



Student Handbook

Discrimination and Harassment Policies

Statement of Non-discrimination

Mount Holyoke College is a women's college that is gender diverse. The College is committed to providing equal access and opportunity in employment and education to all employees and students. In compliance with state and federal law, Mount Holyoke College does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, genetic information, sex, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, ancestry, veteran or military status, or any other legally protected status under federal, state or local law.

— Approved by the Board of Trustees, fall 2020

Mount Holyoke College seeks to comply with all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances prohibiting discrimination in private postsecondary education institutions. The College does not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, student, or applicant for admission on the basis of actual or perceived: age; citizenship status; color; creed; disability; domestic violence victim status; ethnicity; familial responsibilities; gender expression or identity; genetic information; marital status; national origin/ancestry; personal appearance; political belief or affiliation; pregnancy or related condition; race; religion; residence; sex; sexual orientation; source of income; veteran or military status; weight; or any other protected characteristic under applicable local, state, or federal law, including

protections for those opposing discrimination or participating in any grievance process within the institution, with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and/or other human/civil rights agency.

POLICY ON NONDISCRIMINATION AND ANTI-HARASSMENT

RESOLUTION PROCESSES FOR THE NONDISCRIMINATION AND ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

BIAS INCIDENT REPORTING

The purpose of this section is to inform and educate members of the Mount Holyoke community on the processes and procedures related to bias incidents. Such incidents work contrary to the inclusiveness that forms the foundation for the College's educational community, and so the College takes any reports of them very seriously. Mount Holyoke has established a systematic approach for responding to the harm and the impact bias and insensitive incidents can have on the well-being and success of members of our community. Mount Holyoke encourages students to review the content provided.

TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 (TITLE VI)

Title VI, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., is a part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It prohibits discrimination based on race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. The code states "No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." (Pub. L. 88-352, title VI, Sec. 601, July 2, 1964, 78 Stat. 252.) Title VI protects Mount Holyoke students, faculty, staff and visitors from discrimination in any program, service, and activity offered by the College.

The following resolution was affirmed by the faculty in 1973: The faculty of Mount Holyoke College reaffirms its commitment to an academic environment free of racial discrimination in which all individuals are treated with a common standard of decency. It commits itself to a continuing effort to confront and resist racist attitudes and actions wherever they appear in the Mount Holyoke community, and to build a community useful and attractive to all individuals regardless of ethnic background. Please contact the Dean of Students with questions or concerns.

PROTOCOLS FOR BIAS INCIDENTS AND HATE CRIMES

The College is committed to providing an educational and employment environment that is free from discrimination based on protected characteristics, harassment, and retaliation for engaging in protected activity. The College values and upholds the equal dignity of all members of its community and strives to balance the rights of the Parties in the resolution process during what is often a difficult time for all involved.

If a student reports a bias incident or hate crime, they can expect that their concerns will be treated with respect and sensitivity and that each case will be taken seriously. However, it is important to remember that incidents of bias, insensitivity and hate crimes are very complex and may not be immediately recognizable as belonging to one of these three categories.

REPORTING INCIDENTS OF BIAS AND DISCRIMINATION

Bias incidents are any act, conduct, or communication that reasonably is understood to demean, degrade, threaten, or harass an individual or group based on an actual or perceived: age; citizenship status; color; creed; disability; domestic violence victim status; ethnicity; familial responsibilities; genetic information; marital status; national origin/ancestry; personal appearance; political belief or affiliation; race; religion; residence; source of income; veteran or military status; weight; or any other protected characteristic under applicable local, state, or federal law. Bias can occur whether intentional or unintentional and may not violate college policy or state or federal law to be defined as a bias incident. In a bias incident the actor/perpetrator may be known or unknown. Whether an incident meets this definition or not The College is committed to responding to bias incidents by addressing accountability, providing support to those impacted and by creating educational moments for community engagement. Whenever appropriate the College will investigate reported incidents and hold community members accountable for actions that violate college policies or the law.

Note that there are broader categories utilized here than what appears in the College's Statement of Non-discrimination. The Statement of Non-discrimination only focuses on categories that are protected by law, while the College's bias incident definition covers categories that are not covered by law, but that are covered under College policies.

Hostile or hateful speech or other discriminatory behavior may be considered a bias incident, but under certain conditions may also be a hate crime.

The Bias Education & Support Team (BEST) is the coordinated system for tracking and communicating to the College Community, as appropriate, and by creating moments for community accountability and learning. It is important to note that the work of BEST does not replace or supersede any process dictated by administrative rule or criminal law. Through tracking and documentation of de-identified incidents BEST will also increase awareness on critical issues and create opportunities for engagement and learning within a restorative justice framework.

Mount Holyoke will act on reports of incidents of bias discrimination received through the [on-line reporting form](#), by a mandatory reporter, or through direct reporting to the Assistant Vice President for Compliance or their designee. When receiving reports, every effort is made to preserve the privacy of reports and to respect an individual's

desire for confidentiality; however, the College may be legally required to take action depending on the nature of the report. The reporter party will be informed if, in the course of satisfying this obligation, the College may be unable to comply with a request for confidentiality. Reports can be made anonymously with the on-line form and while anonymous reporting can help the College monitor campus climate and inform potential program planning it can be difficult for the Assistant Vice President for Compliance or their designee to follow up on a specific incident without knowing the parties involved.

HATE CRIMES

Under Massachusetts law, hate crimes are those motivated by or against a person or group on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic/national origin, gender, and gender identity. Hate crimes encompass not only violence against people or groups, but also crimes against property, such as arson or vandalism, particularly those directed against community centers or houses of worship. Hate crimes can occur in any of the following ways:

- Intimidating or threatening behavior that puts a person in fear of imminent physical harm (assault, threats to commit certain crimes).
- A physical attack (assault and battery, as well as other violent crimes such as murder, manslaughter and rape).
- Damage to property (arson, vandalism).

TARGETED INDIVIDUALS

A targeted individual is the person or group against whom a bias incident or hate crime is directed. This may or may not be the same as the reporting party. The College recommends using one of these terms rather than the word victim.

ADDITIONAL REPORTING PROTOCOLS FOR STUDENTS



SECTION 504 AND THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT



TITLE IX COORDINATOR



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