

CAST-M Community Charter

The Department for the History of Medicine Graduate Student Handbook outlines the Department's goals for program atmosphere: "We work hard to foster an atmosphere of **relaxed respect** and **camaraderie** within the program and within the university. In our long institutional memory, serious conflicts among students or between students and faculty are rare. However, an easygoing environment is only possible in an **atmosphere of trust**. Maintaining such an atmosphere demands that students (like faculty and staff) in our program be held to the **highest standards of collegial, professional, and research ethics**" (page 1).

In order to foster the respect, camaraderie, and trust that are essential for successful graduate study, CAST-M students, in collaboration with the postdoctoral fellow and faculty, have developed a "CAST-M Charter" that outlines community norms and values. These norms and values were unanimously developed in Program Seminar during the first semester of CAST-M's operations to serve as a model for interpersonal interaction in Pro Sem. CAST-M program members are expected to pursue scholarly community in alignment with these norms and values.

1. Egalitarianism: CAST-M community members of all professional stages are learning together in pursuit of knowledge and the development of boundless curiosity.
2. Grace: Care and support are expected for all program members, rooted in an understanding that graduate school entails any number of professional and personal challenges.
3. Openness: The CAST-M community is inclusive of varied viewpoints, life experiences, and academic trajectories, in order to allow non-judgemental space for questioning and struggle with new material.
 - a. No question is stupid.
 - b. No topic has "been done before."
 - c. Criticism should be constructive and helpful, oriented to amplifying the best rather than critiquing the worst.
4. Validation: It is important for CAST-M community members to recognize effort, build a space to share wins and breakthroughs, and otherwise celebrate intangible but deeply valuable progress in intellectual development.
5. Non-disposability: CAST-M aims to cultivate a culture grounded in the dignity of all participants. CAST-M is cognizant of the often-lifelong value of relationships forged during graduate study. Should disagreements arise between community members, conflict resolution will aim to preserve individual dignity as well as collective goodwill.
6. Clarity: Expectations should be clearly communicated so that all students can pursue graduate study with full understanding of workload, benchmarks, and standards.

7. Minimize assumptions: CAST-M aims to encourage reflexive mindsets that challenge preconceived notions. Community members should enter program spaces with open minds geared toward more thorough understanding.

The Charter is intended to be a living document as the program grows and changes. It is therefore open to amendment by CAST-M community consensus.