



MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 3, 2008

TO: All Faculty and Staff

FROM: M. Lee Pelton, President *M. Lee Pelton*

RE: Harassment Policy

This notice is provided to both remind you of Willamette's commitment to preventing harassment in our campus community and to promote compliance with this requirement. The policy below is found in various publications, including handbooks, but we hope you will take some time to review this policy annually so you remain well informed.

**WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY POLICY  
PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Willamette University will not tolerate harassment of any individual. Tolerance and respect for dignity and worth should be the guiding principles for our relations with each other. The University strives to provide a community where students, faculty, staff and others work and live together in an environment free of all forms of harassment, exploitation, intimidation and discrimination. Harassment is demeaning to all persons involved, and subverts the mission of the University.

The University can fulfill its distinctive mission only in an arena where ideas are vigorously debated, including those which some find offensive, and in an arena where staff, students, and faculty respect one another's dignity in their common membership in a community of inquiry. We must take great care neither to stifle discussion nor to make it dangerous to speak one's mind. However, harassment compromises academic freedom and damages the trust that we must all repose in one another and will not be tolerated. Furthermore, harassment is a violation of state and federal law.

(a) Harassment

Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that demeans or shows hostility toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or that of his/her relatives, friends, or associates, and that: (1) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; (2) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or (3) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following: (1) epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, demeaning comments or labels, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, or sexual orientation and (2) written or graphic material that demeans or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability or sexual orientation and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on the University's premises, or circulated in the workplace.

(over)

## (b) Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of gender (sex) discrimination. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has defined sexual harassment as follows:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when (1) submission to sexual conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic advancement, (2) submission to or rejection of sexual conduct influences employment or academic decisions affecting the individual, or (3) sexual conduct interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or academic environment.

Prohibited sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to sexual jokes, calendars, posters, cartoons, magazines; derogatory or physically descriptive comments about or towards another individual; sexually suggestive comments; inappropriate use of University communications including e-mail and telephone, unwelcome touching or physical contact; punishment or favoritism on the basis of an individual's sex; sexual slurs; negative sexual stereotyping.

Harassment will not be tolerated at Willamette University. It is against the policies of the University for any individual to harass another individual. This includes acts between supervisors and employees, between fellow employees or between employees and students, and between third parties such as vendors or visitors and employees or students.

Where one party is in a position to extend academic or employment benefits to another, even a completely welcome, consensual, romantic or sexual relationship raises at least the appearance of impropriety and can create an unwelcome appearance of favoritism and bias. Such a relationship can lead to sexual harassment allegations if it later becomes unwelcome. Sexual harassment is not limited to situations where there is an unequal power relationship between parties, but such a relationship may make sexual harassment more likely.

Any staff member, faculty member or student who believes he or she has been the subject of harassment by an employee of the University should report the circumstances immediately to their supervisor or the Director of Human Resources. A staff member, faculty member or student may contact the Director of Human Resources without first contacting their supervisor. The University will not tolerate any retaliatory treatment or adverse consequences as a result of acting in good faith to report harassment or participating in an investigation.

Reports of harassment or retaliation will be promptly, thoroughly and impartially investigated. Consistent with the University's need to conduct an adequate investigation and, where a reasonable person would consider an action to be in violation of this policy, prompt corrective action to rectify any harassment or retaliation will take place. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

Any supervisor who sees or hears about conduct that may constitute harassment under this policy must immediately report such conduct to the Office of Human Resources. Any staff or faculty member found in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including discharge.