



Effective August 9, 2024<sup>1</sup>

# Student Discrimination Policy

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## Non-Discrimination Statement

Vanderbilt University is committed to encouraging and sustaining a learning and work community free from prohibited discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Vanderbilt University does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of their race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy and related conditions, parental status, age, disability, military service, veteran status, genetic information, or any other classification protected by law in its administration of educational policies, programs, or activities; admissions policies; scholarship and loan programs; athletic or other University- administered programs; or employment.

Reports of discrimination, discriminatory harassment, and retaliation based on sex or gender, including sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy and related conditions, and parental status are addressed by Vanderbilt University's [Title IX Office](#). EOA will refer reports of sex or gender-based discrimination, harassment, and retaliation to the [Title IX Office](#).

## Prohibited Conduct

Prohibited Conduct under this policy includes:

**Discrimination** is defined as treating someone differently because of their race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, parental status, age, disability, military service, veteran status, genetic information, or any other classification protected by law ("Protected Classes") in the administration of Vanderbilt's educational policies, programs, or activities. This policy also prohibits discrimination based on the perception that any person is a member of any of the Protected Classes or is associated with a person who is, or is perceived to be, a member of one or more of the Protected Classes.

**Discriminatory Harassment** is any verbal or physical conduct, or conduct using technology, directed toward someone because of their membership in a Protected Class that has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the individual's educational or work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive living, working, or academic environment. This policy also prohibits harassment based on the perception that any person is a member of any of the Protected Classes or is associated with a person who is, or is perceived to be, a member of one or more of the Protected Classes.

A person's subjective belief that conduct is intimidating, hostile, or offensive does not make that conduct harassment. To constitute harassment, the conduct must from both a subjective and objective perspective to be so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with, limits, or deprives a member of the community of the ability to participate in or to receive benefits, services, or opportunities from the University's education or employment programs or activities. In determining whether a hostile environment exists, Equal Opportunity and Access (EOA) and the Title IX Office examine the context, nature, scope, frequency, duration, and location of incidents, as well as the relationships of the persons involved.

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<sup>1</sup> Vanderbilt will review, evaluate, and revise its policies and processes on an ongoing and as-needed basis.



**Retaliation** includes action threatened or taken, directly or through others, intended to deter a person from engaging in Protected Activity (defined below) or done in retribution for engaging in Protected Activity. Action in response to Protected Activity is not retaliatory unless it (1) would not have occurred in the absence of the protected activity; and (2) has a materially adverse effect on the person, meaning the action was sufficiently harmful to deter a reasonable person from engaging in the Protected Activity. Vanderbilt strictly prohibits retaliation and will take appropriate action to address reports of retaliation.

## Additional Definitions

Additional Definitions to this policy include:

**Report** is any complaint or information provided to EOA alleging an incident of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

**Complainant** is generally the person who is reported to have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or retaliation; if the complainant is a student organization, a representative from the organization will be designated to represent the organization in the investigative process.

**Respondent** is the person alleged to have engaged in Prohibited Conduct; if the respondent is a student organization, EOA will designate a member of the organization to represent the organization in the investigation process.

**Protected Activity** includes (1) reporting (internally or externally) or inquiring, in good faith, about suspected Prohibited Conduct; (2) assisting others in reporting or inquiring, in good faith, about suspected Prohibited Conduct; or (3) participating in an investigation or proceeding related to suspected Prohibited Conduct.