SOWELA FOUNDATION
Harassment Policy (exhibit A)
Equal Employment Opportunity Policy (exhibit B)

Authority: Foundation Board Action         Policy # SF-2015-6

Original Adoption: ___________ Effective Date: ___________ Last Revision: ___________

The SOWELA Technical Community College Foundation formally adopts the SOWELA Technical Community College policies on harassment and equal opportunity as approved by the College Chancellor, Policy #6.001.1 and #6.004.1 and attached as Exhibits A and B.

See attachments:
SOWELA Policy # 6.001.1 – Harassment
SOWELA Policy # 6.004.1 – Equal Employment Opportunity
Policy Statement

SOWELA Technical Community College adopts the following policy from Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

Harassment, including sexual harassment, is prohibited by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Office for Civil Rights and state regulations (R.S. 23:301,312, 332), and therefore, it is the policy of SOWELA Technical Community College (SOWELA) that unlawful harassment of employees and students is prohibited.

Harassment is physical, verbal and visual conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment, which interferes with work performance. This includes harassment because of race, sex, sexual orientation, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, disability or medical condition, age, or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law, ordinance or regulation.

Sexual Harassment is defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature... when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment, (2) submission or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose and effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

SOWELA applies this definition to the areas of academic advancement, academic standing or academic performance.

Workplace harassment infringes on employees’ right to a comfortable work environment, and it is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. No employee – male or female – should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome overtures or conduct, either verbally, visually, physically or electronically transmitted. Although this list is not all-inclusive, an example of conduct that is prohibited includes:

Taking any personnel action on the basis of an employee’s submission to or refusal of sexual overtures
Unwelcome or unwanted conversations
Unwelcome or unwanted touching
Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature
Explicit or degrading verbal comments, suggestions, or slurs about another individual or his/her appearance
Offensive comments regarding sexual or private matters
Display of sexually suggestive pictures, objects
Offensive jokes
Verbal abuse, comments, names or slurs that in any way relate to an individual’s race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin or disability
Any other offensive or abusive physical, visual or verbal conduct

This policy applies to all members of the SOWELA Board of Supervisors, unclassified employees, students, supervisors, managers, faculty, vendors, and all other individuals doing business with SOWELA. It is the policy of SOWELA that no member of the SOWELA community may harass another. This includes harassment of an employee by another employee, of a student by an employee, of an employee by a student, or of a student by another student. Additionally, under appropriate circumstances, SOWELA may take action to protect its employees and students from harassment, on SOWELA property or at SOWELA sponsored events, by individuals who are not students or employees of SOWELA.

A complaint of harassment should be presented as promptly as possible after the alleged harassment occurs. Any employee who believes he/she is the subject of harassment or who has knowledge of harassing behavior must report such conduct to their direct supervisor, and to the Office of Human Resources. SOWELA had to develop a system of recording all formal written complaints to be submitted and kept on file in the Human Resource Department. Any student who believes he/she is the subject of harassment or who has knowledge of harassing behavior must report such conduct to student affairs personnel. He/she also may submit a complaint to the institution’s Chancellor. No student or employee is required to report or make a complaint of harassment to the person who is allegedly engaging in the problematic conduct. In the event that an individual feels uncomfortable making a complaint at the unit supervisor level, such complaint may be made to the Office of Human Resources (337/491-2699), P. O. Box 16950, Lake Charles, LA 70616-6950. A copy of this policy may be provided to employees and students. A copy will be posted near the Office of Human Resources with contact list identifying individual names, titles, physical location and telephone number where complaints may be filed.

Complaints of harassment will be investigated promptly and in as impartial and confidential a manner as possible. A member of Human Resources will conduct investigations, unless otherwise deemed necessary, in order to assure an impartial and confidential investigation. SOWELA will not tolerate any type of discipline or retaliation, direct or indirect, against any employee or other person who, in good faith, files a complaint of or responds to questions in regard to having witnessed prohibited harassment. False charges are treated as serious offenses and may result in disciplinary and/or civil action.

Any employee or member of management who is found, after appropriate investigation, to have engaged in harassing conduct is subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and/or student standing per the institution’s policies in place governing students.

