

AP 3430 Prohibition of Harassment

References:

Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972; 20 U.S. Code Sections 1681 et seq.;
Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S. Code Annotated Section 2000e-2;
29 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1604.11;
Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA); 29 U.S. Code Sections 621 et seq.;
Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) 42 U.S. Code Sections 12101 et seq.
Standard of Student Conduct (AP 5500)

The College is committed to providing an academic and work environment free of unlawful harassment. This procedure defines sexual harassment and other forms of harassment on campus, and sets forth a procedure for the investigation and resolution of complaints of harassment by or against any staff or faculty member or student within the College.

This procedure and the related policy protects students, employees, unpaid interns, and volunteers in connection with all the academic, educational, extracurricular, athletic, and other programs of the College, whether those programs take place in the College's facilities, a College bus, or at a class or training program sponsored by the College at another location.

Definitions

General Harassment: Harassment is unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, or genetic information. Harassment becomes unlawful where enduring the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment or the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive. Harassment shall be found where, in aggregate, the incidents are sufficiently pervasive, persistent, or severe that a reasonable person with the same characteristics as the victim of the harassing conduct would be adversely affected to a degree that interferes with his/her ability to participate in or to realize the intended benefits of an institutional activity, employment, or resource.

Gender-based harassment does not necessarily involve conduct that is sexual. Any hostile or offensive conduct based on gender can constitute prohibited harassment if it meets the definition above. For example, repeated derisive comments about a person's competency to do the job, when based on that person's gender, could constitute gender-based harassment. Harassment comes in many forms, including but not limited to the following conduct that could, depending on the circumstances, meet the definition above, or could contribute to a set of circumstances that meets the definition:

Verbal: Inappropriate or offensive remarks, slurs, jokes or innuendoes based on a person's race gender, sexual orientation, or other protected status. This may include, but is not limited to, inappropriate comments regarding an individual's body, physical appearance, attire, sexual prowess, marital status or sexual orientation; unwelcome flirting or propositions; demands for sexual favors; verbal abuse, threats or intimidation; or sexist, patronizing or ridiculing statements that convey derogatory attitudes based on gender, race nationality, sexual orientation or other protected status.

Physical: Inappropriate or offensive touching, assault, or physical interference with free movement. This may include, but is not limited to, kissing, patting, lingering or intimate touches, grabbing, pinching, leering, staring, unnecessarily brushing against or blocking another person, whistling or sexual gestures. It also includes any physical assault or intimidation directed at an individual due to that person's gender, race, national origin, sexual orientation or other protected status. Physical sexual harassment includes acts of sexual violence, such as rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion. Sexual violence refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim's use of drugs or alcohol. An individual also may be unable to give consent due to an intellectual or other disability.

Visual or Written: The display or circulation of visual or written material that degrades an individual or group based on gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation, or other protected status. This may include, but is not limited to, posters, cartoons, drawings, graffiti, reading materials, computer graphics, or electronic media transmissions.

Environmental: A hostile academic or work environment may exist where it is permeated by sexual innuendo; insults or abusive comments directed at an individual or group based on gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation or other protected status; or gratuitous comments regarding gender, race, sexual orientation, or other protected status that are not relevant to the subject matter of the class or activities on the job. A hostile environment can arise from an unwarranted focus on sexual topics or sexually suggestive statements in the classroom or work environment. It can also be created by an unwarranted focus on, or stereotyping of, particular racial or ethnic groups, sexual orientations, genders or other protected statuses. An environment may also be hostile toward anyone who merely witnesses unlawful harassment in his/her immediate surroundings, although the conduct is directed at others. The determination of whether an environment is hostile is based on the totality of the circumstances, including such factors as the frequency of the conduct, the severity of the conduct, whether the conduct is humiliating or physically threatening, and whether the conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's learning or work.

Sexual Harassment: In addition to the above, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when this conduct:

- Explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment or education;
- Unreasonably interferes with an individual's work or academic performance; or
- Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment.

This definition encompasses two kinds of sexual harassment:

"Quid pro quo" sexual harassment occurs when a person in a position of authority makes educational or employment benefits conditional upon an individual's willingness to engage in or tolerate unwanted sexual conduct.

"Hostile environment" sexual harassment occurs when unwelcome conduct based on a person's gender is sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to alter the conditions of an individual's learning or work environment, unreasonably interfere with an individual's academic or work performance, or create an intimidating, hostile, or abusive learning or work environment. The victim must subjectively perceive the environment as hostile, and the harassment must be such that a reasonable person of the same gender would perceive the environment as hostile. A single or isolated incident of sexual harassment may be sufficient to create a hostile environment if it is severe, i.e. a sexual assault.

Sexually harassing conduct can occur between people of the same or different genders. The standard for determining whether conduct constitutes sexual harassment is whether a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim would perceive the conduct as harassment based on sex.

Consensual Relationships

Romantic or sexual relationships between supervisors and employees, or between administrators, faculty, or staff members and students are discouraged. There is an inherent imbalance of power and potential for exploitation in such relationships. A conflict of interest may arise if the administrator, faculty or staff member must evaluate the student's or employee's work or make decisions affecting the employee or student. The relationship may create an appearance of impropriety and lead to charges of favoritism by other students or employees. A consensual sexual relationship may change, with the result that sexual conduct that was once welcome becomes unwelcome and harassing. In the event that such relationships do occur, the College has the authority to transfer any involved employee to eliminate or attenuate the supervisory authority of one over the other, or of a teacher over a student. Such action by the College is a proactive and preventive measure to avoid possible charges of harassment and does not constitute discipline against any affected employee.



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