

Anti-Bullying Statement of Values

Findings from the Climate Survey and several alleged cases of bullying at the University suggest the need for an anti-bullying statement of values at WSU. In April 2020, the Academic Senate established an Ad Hoc Anti-Bullying Committee charged with the task of developing an anti-bullying policy. This committee convened in Fall 2020 and was comprised of nine members: three faculty representatives, two academic staff representatives, two administrative representatives, one Graduate Employees Organizing Committee representative, and one AAUP-AFT representative. After careful consideration and research, the Anti-Bullying Committee recommends the following anti-bullying statement of values to the Academic Senate. This statement of values includes a definition of bullying that is consistent with the University of Michigan's and the State's definition, per recommendation from WSU's Office of General Counsel. In addition, the Anti-Bullying Committee recommends that funding and resources be made available to support an anti-bullying initiative at WSU (see attachment addendum). A draft of the proposed statement of values, including the addendum on education resources, was shared with the following university stakeholders to solicit their feedback and support: AAUP-AFT Local 6075, Academic Senate's Policy Committee, Chief Diversity Officer and Diversity Equity and Inclusion Council, Chief Information Officer, the Coalition of Unions at WSU, Dean of Students Office, Graduate Employees' Organizing Committee, Human Resources, Office of Equal Opportunity, Office of the General Counsel, Student Senate, Title IX Coordinator, and WSU Police Department.

Resolution for Consideration

Bullying occurs within academe and negatively impacts students, faculty, staff, and others associated with the university. Bullying may include behavior that is legally actionable, as in particular cases where an individual is bullied due to their perceived or actual membership in one or more protected class (e.g., race, religion, or gender), but may also extend to other behavior outside the scope of that covered by discrimination and harassment laws. Bullying does not, however, include expression protected by the First Amendment, academic freedom, or activity reasonably serving a legitimate purpose, such as constructive criticism provided by a supervisor during an evaluation of an employee. Bullying can have serious negative consequences for the workplace and learning environment (e.g., Hollis, 2015; Keashly, 2021; Lester, 2013; Pörhöla et al., 2020). For example, bullying can lead to poor job and academic performance and workplace turnover and retention. Bullying can also harm an individual's mental health and hinder their ability to perform their academic responsibilities. Recognizing the deleterious effects of bullying in the campus community, many colleges and universities across the country have established anti-bullying policies.

WSU takes pride in creating a welcoming environment for students, staff, and faculty from diverse backgrounds. Such an inclusive stance discourages bullying behavior. Therefore, WSU should establish a statement of values that identifies bullying behavior patterns and makes clear that these have no place in our academic community. It is also recommended that this anti-bullying statement of values be accompanied by a commitment from the WSU administration to support the dissemination of information about bullying and to offer education and resources regarding anti-bullying (see attached addendum for recommendations regarding support).

University Statement of Values to Address Bullying Incidents

Bullying is unacceptable within our University community.

Bullying can be defined as any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, directed toward a person that is intended to cause or that a reasonable person would know is likely to cause, and that actually causes, physical harm or substantial emotional distress and thereby adversely affects the ability of another person to participate in or benefit from the University's activities and educational programs. Bullying does not include constitutionally protected activity or conduct that reasonably serves a legitimate purpose. Bullying is often repeated or persistent, but may occur as a single, severe incident.

Bullying is distinct from discrimination and harassment addressed under [University Policy 5.0](#) and sexual assault protected under [University Policy 01-5](#). This definition is not intended to create legal claims, whether contractual or otherwise, that do not exist under law.

Education and Resources

To ensure that this statement of values against bullying will be transformative and impactful in creating and sustaining an anti-bullying culture at WSU, the University is committed to providing support and resources for education, support, and the dissemination of information about anti-bullying. These efforts will be trauma-informed and sensitive to methods of providing crucial feedback to victims in healthy and productive ways. For more information, see *[Insert link to website created for this purpose. See attached addendum on education resources requested.]*.

