

## Harassment and Assault

### Anti-Harassment Policy

Northwest University is committed to maintaining an environment in which all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect and which is free from all forms of intimidation, exploitation and any type of harassment, including, but not limited to that based upon gender, religion, age, disability, ethnicity, national origin, color, race or any other status protected under applicable local, state or federal law. It is the policy of the University to prohibit harassment of any person by any of its employees or students. This includes hazing, rights of initiation, harassing pranks, and publicly insulting another person with abusive words or gestures. Also included is the use of telephones, United States or campus mail, or e-mail for the purpose of issuing obscene, harassing, or threatening messages.

### Reporting Procedure for Harassment and Sexual Assault

If you believe you have witnessed or been the victim of someone else's violent or destructive behavior (for instance, date rape or other forms of sexual assault, assault, harassment), contact a counselor in the [Wellness Center](#), your [Area Coordinator](#), or your [Resident Assistant](#). Reporting any form of harassment or assault will allow the university to conduct a formal investigation and provide you with further support. Harassment and assault are third-tier level community violations handled by the Student Development Judicial Committee. The steps for processing a third-tier violation can be found within the Student Accountability Process section of the Community Handbook.

However, recognizing that additional measures may be required to protect the rights of college students who claim to have been victimized as a result of violent and destructive behavior, the university may implement changes in procedural standards:

1. Follow-up conversations with the accused may be handled by a member of the University staff, and will not require that the victim be present.
2. The victim may be informed of sanctions taken against the accused, in accordance with provisions of the Campus Security Act.
3. Every reasonable effort will be made to protect the complainant from additional harm.

### Sexual Harassment

It is illegal and against the University's policy for any student or employee, male or female, to engage in actions that sexually harass another student, prospective student, employee, prospective employee, vendor, visitor or other person by:

- Making unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal/physical conduct of a sexual nature a condition of academic requirements or continued employment;
- Making submission to, or rejection of, such conduct the basis for academic decisions or employment affecting the student;
- Stating or implying that a particular student's advances in academic or employment performance has resulted from the granting of sexual favors or the establishment or continuance of a sexual relationship (or similar statements with respect to others);
- Stating or implying that a particular student's deficiencies in performance are attributable in whole or in part to the gender of that person;
- Negatively commenting on particular characteristics associated with a particular gender; or

- Engaging in conduct that has the purpose or effect of interfering with a student's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive academic, student life, or working environment by such conduct or comments.

The conduct prohibited may be verbal, visual, or physical in nature. It includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, physical touching, or the granting or withholding of benefits (e.g. grades, absence excuse, account credit, petition approval, etc.) in response to sexual contact. More subtle forms of inappropriate behavior such as offensive posters, cartoons, caricatures, comments, and jokes of a sexual nature are prohibited, as they may constitute sexual harassment when they contribute to a hostile or offensive work, academic, or student life environment.

### **Racial Harassment**

Racial harassment is any flagrant and/or repetitious verbal or physical behavior that stigmatizes or victimizes an individual or group on the basis of race, ethnicity, or ancestry. Racial harassment includes, but is not limited to objectionable epithets, demeaning depictions or treatment, intimidating language or behavior, and threatened or actual abuse. Protection against racial harassment is provided in both state and federal law.

### **Hazing**

Hazing is not permitted at Northwest University. Hazing is defined as subjecting a fellow student or fellow students to abusive or humiliating pranks (e.g., initiations, responses to engagements, "kidnappings," etc.) It is often difficult to distinguish between hazing and a "just for fun" prank among friends. Therefore, Student Development staff reserve the right to interpret the definition of hazing. Any student participating in either a "just for fun prank" or in a deliberate hazing activity will be held responsible for his/her behavior. Regardless of motive or intent, any student participating in a prank-type activity, which potentially endangers or adversely affects the physical and/or emotional wellbeing of another student may expect immediate and serious disciplinary action including the possibility of suspension or dismissal.

### **Sexual Assault**

Northwest is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for you and other members of our University community. To this end, the University takes seriously allegations of sexual violence and seeks to assure all students are informed of the resources available to them to help prevent, report, and respond to an incident of sexual assault.

Sexual assault is defined as any nonconsensual sexual touching or intercourse. Such an assault can be either forced or unforced. Sexual touching includes any contact with intimate body parts of an individual. It also includes penetration, however slight, of any intimate body part with a body part or object.

Consent is explicit, informed, voluntary and mutually understandable communication to willingly participate in specific sexual activity without pressure, threats, coercion, force or intimidation. Either person must also be able to withdraw consent and cease any sexual activity at any time. Being in a relationship, having previous sexual encounters, or silence may not be taken as an indication of consent. Similarly, a passive response or sexual advances that are not resisted physically or verbally do not constitute consent.

Someone who is not of legal age, or is physically or mentally incapacitated cannot not give consent. The use of alcohol or drugs may render an individual incapable of giving consent due to impaired judgment and the inability to make decisions or communicate intentions. Consent may not be given by someone who is unconscious or unaware, or for any reason is unable to communicate her/his intentions.

### **Reporting Sexual Assault**

To foster the safety and security of the entire community, Northwest University strongly encourages immediate reporting of all alleged instances of sexual assault.

If you feel that you are the victim of sexual assault, please contact someone you can trust right away! Some university officials who are trained to help are:

- Campus Security – available 24 hours/day at: 425-889-5500 or campus ext. 222.
- An [Area Coordinator](#)
- Wellness Center (campus ext. 5282 or [wellnesscenter@northwestu.edu](mailto:wellnesscenter@northwestu.edu))
- Student Development Office (campus ext. 5234 or [studentdevelopment@northwestu.edu](mailto:studentdevelopment@northwestu.edu))

Reaching out to someone in the above list will help you will find a caring professional who can help you get the resources you need. We will not blame you for what has happened to you, and we want you to know that if you have been assaulted, it's not your fault.

We do not require you to notify the police, but strongly encourage you to do so, as it is your legal right. Preserve any potential evidence by not bathing, combing, or cleaning yourself or changing your clothes.

Kirkland Police Department; phone: (425) 577-5656

King County Sheriff's Department; phone: (206)296-3311

We also encourage you to go to a local emergency room and ask to be examined and treated.

Evergreen Hospital; phone: (425) 899-3000

Overlake Hospital; phone: (425) 688-5211

Other important resources regarding sexual assault:

- [Local Resource List](#)
- National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800-656-HOPE
- Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN)
- The United States Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women