

MAKERSPACE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

"The law of evolution is that the strongest survives.' 'Yes, and the strongest, in the existence of any social species, are those who are most social. In human terms, most ethical...There is no strength to be gained from hurting one another. Only weakness."

Ursula K. Le Guin

"The Hainish Cycle" (1974) Chapter 7, p 220



Welcome to the **MAKERSPACE CODE OF CONDUCT** - a full description of the behavior and values that are expected of students entering and using the New Media spaces. This encompasses but is not limited to the Makerspace, Soldering Room, Workshop, RCC 355, Minecraft servers, Discord servers, classrooms, and any space where New Media may be hosting an event.

This code of conduct was created through the shared efforts of New Media community members, student staff, technical staff, faculty and the TMU Consent Comes First office. Together, we strive to make the Makerspace a safe and inclusive space for all students to collaborate and foster ideas, innovation and community. Failure to comply with these directives will result in the appropriate disciplinary action.

If you have questions or suggestions about this guide please don't hesitate to reach out to the Makerspace full-time staff or the program director.



KINDNESS

Cultivate patience, generosity, and empathy for one another. A small amount of kindness can change someone's day.

Kindness represents our overall generosity and consideration for other people. It is the voluntary, positive actions we take that improve others' experiences. It can range from using a supportive tone of voice to helping others solve difficult technical problems giving them grief. Acts of kindness help create an engaged and productive community and make our shared workspaces more enjoyable to use.

Some easy ways to foster kindness:

- **Treat others as you would like to be treated** if your positions were reversed.
- **Ask what's wrong and if you can help when a peer seems overwhelmed or distressed.** Sometimes simply sharing a problem can help unburden people of it. Makerspace staff can direct you to student resources on campus if your peer needs more help than you can provide. TMU provides resources on how to respond to mental health distress, also known as [NER+D](#).
- **Try to approach every interaction gently**, even when other people appear fine. We can't always know what difficulties people are experiencing. Consider whether your comments will be constructive or well-received.
- **Understand that you can offer help, but nobody can demand it.** Other people are not obligated to accept your help or share their problems. They may prefer their privacy or to work through things on their own.
- **Know your emotional limits.** You are not responsible for others' happiness and should never sacrifice your own well-being to support it. You always have the right to refuse requests for help. If someone else's problems are too big for you, ask the staff for help.

COMMUNITY

Support the New Media community, for everyone's benefit. Every student could be your collaborator, teacher, or friend.

Community is an overarching emphasis for New Media. Through community, our kindness, respect, and inclusion can go beyond personal interactions and create something vibrant, larger, and lasting.

To support New Media as a community:

- **Participate in New Media events like exhibitions, socials, or hackathons.** These events are the best way to meet students from other years and disciplines. Your participation and praise can sustain and inspire other students.
- **Share information and advice with your fellow students** about useful resources, staff, tools, or solutions. We each hold pieces of the larger puzzle of university life.
- **Support social and political activism by your fellow students.** We're in new media because we want to challenge the status quo - artistically, intellectually, institutionally, and socially. You're more likely to achieve lasting change working together with your peers, whatever the issue.
- **Take the initiative and start a movement.** If you feel a policy or event would improve New Media, come together with friends and help create it. Approach staff and faculty for support and to help you identify which approaches will have the greatest impact.

RESPECT

Respect your peers and the workspaces you share. Be mindful of everyone's identity, preferences, and time.

Respect shows others that we recognize them as peers and fellow artists. It is demonstrated, for example, by offering care for other students' projects, keeping appointments, and putting tools away when finished.

Respect is the basis of effective teams and shared workspaces and is the foundation of professionalism. As much as possible, try to:

Respect other students.

- **Be considerate of others' work and ideas.** Recognize the hard work that went into them and their emotional investment. Ensure your comments and criticisms are respectful and constructive.
- **Try to be positive in your interactions, even when in conflict.** Focus on problems you can solve together, rather than finding flaws in their character.
- **Do not plagiarize work.** Aside from being a potential academic violation, it is unprofessional and petty.

Respect our staff and teachers.

- **Recognize everyone has limits.** Like you, staff and teachers run into technical problems, lack knowledge, forget tasks, get overwhelmed, and have personal obligations. But they're trying their best.
- **Be patient with people trying to help you.** When frustrated, some amount of irritation is natural. Recognize that our staff are people trying to help solve your problems and restrain any unpleasant words.
- **Understand the difference when staff are off-shift.** When they're not scheduled to work, student staff are students just like you. They have their own projects to work on and are under no obligation to assist you.