Policies Prohibiting Certain Conduct

The University has established several official policies that address prohibited conduct. Bullying may overlap with much of this conduct; however, some bullying behaviors may not be specifically prohibited by University policy. Below is a list of University policies addressing prohibited conduct.

Discrimination and Harassment:

As stated in WSU's Equal Opportunity Policies, WSU is committed to the principle of equal opportunity. For further information on discrimination and harassment, see the policies below.

Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO): <https://oeo.wayne.edu/>

Equal Opportunity Policies: <https://policies.wayne.edu/equalopportunity>

Non-Discrimination Affirmative Action Policy: <https://policies.wayne.edu/appm/3-0-2-non-discrimination-affirmative-action>

Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Process:

<https://policies.wayne.edu/administrative/05-03-discrimination-harassment-complaint>

Student Code of Conduct: <https://doso.wayne.edu/pdf/student-code-of-conduct.pdf>

Electronic Misconduct:

As stated in WSU's Information Technology Policies, WSU prohibits the misuse of information technology resources. For further information on use of information technology and misconduct, see the policies below.

Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources: <https://policies.wayne.edu/it/00-1-acceptable-use-of-technology>

Responsibility for WSU's Network Infrastructure: <https://policies.wayne.edu/it/02-2-network-infrastructure-responsibility>

WSU AccessIDs, Electronic Mail and Directory Services Policy:

<https://tech.wayne.edu/about/emailpolicy>

Student Code of Conduct: <https://doso.wayne.edu/pdf/student-code-of-conduct.pdf>

Personnel Manuals and Collective Bargaining Agreements:

<https://policies.wayne.edu/personnel-manuals-and-collective-bargaining-agreements>

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault:

The University seeks to eliminate and prohibits all forms of sexual misconduct. For further information on mandatory reporting of sexual misconduct and sexual harassment, see the policies below.

OEO: <https://oeo.wayne.edu/>

Title IX Office: <https://titleix.wayne.edu/>

Interim Title IX Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures:

<https://policies.wayne.edu/appm/10-13-interim-title-ix-sexual-misconduct>

Sexual Harassment Policy: <https://policies.wayne.edu/appm/3-0-4-sexual-harassment>

Sexual Assault Policy: <https://policies.wayne.edu/hr/01-5-sexual-assault>

Violence in the Workplace:

WSU prohibits certain forms of threats or acts of violence by anyone on University property or at University-sponsored activities. For further information on reporting of violence, see the policies below.

Workplace Violence Policy: <https://policies.wayne.edu/administrative/99-3-workplace-violence>

Student Code of Conduct: <https://doso.wayne.edu/pdf/student-code-of-conduct.pdf>

Personnel Manuals and Collective Bargaining Agreements:
<https://policies.wayne.edu/personnel-manuals-and-collective-bargaining-agreements>

Other Criminal Behavior:

Any case of bullying suspected to be of a criminal nature, which may include incidents covered in the aforementioned harassment, sexual assault, and violence policies, should be referred to WSU Public Safety, but may also be referred to other law enforcement authorities.

References

- Hollis, L. P. (2015). Bully university? The cost of workplace bullying and employee disengagement in American higher education. *Sage Open*, 5(2), 2158244015589997.
- Keashly, L. (2021). Workplace bullying, mobbing and harassment in academe: Faculty experience. In P. D'Cruz, E. Noronha, L. Keashly, & S. Tye-Williams (Eds.), *Handbooks of workplace bullying, emotional abuse and harassment. Volume 4: Special topics and particular occupations, professions and sectors*. Springer.
- Lester, J. (2013). *Workplace bullying in higher education*. Routledge
- Pörhölä, M., Cvancara, K., Kaal, E., Kunttu, K., Tampere, K., & Torres, M. B. (2020). Bullying in university between peers and by personnel: Cultural variation in prevalence, forms, and gender differences in four countries. *Social Psychology of Education*, 23(1), 143-169.