

1004: Policy Statement on Harassment

Policy Statement on Harassment (Relating to Protected Categories)

Harassment is a form of discrimination prohibited by law.

Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion to an individual because of a Protected Category as specified above, when such conduct has the purpose or effect of: unreasonably interfering with an individual or third party's academic or work performance; creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment; or otherwise adversely affecting an individual or third party's academic or employment opportunities.¹

Harassment may include, but is not limited to: verbal abuse or ridicule, including slurs, epithets, and stereotyping; offensive jokes and comments; threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts, and displaying or distributing offensive materials, writings, graffiti, or pictures. Harassment may include conduct carried out through the internet, email, social media, or other electronic means.

- A hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment exists when conduct is severe or pervasive. Factors to be considered in determining whether conduct is severe or pervasive include the nature, scope, frequency, and duration of the conduct and the number of persons involved. Simple teasing, offhand comments, or isolated incidents that are not severe or pervasive do not create a hostile or offensive environment.
 - If an issue of harassment is raised in strictly academic areas, such as coursework, the matter will be handled in consultation and coordination between IDEAA and the Executive Vice President or Dean of the faculty member's school because such matters may also concern issues of academic freedom.
 - To constitute harassment, the conduct in question must be objectively intimidating, hostile or offensive, and must interfere with a person's ability to participate in employment or educational programs or activities of the University. The injured party's perception of the offensiveness of the alleged conduct, standing alone, is not sufficient by itself to constitute harassment.
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- Harassment is especially serious when it occurs between teachers and students or supervisors and

procedures described above. The Bias Reporting System allows the University to track and review bias-related incidents, offer supportive counseling services and other resources, and may lead to an investigation under which the accused may be held accountable for his or her acts. Anonymous reports are permitted under the Bias Reporting System.

Complainants are encouraged to exhaust internal procedures established to enforce this policy before pursuing administrative remedies outside the University. However, the University acknowledges the rights of complainants to seek redress from any external enforcement agency, including the District of Columbia Office of Human Rights, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Office of Civil Rights of the United States Department of Education.

This policy prohibits retaliation, harassment, or other adverse action against an individual for making a complaint in good faith, assisting in an investigation, opposing harassment or otherwise exercising rights protected by law. It also prohibits taking any adverse academic or employment related action against an individual based on an unsubstantiated allegation or rumor of harassment. Retaliation should be reported promptly to IDEAA and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

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