



Non-Discrimination

Valdosta State University is committed to maintaining a fair and respectful environment for living, working and studying. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, Board of y, and University policy, the University prohibits any member of the faculty, staff, administration, or student body from discriminating against any other member of the University community because of that person s race, ethnicity, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and/or expression, pregnancy, genetic information, religion, age, disabled status or status as a veteran, and other categories protected under the law.

DEFINITION

DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT

At the Valdosta State University, discriminatory harassment is defined as:

Sexual Harassment (Student on Student): Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct based on sex (including gender stereotypes), determined by a Reasonable Person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to participate in or to benefit from an institutional education program or activity.

Sexual Harassment (Other Than Student on Student): Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct, based on sex (including gender stereotypes), that may be any of the



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allegations of discrimination. However, as part of the complaint process, and if appropriate, the Affirmative Action Officer may recommend that the complainant and respondent attempt to resolve their differences through mediation or through the grievance process through the University's [Conflict Management and Restorative Practices Program](#).

The University reserves the right to investigate and resolve a complaint or report of discrimination regardless of whether the complainant pursues the complaint. In such cases, the respondent shall be informed of the status of the investigation at reasonable times until the University's final disposition of the complaint and will be given an opportunity to respond to the substance of the complaint.

These procedures do not replace the right of complainant to pursue other options or remedies available under the law.

PROCEDURES

When safe and possible, the complainant should clearly explain to the alleged offender that the behavior is objectionable and request that it cease. If the complainant is not able or does not feel safe confronting the alleged offender, or the behavior does not stop, or if the complainant believes some adverse employm



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PROHIBITION AGAINST RETALIATION

Students and employees who, in good faith, report what they believe to be discrimination or who cooperate in any investigation, will not be subjected to retaliation. Students or employees who believe they have been the victim of retaliation for reporting discrimination or cooperating in an investigation should immediately contact the Affirmative Action Officer. Any person found to have retaliated against a person who has cooperated in an investigation will be in violation of this policy and will be subject to disciplinary action.

AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS

Indicate all entities and persons within the university affected by this policy:

- Alumni Graduate Students Undergraduate Students
- Staff Faculty Student Employees
- Visitors Vendors/Contractors Other: _____

POLICY ATTRIBUTES

<i>Responsible Office(s)</i>	Human Resources, 1205 N. Patterson St., 229-333-5709, hrstaff@valdosta.edu
<i>Approving Officer or Body</i>	University Council
<i>Date Approved</i>	Prior to 06/01/2009
<i>Revised</i>	02/22/2022: added gender identity and/or expression and other categories protected under the law not currently in the policy; replaced binary, non-inclusive language; revised department location of Affirmative Action Officer 12/12/2024: Separated out the definition of discriminatory harassment to student on student and other than student on student ; based on USG Legal Affairs guidance of 12/11/2024
<i>Next Review Date</i>	12/12/2026