

MAGIC
JUDGE



Fostering inclusive environments

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Assuming positive Intent

- We are all here to learn, and can't do so without asking questions.
- Respect different opinions, beliefs, and points of view. Share ideas rather than judgments.
- Use 'I' statements as much as possible to state your reactions or your experiences to avoid attacking others when challenging them or engaging with them about mistakes that may have been made.
- Everyone (including you) will make mistakes. Expect to be challenged when you do.

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Can't we just play games without ~~all this~~
~~social justice / white knight mumbo jumbo?~~
caring if players feel welcomed vs. excluded
by the environment?

Can't we just play games?

- Anywhere Magic is played must be welcoming, inclusive, and accessible to everyone regardless of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, race, religion, ability, or anything else that has nothing to do with the game.
- Not political correctness or censorship: people can say what they like when playing Cards Against Humanity with friends who know joking & not malicious
- 38% of people who have played Magic in a year are women but usually much lower in stores / pre-releases / GPs – why?
- In a public space these sorts of things actively turn some people way
 - “that’s so gay”
 - “I can’t believe I just lost to a girl”
 - “Thragtusk, fagtusk”
 - “you raped me in that game”
 - “that card is retarded”

Responsibilities: Judge Code of Conduct

- DON'T be a jerk
 - “Judges should not express views that would make other members of the Magic community feel unsafe or unwilling to attend an event where that judge was on staff.”
- DO Stop other players from being jerks
 - “Judges should not allow others to create a bad environment by inaction.”
- DO *create* environments where these behaviors are not accepted and all members of the Magic community can feel welcome

Regular REL - educational

- Ask players to watch their language or have a quiet word after the match/tournament (trade-off between letting others know not ok vs. players may get defensive)
- Usually players will just stop and may even *Think Twice* next time
- If a player gets argumentative, explain that whether they agree or not this is what is expected of them in a WPN store / at sanctioned events
- Persistent and unrepentant behavior constitutes a serious problem. Don't be afraid to pull the trigger on a DQ at regular if warranted.

Competitive REL: USC Minor

- Covers things that are generally disruptive but would not necessarily be bothersome to the average person on the street
- Avoid “boys will be boys” and similar excuses
- When you issue USC – Minor infraction (just a warning) remind the player that repeated offenses would result in upgrade to USC – Major (match loss)

Competitive REL: USC Major

- *A player takes action towards one or more individuals that could reasonably be expected to create a feeling of being harassed, threatened, bullied, or stalked. This may include insults based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. Threats of physical violence should be treated as Unsporting Conduct – Aggressive Behavior.*
- Focus on language not actions which are generally USC - Aggressive Behaviour
- “Did someone feel uncomfortable?” not an effective way to determine whether this infraction applies.
- Can commit this infraction without intending to harm someone.
- How to issue the infraction and penalty (match loss)
<https://rainbowvale.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/judge-diversity-presentation.pdf>

Scenarios

- The scenarios are adapted from various survey responses.
- Please discuss the scenarios in your small group and discuss the questions at the end of each scenario.
- If you have any questions, feel free to ask the presenter.
- **CONFIDENTIALITY:** respect privacy of information and experiences shared here. Ask permission to take anything said during this presentation beyond it.

Scenario #1

A female player approaches you between rounds at FNM. She tells you that she is feeling uncomfortable due to the actions of a group of players at the other end of the room. She tells you that there is a group of about seven male players that were having a conversation about how old she was. They were discussing the age of the female player in the hopes that one of them would have a chance to have sex with her. She tells you she feels terrified because she feels as though she is only “a lamb amongst a field of predators”. She wishes to continue playing at the event but does not want to feel unsafe while she is at the event.

- What are the problems presented in the scenario?
- If you were the judge in this scenario, how would you proceed?
- How would you create a more welcoming environment for the player in the future?
- What steps would you take to foster education in the community?

