

## Graduate Sexual Harassment Policy

The University is committed to maintaining an environment that is free from sexual harassment. In keeping with this commitment, we do not tolerate sexual harassment by anyone, including students, faculty, staff or vendors of the University. The Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education defines sexual harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 as consisting of “verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, imposed on the basis of sex, by an employee or agent of a recipient that denies, limits, provides different, or conditions the provision of aid, benefits, services, or treatment protected under Title IX.”

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, or visual conduct based on sex when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual’s employment or education; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions affecting the individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual’s academic or professional performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment or educational environment.

Sexual harassment encompasses any sexual attention that is unwanted and can take many forms, but most sexual harassment falls into three categories: verbal, visual, and physical.

Sexual harassment is especially serious when it threatens relationships between faculty and student, or a supervisor and subordinate. In such situations, sexual harassment exploits unfairly the power inherent in a faculty member’s or supervisor’s position. Through grades, wage increases, references, promotion, and the like, a professor or supervisor can have a decisive influence on a student’s, staff member’s, or faculty member’s career at the University and beyond. While sexual harassment most often takes place in situations involving a power differential between persons, PLNU also recognizes that sexual harassment may occur between persons of the same status within the University. PLNU will not tolerate behavior between or among members of the University community that creates an unacceptable work or educational environment.

Any student, staff or faculty who feels that he or she has experienced or witnessed harassment should, when possible, inform the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop. If the student does not wish to confront the harasser, or, if confrontation has not been effective, then the following courses of action should be taken. If a student has experienced or witnessed sexual harassment in any University context, such as the following examples:

- as an employee of the University
- from a student peer
- from a faculty member
- from a staff member
- as a student volunteer or intern at an off-campus site

The student should report the incident to the Program Director or Associate Dean or in those cases where the student wishes, he or she may communicate directly with the University Sexual Harassment Officer. The PLNU Sexual Harassment Officer is the Vice President for Student Development, Dr. Caye Smith, [CayeSmith@pointloma.edu](mailto:CayeSmith@pointloma.edu), available on the main campus in office 303, third floor of Nicholson Commons, and at 619.849.2313.

The University will investigate all such complaints thoroughly, impartially, and promptly. The University will keep all complaints, and the terms of their resolutions, as confidential as reasonably possible. If an investigation confirms that harassment has occurred, the University will take corrective action, up to and including expulsion or termination.

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_