviews, and discern the implications of these evaluations for their overall performance ratings. The performance appraisal process for that year commenced in September 2023.

Purpose and Goals:

As a community, Argonne employees proactively drive positive change and are committed to continuous improvement in our work, operations, and culture. As individuals, each member of the community shares the responsibility to create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive workplace environment through their behavior.

The accountability that is achieved through evaluating supervisors and employees on Core Values reinforces the importance and necessity of Core Values in delivering on Argonne's mission of accelerating science and technology for U.S. prosperity and security. It also provides a means of supportive feedback to recognize and improve Core Values in action at Argonne.

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Implementation:

Prior to 2023, all employees were evaluated on the Core Value of Safety. In 2023, the Laboratory implemented an expanded version of the Safety evaluation process already familiar to employees to include all five Core Values. Three performance ratings were used to evaluate Core Values:

- Exceeds Expectations
- Achieves Expectations
- Fails to meet Expectations

An “Achieves Expectations” rating in Core Values is the expected rating for all employees, indicating that everyone is doing what is expected to contribute to a safe, welcoming, equitable, and inclusive culture at the Laboratory.

A “Fails to Meet Expectations” rating in Core Values renders an employee ineligible for the “Far Exceeds Expectations” overall performance rating and requires a Performance Improvement Plan and/or corrective action.

Multiple sources of input are available to assist in evaluating adherence to the Core Values, including:

- Supervisor observations
- Feedback from others
- Employee self-evaluation/input
- Core Values Shout-Outs received by employees. (The Shout-Outs program is a peer-to-peer recognition program where individuals can acknowledge colleagues for exemplifying the Core Values, and it was described in [a previous description of work](#).)

The Laboratory offers regular training on the performance appraisal process to all employees to assist them in completing their written appraisals and conducting a performance conversation with their supervisor.

Measuring Outcomes:

To ensure a safe, welcoming, equitable, and inclusive environment, Argonne periodically uses climate surveys and follow-up employee pulse surveys to evaluate cultural issues at Argonne and devote attention and resources to areas identified as deficient in survey data. The Laboratory is also developing tracking procedures for metrics related to several programs and practices, including performance appraisals.

Next Steps:

We will continue offering training on Argonne’s Core Values through an interactive, leader-led workshop series as well as a robust introduction of the Core Values as part of New Employee Orientation. Additionally, we will provide opportunities for employees to receive training ahead of the Performance Appraisal season. Furthermore, we will continue refining guides and ratings to ensure that they align

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with leadership expectations. This approach represents a commitment to continuous improvement as well as an openness to feedback from the laboratory community.

Website for further information (if applicable): <https://www.anl.gov/our-core-values>

Point of Contact Name: Jeremy Boldt

Email Address for Point of Contact: jboldt@anl.gov