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 or conduct of a sexual nature. The behavior is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive 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 anyone for reporting, cooperating in an investigation or participating in the University’s complaint resolution process, and/or for exercising their rights under University policy.

Federal and state 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 (i.e., volunteers, contractors, vendors, etc.). Any person can raise a concern about another community member.

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.

Resources
If you have experienced any form of sex discrimination, support resources are available to you. You can access them without making a formal report.

Confidential resources
Advocates can help you make a safety plan and provide information about your rights and reporting options. An advocate will provide advice and guidance if what you tell them cannot be kept confidential.

Advocacy for students
Seattle: 206.685.4357 hwadvoc@uw.edu
Bothell: 425.352.3851 uwbvae@uw.edu
Tacoma: 253.692.5934 uwtswa@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.

Private and discreet resources
These resources make every effort to protect the information you share with them. In rare instances, information may be provided to other University offices when ongoing or urgent safety risks to a campus community must be addressed. You will be informed when this is necessary.

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 Aleks, Deputy Title IX Coordinator
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 report

You have the right to make a formal report to the University, to law enforcement, to both or to neither. Go to uw.edu/titleix for more information about making a report 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 report, and support you and your choices.

Confidential advocates can assist with reports to the University and/or to the police.

Report and Investigation Offices

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

Human Resources
For concerns about staff, including student employees, go to the Title IX “Make a Report” page at uw.edu/titleix to locate an HR office.

Law enforcement
For police and campus safety contact information on your campus, go to the Title IX “Make a Report” page at uw.edu/titleix.

Other reasons you might need to reach out:

Are you a Campus Security Authority (CSA)?
If you are a CSA, you must contact SafeCampus when you become aware of any crime – including sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking – on or near a UW campus or other location where University activities take place.

Is a minor (individual under 18 years of age) involved?
If you have concerns about or become aware of sexual misconduct that involves a minor, you should contact SafeCampus. If you are an employee and suspect or become aware of abuse or neglect of a minor participating in UW-sponsored or -affiliated activities, you must contact law enforcement or the Washington State Department of Social & Health Services at 1-866-ENDHARM.

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 at Washington.edu/safecampus/uws-title-ix-protocol/.

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

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

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

Office of the Title IX Coordinator
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