

Discrimination and Harassment

Lake Land College is committed to maintaining a working and learning environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Faculty, staff and students have a right to work and learn in an atmosphere that promotes equal opportunity and prohibits discriminatory practices. The College is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment and prohibits harassment based on race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, marital status, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity and expression, pregnancy, parental status, order of protection status, unfavorable discharge from military service, or any other basis of discrimination precluded by applicable federal and state statutes, or acts or threats of violence from students, employees, elected officials or third parties including visitors, vendors, consultants and contractors.

Definitions

Unlawful harassment includes unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct by any one person toward another person based on that person's race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, marital status, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity and expression, parental status, pregnancy, order of protection status, unfavorable discharge from military service, or any other basis of discrimination precluded by applicable federal and state statutes, and that has the purpose and effect of creating a hostile or offensive work or academic environment. Lake Land College prohibits and will not tolerate any such harassment or discrimination.

Examples of behavior that would be considered to be unlawful harassment include but are not limited to the following:

1. Racial, ethnic, or sexual slurs or jokes, whether communicated verbally, in writing or electronically.
2. The use of racial or ethnic nicknames or stereotyping.
3. Vulgar, offensive or obscene language, noises or gestures.
4. Display of vulgar, offensive, explicit or obscene pictures,

photographs, cartoons, materials or web sites.

5. Verbal or physical acts or threats of violence including, but not limited to, aggression, hate crimes, bullying, cyber bullying, cyber intimidation, domestic violence, stalking, or intimidation.
6. Actions of sex-based misconduct including, but not limited to sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking as addressed in Board Policy 11.04.01 Prohibiting Sex-Based Misconduct.

Employees and students must report all incidents of unlawful harassment. Anyone who believes that he or she is being harassed by a student, employee or third party at the College, or believes that his or her employment or academic career is being adversely affected by such conduct should immediately report such concerns. Employees should report concerns of harassment to their supervisor, next level administrator, another administrator, or the Director of Human Resources. Students should report such concerns to the Director of Human Resources or the Vice President for Student Services. In addition, individuals covered by this policy have a right to file claims of sexual discrimination and harassment with the Illinois Department of Human Rights and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

Retaliation

No individual making a complaint, whether formal or informal, will be retaliated against, even if a complaint made in good faith is not substantiated. Witnesses involved in any complaint of harassment will also be protected from retaliation. Whistleblower protections are also available under the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, the Whistleblower Act, and/or the Illinois Human Rights Act.

Retaliation Charge

A student or employee who believes he or she has been subjected to any form of retaliation after filing a complaint or being a witness under this policy may file a complaint of retaliation.

False or Malicious Complaints

It is a form of harassment to file a knowingly false or malicious complaint of harassment or to knowingly provide false information in the course of an investigation of such complaint. Such conduct is considered a violation of this Discrimination and Harassment Policy and will subject an employee or student to disciplinary action.

Supervisory Responsibility

Supervisors must strive to maintain a harassment-free College environment by promoting professionalism and by addressing harassment promptly.

Supervisors will address any observed or reported incident or complaint of harassment with seriousness and must take prompt action, whether or not a formal written complaint has been filed. Supervisors must immediately consult the Director of Human Resources regarding any harassment complaint reported to them.

Sanctions and Disciplinary Action

Individuals found to have violated this Policy shall be subject to corrective and disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment, dismissal and/or exclusion from the College and its property. Additionally, an individual who engages in retaliation under the Ethics and Whistleblower Acts may also be subject to fines and/or penalties.

Special Circumstances

Complaints by an elected official (trustee) against another elected official shall be submitted to the Director of Human Resources. The Director of

Human Resources shall, in consultation with legal counsel for the College, ensure that an independent review is conducted with respect to such allegations.

Prompt Investigation and Confidentiality

Complaints of unlawful harassment are serious violations of College policy. Once a complaint of unlawful harassment has been made, the College has an obligation to promptly investigate the matter. The College will take prompt remedial action to address a substantiated complaint of unlawful harassment. All investigations into claims of unlawful harassment will be conducted respectfully. Every reasonable effort will be made to preserve confidentiality, to the extent practicable. However, in the course of an investigation, it will be necessary to discuss the complaint with the claimed offender, other persons who may have relevant information, and those with a legitimate need to know.

The College will establish, implement and publish procedures implementing this policy.

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