

Acts of Harassment and/or Discrimination

Harassment is unwelcome verbal, written, visual or physical behavior which is directed at a person based on a protected characteristic when these behaviors are sufficiently severe and/or pervasive to have the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's educational experience, working conditions or living conditions by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Such behavior is prohibited under the University's Policy on Discrimination and/or Harassment.

Protected characteristics are personally identifying traits, characteristics and/or beliefs, including race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, religion, physical or mental disability, veteran status, marital or domestic partnership status, affectional or sexual orientation and/or other characteristics protected by law.

Examples of conduct that can constitute harassment if based on an individual's protected characteristics include but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome jokes or comments about a legally protected characteristic (e.g., racial or ethnic jokes);
- Disparaging remarks to a person about a legally protected characteristic (e.g., negative or offensive remarks or jokes about a person's religion or religious garments);
- Displaying negative or offensive posters or pictures about a legally protected characteristic;
- Electronic communications, such as e-mail, text messaging and internet use, that violate this Policy.

Discrimination is adverse treatment of an individual based on a protected characteristic, rather than individual merit. Examples of conduct that can constitute discrimination if based on an individual's protected characteristic include but are not limited to:

- Singling out or targeting an individual for different or less favorable treatment because of their protected characteristic;
- Failing or refusing to hire or admit an individual because of their protected characteristic;
- Terminating an individual from employment or an educational program based on their protected characteristic.

As an RCA, should you encounter any act of harassment or discrimination, it is your responsibility to report it to your DSL. Your job is to help provide a supportive community in which all members are treated with respect. It is also an RCA's responsibility to take a proactive approach to educate the community around diversity.

Steps to take if you encounter incidents of harassment and/or discrimination:

- Refer those affected to appropriate [resources](#), and assume that everyone who has seen or experienced the incident is affected.
- Where there is evidence, do not erase or destroy it (or allow it to be erased or destroyed) before it is documented.
- Record what transpired during the incident.

- Tell your DSL.
- Work with your fellow RCAs and DSL to provide educational programming and opportunities to address the incident and foster dialogue about diversity and respectful climate.

To maintain a community of respect and to prevent harassment and discrimination, an RCA should always model behavior and language that is inclusive and respectful. You can also direct students to the [University's Policy on Discrimination and/or Harassment](#) and accompanying [FAQs](#) for further information.