



## **GENDER DISCRIMINATION/SEXUAL HARASSMENT IS PROHIBITED**

### **THE LAW**

Gender discrimination/sexual harassment is prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Title 25 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

### **OSU GENDER DISCRIMINATION/SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY & TITLE IX GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE 1-0702**

It is the policy of Oklahoma State University that gender discrimination and sexual harassment of students, staff, and faculty is prohibited. OSU subscribes to an educational and work environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity and condemns insulting, degrading, and exploitative treatment of its students and employees. Furthermore, retaliation against anyone who makes a complaint or participates in the complaint process will not be tolerated. The University is committed to providing an environment of study and work free from gender discrimination and sexual harassment.

Members of the University community holding positions of authority involving the legitimate exercise of power over others have a particular responsibility to be sensitive to that power relationship. Supervisors, in their relationships with subordinates, and faculty, in their relationships with students, need to be aware of potential conflicts of interest and the possible compromise of their evaluative capacity. Because there is an inherent power difference in these relationships, the potential exists for the less powerful persons to perceive a coercive element in suggestions regarding activities outside those appropriate to the professional relationship. It is the responsibility of faculty and staff to behave in such a manner that their words or actions are not sexually coercive, abusive, or exploitative.

### **GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT DEFINITIONS**

"Gender discrimination" is unequal or disadvantageous treatment of an individual or group of individuals based on gender. Sexual harassment is a form of illegal gender discrimination.

"Sexual harassment," as prohibited under federal and state law and University policy, is defined as unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, and may include unwelcome sexual advances, sexual assaults, or requests for sexual favors. This and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

- ◆ Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's academic standing or employment.
- ◆ Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions affecting such individual
- ◆ Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance or work environment or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment.

### **THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF CONDUCT MAY CONSTITUTE GENDER DISCRIMINATION/SEXUAL HARASSMENT:**

- ◆ Treating a student differently based upon his/her gender in academia or extracurricular activities, academic programs, discipline, classroom assignment, physical education, grading, and/or athletics.
- ◆ Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature. Suggestive comments and sexually explicit jokes, or turning discussions at work or in the academic classroom to sexual topics may constitute sexual harassment.
- ◆ Sending someone letters, gifts, or materials of a sexual nature. Such attention may not be appreciated in the manner intended, may be offensive to the subject of the attention, and may constitute sexual harassment.
- ◆ Displaying sexually demeaning or offensive objects and pictures. Nude or semi-nude photographs and drawings, on computer software is very likely to be viewed as sexual harassment.
- ◆ Staring repeatedly at someone, blocking another person's path or otherwise restricting their movements. Such acts, particularly when in conjunction with other acts or comments, may be viewed as sexual harassment. Invading a person's personal body space, such as by standing closer than appropriate or necessary for the work being done may similarly constitute sexual harassment.
- ◆ Physical assault or coerced sexual activity.

### **INFORMATION & ASSISTANCE**

Any individual who believes s/he may have experienced gender discrimination, including sexual harassment, or who believes that s/he has observed such actions taking place, may receive information and assistance regarding the University's policy and grievance procedure from any of the following offices:

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| 1. Dr. Carolyn Hernandez<br>Director of Affirmative Action/Title IX Coordinator<br>408 Whitehurst Hall<br>405-744-5371 | 3. Dr. Lee Bird<br>Vice President of Student Affairs<br>201 Whitehurst Hall<br>405-744-5328            |
| 2. Tawny Taylor<br>Student Conduct Officer<br>326 Student Union Building<br>405-744-5470                               | 4. Dr. Marlene Strathe<br>Provost & Sr. VP of Academic Affairs<br>101D Whitehurst Hall<br>405-744-5627 |

If an apparent conflict of interest prevents use of the assistance of the above offices, the person complaining of gender discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual assault may request assistance directly from the Office of the President, 107 Whitehurst Hall (405-744-6384).

**For further information go to: <http://osu.okstate.edu/> and 'Quick Link' to Affirmative Action.**