

TITLE: HARASSMENT

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2003

LAST REVISION: June 8, 2009

Policy No. 6.001.1

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 (STCC) 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, 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

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

Approved by: _____
 Chancellor