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## Equal Opportunity

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### Policies and Procedures

#### THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment of either employees or students is a violation of federal and state laws. It is the policy of the University of Maine System that no member of the University System community may sexually harass another. In accordance with its policy of complying with non-discrimination laws, the University System will regard freedom from sexual harassment as an individual employee and student right which will be safeguarded as a matter of policy. Any employee or student will be subject to disciplinary action for violation of this policy.

In conformance with this policy, the University of Maine System will ensure fair and impartial investigations that will protect the rights of the person(s) filing sexual harassment complaints, the person(s) complained against, and the institution or unit. Retaliation against anyone who makes a complaint of sexual harassment or who is involved in a complaint process will not be tolerated.

Consenting relationships may constitute sexual harassment under this policy. When a professional power differential exists between member of the University of Maine System and a romantic or sexual relationship develops, there is a potential for abuse of that power, even in relationships of apparent mutual consent. Faculty and staff members are strongly advised not to engage in such relationships. Further, the University System prohibits the abuse of power in romantic or sexual relationships.

To assure that power is not abused and to maintain an environment free of sexual harassment, a faculty or staff member must eliminate any current or potential conflict of interest by removing himself or herself from decisions affecting the other person in the relationship. Decisions affecting the other person include grading, evaluating, supervising, or otherwise influencing that person's education, employment, housing, or participation in athletics or any other University System activity.

#### Definitions:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

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

#### Procedures:

The Chancellor and Presidents are directed to take appropriate steps to distribute this policy statement, to educate the University System community to recognize and assertively confront sexual harassment, and to inform students and employees of procedures for raising complaints.

Related Documents: [Stop Sexual Harassment Brochure](#), [Guidelines on Consenting Relationships](#), [Equal Opportunity Complaint Procedure](#)

University of Maine System, Board of Trustees 1990  
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Quicklinks



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