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THE ST. LAWRENCE

NONDISCRIMINATION

AND DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT

POLICIES

For further information
contact the Special Assistant for Equity Programs
315-229-5584, Vilas G1
or the Director of Multicultural Affairs
315-229-5551, Vilas 116

October 2001

WHAT KINDS OF BEHAVIORS CONSTITUTE DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT?

St. Lawrence University Policy prohibits discriminatory harassment. Discriminatory harassment is behavior or communication of some kind – words, gestures, posters – that affect a person's ability to work or to get an education by creating an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational or work environment. Usually it is behavior that is persistent, pervasive and repetitious.

Discriminatory harassment is behavior that gets in the way of the person who wants to get on with being a student or to do his or her work. Discriminatory harassment is **NOT** about *good manners*, it is **NOT** about being able to *take a joke*, it is **NOT** about being *oversensitive*. Discriminatory harassment is behavior that frightens, demeans, or belittles, and that interferes with a person's academic or work life. Discriminatory harassment, because it is discriminatory behavior, is

against the law protecting everyone's civil rights.

IMPACT – NOT INTENT

DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT IS ABOUT IMPACT-
NOT INTENT.
The real question is WHAT **IMPACT** DID THE BEHAVIOR HAVE?
not Did the harasser mean any harm?

WHAT'S THE FUSS?
DOES DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT REALLY AFFECT PEOPLE?
Discriminatory harassment can make people feel angry, afraid, embarrassed, degraded and intimidated.

WHO SETS THE STANDARDS ON WHAT'S ACCEPTABLE – AND WHAT ISN'T?

At SLU the important standard is mutual respect including a respect for and support for diversity.

THE SLU POLICIES

St. Lawrence University - Nondiscrimination Policy

All members of the St. Lawrence community are valued equally. We are committed to multicultural diversity in our faculty, staff, student body and curriculum. Awareness training for students, faculty and staff is designed to eliminate all forms of discrimination. St. Lawrence University subscribes fully to all applicable federal and state legislation and regulations (including the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (ADEA); New York State Human Rights Law; and Part 53, Section 607 of the New York State Educational Law) regarding discrimination, as well as the Drug Free Workplace

Act of 1988. The University does not discriminate against students, faculty, staff, or other beneficiaries on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin in admission to, or access to, or treatment, or employment in its programs and activities. St. Lawrence University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. For further information contact St. Lawrence University's Age Act, Title IX, and Section 504 Coordinator, Susan M. Cypert, Special Assistant for Equity Programs, Vilas Hall Room 121, St. Lawrence University, Canton NY 13617, 315-229-5584.

Office of Equity Programs
October 1995, rev. May 1997
Rev. Feb. 1999, Rev. June 2001

St. Lawrence University - Discriminatory Harassment Policy

St. Lawrence University provides for the development of a climate of tolerance and pluralism and prohibits expressive behavior which is intended to be demeaning, intimidating or hostile, communicated verbally,

physically or with other communication device, including telephonic or electronic means. It is expressly against University policy for any employee or student to engage in discriminatory harassment which is defined as any demeaning, intimidating or hostile verbal, physical or symbolic behavior that is directed at an identifiable individual or group and that is based on that individual's or group's race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, disability or sexual orientation, and has the effect of interfering with a reasonable person's academic or work performance or of creating an intimidating or hostile situation or environment. Such behaviors include, but are not limited to, the use of slurs, epithets, gestures, demeaning jokes or derogatory stereotypes.

This policy is not intended to proscribe, and should not limit free discussion of, the merits of any issue relating to ethnic, racial, religious or other multicultural difference or open inquiry into any material or issue relevant to the academic content of a course.
Not all offensive conduct or language that might be derogatory concerning an individual or group necessarily

constitutes discriminatory harassment. Whether a specific act does in fact constitute discriminatory harassment must be determined on a case-by-case basis in light of all relevant circumstances.

If you believe you have experienced or are experiencing discriminatory harassment, if you can, talk to the person or persons who may be responsible for the problem. If that is not possible, or doesn't work, speak to someone for help or advice.

If you are a student you may speak to your academic advisor, the chairperson of the department, any staff member in student life, particularly residential learning, security, counseling, or the director of multicultural affairs, or to the special assistant for equity programs. If you are an employee, speak with the human resources office, the vice president or dean of that area (academic affairs, administrative operations, admissions and financial aid, business and finance, information technology, student life, university advancement), the equity programs office or the multicultural affairs

office. Any citizen may also contact outside authorities to file complaints. External agency rules or procedures internal to St. Lawrence University may obviate a complaint in the event you choose an external route.
Office of Equity Programs. May 1997, rev. 8/98, rev. 10/01

EXAMPLES OF DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT

POISONED ATMOSPHERE

The work or study environment is demeaning or hostile or belittling based on persistent comments or things like jokes, teasing, pictures or cartoons. The offensive or hostile atmosphere gets in the way of a student being a student (e.g. being unwilling to speak up in class, difficulty concentrating, cutting class, skipping a lab or assignment or avoiding working with a certain individual or group, avoiding getting special help from a faculty member or tutor) or of being a worker (e.g. being late or not coming to work, avoiding certain job tasks in order to avoid certain co-workers or situations, being unable to concentrate or to work effectively).

