



HEMA Alliance Discussion Group Rules

The HEMA Alliance (HEMAA) is a 501(c)3 U.S. non-profit service organization. Please visit our website for more information: <https://www.hemaalliance.com/>.

The HEMA Alliance facebook group and hemaforums.com are dedicated to the discussion of relevant HEMA-*specific* topics. Both are managed by a team of volunteer moderators.

REMEMBER: We have over 16,000 users in our group - be mindful of people's time, differences in politics, and sensitivities.

The HEMA Alliance reserves the right to delete any topic or comment at any time, without warning. Typically an explanation will be provided in the topic comments before deleting, or directly to the poster.

Being a member of the HEMA facebook group of forums does not make you a member of the HEMA Alliance - if you would like the benefits of a membership, please purchase a membership at hema.tidyhq.com.

HEMAA membership does not grant you additional privilege in the group or forums.

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I. Moderator Discretion

Contained within this document are guidelines for the most likely moderator behavior. Having said that, moderators are not under obligation to follow these rules strictly, and will use them at their discretion.

Any poor moderator behavior will be dealt with by the rest of the moderation team.

II. Statement of Inclusion

The HEMA Alliance has a zero-tolerance policy for discriminatory behavior or hate speech amongst its members, and aims to be a safe and welcoming space for all. We reserve the right to ban any member for behaviors or actions that do not adhere to this statement. Please see our Code of Conduct for more information.

III. Approval into the facebook group

In an effort to keep spam and bot accounts at a minimum, the alliance requires approval of any facebook group members prior to posting.

- Accounts that are obvious bots are banned instantly (ie no posts, random friends, the only pictures are sexual in nature, etc).
- Most accounts that are under 1 year old are initially ignored. This is typically because new accounts are either bots or newly created by people who have been banned. Newly created accounts *can* write us or re-request access to prove they are humans and not aliens wearing people skin.
- **If you have a legitimate new account and want to be added to the alliance facebook group**, please email us at gc@hemaalliance.com.

IV. Original Posts and Subsequent Discussion Challenges

There have been times when the original post has been perfectly within our guidelines, but the ensuing discussion becomes problematic by failing our guidelines.

As long as the OP was not involved in the problematic discussions, the problems will not count against them, and no warnings should be issued. The OP shouldn't feel punished for the behavior of others.



Having said that, the moderation team may disable further comments, delete specific comments, or even delete the entire thread.

People found violating the guidelines within comments may receive the corresponding disciplinary consequences.

V. Guidance and Offenses

The following offenses will receive a warning for the first offense, and a final warning for the 2nd. A 3rd offense will lead to a permanent ban.

The HEMAA moderation team is not obligated to follow these guidelines in a strict fashion; depending on the severity, the moderators can meet and decide a ban is necessary before the 3rd offense.

- HEMA related topics, such as fantasy, science fiction, video games, light sabers, eastern martial arts or other non european martial systems, sports, role playing, etc will be deleted unless there is a very HEMA specific reason stated. "It has swords in it," is not a valuable reason.
 - Sports fencing is HEMA *related*, not HEMA *specific*, and therefore posts exclusively about sports fencing (ie, team performance in the olympics) will be deleted.
 - Sports Fencing in the *context* of HEMA is allowed - an example would be an article on footwork so we can discuss how it applies to HEMA would be fine. Another example would be a discussion on how epee fencing can improve your rapier would be allowed as well.
 - ACL / BOTN resemble HEMA, but are hema related, not hema specific. Therefore, posts about ACL / BOTN are not allowed.
- **Memes, Jokes, Artwork, or other similar content is not allowed.** We like memes, but when we've allowed them in the past they've flooded the board. Our goal is to keep our discussion on topic, which is about the specifics of HEMA.
 - Fan art also falls into this category.
 - Additionally, low effort screenshots of reddit and Twitter are not permitted.
- **Spamming is not allowed.** This is up to the moderator's discretion, but more than a topic a day in the facegroup group is be considered spamming.



Moderators reserve the right to consider less frequent posting as spam, depending on the nature.

- i.e. every few days posting a request for sparring partners.

Reposting the same topic or content repeatedly is also considered spam. Moderators will usually comment that a discussion is already happening on a thread and encourage OP to discuss on existing thread.

Content or information pertaining to a specific topic that is posted more than once per week is also considered spamming. Extreme spamming can lead to an instant ban.

- Vendor/ product advertisements as well as events are limited to 1-2 times per week, the only exception being for vendor sponsors of the HEMA Alliance.

If you are inquiring if there is a club near you, please consult the <https://www.hemaalliance.com/club-finders> PRIOR to requesting information in the forum.

Please utilize the keyword search function within FB to check.

- **Posting links/videos without context or description** will lead to us asking that a description be added to the original post. If not complied with, the content will be deleted.
 - Shared posts must have their settings on public so the content is viewable by all.
- **Topics not related to HEMA will be deleted immediately** and a final warning will be given.
- **Profile names or profile images that contain bigoted iconography or language of any kind are not allowed.** The offending user will be given a final warning, and if they choose not to modify the offending content, they will then be banned.
- **Disparagement of the HEMAA or any of its affiliates is not allowed**, and will result in a warning. Productive discussion about the HEMAA is fine ("I wish the alliance would provide X to its affiliates"), but outright disparagement is not ("The alliance is bullshit and stupid").



- Overly graphic / violent content is not allowed
- **Promoting practices that are against the HEMA safety policy**, such as sparring with sharp weapons, is expressly disallowed.
- **Posts must be in English.** English is the Lingua Franca of the HEMA Alliance Facebook group, and original posts must adhere to this rule or be deleted.

VI. Bannable Offenses

These are still up to the discretion of the moderation team - after investigation, warnings may be issued instead of bans.

