



**Stella Maris Polytechnic University
Catholic Archdiocese of Monrovia
Code of Conduct for Teachers and Employees
Prevention and Response to Sexual Harassment**

Preamble

As a Catholic institution, we are committed to upholding the dignity of every individual, rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Church. We seek to foster a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where all members of the community are treated with respect and care. Teachers at our university are entrusted with the responsibility to be role models and advocates for the holistic development of students, free from all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment.

1. Guiding Principles

- Respect for Dignity: Every person is created in the image and likeness of God, and as such, every interaction between faculty, staff, and students must respect the inherent dignity of the human person.
- Upholding Church Teachings: Teachers and Staff are expected to uphold and reflect the moral and ethical standards of the Catholic Church in their professional conduct, including promoting justice and safeguarding the well-being of all students and colleagues.
- Commitment to a Safe Environment: The University is dedicated to creating an academic environment free from sexual harassment, intimidation, exploitation, or any form of inappropriate conduct.

2. Prohibited Conduct

The following behaviors are strictly prohibited:

- Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, including but not limited to:
- Frequent phone communication outside of official class chart or staff room.
- Unwelcome sexual advances.

- Text messages with overt Sexual remarks.
- Texting sexually related Jokes
- Text messages sharing personal sexual information
- Requests for sexual favors (These are often quid pro quo, i.e., a workplace perk is offered in exchange for a Sexual favor)
- Other verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that affects an individual's employment, education, or participation in university programs
- Inappropriate touching or physical contact.
- Offensive sexual remarks, jokes, or comments.
- The display of sexually explicit material or inappropriate gestures.
- Any behavior that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive educational environment.
- Exploitation of Authority: Any attempt to exploit the authority of a teacher over students or staff for sexual purposes or coercion, whether explicit or implicit, is prohibited.

3. Responsibilities of Teachers and Staff

- Professional Boundaries: Teachers and Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students at all times. Personal relationships that may compromise or appear to compromise these boundaries must be avoided.
- Modeling Integrity: Teachers and Staff are expected to model Christian virtues, including respect, compassion, and integrity, in all interactions.
- Vigilance: Teachers and staff must be vigilant in identifying and reporting any behavior or situation that may involve sexual harassment. They are responsible for intervening when necessary and reporting incidents through appropriate channels.
- Confidentiality and Support: Teachers and staff must respect the confidentiality of those who report harassment and offer support to victims while ensuring proper protocols are followed.

4. Reporting and Accountability

- Reporting Mechanisms: Teachers and Staff are required to report any observed or suspected cases of sexual harassment involving themselves, their colleagues, or students to designated university authorities (Office of Student Affairs).
- Cooperation with Investigations: All teachers must fully cooperate with any investigation into allegations of sexual harassment. Non-compliance or failure to report will result in disciplinary actions.
- Consequences: Teachers and Staff found to have engaged in sexual harassment or failed to uphold this Code of Conduct will face disciplinary action, which may include suspension, termination, or legal consequences depending on the severity of the violation.

5. Support for Victims

- Pastoral Care: In accordance with Catholic values, the university will provide pastoral care,

counseling services, and other forms of support to victims of sexual harassment.

- Non-Retaliation: The University will not tolerate any form of retaliation against individuals who report sexual harassment in good faith.

6. Commitment to Training

- Ongoing Education: The University commits to providing regular training for all teachers and Staff on recognizing, preventing, and responding to sexual harassment, ensuring that all faculty are aware of their responsibilities under this Code of Conduct.

Conclusion

This Code of Conduct is designed to uphold the moral and ethical standards of our Catholic identity while ensuring that our university is a place of respect, safety, and integrity for all members of our community. By adhering to these guidelines, teachers affirm their commitment to fostering a Christ-centered environment where the dignity of each person is honored.