Scenario #2

You are running a Grand Prix Trial for a store you do not usually work at. Before round one, a male player approaches you to ask you about some situations that have happened to him at previous events at this store. He informs you that he has been the target of jokes relating to his sexuality and has been told by his opponents that he only wins because his “boyfriend built the deck for him.” He then goes on to inform you that the usual judges at this store do nothing when hearing it and on some occasions laugh at the jokes at his expense. He tells you that he is afraid sometimes to play at this store but has no other options.

- How would you first proceed to get more information on what has happened to this player? How would you make this player’s experience more enjoyable?
- Despite not working at this store on a regular basis, how would you foster a welcoming environment at this event?
- Concerning the other judge’s behavior, what steps would you take? (Assume the usual judge is not there at the time to discuss.)
- Are there any other steps you would take?

Scenario #3

At a large open-style event, you are working with another judge on the floor team for the event. The judge you are working with is of Japanese descent, and this is their first competitive REL event of this size. When walking past a group of players, you both overhear a group of players talking about how they “can never beat Asian Magic players” and that “all Asian players are the same.” Your judge partner is visibly upset at the comments they are making, and expresses their discomfort to you about approaching the players about their behavior. They want to say something to the players, but say they aren’t able to do it themselves due to anxiety and nervousness.

- How would you work with your judge partner in order to make them feel more comfortable?
- What strategy would you use to approach these players about their behavior and comments?
- How would you make sure that your judge partner will not be discouraged from working future events?
- If hypothetically, your judge partner showed no outward discomfort, would you still approach these players?

Scenario #4

You are working an RPTQ and you hear a judge call nearby. You get to a table and the player that calls you over says that his opponent is not the person that is supposed to be there, stating that “a girl’s supposed to be sitting there.” The other player speaks to you away from the player that called you over and explains that they have changed their name, are transgender, use she/her/hers pronouns, but they are aware that they still appear to be “male” in appearance. The player that originally called you over now believes that he is being cheated by having an incorrect opponent and demands to speak to the head judge about this. The other player at this point is upset over her gender being called into question.

- How do you proceed in mediating this situation?
- Would you get the Head Judge for assistance in this scenario? Why or why not?
- How would you foster inclusivity in the future?

Fostering welcoming environments

- Judge Code of Conduct
 - “They have additional responsibility to act positively to create environments where these behaviors are not accepted and all members of the Magic community can feel welcome.”
 - Previously only TO responsibility now falls to us as well

Fostering welcoming environments

- Don't always use male pronouns for hypothetical players & judges
- Call out "small things" even when not judging
- Approach LGS about regular events where inclusiveness is highlighted
<http://www.mtgdiversity.org/starting-a-local-chapter/>
 - Example P4D opening announcement: "Tonight is Planeswalkers for Diversity night so take extra care to treat your opponent well regardless of their gender, race, orientation, or anything else. Of course this is always expected where Magic is played but we are paying particular attention to it tonight."
- Add the P4D opening announcement or simply "treat your opponents with respect they are humans not Eldrazi" to all events, especially pre-releases

Fostering welcoming environments beyond LGS



Judges for Diversity www.mtgdiversity.org/judges

Planeswalkers for Diversity www.mtgdiversity.org



Lady Planeswalkers Society www.mtgdiversity.org/lps

More Resources

- Encouraging Diversity and USC by Matt Crocker
 - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/19G-71YgC4KMWQnB7J4NAXgnEQdJ87BM2J71asb-k3cM/edit?usp=sharing>
 - <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1-iGAQ0cDfNo389hEskoxvW0zV09jaKRdCWITqPjaxTc/edit#slide=id.p>
- USC Major
 - <http://blogs.magicjudges.org/seacat/updating-unsporting-conduct-major/>
 - <http://blogs.magicjudges.org/seacat/unsporting-conduct-major-faq-edition/>
 - <https://rainbowvale.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/judge-diversity-presentation.pdf>