Source of Policy: HR
Related Policy: LCTCS/BESE/DOE
Approved by:____________________________
Date: ________________________
Chancellor

Responsible Administrator: Human Resources
LCTCS Policy Reference: 6.015
LCTCS Guideline Reference: BESE/DOE

Policy Statement

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Equal Opportunity Program at SOWELA Technical Community College is to ensure that the College is in compliance with State and Federal Equal Opportunity guidelines, and to support the affirmative action and equal opportunity standards as set forth in our Equal Opportunity Program. *It is our every intention to create a workforce climate that is responsive and respectful of fairness and equity for all employees, applicants, and students so that no person will be excluded from any course or activity because of age, race, creed, marital status, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, qualified mental or physical disability, or veteran's status.* Further, the purpose is to provide guidance in the development of a plan to facilitate greater utilization of all persons by enforcing both equal opportunity and affirmative action standards. This includes prohibition of retaliatory actions against employees, applicants, or students because they filed a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in a hearing, proceeding, or investigation of employment discrimination. The Director of Human Resources in conjunction with the EEO Officer(s) will be responsible for the Program implementation and administration. They will be responsible for an annual program update and revision with respect to the Equal Opportunity Program. Positive measures will be taken to ensure identification of underutilized groups in the workforce and by making special efforts toward equitable and fair treatment of all protected groups (i.e., women, minorities, disabled persons, and older persons within all phases of personnel practices) and their recruitment, selection, development, and promotional opportunities.

EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT

It is the policy of SOWELA to recruit, employ, and maintain the best qualified personnel available in accordance with appropriate state and federal laws and acceptable human resources practices for all its diverse activities, and to provide equal opportunities during employment without regard to age, race, creed, marital status, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, qualified mental or physical disability, or veteran's status. All employment practices will be supervised on a continuous basis to ensure that all budget unit heads take positive action in fulfilling the goals of equal employment opportunity.

SOWELA COMMITMENT

SOWELA is committed to equal employment opportunity and this EEO policy because the College believes that it is morally right and that it is in accordance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as

To facilitate the Equal Employment Opportunity Program, SOWELA will ensure that the following EEO guidelines be implemented at all levels of administration:

- Recruit, hire, place, train and promote in all job classifications without regard to non-merit factors, such as race, color, age, religion, sex, national origin, disability veteran status, or any other factor protected by law, except where there is a bonafide occupational qualification.
- Identify and use existing talent and potential through upgrading and promotion of present employees. All promotions will be based only on valid equal employment promotional requirements.
- Base decisions on employment so as to further the principles of equal employment opportunity.
- Ensure that all personnel actions such as compensation, benefits, transfers, layoffs, recall from layoffs, education, tuition assistance, and social and recreation programs be administered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, veteran status or any other non-merit factor.

All SOWELA personnel with responsibility for recruitment, appointment, placement, evaluation, transferring or any other aspect of personnel management are charged with the responsibility of seeing that this policy is successfully implemented by giving it full support through active cooperation and example. All such persons shall be evaluated on the basis of their equal employment efforts and results in addition to the usual standards of performance. Persons who fail to adhere to the Equal Employment Opportunity policy are subject to administrative disciplinary actions. The Office of Administration and the Department of Human Resources will periodically review its personnel actions to ensure compliance with this policy.

PUBLIC INFORMATION EFFORTS & SPECIAL OUTREACH PROGRAMS TO HIGH SCHOOLS

SOWELA is committed to promoting respect for the rights and privileges of others, understanding and appreciation of human differences, and the constructive expression of ideas.

The Office of Public Information maintains positive relations with the public, the print press and electronic media. SOWELA has established ongoing relationships with local media outlets of Southwest Louisiana through regular press releases, meetings with media representatives, and other appropriate activities. The Public Information Officer acts as institutional spokesperson and responds to request for information.

To enhance minority recruitment SOWELA has implemented the following:

- Recruitment advertisements on minority-owned radio stations.
- Other race students serve as ambassadors of the college during presentations to civic clubs and organizations.
- SOWELA recruitment video features testimonials utilizing other race students.
A series of college career fairs throughout Southwest Louisiana offer presentations to minority high school students on career opportunities, admission policies, financial aid/scholarships, and how best to prepare for the college experience at SOWELA.

Each spring approximately 29 high schools are invited to visit the college campus. Students attend informational sessions about career training and tour the campus. Admission testing is also available to those students interested in enrolling in the future.

Through SOWELA’s Process Technology Program, an Introduction to Process Technology course is offered to a predominantly other race high school (Washington Marion).

Parish school board members and area legislative representatives are invited to an annual luncheon that emphasizes workplace development opportunities available through the College.