



MICCAI 2019 Code of Conduct Violation report and sanctions

This document presents a redacted and summarized version of the MICCAI 2019 Code of Conduct violation investigation conducted by the Safety officers with the assistance of the external consultant. Two incidents are reported for the same violator.

Incident 1

Report date: 11/14/2019. Incident date: Monday 10/14/2019 after dinner 9-10pm.

The report was taken by the two safety officers.

Type of violation: verbal sexual harassment, disruptive or drunken behavior, violence or threatening behavior

Report Details

The incident occurred Monday October 14th, 2019 after a group dinner around 9-10pm local time when students decided to go to a restaurant. Target 1 (female) was attending a dinner with several other affiliates. At the end of the dinner, several professors at the dinner paid for their students, while the violator paid for several others, including Target 1. Target 1 approached the Violator (male) after they had left the restaurant to ask him how they could transfer to him the amount spent on the dinner. The violator declined the offer to pay him back, insisting that the dinner was on him. However, when Target 1 insisted that they pay him back, the violator said: “You can just give <name redacted> a hand job instead”, referring to a common friend who was also at the dinner.

Witness Interviews

Witness 1: Everyone went out for a “PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION REDACTED” centered dinner, there was a dispute over the bill, and the violator ended up paying for a number of people, including Target 1. After the dinner, everyone went to a bar, and then later in the night after the bar Target 1 told a group of friends about the incident including the verbal harassment, specifically that the violator told her that she can give another group member a hand job instead of paying the bill. This witness recalls Target 1 being definitely upset, feeling offended, feeling that a line had been crossed. The witness doesn’t recall anything particularly unusual about the violator, other than it was a night that everyone was pretty much drinking and being loud etc.

Witness 2: The witness was at the bar with the rest of the group. Target 1 told the witness that when she asked the violator how to pay back for the dinner, the violator responded by saying that Target 1 could give a hand job to a mutual friend. Target 1 and a group of friends were sharing a cab ride back to the hotel after the bar and that is when she talked about this incident with those in the cab. Target 1 was upset about the incident.

This witness noted that the violator often makes super sarcastic, potentially offensive remarks, even when sober. Earlier the same night the witness heard the violator making another potentially inappropriate remark by saying that the lab would pay for a seemingly disproportionately larger amount of beer that the group was drinking, at which point another member of the group a faculty

member (name redacted here, but available from the witness) made it clear that the University/lab would not pay for such a large amount of alcohol as this would not be an appropriate thing to do.

Witness 3: There was a dinner with the PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION REDACTED group. The witness 3 was sitting next to the violator. Some people at the dinner were drinking a lot. There were two groups into two tables: one group of men who were drinking heavily and one group of women who were not drinking. This witness reports that the violator was very drunk. When the bill arrived, there was a discussion about splitting the bill. Finally, part of the bill for the alcohol was paid by the violator. Then they all went to the bar, where more alcohol was consumed.

The witness 3 did not hear about the incident. The witness 3 adds that “The violator is a good person with REDACTED children. But he could have said this. This is his specific sense of humor. He said it to me already. He deserves a strong warning.”

Incident 2

Report date: 11/14/2019. Incident date: Monday 10/14/2019 after dinner 9-10pm.

The report was taken by the two safety officers.

Type of violation: disruptive or drunken behavior, violence or threatening behavior

Report Details

It was first a dinner at a restaurant close to the conference center with students and staff. Students, faculty and affiliates went out to dinner. People were drinking alcohol. There was a lot of beer and wine.

Target 2 (male) did not know or had met the violator before this night. Their first interaction was when Target 1 asked Target 2 to ask the violator for a beer for Target 1. Target 1 from the incident described above asked Target 2 to take a beer across the table and when Target 2 asked the violator for the beer, the violator said “no.” A few people chimed in and supported Target 2 and the violator eventually gave Target 2 the beer. Target 2 felt professional heckling. The violator said, looking at Target 2: “I will make sure he does not have his PhD”. Target 2 was and is scared. Target 2 had no contact with the violator since.

The Target 2 finds the violator’s attitude unprofessional, emotionally, rude, trying to put fear and trying to use his position. Target 2 wants to file the harassment he experiences by the violator as a separate incident, establishing a pattern of belligerent verbal harassment.

Target 1, the violator, other students and staff, and the witness went to the bar afterwards. Target 2 reports that he felt the environment became dangerous and that the heckling increased. At one point, the violator said into his microphone “I’ll make sure he doesn’t get his PhD” looking towards the Target 2. This immediately made the Target 2 afraid. Finally, at one point, Target 2 tried paying for his own share of the beer so he could leave. The violator refused to let Target 2 pay his share. When Target 2 asked why, the violator completely ignored him and did not say anything else. The violator’s actions made Target 2 feel completely trapped at the bar. This happened around the same time as the incident reported by Target 1.

Target 2 was initially unsure what resolution he would like to see. Target 2 said that he has been attending professional events with alcohol for many years and has never witnessed something this dangerous and unprofessional. Target 2 understands that the violator has a strong research

background for the MICCAI community, but he would strongly prefer not to see him at future MICCAI's and he believes that the violator needs some type of behavior adjustment before returning.

Violator Interview

Initially, the violator said he did not recall anything specific about MICCAI 2019 that could have him involved in any incident of violation for the Code of Conduct (CoC). The safety officer became more specific, telling him exactly what Target 1 had communicated to them. The violator was evidently apprehensive and uncomfortable. He still said that he did not remember it, but if that person said it, it was probably true. He said that he does not have any recollection of the specific comment, but he does not dispute what Target 1 reported him saying.

The safety officer asked him if there was anything else, he wanted to add from his perspective and he said that he can appreciate how a person can be offended by such a comment. When the safety officer mentioned that there was alcohol use that night, he said that alcohol is not an excuse for saying something like that. When the safety officer asked him if he wanted to identify any witnesses on his behalf, he said that he did not see a point in doing that as he does not dispute the event. He did not verbally express remorse or apologize for the incident, even after the safety officer repeatedly asked him if there was anything else he wanted to add, including that some people may want to share their thoughts post-incident or even apologize. But he did not.

Recommendations from the Safety Officers and External Consultant

The violator seems to have a pattern of belligerent verbal harassment behavior that is supported both by the two targets, as well as by the related witnesses. We recommend the following:

- Ban violator from attending MICCAI meetings for at least three years and up to five years
- Offer the violator professional training on compliance with the Code of Conduct or other anti-harassment training (could be on-line)

Decision of the MICCAI Board

The MICCAI Board voted to accept in full the recommendations of the Safety Officers and the External Consultant and impose the following sanctions on the violator:

1. Ban of 3 years from attending the MICCAI Conferences
2. After the ban, request to obtain verifiable professional training on compliance with the Code of Conduct before being allowed to participate again to a future edition the MICCAI conference