The moderation team always discusses bans as a group, either before the ban or after. This means that bans cannot be appealed, unless the moderation team asks for more information.

- Personal attacks are not allowed
 - This includes but is not limited to disparaging someone's skill, ethnicity, gender, age, or competence. This can be a bannable offense.
 - Vulgar language that is meant to be insulting is included in this.
 - Not included is factual content that may be negative, see below for more information
- Constant communication or harassment of the moderation team will result in permanent blocking, and a lifetime ban to any aliases the person maintains.
- Bigoted discussions of any variety are not allowed and will most likely result in instant bans. Discussions about gender are fine, but walk a very fine line, please be careful about what you post.
- Sexually explicit or graphic content will result in an instant ban.
- Public posts of any kind complaining about a moderation decision will result in the user being banned. The moderation team is made up of volunteers who spend time each day ensuring our discussions are healthy, and complaining about a moderation decision publicly goes well past the initial warnable offense.
- Attempting to re-enter the group under a different alias after being banned is grounds for that alias to be banned immediately.



VII. Crowdfunding / Fundraising Policies

Crowdfunding / Fundraising campaign posts *at a minimum* must meet all the guidelines set forth in this document already

Crowdfunding / Fundraising through various platforms is a complex topic for the HEMA. As a non-profit, we don't want to stifle the community's desire to improve itself, but we must also look out for the financial safety of our members, for both ethical and legal reasons.

- **All posts linking to a crowdfunding / fundraising platform *must* include the following language in the post:**
 - *"The HEMA Alliance is not sponsoring this campaign, and you participate at your own risk."*
- If the above language is not included, the moderation team has every right to delete the post immediately and request that when you repost, the language is included. Ignoring this request can lead to warnings and an eventual ban.

Permissible Crowdfunding / Charity Campaigns

- HEMA Charity Events (tournament to raise money for abuse victims)
- HEMA specific (campaigns that benefit the community as a whole, ie Wiktenauer)
- Historical manual or artifact purchase campaigns are only allowed if they explicitly benefit the community at large (ie, commit to scanning and releasing to the public for free), or are done by another non-profit / education institution (ie a museum wanting to purchase a manual for preservation reasons)
- HEMA-related charity campaigns (Lightsaber tournament to raise money for the homeless, or a general martial arts charity) are ok, but the moderation team will use their discretion.
- Product-specific campaigns are fine, provided they are HEMA-specific. Campaigns maintained by individuals who have not delivered on previous campaigns may be deleted.



Disallowed Crowdfunding / Charity Campaigns

- General Charity (raising money on behalf of someone not in the community)
- Club-specific campaigns (raising money to help a club buy gear). This will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.
- Purchasing manuals or artifacts that will primarily benefit a single person or club are not allowed.
- Vendor-specific campaigns (helping a vendor build a new heat treat facility) - is not allowed.

VIII. Admonitory Post Policy

- **What is an admonitory post?**

An admonitory post is a post in which an individual, club, vendor, or other HEMA entity is accused of serious misconduct or violations of our (forthcoming) code of conduct. Another familiar name are "call out" posts. They may or may not be members, affiliates, or associated with the HEMA Alliance. These differ from a personal attack in that this can be backed up with some form of concrete proof. The HEMA Alliance does not assume responsibility to find any admission of guilt or pursue any legal actions. The author of the original post, including repost, assumes all responsibility.

The GC is allowing these posts to remain in our forum because it behooves the community as a whole to know if there is an entity that is creating a serious problem, whether they may be a business operating fraudulently; a person or persons whose conduct is making others unsafe or otherwise harming the community as a whole. These posts do not necessarily fall within the scope of the mission of the HEMA Alliance.

However, words have powers and accusations can have serious consequences. The GC takes such posts extremely seriously, and reserves the absolute right to close comments or delete if an admonitory post is found to be false or if, for other reasons, the moderators determine it to be in the best interest of the group as a whole. Actions may also include banning from the forum if it is warranted.

- **Accepting responsibility**

The Hema Alliance is a United States-based organization and as such the GC supports first amendment rights of freedom of speech. Those who make such posts assume responsibility for the post's content and that it follows the HEMA Alliance



group rules, to alert the GC/moderators (preferably via email) that such a post will be made (see below), and to monitor comments and alert moderators when forum rules are violated.

Entities who are the target of such a post have every right to respond in a manner consistent with forum rules.

- **Alerting the moderators**

The Hema Alliance Facebook group is moderated by about ten volunteer individuals at any given time; the group has over 16,000 members. Our capacities are limited. Thus, emailing gc@hemaalliance.com is *extremely* encouraged prior to any admonitory or edificatory in nature are posted. With advance notice the moderators can plan and devote appropriate moderation resources that the moderators can't when they are taken by surprise.

- **Comments**

To make sure that members have a reasonable time to respond, the moderators may be limited to leave the comments of a call out post open for a 2 hour period of time before closing them when the discussion has run its course. Comments will be closed over night - around 2 AM eastern time - and reopened in the morning - around 9 am eastern time, due to lack of available moderators overnight.

- **Reposts**

Reposts, especially re-shares of a shared post, will not be allowed as constant re-posting is a drain on moderator resources, also known as spamming. Moderators realize someone reposting may not have seen the original post and will let them know why their re-post was removed. Please use the group search function to make sure that what you want to post has not already been posted by another.

- **General**

Please read the forthcoming comprehensive HEMA Alliance code of conduct. The HEMA Alliance is a service provider, not a governing body. It is bound by the laws concerning a 501(3)c non profit, and has no ability to discipline those who are not members or affiliates (and limited ability to discipline those who are beyond revoking membership). Membership in the Facebook group does not mean membership as a HEMA Alliance member or affiliate and is open to anyone who follows the forum rules.