Understanding sex discrimination

Sex discrimination occurs when a person is treated unfavorably based on their actual or perceived sex, gender, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation. Sex discrimination can be experienced by anyone.

Sexual harassment, sexual assault, and gender-based harassment are all forms of sex discrimination.

Sexual harassment is characterized by unwelcome language or conduct of a sexual nature. The behavior is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive such that it could create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment or impact an individual’s academic or work performance.

Sexual assault is sexual contact with another person without, or that exceeds, that person’s consent.

Gender-based harassment, or discriminatory harassment based on sex, is characterized by unwelcome or derogatory language or behavior that is motivated by gender or gender identity.

The University prohibits retaliation against any person for reporting, cooperating in an investigation or participating in the University’s complaint resolution process, and/or for exercising their rights under University policy.

Recognizing the behaviors

What could constitute sexual harassment?
Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or sexually suggestive conduct. This may include conduct that:

- Can be observed: gestures; staring; sexually explicit images; sexually suggestive objects
- Can be heard: jokes; derogatory comments; slurs
- Can be felt: unwanted bodily contact, such as pinching, rubbing or hugging; restricting a person’s movement
- Utilizes power dynamics to create fear or to undermine, coerce, or intimidate
- Occurs in person or electronically, through texts, email, or social media

The above lists are not exhaustive.

If you are uncomfortable with behavior you have experienced or observed or are unsure if it could constitute sexual harassment, consider consulting a UW resource.

You can access resources and receive support without confronting the offending party. However, if you feel comfortable doing so, you can tell the person that their behavior is inappropriate and they should stop the offensive or unwelcome conduct.

Federal and state laws and regulations
Laws and regulations, including Title IX, prohibit sex discrimination. University policies incorporate these legal mandates and apply to every member of the University community: students, staff, faculty and other academic personnel, and third parties (e.g., volunteers, contractors, vendors, etc.). Any person can raise a concern about another community member.

Resources and support
If you have experienced any form of sex discrimination, support resources are available whether or not you make a formal complaint or request an investigation.

Confidential advocates Consultation with confidential advocates is free and available to any member of the UW community. They can help you make a safety plan, facilitate support measures, and provide information about your rights and reporting options.

Advocacy for students Seattle: 206.685.4357 hwadvoc@uw.edu Bothell: 425.352.3851 uwvbae@uw.edu Tacoma: 253.692.5334 uwflsv@uw.edu

Advocacy for employees and students UWPD Victim Advocate (all campuses and locations) 206.543.9337 uwpdadvocate@uw.edu

Counseling services and medical care are also available to students and employees.

Confidentiality and privacy Confidential advocates have legally protected confidentiality and only share information with others when given specific permission by the survivor/victim—or when required by law. The Office of the Title IX Coordinator and SafeCampus do not have the same legally protected confidentiality, but protect the privacy of individuals who have been impacted by sexual misconduct. They share this information as needed to respond to the requests of those who have been harmed, to assess community safety, or to comply with legal requirements.

SafeCampus Call anonymously 24 hours a day/7 days a week. 206.685.7233 safecampus@uw.edu

Office of the Title IX Coordinator Valery Richardson, Title IX Coordinator Mags Alexs, Deputy Title IX Coordinator 4311 11th Avenue NE, Suite 340 Seattle, WA 98105 206.221.7932 titleix@uw.edu Learn more at uw.edu/titleix
What to do if you witness or become aware of concerning behaviors

When you learn that a member of our community has experienced harm, you are encouraged to contact SafeCampus whose staff will assess for immediate safety concerns and provide consultation and support tailored to the situation. You can contact SafeCampus anonymously. SafeCampus is available 24 hours/7 days a week at 206.685.7233. Learn more at uw.edu/safecampus.

Any unwelcome behavior, even conduct that does not clearly violate University policy, can be addressed.

Make a formal complaint

You have the right to make a formal complaint to the University, a report to the police, to do both or neither. Go to the Reporting Options page at uw.edu/titleix for more information about making a complaint and available academic, workplace, and other support measures. Consider connecting with a confidential advocate first–advocates can help you understand your options, provide information about what to expect when making a complaint, and support you and your choices. Confidential advocates can assist with complaints to the University and/or reports to the police.

Submit a formal complaint to:
Title IX Investigation Office
For complaints about students. 206.616.5334  tixinv@uw.edu

University Complaint Investigation and Resolution Office (UCIRO)
For complaints about faculty and other academic personnel, staff, and student employees. 206.616.2028 uciro@uw.edu

Law enforcement
For police and campus safety contact information on your campus, go to the Title IX website at uw.edu/titleix.

Contact the Office of the Title IX Coordinator at any time regarding support measures, complaints, or other concerns related to sex discrimination.

Prevention and engagement

Training and education
Attend campus workshops and training. Information and details regarding online and in-person training can be found at uw.edu/titleix.

Inform yourself
Consult the University’s policy directory for Title IX-related information relevant to employees and students. Learn more about the University’s Title IX protocol on the SafeCampus website at uw.edu/safecampus.

Get involved
Commit to working towards and maintaining equitable, respectful, and inclusive work and learning environments.

Consider taking the It’s On Us pledge at itsonus.org and developing your own strategy for being an active bystander.

Visit uw.edu/titleix for information about current initiatives and engagement opportunities.