

Principle Code of the Ethics

Houston Archeological Society

Principle Code of Ethics

Code of Ethics No. 1: Honesty

The Houston Archeological Society (HAS) will strive for honesty in all scientific communication. This includes but is not limited to, honesty in identification, documentation and recordation of archeological sites. Honesty in performing archival research, data synthesis and analysis, report development, results, methods, procedures and publication of historic property (prehistoric and historic) site data.

Code of Ethics No. 2: Objectivity

The HAS will strive for objectivity to avoid bias in experimental design, data analysis, data interpretation, peer review, personnel decisions, grant and/or proposal writing, expert testimony and other aspects of research where objectivity is expected or required. Avoid or minimize bias and disclose any financial interest that may affect HAS research.

Code of Ethics No. 3: Integrity

The HAS will strive to keep in full, any and all HAS agreements whether verbal or written; act with sincerity; and make every effort for consistency of thought and actions.

Code of Ethics No. 4: Stewardship

The HAS will strive to perform to the best of its' ability, as stewards of the archeological record. This includes proper management of in situ (archeological data located in original context upon identification), archeological collections, and records and reports that are irreplaceable. It is the responsibility of all archeologists to work toward long-term conservation and protection of archeological data by practicing and promoting stewardship of the archeological record. Stewards are both caretakers of and advocates for the archeological record for the benefit of all people; as they investigate and interpret the record, they are to use the specialized knowledge they gain to promote public awareness, understanding and support for a sites long-term care and preservation.

Code of Ethics No. 5: Accountability

The HAS will strive to adhere to all local, regional, state and Federal Historic Preservation laws, regulations and statutes pertaining to the identification and protection of archeological sites. To perform in a responsible manner when conducting archival and archeological research, including all levels of professional activity, requiring acknowledgment of public accountability and a commitment to

make every reasonable effort, in good faith, to consult actively with affected group(s), with the goal of establishing a working relationship that can be beneficial to all parties involved.

Code of Ethics No. 6: Commercialization

The HAS recognizes that the purchase and/or selling of objects out of the archeological context are contributing to the destruction of the archeological record around the world. Commercialization of archeological objects results in the destruction of archeological sites, as well as the contextual information that is essential to understanding the archeological record. HAS Principal Investigators, Project and Field Directors, Board Members, general members and volunteering participants will therefore not engage in and avoid any and all activities that enhance the commercial value of archeological objects, especially objects that are not curated in public institutions, or readily available for scientific study, public interpretation and display.

Code of Ethics No. 7: Public Education and Outreach

The HAS will strive to reach out, and participate in cooperative efforts with other interested parties with the aim of improving the preservation, protection and interpretation of the archeological record. To accomplish this, HAS will strive to: (1) enlist public support for the stewardship of the archeological record; (2) explain and promote the use of archeological methods and techniques in understanding human behavior and culture; and (3) communicate archeological interpretations of the past.

To accomplish this, HAS will strive to engage students and teachers, regional Native Americans and other ethnic, religious and cultural groups who find in the archeological record important aspects of their cultural heritage. Other groups include lawmakers and government agencies and officials; reporters and journalists and others involved in media; and the general public.

Code of Ethics No. 8: Intellectual Property

HAS members and volunteers participating in HAS activities will refrain from withholding of HAS property whether in hardcopy or electronic form of any kind, as contained in the knowledge and documents created on behalf or as a result of a HAS study of archeological resources. As such, all documentation will be treated in accord with the principles of stewardship rather than as a matter of personal possession (36 C.F.R. 800.16.l.1). If there is a compelling reason, and no legal restrictions or strong countervailing interests, a HAS researcher may have primary access to original and/or copied materials and documents for a limited and reasonable time, after which these material and documents must be made available to others engaged in scientific research.

Code of Ethics No. 9: Respect for Intellectual Property

The HAS will strive to honor patents, copyrights and other forms of intellectual property. HAS will not use unpublished data, methods or results without express permission from the owner of said intellectual property. Acknowledgement and/or credit for all research data and contributions to research will be given as appropriate. Plagiarizing, on any level, will not be tolerated.

Code of Ethics No. 10: Confidentiality

The HAS will strive to protect confidential communications, such as papers or grants submitted for publication, personnel records, trade or military secrets and patient records.

Code of Ethics No. 11: Public Reporting and Publication

The HAS will strive, within reasonable time, and in order to advance research and scholarship, the knowledge gained from investigations of the archeological record and will disseminate and/or present in accessible form (through presentations or other means) to as wide a range of interested parties as possible. The documents and materials on which publications and other forms of public reporting are based will be deposited in a suitable place for permanent safekeeping. In addition, the HAS will strive for compliance with Historic Preservation laws, regulations and statutes in the preserving and protecting of in situ archeological sites must be taken into account when publishing and distributing information about their nature and location.

Code of Ethics No. 12: Records and Preservation

HAS members and participants will strive actively for the preservation of, and long term access to, archeological collections, records and reports. To this end, the HAS will encourage colleagues, students, and others to make reasonable use of collections, records and reports in their research as one means of preserving the in situ archeological record, and of increasing the care and attention given to that portion of the archeological which has been removed and incorporated into archeological collections, records and reports.

Code of Ethics No. 13: Mentoring, Training and Resources

The HAS will strive to educate, mentor and advise members, students and volunteers and promote their welfare and assist them in making good scientific decisions. Given the nature of archeological investigations, HAS will ensure that members, students and volunteers are adequately trained, or have adequate experience and/or facilities and other support necessary to participate in any program of archeological research, in a manner consistent with the foregoing principles and contemporary standards of professional practice of this scientific discipline.

The HAS Principle Code of Ethics is currently under review by the Board of Directors for approval. The Code of Ethics 1-13 contained herein, are the collective work, either in whole or in part, of the Society for American Archeology (SAA) and National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS).