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## Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation Policy

LIGS University is committed to providing an environment that is free of all forms of unlawful harassment and discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, we maintain a strict policy prohibiting all forms of unlawful harassment and discrimination in interactions that take place in the University environment, whether physical or virtual.

Discrimination is any treatment – including harassment – on the basis of a protected characteristic. The University does not engage in and will not tolerate harassment or discrimination based on sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status, veteran status, handicap, disability, or any other characteristics protected by applicable federal, state or local law. If you experience, observe, or become aware of behavior that you believe to be harassing or discriminatory in nature, or that is inappropriate or offensive, you are strongly encouraged to report the behavior immediately to the appropriate authority.

Persons reporting incidents of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation may be concerned about the confidentiality of information they are sharing. The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and the accused, will be respected to the extent possible insofar as it does not interfere with the University's legal obligations or ability to investigate or to take corrective action when it is found that misconduct has occurred. It is our policy to promptly and equitably investigate any report of harassment, discrimination or retaliation.

Appropriate action will be taken against any individual who violates this policy. Harassment or discrimination by any student to another student or a University faculty or staff member will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Harassment or discrimination by a University faculty or staff member to another employee or student will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. In addition, any individual who engages in conduct prohibited by this policy may be personally liable in legal action brought against him or her.

### Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other verbal, virtual or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- (1) submission to such conduct is an explicit or implicit condition of employment or academic success;
- (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for an employment or academic decision;
- (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of (a) unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or (b) creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or academic environment.



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While sexual harassment most often takes place where there is a power differential between the persons involved, it also may occur between persons of the same status. It can occur between members of the same gender as well as between members of different genders. Personal relationships must not be allowed to interfere with the academic or professional integrity of the faculty-student, staff-student, supervisor-employee or other professional relations within the University.

## **Cyber-Harassment**

The University is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for students, faculty and administrators. The University believes that preventing cyberstalking and cyber-harassment is critical to creating and maintaining a safe and secure culture, which supports academic achievement.

Cyber-harassment can create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, which may lead to more serious violence. Cyberstalking is threatening behavior or unwanted advances directed at another using the Internet and other forms of online and computer communications. Cyberstalking and cyber-harassment are prohibited at the University.