Important University Policies

Non-Discrimination Policy and Discrimination Grievance Procedures

Montana State University is committed to providing a working and learning environment free from discrimination. Discrimination and harassment based on a person’s race, color, national origin (ancestry), sex, sexual preference/orientation, gender identity, gender expression, transgender, marital or parental status, age, creed, religion or political beliefs, mental or physical disability, genetic information or status as a veteran is prohibited.

Any student, employee, applicant for employment or admission, participant in University activities or other person who believes they may file a complaint under the university Non-Discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures. Refer to the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) website to submit a complaint online www.montana.edu/equity/discrimination/ or contact OIE at (406) 994-2042, Hamilton Hall Room 118.

All employees, except those operating under a license or state law which provides confidentiality or privilege, are required to report known or suspected discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking and retaliation. Every member of the MSU community and our guests are strongly encouraged to report these issues.

Retaliation is action taken by someone against a person because that person has opposed behavior that is prohibited by MSU Policy, including if the person filed a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation or proceeding under the Policy. This includes action taken against a bystander who intervened to stop or attempt to stop discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct. Retaliation includes intimidating, threatening, coercing, or in any way discriminating against an individual because of their complaint or participation.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, including sexual misconduct. Sexual harassment can be perpetrated by anyone regardless of their sex or gender identity. Consistent with the law, MSU policy prohibits two types of sexual harassment:

• **Tangible Employment or Educational Action**: This type of sexual harassment occurs when the terms or conditions of employment, educational benefits, academic grades or opportunities, living environment or participation in a University program is conditioned upon, either explicitly or implicitly, submission to or rejection of unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, or such submission or rejection is a factor in decisions affecting that individual’s employment, education, living environment, or participation in a University program. Generally, this type of sexual harassment will involve agents or employees with some authority from the University.

• **Hostile Environment**: A hostile environment based on a protected class status, including sex, gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation exists when harassment:
  • when such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s employment or academic performance.
  • is sufficiently serious (i.e., severe, pervasive, or persistent) and objectively offensive so as to deny or limit a person’s ability to participate in or benefit from the University’s programs, services, opportunities, or activities; or
  • A hostile environment can be created by anyone involved in a university program or activity (e.g., administrators, faculty members, students, and even campus guests). Mere offensiveness is not enough to create a hostile environment. Although repeated incidents increase the likelihood that harassment has created a hostile environment, a serious incident, such as a sexual assault, even if isolated, can be sufficient. In determining whether harassment creates a hostile environment, the harassment will be considered not only from the perspective of the individual who feels harassed, but also from the perspective of a reasonable person in a similar situation. Also, the following factors will be considered:
    • The degree to which the conduct affected one or more students’ education or individual’s employment;
    • The nature, scope, frequency, duration, and location of the incident or incidents;
    • The identity, number, and relationships of the persons involved;
    • The perspective of a “reasonable person” in the same situation as the person harassed; and
    • The nature of higher education.

Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX)

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”) and the Montana Human Rights Act prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities. Discrimination based upon sex can include sexual harassment or sexual violence. Title IX also prohibits gender-based harassment, which may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature.

The Title IX Coordinator for Montana State University is:

  Jyl Shafer
  Office of Institutional Equity
  Montana State University
  P.O. Box 172430
  Bozeman, MT 59717-2430

  Tel: (406) 994-5326
  Fax: (406) 994-7999
  E-mail: oie (oie@montana.edu)@montana.edu (oie@montana.edu)
  Location: 114 Hamilton Hall
  http://www.montana.edu/equity

Consensual Relationships

http://www.montana.edu/policy/discrimination/

There are inherent risks in any romantic or sexual relationship between individuals in unequal positions (such as faculty and student, supervisor and employee). These relationships may be less consensual than perceived by the person whose position confers power. A consensual romantic relationship in which one party has supervisory or evaluative responsibilities for the other is a conflict of interest and, as such, and as provided in the University Conflict of Interest (COI) Policy the party in the evaluative or supervisory position must promptly disclose the relationship to his or her supervisor and to the campus official responsible for COI reporting. The supervisor and the University official
responsible for COI management shall take steps to ensure that the situation is appropriately managed in accordance with the campus COI Policy. This could result in the removal of the employee or student from the supervisory or evaluative responsibilities by their romantic partner. As provided in the COI Policy, an employee’s failure to promptly disclose a conflict of interest may result in discipline.

**Non-Discrimination Policy Based on Disability**

The University is committed to eliminating disability-based discrimination against qualified persons with disabilities and to making appropriate reasonable accommodation for any known disability that interferes with an applicant’s ability to compete in a selection process, an employee’s ability to perform the essential functions of a job, a student’s ability to meet the essential requirements of an academic program, or a person’s ability to benefit from a University service or participate in a University sponsored or hosted event.

All applicants, employees, students or participants, including those with disabilities, are expected to be able to perform the essential functions of the position or program, with or without reasonable accommodation.

It is the responsibility of the applicant, employee, student or participant with a disability to inform the appropriate person, as indicated below, that an accommodation is needed:

1. **To request an accommodation in a job application or interview process**, contact: The hiring authority or chair of the search committee of the search, as indicated on the vacancy announcement or contact Human Resources, (406) 994-3651, www.montana.edu/hr/

2. **To request accommodation in employment, including concerns about job duties**, contact: The direct supervisor or the Office of Human Resources, (406) 994-3651 or www.montana.edu/hr/

3. **To request an accommodation when applying for admission to the University**, contact: The Director of Admissions, (406) 994-2452, if applying for undergraduate admission; or the Dean of the Graduate School, (406) 994-4145, if applying for graduate admission.

4. **To request an accommodation when applying for housing or to request housing accommodation**, contact: Residence Life and University Food Service, (406) 994-2661, if applying for housing in the residence halls; or Family Housing, (406) 994-3730, if applying for family or graduate housing.

5. **To request accommodation related to an academic program or requirement, class, or other educational opportunity or activity**, contact:
   - The Office of Disability, Re-Entry and Veteran’s Services
   - Room 155
   - Strand Union Building
   - (406) 994-2824.

6. **To request public accommodation or accommodation to participate in a University sponsored or hosted event**, contact:
   - The Event Sponsor or the University Compliance Officer, (406) 994-2042.

**University Compliance Officer**

The University Compliance Officer and the office responsible for the University’s compliance efforts is:

**Director of the Office of Institutional Equity**

Montana State University

Hamilton Hall Room 118

P.O. Box 172340

Bozeman, MT 59717-2430

Phone: (406) 994-2042

Fax: (406) 994-7999

Email: oie@montana.edu

www.montana.edu/equity/

Procedures for filing complaints of discrimination, harassment or violations of Title IX are available electronically at: http://www2.montana.edu/policy/affirmative_action/ or in print from the address above.
Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Times was used instead of Adobe Garamond Pro.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.