

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY STATEMENT

St. Mary's University reaffirms the principle that its students, faculty, and staff have a right to be free from sex discrimination in the form of sexual harassment by any member of the University community.

Sexual harassment is defined as an attempt to coerce an unwilling person into a sexual relationship, or to subject a person to unwanted sexual attention, or to punish a refusal to comply, or to create a sexually intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment. Sexual harassment is understood to include a wide range of behaviors, from the actual coercing of sexual relations to the unwelcomed emphasizing of sexual identity. This definition will be interpreted and applied consistent with accepted standards of mature behavior, academic freedom, and freedom of expression.

Sexual harassment in any situation is reprehensible; it is particularly damaging when it exploits the educational dependence and trust between students and superiors including supervisors and faculty. When the authority and power inherent in faculty relationships to their students, whether overtly, implicitly, or through misinterpretations, is abused in this way, there is potentially great damage to individual students, to the person complained of, and to the educational climate of the University. While a particular interaction must be offensive and unconsented to be defined as harassment, faculty members and other individuals in positions of authority should be sensitive to the questions about mutuality of consent that may be raised and to the conflicts of interest that are inherent in personal relationships where professional and educational relationships are also involved.

Individuals who believe they have been sexually harassed may obtain redress through the established informal and formal procedures of the University. Complaints about sexual harassment will be responded to promptly and equitably. The right to confidentiality of all members of the University community will be respected in both informal and formal procedures, insofar and possible. University policy explicitly prohibits retaliation against individuals for bringing complaints of sexual harassment. Formal procedures will not be initiated without a written, signed complaint. An individual found to be guilty of sexual harassment is subject to disciplinary action for violation of University policy, consistent with existing procedures.

This policy applies to all St. Mary's students regardless of whether their primary placement is in the classroom or off campus. Individuals seeking redress or information concerning sexual harassment should contact the Dean of Students. (436-3714).

Signature of Supervisor

Date