Respect our workspaces.

- **Leave workspaces clean** and tools put away when you finish with them so that your mess doesn't become someone else's problem.
- **Limit the space you use when working on or storing a project.** Consider what it would be like if everyone used as much space as you.
- **Keep our workspaces pleasant and usable.** Do not subject others to loud music, strobing lights, noxious paints, etc.

Respect yourself.

- **Don't push yourself to your limits.** Take breaks, hydrate, eat, rest, and sleep, doing whatever you need to stay healthy and sane. We're not robots; we just build them.
- **Seek help if you feel stuck, rather than leaving tasks that stress you.** Ask staff to help you think through your tasks or for alternative approaches. Ask instructors for advice as early as possible.
- **If you need guidance around enrollment, planning course selections, requesting accommodations, deferrals, etc., contact the Student Affairs support team: [Angela Cheng](#) (1st and 2nd years) and [Donna Morrison](#) (3rd and 4th years).**

BOUNDARIES

Respect the boundaries of everyone in our community. No one is obligated to interact, participate, or share more than they are comfortable.

Everyone has a right to limit their interaction and participation to whatever extent they wish. Everyone in our community also has an expectation of and right to privacy.

Unless given explicit permission, give others their space and privacy. Also be aware that comfort levels change over time: what was alright yesterday may not be today.

To ensure the comfort and peace of mind of your fellow students:

- **Always ask for consent before entering someone's personal space,** whether physical, emotional, or virtual. If they refuse, accept it: do not pressure them.
- **Don't record, photograph, or screenshot others or their work without notification or consent.** Similarly, don't share or post photos without the agreement of its subjects.
- **Respect people's privacy.** Don't pry into or share contact details, medical information, or any other kind of personal information.
- **Recognize that staff and students have private lives and are not available 24/7,** even though online communication channels might suggest otherwise. Privacy and boundaries are even more important outside of physical spaces; violating these off-campus will have consequences on-campus.
- **Don't stalk members of our community, research or share their personal information, or engage in similar activities.** Aside from being an invasion of privacy and a cause of immense distress, such actions can have dire social, legal, and administrative consequences.

INCLUSION

Ensure New Media is welcoming to people of all backgrounds and identities.
Everyone deserves to feel welcome in our community.

We're fortunate in New Media to have students of diverse identities, experiences, and opinions. It's our responsibility to take steps, great and small, to oppose prejudices and language limiting participation and ensure every member of New Media feels included in the community:

- **Support the inclusion of students of traditionally excluded backgrounds.** Challenge racist, colonialist, misogynistic, homophobic, and transphobic language and thinking wherever possible. Work to empower minorities, recognizing that prejudice limits and discourages their participation.
- **Always use people's preferred names and pronouns.** If you're uncertain, use gender-neutral language until you know which pronouns to use - then use gender-affirming language.
- **Use and encourage the use of gender-inclusive language.**
- **Work to make our spaces accessible and to challenge ableism.** Be mindful of both visible and invisible disabilities.
- When in doubt, **approach others with a willingness to listen, learn, and admit the limits of your knowledge.** Inclusion can feel overwhelming to the unfamiliar. Remember that it is ultimately about making others feel heard and valued.
- **We do not tolerate hate speech.** Freedom of expression does not extend to discrimination and defamation and does not equate to freedom from consequences. Repeat offenders risk having their access to our workspaces restricted.

GROWTH

Practice new skills and help your peers in their development. Everyone starts somewhere; everyone's an expert at something.

Every student in New Media is here to learn and grow - technically, artistically, and personally. To help us all along this path:

- **Recognize your shortcomings, forgive them, and work to surpass them.** Strive to be the best version of yourself. Encourage your peers in their development.
- **Support and include inexperienced students.** Don't criticize, restrict access to tools, or exclude them from projects. Instead, provide a safe space in which they can improve. If their lack of skill concerns you, help them to be better.
- **Ask questions.** This is the best way to understand the choices, actions, or intentions and avoid confusion.

- **If you feel uncomfortable with a task or tool, ask our staff for help.** You are not alone. Others taught us, and now we're here to help you.
- **New Media is multidisciplinary by definition.** Everyone knows something new that you don't, and we all benefit from sharing knowledge and being open to learning.