THE LIVING ENVIRONMENT

A poisoned atmosphere can be created in a residential setting. One or more students – male or female – can create a hostile environment for others – male or female – that could be discriminatory harassment. The "poison" can include persistent and repeated notes on a message board, emails or voice mail messages, whistles, sneers, or other comments, posters or cartoons or spreading rumors. The harasser is often acting anonymously while "poisoning" the victim's life. Persistent, repetitive, and unwelcome behavior of this kind could be found to be discriminatory harassment.

If you believe you have or are experiencing discriminatory harassment, **speak to someone** (see the recommendations below), you do not have to "go it alone". Seek advice, seek help!

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT?

THE THREE R'S: RESPOND… REPORT … RECORD

RESPOND: If you are being harassed you can confront the harasser and make it very clear that you want the harassment to stop. You can communicate this in writing or person-to-person. Consider having another person with you for support.

REPORT: If you can't confront the harasser, or you confront the harasser and the harassment doesn't stop, SEEK FURTHER HELP. See below.

RECORD: DOCUMENT DOCUMENT DOCUMENT what is going on. A written diary of what happens when and where and at what time is important. It helps you get a full picture of what is going on, as well as creating the full picture for anyone else who gets involved.

GET SUPPORT! TALK TO SOMEONE! Harassment does not go away by itself. Just ignoring it will probably not make it stop. Talk to someone, at least for support. Your supervisor, your faculty advisor, your department chairperson, a staff member in Residential Learning or Student Life (see below for contacts).

WHERE TO FILE A COMPLAINT:

STUDENTS: talk to a faculty member or advisor, someone in the FYP, the chair of your academic dept., a staff member in Student Life (such as the Counseling Center, Residential Learning, Security and Safety, Multicultural Affairs), or the Special Assistant for Equity Programs.

EMPLOYEES: talk to a supervisor, the Security & Safety Office, or the Human Resources / Equity Programs Office. The Employee Assistance Program can provide counseling, but does not process

complaints.

Alternatives outside SLU: Your concern may be one that can be submitted as a complaint with outside authorities, such as the local law enforcement agency (i.e. the Canton Village Police), a state agency (i.e. the New York State Division of Human Rights), or a federal agency (i.e. the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) or Department of Education).

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THERE IS A COMPLAINT OF DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT?

Complaints can be informal or formal, the difference being whether the complainant wants her/his name known, and what the complainant wants done.

ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Advice and support is provided to a complainant with any report. A first and primary concern is the complainant's well-being. Is the complainant in any immediate danger? If so the issues of safety must be addressed first. It might mean keeping the alleged harasser off campus and seeking assistance from the Canton Police.

CEASE AND DESIST

The most common request from a complainant is *Make it stop, I just want to get on with my life.* The complainant often doesn't want her/his name used. When this is the situation the Special Assistant or the Director of Multicultural Affairs will try to find a way to talk to the alleged harasser, without revealing the complainant's identify. The talk identifies behaviors that shouldn't be happening and that must stop, if they are.

The Cease and Desist approach does not involve an investigation, hence there isn't a decision about who's "guilty". The alleged harasser is warned against any future action, but there is no discipline for what action

might have occurred up to that point.

If the Cease and Desist doesn't work the complainant can proceed to a formal complaint which involves revealing names, investigating, and possible discipline. The Cease and Desist can be a first step, not the final step.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT?

Support and encourage knowledge and understanding. Talk with friends and colleagues. Sponsor educational events or programs. Think about the issues, the behavior of groups you belong to or your friends, and your own behavior.

Remember, it's not what you meant, it's how the other person is affected. Think about how you behave in a group of peers, think about what kind of behavior you've learned to accept as *just the way we are* or *that's just the way it is.* Is it? Can't it change?

Contact the university's tripartite Multicultural Affairs Committee, the Office of Multicultural Affairs [Vilas 116, 229-5550/1, or the Equity Programs Office [Vilas G1, 2290-5584/5509] to get involved!

WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT A VICTIM OF DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT?

Listen, provide support, and help the person talk to someone who can be of further help (see the list below).

Encourage the victim to R-R-R: respond / report / record.

CONTACTS:

Security & Safety 229-5555

Student Life Office 229-5311

Office of Residential Learning and Communities 229-5250

Director of Multicultural Affairs / University Judicial Officer 229-5550 / 5551

Counseling Center 229-5391

Office of Human Resources 229-5596

Special Assistant for Equity Programs 229-5584 / 5509

Employee Assistance Program 265-6213

Canton Village Police 911