Outlook

New information regarding the Ethics Complaint

From Nicholas Gessler, Ph.D. <nick.gessler@duke.edu>
Date Fri 7/24/2026 12:51 PM
To Chabot, Nancy L. <nancy.chabot@jhuapl.edu>; Rhonda Stroud <rhonda.stroud@asu.edu>; Martin Lee <martin.lee@glasgow.ac.uk>

3 attachments (645 KB)

2026.07.24 Re_ Status of New Business at the 2026 Annual Business Meeting - Nicholas Gessler, Ph.D. - Outlook.pdf; 2026.07.24 What is Planetary Science.pdf; 2026.07.23 MOHAMED Do you support this statement - Outlook.pdf;

Dear Nancy, Rhonda and Martin,

I attach an email I received this morning from Guy and Jutta.
It appears to confirm that Guy was not only copied on the correspondence, but that he approved it.

Below is my rebuttal, based on my reading of MetSoc's By-Laws, Ethics and other statements, and practices.

With regards to the MetSoc Constitution 1.2, "The purpose of the Society..."

"to promote research and education in **planetary science**..."
(please see the attachment which is a transcript of a short chat with Google AI on "What is planetary science" with the follow-up question, "Does planetary science have a cultural component."

Our motion would appear to be included in the Society's purpose.

"with **emphasis** on..."
That emphasis is abundantly displayed by the Society's activities.
"Emphasis on," does not preclude activities surrounding culture.

Our motion is well within the stated purpose of the society; it is not precluded.

With regards to Article 16 - 1:

"**No substantial part** of the activities of the Society shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation."

Regardless of how one defines "propaganda:"

A) the systematic spreading of information, ideas, or rumors to influence how people think, feel, or act

B) also widely used in everyday advertising, public relations, and social movements. (Encyclopedia Brittanica).

MetSoc has many times engaged in propagandizing and advertising to discuss, present, and influence legislation: Many MAPS articles discuss "laws" and worldwide legislation, as do many conference presentations, sessions and workshops advocating legislation, and the "MetSoc Position Statement on the Collection, Trade, and Curation of Extraterrestrial Materials" which states that:

"Members who recover, collect, trade, display or do research on meteorites **should comply** with all **applicable** national, state and local laws and regulations, international conventions and agreements, institutional and professional rules and codes, and rules of best scientific practice."

Following MetSoc's practices:
"Should" implies that there are intervening complexities.
Our motion is not a substantial part of the activities of the society, and
Our motion does comply with all those rules and regulations.

With regards to Article 16 - 2:

"The Society shall not **participate or intervene** in any political campaign (including the publishing or distribution of statements) on behalf of any candidate for public office."

Our motion does not "participate or intervene" in any political campaign any more than does MetSoc's position statements cited above.

With regards to the Code of Ethics of the Meteoritical Society, which states it is:

"Committed to the philosophy of equality of opportunity and treatment.
This extends to members and participants of Meteoritical Society activities, regardless of...

- race, color, ethnicity, country of origin... (granted, we have no responsibility for the EU's actions)
- **political identity**... (this in seeming conflict with Article 16-2)
- **employment status**." (this is in clear conflict with the Frankfurt organizing committee's statement belittling our invitees accomplishments with regards to "lawyers, reporters and diplomats."

Our motion is in compliance with the above-mentioned ethical considerations.

If the Meteoritical Society wishes to quash our motion and censor our statement of support from Somalia's Ambassador to UNESCO and to France (attached), are they not then censoring any statements from UNESCO pertaining to the protection of cultural property and the rejecting the illicit trade in stolen property? Are we not then censoring "international conventions and agreements?"

With best regards,
Nick

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EL ALI Research Archive (8th largest meteorite in the world)
"Probably no other meteorite has een so intimately connected with the life and fate of so many people..."
https://people.duke.edu/~ng46/El-Ali/

* COMPLEX SYSTEMS: ARTIFICIAL LIFE, CULTURE & EVOLUTIONARY COMPUTATION, Multiagent Modeling & Simulation: ISIS-170, CompSci-107, VisualMediaStudies-172
* ESPIONAGE, CRYPTOLOGY & PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS, Networks of Trust, Secrecy & Deception: ISIS-235, CulturalAnthropology-226, VisualMediaStudies-245.
* METEORITICS: METEORITES & SOLAR SYSTEM HISTORY, Science, culture and history of Meteorites: ISIS-230, EarthOceanSciences-230