

State University of New York at Fredonia

Sexual Harassment Policy

College Policy: Sexual discrimination in the form of sexual harassment, defined as the use of one's authority and power to coerce another individual into sexual acts or relations or to punish the other for his/her refusal, shall be a violation of the policy of SUNY Fredonia.

As an educational institution, SUNY Fredonia is committed to maintaining a campus environment where all members of the academic community are able to work and pursue collegial study in an atmosphere of mutual respect, civility and trust. Any violation of this trust damages the institution's educational mission by undermining the freedoms of inquiry and expression. We must make it unmistakably clear to every member of the faculty and academic staff, to every employee and every student that sexual harassment will not be tolerated here on this campus.

As a form of discrimination, sexual harassment is a violation of both federal and New York State laws, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and New York Human Rights Act of 1982.

Sexual harassment is any repeated or unwanted verbal or physical sexual advance, sexually explicit derogatory statement, or sexually discriminatory remark made by someone in the workplace or educational setting. Such objectionable behavior may offend the recipient, cause discomfort or humiliation, and interfere with the recipient's job or school performance. This behavior constitutes sexual harassment when:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic standing;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting the individual;
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment.

Although we would like to believe that instances of sexual harassment and sexual assault are not common on this campus, I want to reiterate college policy on this important matter. If such cases come to the attention of the college administration and, after careful investigation, are substantiated, we will take appropriate disciplinary action. Complainants should be assured that their concerns will be treated with appropriate confidentiality and that they are protected from retaliation for having reported the incident.

All of us should keep in mind that students, by virtue of their status, are almost always less powerful and more dependent than others in the college community. This power-dependency exists not only between students and classroom teachers, but frequently between students and other college staff.

Accordingly, employees who invite, encourage or accept intimate relationships with students do so with a risk of exploiting them. Such sexual exploitation, when it occurs, will not be tolerated; nor will we tolerate derogatory sexual remarks and/or insensitive innuendoes, advances, or pressure toward anyone, no matter what the source.

Employees or students who feel they have been harassed in this manner by supervisors, faculty or staff can file formal complaints under the SUNY Grievance Procedure for Review of Allegations of Discrimination. Such complaints can be filed with Joyce H. Smith, Director of Affirmative Action, 143 Fenton Hall, 673-3358.

Students who feel they have been harassed by other students can file formal complaints with the Office of Student Affairs, 608 Maytum Hall, 673-3271.

President Dennis L. Hefner
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