

Sexual Harassment

Zero Tolerance

St. Petersburg College has a strong commitment to keeping its workplaces and classrooms free from sexual harassment. The responsibility for doing so rests with each member of the college community.

SPC's policy on sexual harassment

A student or employee in violation of the SPC's Sexual Harassment Policy is subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal or termination.

Ready to help

The [Equal Access/Equal Opportunity \(EA/EO\)](#) office will help members of the SPC community who report any incident of sexual harassment. SPC wants each student and employee to have an educational or work environment free from sexual harassment.

[Sexual Harassment and Relationships Rule](#)

[Sexual Harassment and Relationships Procedure](#)

[Reporting Contacts](#)

Types of Sexual Harassment

Quid Pro Quo (This For That)

Quid Pro Quo occurs when offers of education, employment participation or benefits are linked to sexual favors. These offers may be made explicitly or implicitly, but the outcomes or conditions must be unwelcome. Harassment exists whether the student or employee resists and suffers the threatened consequence or submits and avoids the consequence.

Hostile Environment

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that are sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive create a hostile or offensive educational or working environment. This adversely affects a person's education or job.

Hostile Sexual Misconduct

Hostile sexual misconduct exists where individuals are subjected to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. The sexual offers or misconduct may be made by a student, employee or third party.

Off-color jokes, sexually explicit discussions, graffiti, pictures, sexually explicit reading materials, e-mails and computer screens can create a hostile environment.

FAQs

Where can I get a copy of the college's sexual harassment policy?

SPC Sexual Harassment Policy is posted online and in the Student Handbook, the Supplement to the Faculty, Staff and Student Handbook, and the Faculty Manual. Copies of the rules also may be obtained from provosts' offices and the libraries.

How can sexual harassment be discouraged?

Be alert to unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature whether it is you or someone else being harassed. Don't ignore an incident; silence appears to give consent. Be aware of possible misinterpretations of your genuinely friendly behavior. Be firm when confronted in a harassing situation by telling the individual that such behavior is against college policy. Don't be intimidated by fear of retaliation.

What can be done about a sexual harassment incident?

The first thing to remember is that sexual harassment is not your fault. Speak up at any incident. Say "stop," "no" or "that makes me uncomfortable" clearly and firmly. Make sure to report sexual harassment to the proper college officials as soon as possible.

Who is the proper person at the college to inform about a sexual harassment incident?

Every site has designated representatives to contact regarding complaints of sexual harassment by students or employees. You do not have to file your complaint on your home campus. If in doubt, contact any provost or associate provost.

Can confidentiality be guaranteed?

No. However, the information is generally limited to those who need to know. By law, employee records are generally considered public records but are provided only upon an appropriate request. Student records are generally protected from the public disclosure law and are protected by state and federal laws.

Why does a report need to be filed?

Research indicates that only a few persons engage in harassment, but they tend to harass repeatedly. When harassment incidents are reported, the college can take action. Prompt reporting of an incident is very important.

I'm not sure if my instructor is sexually harassing or if he/she is just very friendly. I don't want to irritate him/her because I need a good grade in the class. How can I be sure the instructor has no more than the subject matter on his/her mind?

The best advice is to be cautious when you are in a situation where you feel uncomfortable. A student may find it difficult and threatening to refuse the signals that can be sent by instructors. If the situation doesn't seem right, it probably isn't, and you should report it to one of the designated representatives of the college.