Anti-Harassment Policy

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Q What is considered harassment under Vanderbilt's policy?

A An environment that allows implicit and explicit behavior used to control, influence, or affect the well-being of any member of our community.

Q Is harassment illegal?

A Yes. Harassment of any individual based on sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age or disability is unacceptable and grounds for disciplinary action and also constitutes a violation of federal law.

Q What is sexual harassment?

A Sexual harassment under Title VII is defined as "Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when 1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individuals employment, 2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment.

Q Is "harassment" based upon "sexual orientation considered discrimination under Title VII?

A No. However, Vanderbilt, through its "sexual orientation nondiscrimination statement", applies the same principles of discrimination under Title VII to harassment on the basis of sexual orientation.

Q What is a hostile work environment?

A Conduct that is sufficiently pervasive so as to alter the conditions of

employment and create an adverse working environment.

Q How do I report an incident that is believed to be harassment.

A Any member of the University community who experiences harassment on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or sexual orientation should immediately seek assistance through the Opportunity Development Center (ODC).

Q Who is responsible for investigating complaints of alleged harassment?

A The ODC will document the details of the complaint and will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation. The ODC will explain the process to all parties involved and notify them of the need for confidentiality to be maintained throughout. Where appropriate, the ODC will facilitate remedial action to protect the parties involved in the process. All pertinent documents will be reviewed and appropriate witnesses will be interviewed. Following an objective evaluation of the information gathered, the ODC will notify the parties of the outcome of the investigation. Where appropriate, the ODC will attempt to facilitate a resolution. The University prohibits retaliation against staff members who utilize this process in good faith to make complaints of harassing or discriminatory conduct.